VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Bend Tree Project | March 2026

CITY OF BEND

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Section 1. About the Bend Tree Project Volunteer Program

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Volunteer Handbook is to provide information specific to volunteering with the City of Bend Tree Project. As you begin your work, you may have questions—this handbook is intended to help answer them and to provide the guidance you need for a positive, successful, and rewarding volunteer experience.

The Bend Tree Project engages volunteers in collecting meaningful data that supports the City's urban forestry efforts. By participating, volunteers contribute valuable expertise and time, helping the City better understand, manage, and plan for its urban tree canopy. Volunteers also gain insight into local environmental stewardship and can make a difference in the community.

1.2. Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer is any person approved by the Human Resources Department who donates approved services to the City of Bend without pay or other remuneration, other than reimbursement of approved expenses.

City employees may not volunteer to perform the same or similar work they normally perform in their paid positions.

Volunteers include:

- Individuals appointed to serve on officially recognized City committees, boards, and commissions.
- People who participate in unpaid job experience or on-the-job training programs, including student interns. Student interns are not considered employees within the meaning of wage and hour laws if they perform their services freely, without pressure or coercion, and without promise or expectation of compensation from the City. Interns may receive academic credit from their educational institution.
- City employees who are separately approved for volunteer service outside the scope of their paid duties.

1.3. Individuals Not Considered Volunteers

- Paid interns (considered City employees and subject to City employment policies).
- Community service workers.
- Anyone not approved by the City for volunteer service.
- Individuals under the age of 18 are not eligible to volunteer for the Bend Tree Project.
- Individuals or groups performing community service for another agency (for example, Boy Scouts participating in the Bend Beautification Program).

1.4. Bend Tree Project Expectations

- Volunteers may not operate City-owned vehicles.
- Volunteers may perform field data collection and/or data entry tasks.
- Limited GIS access may be granted to designated volunteers.
- Volunteers must follow all safety guidance provided during training.

Section 2. Eligibility, Applications, and Onboarding

2.1. Volunteer Application Process

Individuals interested in volunteering for the Bend Tree Project must complete the Volunteer Application, which is available online at **bendoregon.gov/bend-tree-project**.

Volunteers may begin service only after their application has been reviewed and approved by the City's Urban Forestry staff and Human Resources.

Please notify the Project Lead of any changes to your contact information or any relevant medical conditions that may affect your ability to participate safely in the field.

All applicants will undergo a screening process appropriate to the Bend Tree Project. Screening may include review of application materials, evaluation of relevant experience, and confirmation of program eligibility.

Approved volunteers will receive general orientation and project-specific training provided by City staff prior to beginning any volunteer duties.

2.2. Eligibility and Qualifications

An individual will be selected as a volunteer for the Bend Tree Project if the City representative determines that the applicant has the interest, ability, or training potential to successfully perform the project's required duties.

For all volunteer recruitment and retention activities, the City does not discriminate or exclude based on race, religion, color, sex, marital status, familial status, domestic partnership, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, veteran status or any other protected status under City Code, State, and Federal law.

Individuals requesting accommodation or accessibility information should notify the Project Lead when applying.

2.3. Required Training and Orientation

Volunteers must complete required orientation and safety training prior to beginning service. Orientation is intended to ensure volunteers understand policies, procedures, and expectations necessary for a positive and successful experience. Topics may include:

- Safety procedures
- Emergency procedures

- Insurance coverage
- Use of City communication systems
- Confidentiality
- Harassment policy
- Workplace violence policy
- Drug and alcohol policy
- Project-specific field safety requirements
- Data collection accuracy and equipment handling

Prior to beginning service, volunteers must complete the Volunteer Agreement acknowledging receipt and acceptance of this handbook.

Volunteers must also complete the Volunteer Informed Consent and the Release Agreement, which includes legally required language specific to the Bend Tree Project. The Informed Consent and Release Agreement will be provided and signed at the orientation meeting following the training.

2.4. Program Staff Responsibilities

The City's Urban Forestry staff will provide volunteers with a written description of the major duties associated with volunteering for the Bend Tree Project and will review those duties with volunteers.

Urban Forestry staff are responsible for ensuring that volunteers receive all required training.

2.5. City Employee Participation as Volunteers

City employees are encouraged to engage in civic volunteer activities. However, employees may not perform unpaid volunteer work that is closely related or like their paid job duties.

The City may accept volunteer services from employees provided that:

- The service is offered freely and voluntarily
- There is no expectation of employee benefit
- The service is outside the employee's normal job duties
- The service occurs outside regularly scheduled working hours

City employees who wish to volunteer for the Bend Tree Project must meet these criteria and follow the same application and approval process as all volunteers.

2.6. Human Resources Review & Approval

The Bend Tree Project volunteer role is subject to review and approval by the Human Resources Director (or designee) prior to assignment.

A risk review will be conducted based on the services to be performed. Volunteers must sign the Volunteer Release and Waiver of All Claims, including Photograph Release, when required.

Section 3. Provisions Applicable to All Volunteers

3.1. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers have the right to:

- Meaningful assignments
- Effective supervision
- Appropriate training
- Recognition for work accomplished

In return, volunteers agree to perform their duties to the best of their ability and to follow all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and safety guidance provided for this project.

3.2 Volunteer Duties, Assignments, and Attendance

The Project Lead or designed Urban Forestry staff will provide a current description of the volunteer duties, along with the primary contact for training and supervision.

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties as agreed. If you are ill, follow the directions provided during orientation.

3.3 Performance Concerns and Termination of Service

Volunteer service may be terminated at any time by either the volunteer or the City.

The City regards termination as a last resort and will attempt to address performance or conduct concerns in a timely and respectful manner when appropriate.

3.4. Liability and Insurance Coverage

Volunteers serve at their own risk. Except for specified categories required by law, the City does not provide workers' compensation coverage for volunteers.

Volunteers are responsible for their own medical expenses related to injuries that may occur during volunteer service. All injuries must be reported immediately to the volunteer supervisor.

The City does not provide insurance coverage for personal property, equipment, or vehicles owned by volunteers.

3.5 Code of Conduct and Professional Standards

The following City requirements apply to volunteers:

- **Conduct:** Volunteers are expected to adhere to the same high standards of ethics, honestly, and integrity as City employees.
- **Dress:** Volunteers must follow dress code standards appropriate to their assignment. Requirements will be discussed during orientation.

- **Drugs & Alcohol:** Volunteers may not possess, use, transfer, manufacture, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while engaged in volunteer activities. Volunteers must notify the Project Lead if any medication may inform safe performance.
- **Tobacco Use:** The City maintains a tobacco-free environment. Tobacco use is prohibited in all indoor and outdoor City areas and City vehicles.
- **Technology Use:** City technology resources are for City-related activities only.
- **Harassment:** The City will not tolerate harassment, threatening behavior, or unprofessional conduct.
- **Safety Practices:** Volunteers must follow all established safe practices and immediately report unsafe conditions.
- **Violence in the Workplace:** The City maintains a zero tolerance for workplace violence. Firearms are prohibited on City property except as authorized by law.

3.6 Confidentiality and Protection of Sensitive Information

Volunteers may have access to confidential and proprietary information. Unauthorized disclosure of such information is prohibited.

No volunteer may disclose City or community member information without prior supervisor approval. City records must remain on City premises unless authorized by the City Manager.

3.7 Gifts, Gratuities, and Conflicts of Interest

If offered a gift, gratuity, or item of value, volunteers must notify the Project Lead.

Volunteers may not accept items of value from suppliers, contractors, or parties doing business with the City. Modest items intended to be shared with a group (for example, food items) may be accepted on behalf of the City when appropriate.

3.8 Use and Care of City Property

City equipment and records must be used appropriately and returned at the end of volunteer service. Volunteers are responsible for items in their custody.

3.9 Use of City Technology and Communications Systems

Volunteers may be granted access to City communications systems including computers, software, email, copiers, fax machines, telephones, radios, and databases.

Passwords must not be shared. Volunteers must protect the confidentiality of City systems and follow all IT security requirements.

Volunteers granted access to GIS or other specialized systems must use those systems only for authorized City purposes and must follow all data security guidance provided during training.

Limited personal use of City systems may be permitted consistent with City policy. Improper use may result in dismissal from volunteer service.

Section 4. Agreement and Acknowledgement

As a volunteer of the City of Bend for the Bend Tree Project, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. I have received a copy of the Volunteer Handbook and understand my responsibility to read and follow it.
2. I understand that this Handbook is not a contract.
3. I understand the City may modify policies at its discretion.
4. I understand I am donating my service without expectation of compensation and that I am not covered by workers' compensation except where required by law.
5. I understand I am not eligible for employee benefits.
6. I agree to maintain confidentiality of information obtained through my volunteer service.
7. I consent to the use of photographs or video taken of me during volunteer activities for City purposes without compensation.
8. I understand the City may terminate my volunteer participation at any time.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to ask questions and received clarification before signing.

Volunteer Signature _____

Volunteer Name (printed) _____

Date: _____

Sign and return this page to Project Lead

Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities & Language Assistance Services
You can obtain this information in alternate formats such as Braille, electronic format, etc. Free language assistance services are also available. Please email **accessibility@bendoregon.gov** or call 541-693-2198. Relay Users Dial 7-7-1. All requests are subject to vendor processing times and should be submitted 48-72 hours in advance of events.

Servicios de asistencia lingüística e información sobre alojamiento para personas con discapacidad
Puede obtener esta información en formatos alternativos como Braille, formato electrónico, etc. También disponemos de servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Póngase en contacto en correo electrónico **accessibility@bendoregon.gov** o número de teléfono 541-693-2198. Los usuarios del servicio de retransmisión deben marcar el 7-1-1. Por favor, envíe sus solicitudes con 48-72 horas de antelación al evento; todas las solicitudes están sujetas a los tiempos de procesamiento del proveedor.