



# Volunteer Handbook



Photo Credit: Saxon Holt

Volunteer Services  
San Francisco Botanical Garden  
2/20/2020



## Volunteer Services

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Welcome to San Francisco Botanical Garden's volunteer team- a community of talented, motivated, and enthusiastic lovers of plants, nature, people, and the connections between them.

Volunteers have been essential to the Garden's operations since the earliest days, even before opening in 1940. Your contributions help the Garden reach its mission, *to connect people with plants*, in ways which would not be possible without volunteers.

This Handbook is intended to provide you with basic information about the policies and procedures of the San Francisco Botanical Garden as well as information about your benefits and your responsibilities. We ask you to familiarize yourself with these policies, as all staff and volunteers are expected to observe them.

We look forward to having you volunteering here with us, and thank you for the time and commitment you are choosing to offer. If you have questions or concerns about any of our policies, please direct them to your supervisor or to Volunteer Services.

See you in the Garden!

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San Francisco Botanical Garden

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## **Volunteer Services**

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### **Mission Statement**

*The mission of San Francisco Botanical Garden is to create, sustain and interpret a distinct, documented collection of Mediterranean, mild temperature and tropical cloud forest plants displayed in designed gardens and to provide a place of exceptional beauty and natural sanctuary. San Francisco Botanical Garden Society builds communities of support for the Garden and expands people's understanding and appreciation of plants.*

### **Values**

*San Francisco's unique Botanical Garden inspires visitors with the extraordinary diversity of rare and unusual plants that can be grown in coastal California. Through its programs and displays, the Garden cultivates the bond between people and plants and instills a deeper understanding of the necessity to conserve Earth's biological diversity. As a public/private partnership between a community-based nonprofit organization and the San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department, and a beloved San Francisco institution, we are committed to transparency, cultural diversity, inclusion, and environmentally responsible practices. We are proud to be a public garden, accessible to all and grateful to the funders who help sustain us.*

### **Vision Statement**

*The San Francisco Botanical Garden (SFBG) will be cherished locally and recognized internationally for beauty, diversity of plant collections, educational programs and dedication to conservation.*

### **Volunteer Services Mission Statement**

Volunteers are a critical connection between people and plants, between the Garden and the San Francisco community. Volunteers enhance the Garden's ability to serve the public, inside and beyond the Garden. The Volunteer Engagement Department provides volunteers with the resources needed to fulfill their commitment to the Garden, and supports Garden staff who supervise volunteers.



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### Code of Ethics

Public trust demands that, in all activities, the Garden must act with integrity and in accordance with the most stringent ethical principles, as well as the highest standards of objectivity. The Garden enjoys high public visibility and their staff enjoys a generous measure of public esteem. To the public, people are never wholly separable from the institution. Any Garden-related action from the individual may reflect on the Garden or be attributed to it. Trustees, staff and volunteers must be concerned not only with the true personal motivations as they see them, but also the way in which such actions might be construed by the casual observer.

All those involved with the Garden share a commitment to high standards both within the organization and in dealing with others. This is a shared commitment arising out of the variety of the work done by this institution that produces a collaborative interdependence and shared values among its governing board, employees, students, and volunteers. In support of its mission and values, the Garden requires its employees, trustees, and volunteers to support its ethics policy. Fair, honest, and ethical conduct and conduct consistent with the best interests of the Garden shall prevail at all times in all internal and external interactions.



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## Garden-Wide Policies

### Equal Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of the San Francisco Botanical Garden Society to comply with all equal employment opportunity (EEO) laws. SFBG has a continuing policy to ensure that all employees and volunteers are treated in a fair and non-discriminatory manner and employment is based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without unlawful regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, ancestry, national origin, marital status, domestic partner status, physical or mental disability, medical condition (as defined under California Employment Laws), AIDS/HIV status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity (transgender status), height, weight, status as a Vietnam-era veteran, or qualified disabled veteran, or any other considerations made unlawful by applicable laws.

This policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, board and committee members, and volunteers. This policy applies to recruitment, screening, referral, selection, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, demotion, compensation, benefits, termination, layoff, recall, and other conditions of employment for all persons in every job classification.

### Harassment

In compliance with applicable laws, the Garden strives to provide a working environment free from harassment of its volunteers based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran or marital status. No volunteer or employee shall make, as a condition of any person's involvement, unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; use a person's submission to or rejection of such conduct as the basis for or as a factor in any employment decision; or otherwise create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment by such conduct.

Examples of impermissible behavior that is inconsistent with this policy include the following.

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory comments, slurs or unwanted comments and jokes, or inappropriate email content;
- Visual conduct such as leering, displaying of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings or gestures;
- Physical harassment such as assault, blocking normal movement, restraint, touching, pinching or patting another employee's body, or other physical interference with work directed at an individual;
- Threats and demands to submit to unwanted conduct (for example submitting to requests for sexual favors) in order to maintain employment or avoid some other employment loss
- Offers of job benefits in return for complying with unwanted, inappropriate conduct (for example in return for sexual favors);
- Retaliating, threatening to retaliate, or implying a threat of retaliation following any attempt to resist or stop unwanted, inappropriate conduct.



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It is impossible to define every action or all words that could be interpreted as harassment. The examples listed above are not meant to be a complete list of objectionable behavior. If you believe you have been unlawfully harassed or discriminated against, bring your complaint to your own or any other Garden supervisor as soon as possible after the incident. You will be asked to provide details of the incident or incidents, names of individuals involved, and names of any witnesses. Supervisors will refer all harassment complaints to Volunteer Services or the Executive Director of the Garden. Every reported complaint of harassment will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and in a confidential manner. Employees are expected to cooperate in such an investigation, to be honest and forthcoming with pertinent information. While the investigation will be as discreet as possible, absolute confidentiality and anonymity cannot be assured.

Harassment is serious misconduct and if a volunteer is found to have harassed or discriminated against any volunteer or employee, that person will be immediately dismissed. Likewise, filing a false or bad-faith complaint is prohibited and will result in immediate dismissal.

### **At-Will Volunteer Employment**

All volunteers of the Garden are at-will and, as such, are free to resign at any time for any reason. The Garden, likewise, may terminate a volunteer at any time with or without cause.

### **Disabilities**

The Garden is committed to compliance with applicable state and federal laws governing the treatment of qualified individuals with disabilities. Accordingly, the Garden will provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees with disabilities who are otherwise qualified to safely perform the essential functions of the position. A reasonable accommodation is designed to assist an employee in the performance of his or her job without placing an undue hardship on the Garden or posing a direct threat to others. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Garden that an accommodation is needed to perform essential job function so that appropriate action can be taken to explore a reasonable accommodation.

### **Drug-free Workplace Policy**

San Francisco Botanical Garden maintains a strong commitment to provide a safe, efficient, and productive work environment. The Organization wishes to ensure that all employees and volunteers will perform their duties safely and efficiently in a manner that protects their interests and those of their co-workers.

In keeping with this commitment, we have a strict policy regarding the use and possession of drugs and alcohol.

- 1) Under no circumstances will the Garden tolerate the unlawful use or possession of a controlled substance anywhere in the Garden, at any location, or while off-site on Garden business. The manufacture, distribution, or dispensation of controlled substances is strictly prohibited anywhere in the Garden, at any location.



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- 2) Any volunteer convicted for any violation of a criminal drug statute must notify the Garden of the conviction no later than 5 days after the conviction. This is a requirement of federal law.

Volunteers who violate this policy are subject to strict disciplinary action, including termination.

Golden Gate Park is a non-smoking public area; smoking is not permitted anywhere in the Garden, including the parking lot, nor on the grounds immediately adjacent to the building up to the street.

#### **Prohibited Materials**

Prohibited materials are weapons (including knives, unless they are required for your job), explosives, or any other instrument considered as an injurious or deadly weapon. Illegal drugs are not permitted on the premises. Alcohol is prohibited, except at SFBG's sponsored events.

#### **Media & Social Media**

**All media (including social media) queries should be referred to the Garden's Director of Visitor Experience and Marketing.** The Garden encourages reporters to seek information through official sources that helps assure accurate and balanced news coverage.

The Garden recognizes the importance of the Internet in shaping public thinking about our organization and our current and potential offerings. We also recognize the importance of our volunteers joining in and helping shape community conversation and direction through interaction on social media. The Garden is committed to supporting honest, transparent, and knowledgeable dialogue on social media. In any personal social media activity involving the Garden please act with maturity, good common sense, and in a business-like manner at all times.

#### **Dress & Grooming**

It is expected that volunteers will maintain a clean and neat appearance and will project an image appropriate to your job description image. SFBG reserves the right to define appropriate standards of appearance for the workplace and may find it necessary to ask a volunteer to change clothing to meet the dress standards.

#### **Nametags**

Volunteers receive a temporary nametag at orientation. We will produce an engraved badge for volunteers after completing the required training and/or 20 hours of service.

#### **Vehicle Policy:**

No personal vehicles may be driven in the Garden. Bikes and other non-motorized vehicles must be carried or walked.





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### Operating Hours:

Note that last entry to the Garden changes seasonally. All guests, including volunteers, are expected to exit within one hour of closing time, unless participating in a staff-led after hours program. For your personal safety, it is Garden policy that staff and volunteers do not work or walk alone in the Garden after dark.

### Fingerprinting/Background checks:

It is the Garden's policy that all volunteers and staff above the age of 18, who work with minors or in areas where minors are frequently present (i.e. the Children's Garden), must pass a background check before starting their position.

If a volunteer does not complete the background check requirement, they will be removed from a current volunteer role or will not be placed. Volunteer background checks may be run multiple times during a person's volunteer service with the Garden.

For one-time, public events, a Nationwide Sex Offender Search may be run on all individuals with direct supervisory or disciplinary authority over minors.

### Plant Use and Access Policy

Volunteers may not remove plants from the Garden, nor should anyone bring living plant material into the Garden without proper authorization. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include termination.

This policy governs the collection of samples from living plants by staff and volunteers for interpretive and educational purposes. It should be noted that there is considerable concern regarding the sensitive and unique nature of the Garden's plant collections. The collection of living plant material for interpretive purposes should be limited to ephemeral parts of the plant such as leaves, fruit and flowers. It should also be recognized that the use and collection of plant material throughout the garden, if done improperly or excessively, could result in significant damage. Due to these concerns, SFRPD retains the right to revoke the right to use and collect samples of plants, should these activities.

### Guest Interactions

This is a Garden, and everyone who comes here is looking to enjoy the Garden for the day. The following guidelines will help ensure that both guests and volunteers have a positive experience while spending time in the Garden.

- Volunteers are encouraged to greet visitors with a smile and hello.
- Staff and volunteers should be pleasant, polite, and professional in all interactions
- With all issues involving children it is paramount for staff and volunteers to identify the accompanying adult and engage them about the rules – not the child directly.
- If a guest respond argumentatively or with negative attitude remain, calm, polite and professional and politely ask once more. If you get a similar response, disengage and inform your immediate supervisor.



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## Volunteer Placement & Expectations

**Step 1:** Attend a Volunteer Orientation.

**Step 2:** Review Handbook and sign Volunteer Agreement.

**Step 3:** Volunteers working independently with the public or with minors are required to undergo a Background Check.

**Step 4:** Get started! This may mean attending a specific training for your assignment, scheduling yourself directly online, or meeting directly with your department supervisor.

We aim to place each volunteer in a position that is mutually beneficial for Garden staff and the individual. Volunteer Services staff are always available to change assignments if you wish and/or help resolve any issues should they arise.

The needs of each volunteer position vary, but it is always required that you:

- **Understand the job description and requirements** of your assignment, including Health and Safety regulations pertinent to your department.
- Honor the **time commitment** you have made to your department. Participate during scheduled timeframes and under appropriate staff supervision.
- Let your supervisor know **as soon as possible** if you are planning **vacations**, or if you need to be **absent** or late for any other reason. Three (3) absences without notification may be interpreted as resignation from the volunteer program.
- **Record volunteer service hours through the volunteer database.** These numbers are used for statistical reports and grant applications; they also demonstrate the value of the volunteer program to the institution.
- **Wear your nametag at all times**, especially when entering the Garden, doing any horticulture activity or moving in the beds, and when acting in a role that requires interacting with the public. If it is lost, notify your supervisor or Volunteer Office to receive a new one. **When you are no longer volunteering with us**, your badge must be turned in to your supervisor.
- **Maintain appropriate dress standards**, required of all volunteers whether or not you are interacting with the public. Shoes with closed toes are required when doing any volunteer activity in the Garden (including the nursery).
- Follow the same rules as visitors when enjoying the Garden, including **avoiding unnecessary walking in planted beds or collecting plant material (including weeds).**
- Reflect the dignity and integrity of the and the Garden in all interactions with the public and to **be respectful to Garden staff and visitors**, following staff directions and protocols as given.



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### Emergency and Medical Situations

It is the Garden's policy to provide and maintain safe and healthful working conditions, and to follow operating practices that will safeguard all staff and result in safe working conditions and efficient operations. Violations of Garden safety rules and regulations will result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

Volunteers should:

- 1) Not attempt to carry out any task that may endanger themselves, the public, or any member of the staff. If you are uncertain, seek supervisor approval.
- 2) Observe the special safety rules of common work areas as outlined in training documents (see guidelines specific to your program).
- 3) Make sure your supervisor informs you of the proper safety practices in each department established for the job, such as observing all hazard warning signs, keeping pathways and work areas clear of tripping hazards, knowing where the location of fire/safety exits, wearing protective clothing where necessary, and knowing where first aid supplies are stored. Also, proper lifting procedures must be practiced.

### Garden Closures

The Garden rarely closes, however if conditions are unsafe for visitors, such as in the case of an earthquake, windstorm, flood, fire. Visit the Garden's website, [sfbg.org](http://sfbg.org), or call the Garden's main phone line, 415-661-1316, to confirm a closure.

### Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of an emergency such as fire, earthquake, active shooter, high winds, or other event where the garden is not safe, volunteers and visitors may need to evacuate the Garden. In an evacuation, all volunteers and guests should make their way to one of the two main exits.

Volunteers should check in with staff at one of the two designated Evacuation Assembly Areas: the **Big Rec baseball field across MLK Jr. Ave**, and the **junction of Stowe Lake & the Japanese Tea Garden, across from the Friend Gate**. If you must leave the area, please check in with your supervisor or volunteer services as soon as possible.

### Injury, Illness, Hazards, or Accidents

- 1) Immediate report any injury, illness or property damage occurring at the Garden while performing volunteer duties to the immediate supervisor and to Volunteer Services.
- 2) Report hazardous conditions (unsafe equipment, floors, materials) and unsafe acts to the immediate supervisor.
- 3) An accident needs to be documented within 24-hours following an injury. Your supervisor or Volunteer Services will fill out an incident report with you which is then submitted to SFRPD.
- 4) Always report all incidents involving visitors to Visitor Services: **415-368-5007**.



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### Medical Situations

**In case of an emergency**, call 911 first, then call Visitor Services, **415-368-5007**. The Visitor Experience Lead Associate Phone is not an emergency phone number but can act as a conduit between visitors and proper law enforcement, medical, or other appropriate authorities. If you need to leave the area to find a staff person, please identify someone near you who can stay with the injured person.

For a major, non-emergency injury, go to the hospital designated for your personal health plan, or go to the nearest hospital. A staff member may accompany you to the hospital.

If a volunteer or visitor is injured and determines that they do not need or want medical attention, please notify the staff ASAP. For example, a twisted ankle, laceration, or a tumble into a pointy cactus. Staff must fill out an incident report for any injury on the property, even if the visitor does not require or want medical attention.

Please do not offer medications to visitors. Do offer visitors a comfortable place to sit, a glass of water, or a Band-Aid. First aid kits are located in each building, including entrance kiosks, the Green Team tool shed, and the Children's Garden tool shed.

### Volunteer Insurance Coverage

Garden insurance policy for volunteers is a secondary coverage; we will cover costs in excess of any other health insurance that you have in place. The policy benefits are as follows:

- Max \$25,000
- Dental Max \$250 per tooth per accident
- **Deductible** \$250 per accident: Integrated deductible (covered by primary insurance or by the volunteer)
- Initial medical expenses must be incurred within 90 days of the accident.

In the event of an accident, you must notify the Garden immediately. Any incident occurring on property of San Francisco requires completion of an Incident Report to be submitted to San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department.

To initiate a claim, volunteers should submit a completed Claim Form along with All itemized bills (e.g., UB-92 or HCFA), original receipts, primary carrier's explanation of benefits (if volunteer has insurance) and any other pertinent information to AIG via email, postal mail, or fax.

### Liability

In the event of an accident involving another volunteer, guest, or staff, coverage is provided by the Society's liability insurance. This policy would also protect you in case the third party decided to sue.



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### Conflict Resolution

#### Volunteer Improvement Plan

The role of volunteers is to support staff in carrying out the mission of the Garden. If a volunteer is not able to abide by the policies outlined in the Volunteer Handbook, and any additional guidelines related to a specific assignment, the following steps may be taken.

- 1) **First informal notice in person.** Supervisor should remind the volunteer of the relevant policy, take notes on the incident, and report to Volunteer Services for record-keeping.
  - a. Here, mitigating circumstances can be discussed. Should they wish, the volunteer may be accompanied by a friend. Careful notes must be taken, and a time frame for improvement agreed.
- 2) **Second formal notice in writing** from volunteer supervisor to volunteer.
  - a. If there is insufficient improvement, or in the case of a very serious offense, a further meeting should be arranged, after which a written warning clearly stating what further improvements are expected should be issued to the volunteer.
  - b. Copy should be given to Volunteer Services
- 3) **Written notice to the volunteer of dismissal from duties.**
  - a. If there has been no improvement at the conclusion of the previous stages or in the case of gross misconduct, the volunteer can be asked to leave and any further offer of help from them refused.

A right of appeal should be included at every stage and carried out within the agreed time limits. The volunteer, the person in charge of the volunteer, and a Volunteer Services representative should attend the appeal. In case of a conflict with the direct supervisor or the Volunteer Services Manager, the volunteer may request the presence of another staff person.

**Volunteers may be dismissed without prior warning for gross misconduct. Gross misconduct may include, but is not restricted to:**

- Harassment of any nature of staff, volunteer, or any other guest at the Garden
- Willful damage to or theft of Garden property
- Angry or violent behavior



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## Grievance Procedure

We strive to treat all volunteers respectfully and equitably. If you believe you are not being treated fairly, you are encouraged to do the following:

**Step 1:** Go to the person you are having the problem with and try to resolve the issue verbally, one-on-one.

**Step 2:** If the issue cannot be resolved in this way, talk to your supervisor (if you did not speak to them in Step One) to see if it can be handled at their level.

**Step 3:** If the problem continues, submit a formal, written complaint to Volunteer Services via email. Be sure to explain all aspects of your issues clearly and truthfully, along with the names of all parties involved. The the Director of Volunteer Engagement will get back to you within two business days with the status of their review. They may need time for additional investigation, but will try to have a final response, with any next steps, in writing to you within 10 business days.

**Step 4:** If you are not satisfied with the response from the Director of Volunteer Engagement, you may submit a formal, written appeal to the Learning & Engagement Director via email to [jbarzelay@sfbg.org](mailto:jbarzelay@sfbg.org). Attach your initial complaint letter along with a clear explanation why you disagree. The director will get back to you within two business days with a decision in writing. The decision at this level will be final.

## End of Service

Volunteers are valuable assets to our organization. At the same time, we understand that your commitment may have a beginning and an end. Please give the Volunteer Services Manager at least two weeks' notice before your last day. If possible, plan your end date with your program supervisor, so we can recruit and train a volunteer to take your place. This information also helps us maintain accurate records of active volunteers.



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### Volunteer Service & Benefits

#### Volunteer Appreciation Party

The Garden holds an Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party each year. All volunteers who have contributed 3 or more hours in the previous 12 months are invited to attend.

*Save the Date! June 4, 2020*

#### Active Volunteers:

- Contribute 30 hours per year
- Meet service requirements of assigned program
- Receive engraved name badge (awarded at 20 hours)
- Receive discounted membership to SFBG
- Receive Volunteer Newsletter to stay informed about garden activities and programs
- Active Volunteers receive free admission to the Garden during regular operating hours by showing volunteer badge at the entrance.

#### Leave of Absence (LOA)

- If no service is reported in 6 months, your profile will be set to "Leave of Absence". Or, notify Volunteer Services and your Supervisor to pause your volunteer commitment.
- You will continue to receive Volunteer Newsletter to stay informed about garden activities and programs.
- LOA volunteers do not receive free admission to the Garden or discounted membership.
- To reactivate service, contact Volunteer Services. If more than 1 year has passed since your last date of activity, you may be asked to attend a new training or orientation. You may be also asked to complete a new background check, if this is required.

#### Inactive:

- If no service reported in the past 12 months, your volunteer profile will be set as Inactive.
- You will not receive the Volunteer Newsletter.
- To reactivate service, contact Volunteer Services. If more than 1 year has passed since your last date of activity, you may be asked to attend a new training or orientation. You may be also asked to complete a new background check, if this is required.
- Inactive volunteers should return their namebadge and do not receive free admission

#### Emeritus:

- Volunteers who have served 10 years or longer may be awarded Emeritus status
- No minimum hours requirement; volunteers may sign up for shifts as they are able
- Emeritus Volunteers are invited to the Volunteer Appreciation Party and other events
- Emeritus Volunteers receive free admission to the Garden during regular operating hours by showing their volunteer badge at the entrance.



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### Overview of Volunteer Programs

#### Horticulture & Plant Collections

These positions involve working primarily with plants (and appropriate tools), in the Garden.

##### *Green Team*

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday, 10-1pm

Saturday, 9am-12pm

Join a delightful group of dedicated volunteers who assist garden staff with collections maintenance- weeding, raking and mulching- on a regular basis. No experience necessary.

##### *Team California*

Wednesdays, 10am-12:30pm

Volunteers will assist horticulturist Brendan O'Keefe with maintenance of the California native plant collection. Volunteers should have prior experience with the Green Team or in the Nursery, and be willing to commit to participating at least 2/month. Sign up on Vicnet; the group will meet at the Stone Circle in the California garden.

##### *Team Zellerbach*

Wednesdays, 10am-12pm

Volunteers will assist horticulturist Shannon Sweeny with maintenance of the Zellerbach Garden of Perennials. Volunteers should have prior experience with the Green Team or in the Nursery, and be willing to commit to participating 3-4 times a month for at least 6 months. Sign up on Vicnet; the group meets at Zellerbach.

##### *Children's Garden Green Team*

Saturdays, 10am-1pm (10am-12pm, April-October)

Volunteers assist with maintenance of the Children's Garden, creating and caring for the special hands-on learning space designed for families and nature lovers of all ages. This is also our teen volunteer program- we welcome adults who are interested in mentoring our next generation of garden enthusiasts.

##### *John Muir Green Team*

Fridays, 1-4pm

Assist Kendra Hauser, Youth Education Program Manger, on maintenance of the wildlife habitat garden that comprises the John Muir Nature Trail. This site is located at the western edge of the botanical garden, near the Children's Garden. No experience required but experience with California native plants is welcome! Volunteer should commit to participating 3-4 times a month for at least 6 months.

##### *Gardener's Assistant*

Variable schedule, 3 hours/week minimum commitment

Work one-on-one or in a small group with one horticulturist. Training is provided, but volunteer should have prior horticulture experience or have participated in at least four Green Team sessions. Minimum commitment is four months of weekly volunteering- a longer commitment is preferred! Opportunities for this role are promoted through the volunteer e-newsletter.





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### *Plant Detective*

Weekdays, 10m-2pm. Weekly commitment is required.

Teams of Plant Detectives (2-3 people) work with horticulture and plant collections staff to document plant locations, verify accuracy of plant information, and take photo documentation of the plants. The Plant Detectives will spend 100% of their time working in the garden, and your main tool will be a tablet. Volunteers must be able to navigate planting beds on steep, uneven terrain, and be comfortable with a computer/tablet/smartphone. Minimum commitment is 6 months.

### *Group Volunteer Project*

3 – 3.5 hours, weekday mornings preferred

Groups (corporate, school, community or otherwise) are invited to organize a volunteer event at the Garden, helping professional horticulturists to maintain the Garden, with projects including planting, weeding, mulching and more. Please schedule at least 4-6 weeks in advance. Group size can be 5-60 individuals (some restrictions for age). We have a suggested donation for corporate groups; more information is available at [sfbg.org/corporate-group-programs](https://sfbg.org/corporate-group-programs).

### *Teen Volunteer Day*

Saturdays, 10am-1pm (10am-12pm, April-October)

Volunteers help tend the Children's Garden, a special area of the Garden designed for hands-on exploration of nature. All volunteers under 18 must bring a signed [minor consent & emergency contact form](#). Ages 12-14 must be accompanied by an adult. Groups welcome! Maximum 20 people per date.

### *Bean Sprouts Family Days*

Saturdays, 1-4pm (April – October)

Families with younger children who would like to experience hands-on activities Children's Garden are invited to attend Bean Sprouts Family Days, Saturdays from 1-4pm, April through October. No pre-registration required.

### *Nursery & Plant Sales*

The nursery and plant sale propagation program will be on pause during the construction of a new nursery growing facility. The estimated timeframe for construction is 2020-2022. Many nursery volunteer opportunities are available throughout the Bay Area; volunteer services can assist if you are interested in learning more.

### **Visitor Experience & Engagement**

These positions involve welcoming and engaging with the public, including children. Additional requirements and training may be required.

### *Plant Arbor*

Daily, 10am-1pm or 1-4pm

Welcome visitors to the plant arbor; water and weed plants; ensure prices and plant information are visible. Assist customers with finding appropriate plants. Volunteers should be able to commit to a weekly or biweekly schedule.



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### *Bookstore*

Daily, 10am-1pm or 1-4pm

The Garden Bookstore is one of the first places visitors engage with the garden and it therefore plays a critical role in creating a good first impression. The bookstore volunteer is expected to welcome visitors in a friendly manner and assist customers in order to facilitate the sales of books, gift items and plants.

### *Library Reception*

Daily, 10am-1pm or 1-4pm

Welcome visitors from around the world to our horticultural library at the front reception desk. Greet library visitors, answer basic questions, answer the telephone, and assist the librarian with small tasks if needed. During your shift, you are welcome to read, study, and use the computer or bring your laptop. This position is ideal for a volunteer who has customer service experience and is comfortable with self-directed downtime. Commitment to volunteering 2 shifts/month for at least 6 months

### *Interpretation Stations*

Friday, 12-2pm; Saturdays & Sundays, 11am-3pm

No prior experience necessary, just a willingness to engage and talk with the public!

Interpretation stations are located throughout the garden where docents present seasonal highlights. Training dates and details vary, see [sfbg.org/adult-volunteer](http://sfbg.org/adult-volunteer) for more details. Docents should plan to commit to leading 1 station per month for at least one year following training.

### *Public Tours*

Daily tours at 1:30pm

Join a community of lifelong learners and plant lovers! Docents lead visitors on walking tours for 60-90 minutes. Applicants should have prior experience volunteering at the Garden, leading tours, or in botany or horticulture. Training dates and details vary, see [sfbg.org/adult-volunteer](http://sfbg.org/adult-volunteer) for more information. Docents should commit to leading 2 tours per month for at least one year following training.

### *Children's Walks*

Tuesday-Friday, 10am-12pm

Experience the Botanical Garden through a child's eyes and help connect children with the environment through an exploration of the plants and animals living in the Garden's varied habitats. Volunteer guides lead groups of 6 to 8 K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students and chaperones through the Garden. Volunteers should commit to leading at least 20 walks per year. Training dates and details vary, see [sfbg.org/adult-volunteer](http://sfbg.org/adult-volunteer) for more details.

### *Children's Garden Program Aide*

Weekdays, 9:30-12:30pm, March-May and September-November

The Children's Garden inspires families to get outside and play! Volunteers assist garden staff and high school interns to engage classes in the Children's Garden through our multi-visit school program. Volunteers should commit to participating for an entire season.

### *Library Volunteer*

Scheduled based on need and availability

Welcome visitors from around the world to our horticultural library. Library volunteers answer visitor questions and assist library staff with processing and maintenance of library collections.



## Volunteer Services

San Francisco Botanical Garden

### Special Events

Save the date for these Garden-wide events where all volunteers pitch in and help welcome visitors in the Garden. Requests for support and signup opportunities will be shared via email and posted at [sfbg.org/volunteer-specialevents](https://sfbg.org/volunteer-specialevents) two months in advance.

#### *Spring Plant Sale*

May 2 & 3, 2020

Volunteer as a greeter, cashier, plant loader, or with setup and breakdown, to support the Garden's annual plant sale.

#### *Garden Feast*

May 13, 2020

Support the Garden's annual fundraiser by volunteering at this event, helping with silent auction items, check-in and registration, set up and breakdown, and moving plants.

#### *Flower Piano*

July 9-20, 2020

This annual event celebrates the beautiful connection between music and the Garden. With our creative partners, Sunset Piano, twelve (or more) pianos are placed throughout the Garden for twelve days. Pianos are open to the public to play, alongside scheduled performances from local and international musicians.

Volunteers support Flower Piano as greeters, welcome/information table volunteers, roving docents, program support, and a variety of other roles.

#### *Flower Piano at Night*

July 16, 17 and 18, 2020

Flower Piano at Night offers a very special experience of enjoying piano concerts and impromptu performances at night in a well-lit Garden.

Volunteers support Flower Piano at night with registration, drink ticket sales, and as Garden Monitors, helping visitors find their way, protect the collections, and provide general support to visitors in the garden at night.

### Administration and Miscellaneous Volunteer Opportunities

Please let us know by email ([volunteer@sfbg.org](mailto:volunteer@sfbg.org)) if you are interested in the following, or if you have additional skills to offer not included in this list.

#### *Office Support*

Weekdays, between 9am and 4:30pm

Assist staff with data entry, mailings, and other administrative tasks as needed.

#### *Board Member*

The volunteer-led Board of Trustees is currently at full capacity. If you are interested in becoming involved with the Board or a Board Committee, please contact Executive Director, Stephanie Linder ([slinder@sfbg.org](mailto:slinder@sfbg.org)).



# Volunteer Services

San Francisco Botanical Garden

## Logistical Information

### Garden Operating Hours

The Garden is open daily, starting at 7:30am, and closes one hour after last entry. Last entry changes seasonally:

*Spring & Summer: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in March- September: 6pm*

*Fall/Winter: Oct through early Nov; February- 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in March: 5pm*

*Winter: 1st Sun in Nov through Jan: 4pm*

The Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture is open 10am–4pm; closed Tuesdays and major holidays. The Garden Bookstore and Arbor are open daily, 10am–4pm. Hours may be extended for special events.

### Parking

Parking can be challenging in the park, particularly on weekday mornings, and weekends. We highly recommend that volunteers use public transportation or alternative transportation. Parking options include:

- County Fair Building parking lot, accessible from Lincoln Way at 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Stow Lake (free all day, enter through the North Gate)
- Music Concourse Garage, accessible from Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, across from the Garden. Please check the garage for hourly rates.
- Street parking on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Lincoln Way. Be aware of time limits and street cleaning. The Garden is not responsible for tickets or towed vehicles.

***\*Do not leave valuables unattended in your vehicle! Break-ins do happen.***

### Weather Cancellations

Rain cancellations vary by volunteer program.

- Horticulture volunteers- 70% chance of rain or rain day of cancels
- Nursery & Plant Arbor- volunteer may opt to participate in light rain
- Docent- volunteer may opt to participate in light rain
- Youth Education Programs (including Children's Guides)- cancellations based on school group

Volunteer activity in the Garden will be canceled during severe weather or in situations of unhealthy air quality. If the Air Quality Index (AQI) is greater than 151 pm (RED: Unhealthy), all outdoor volunteer activity will be canceled, including tours, Green Team and horticulture volunteer groups, plant sales, and youth education programs.

More information about visiting the garden is available at [sfbg.org/visit](http://sfbg.org/visit).



# Volunteer Services

San Francisco Botanical Garden

## Volunteer Agreement & Waiver

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Lead: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments about preference or availability: \_\_\_\_\_

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- I understand that I am responsible for reading the San Francisco Botanical Garden's ("Garden") Volunteer Handbook (the "Handbook") and for knowing and complying with the policies set forth in the Handbook.
- I acknowledge and agree that I intend to donate my time and services to the Garden without contemplation of pay and for public service and/or humanitarian objectives, and that nothing in the Handbook should be construed to create a contract of employment.
- I understand and agree that as a Volunteer of the Garden, my image, likeness, and/or voice, whether in photographs, video, or audio recorded in any format, whether now existing or hereafter created, (collectively "Photos") may be recorded and used for and/or in connection with educational, commercial, and/or promotional purposes by the Garden. I hereby release and waive any and all interest I may have in and with respect to the Photos and acknowledge and agree that, between the Garden and me, the Photos are the sole and exclusive property of the Garden.

### Volunteer Agreement, Waiver, and Liability Release

In consideration for being granted permission to work as a volunteer, I shall protect, hold free and harmless, defend and indemnify the San Francisco Botanical Garden Society, and the City and County of San Francisco, including their agents, from any and all claims of any kind and from all liability, penalties, costs, losses, damages, expenses, claims, or judgments (including attorney's fees) resulting from injury, death, or damage to visitors, third parties, myself or other volunteers, or property of any kind, which injury, death or damage arises out of or is in any way connected to the volunteer assignment.

Volunteer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_