



W. K . Kellogg
Biological Station
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Adult Volunteer Handbook

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WELCOME

Welcome to the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station (KBS)! This handbook provides information about Michigan State University's (MSU) policies KBS guidelines and the benefits of the volunteer program. We encourage all volunteers to read this document and follow the web links provided to become familiar with our policies, procedures, and requirements.

Kellogg Biological Station Mission

The mission of KBS is to increase our understanding of natural and managed ecosystems and their linkages to society. This entails three main integrative activities:

- Promote and support multi-disciplinary research in ecology, agriculture, natural resources, and the environment across the continuum of basic to applied research.
- Provide MSU students with inquiry-based educational opportunities in ecology, agriculture, natural resources, and the environment.
- Provide outreach programs that bring KBS expertise to bear on environmental issues of public importance.

Rights and Responsibilities: KBS staff/volunteer mentors

All members of the KBS community, including volunteers, must sign and honor the [W.K. Kellogg Biological Station Code of Conduct](#) and will be held to the same standards of behavior. These standards follow MSU's University-wide policies and procedures.

- Treat all persons with respect and consideration and nurture an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- Cultivate awareness of how historical and current inequities inform personal power and privilege. Recognize how power and privilege mediate interpersonal interactions and affect decisions.
- Be mindful of how individual choices may affect other people – intentionally or unintentionally – and be accountable for one's decisions, words, and actions and their impacts. Be willing to listen to others and, if necessary, change one's behavior to reduce harm.
- Be conscious of the safety and wellbeing of every person. Strive to recognize and intervene to prevent or interrupt situations that could threaten a person's health or safety. Examples of safe and effective types of interruption include the '3Ds' of bystander intervention:
 - Direct: Confront the situation immediately and, when possible, separate the person from the unsafe situation.
 - Distract: Create a distraction to defuse the situation and, if necessary and when safe, separate the person from the situation.
 - Delegate: If intervention is not possible, enlist assistance from others to interrupt the situation.
- Protect oneself and others by complying with all University-wide and KBS-specific guidelines for public health.
- Comply with all University-wide policies and procedures.

KBS Properties

KBS is MSU's largest off-campus education complex and one of North America's premier inland field stations. Located between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek, Michigan (about 65 miles from MSU's main campus in East Lansing), the 3,873 acres/1,566 ha station includes the [W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary](#), [W.K. Kellogg Farm](#), [KBS Academic and Research Facilities](#), [W.K. Kellogg Conference Center and Manor House](#), and Lux Arbor Reserve. The nearby [W.K. Kellogg Experimental Forest](#) is closely affiliated with KBS.

Volunteer Coordinator

The volunteer coordinator position falls under KBS community relations. If you're looking to speak with someone, please start with the volunteer coordinator: volunteers@kbs.msu.edu.

DEFINITION OF A VOLUNTEER

If you perform a service on behalf of an organization without compensation or expectation of compensation, except for reimbursement for volunteer-related expenses, you are considered a volunteer. Before performing your tasks, you must go through the volunteer application process to officially serve as a volunteer. KBS welcomes volunteers of all ages, families, and groups, and does not discriminate against any volunteer.

Employees as volunteers

You can participate in KBS volunteer opportunities if you currently work for KBS. Please note that as an employee, you are not obligated to volunteer your time, and you should never be expected or allowed to volunteer for duties that are part of your regular job responsibilities.

Director's Advisory Board

If you are a Director's Advisory Board (DAB) Member, you can volunteer for other KBS volunteer programs that go beyond your regular responsibilities. All DAB members must register as volunteers; a background check is required to participate in KBS volunteer programs.

Minors as volunteers

It is essential to prioritize the safety of minors by having at least two adults present during any activity where only one minor is present. Youth program coordinators should take reasonable steps to minimize one-on-one interactions between adults and minors participating in youth programs. To ensure safety, all necessary direct electronic communication regarding KBS youth programs must involve more than one adult.

Children 13 years old or younger must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who will volunteer alongside them and provide parental supervision at all times during the activity.

Conducting University Youth Programs: Minimum Operational Requirements. That University-wide policy may be found online at: https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/universitywide/youth_program_operation.html. You may also view the latest updates to MSU Youth Programs policies at <https://youthprograms.msu.edu/news/index.html>.

Group Volunteers

KBS welcomes corporate service teams, high school and college service, and church groups. To engage in one-time volunteer service, instead of the formal volunteer application, groups can email volunteers@kbs.msu.edu to inquire about opportunities.

PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEERS

Adult Application and Selection

Step 1: Complete an online [adult volunteer application](#) and submit the required volunteer forms linked below.

- [Criminal Background Check \(CBC\)](#)
- [Consent and Release](#)
- [KBS Code of Conduct](#)
- [MSU Photo/Video/Audio Release Form](#)

Step 2: Return required forms by uploading signed forms with your online application, email to volunteers@kbs.msu.edu, or mail to KBS Volunteer Coordinator, 3700 E. Gull Lake Drive, Hickory Corners, MI 49060.

Step 3: Please retain a copy of your application for your own records.

Youth Application and Selection

Step 1: Complete an online [youth volunteer application](#) and the **following** MSU Youth and Guardian Volunteer Forms with an adult guardian.

- [Medical Treatment Authorization Form](#)
- [Media Release Form](#)
- [Parent-Guardian Consent Form](#)
- [Pick-up, Drop-off, and Commuter Form](#)

Step 2: Return required forms by uploading signed forms with your online application, email volunteers@kbs.msu.edu, or mail to KBS Volunteer Coordinator, 3700 E. Gull Lake Drive, Hickory Corners, MI 49060.

Step 3: Please retain a copy of your application for your own records.

Michigan State University's Criminal Background Check Requirements Policy

The University strives to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for its students, faculty, staff, and visitors in support of its educational mission. In support of that goal, criminal background check requirements for all University volunteers and event workers at specified University events and venues are identified at [The University Events and Venues: Criminal Background Check Requirements Policy](#) website.

After you submit your application

After submitting your volunteer application, the coordinator will review your references and schedule an interview. If you're under 18, you must have an adult present during the interview. The volunteer coordinator will contact you to schedule the interview. Once you're done with the interview, you'll be assigned a mentor and given a name tag. Please always wear your name tag to identify yourself as a volunteer.

ASPECTS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Current volunteer opportunities

To find volunteer opportunities at KBS, visit <https://www.kbs.msu.edu/support/volunteer/> and check the list of available assignments. Most volunteer roles are available from March to November.

Scheduling and sign-up

After we process your application, you will be assigned a mentor. Your mentor will manage your schedule and communicate with you about ongoing opportunities.

Record Maintenance and Volunteer Time Reports

Volunteers must use KBS's authorized timesheets to record their hours. This helps us track volunteer contributions. Your privacy is important; we won't share your personal information without your written consent. Please send any changes to your contact information to the KBS Volunteer Coordinator.

Program Orientation and Training

All volunteers must complete a KBS orientation covering history and programs. Orientations take place twice a year. You can begin volunteering before completing this orientation and training piece.

In-service Training

Volunteers will receive communication from the coordinator and mentors about educational and environmental programs designed to increase knowledge about KBS, MSU, and the topics related to their volunteering.

Unit Training

Volunteer training is offered throughout the year but is scheduled heavily in the spring. Different units may require additional training.

Volunteer Responsibilities

When volunteering with KBS, you are entitled to certain rights and have specific responsibilities associated with your volunteer role or program. As a volunteer, you are a valuable part of the organization and should take pride in your contributions. While you can set your schedule, preparing to fulfill your volunteer commitments is important.

Please keep the following in mind:

- Honor your commitments to your team lead and inform them if you are unable to do so.
- Please make sure to inform your unit mentor or the KBS volunteer coordinator about any issues that arise.
- Remember to record your volunteer hours whether you're volunteering on-site or remotely.
- Be respectful to clients, staff, and other volunteers.
- Follow the guidance of the volunteer coordinator.
- Be open to learning and attending training programs.
- Comply with MSU and KBS guidelines and policies, including your signed code of conduct.

Concerns and Grievances

We believe addressing concerns through open communication among volunteers and staff can prevent most issues from escalating.

How to Report Concerns

If you are a volunteer, it is important to talk to the people involved and or a staff mentor if you have any concerns. We will do our best to resolve the issue through informal discussion.

Formal Procedure: If a volunteer or staff member is unable to resolve a concern through informal efforts, they may submit the incident:

To report an incident, please email the Volunteer Coordinator and include the following details: your name, the date, time, and location of the incident, the names of people involved, and any relevant information that can help examine the matter.

The Kellogg Biological Station administration will provide written documentation to notify the volunteer and summarize the specific action(s) that warrant behavior changes or termination.

All information regarding the concern will be kept confidential. Minor issues will be dealt with, while more serious ones will result in appropriate action, including termination based on the severity of the offense.

VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

Reciprocal Benefits

Volunteers who volunteer for 20 hours or more per fiscal year can enjoy free general admission to Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, and Manor House. Additionally, you will receive a 10% discount on merchandise and program offerings and an individual membership card with reciprocal benefits at other locations.

- Admission to the [Grand Rapids Children's Museum](#) during April.
- Admission to the Critchlow [Alligator Sanctuary](#) during September.

- Admission to the Cultural Membership Exchange organizations during October with your current volunteer membership card.
- [Association of Nature Center Administrators Reciprocal Program](#)

Recognition events

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization. We honor their dedication and hard work by recognizing our active volunteers during special events and by holding events to thank those who have contributed their time to specific projects. Their selflessness and generosity inspire us all to keep striving towards our goals.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS - OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT KBS

Donations

Volunteers may encourage donations for KBS at any time. All correspondence should be handled through KBS to keep our books in order and eliminate miscommunication. Please get in touch with the Asst. Director of Engagement at communityrelations@kbs.msu.edu. If donating non-cash items, please obtain a form from the Volunteer Coordinator and submit it to Community Relations.

Media Procedures

So that efforts are not duplicated, and information is accurate, you must bring any dealings with the media to the attention of the Asst. Director of Engagement at communityrelations@kbs.msu.edu. Media includes anything printed, broadcast, or televised about KBS. We welcome any contacts or story ideas you may have and ask that you direct them to the Asst. Director of Engagement using the contact information given above.

Volunteer Hour Match

Your company may match the hours you volunteer with donations to a nonprofit of your choice. Contact the Asst. Director of Engagement to learn about Volunteer Hour Match. For employer verification, contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

SAFETY AT KBS

Volunteers are expected to follow the instructions given by KBS staff in case of any safety concerns. Even if the volunteer programs are self-guided, complying with the standard procedures mentioned below is crucial.

Thunderstorm and Tornados

Employees and volunteers should immediately seek shelter during a thunderstorm, tornado watch, or warning. If severe weather conditions occur, those who work mainly outside will be given alternate indoor jobs whenever possible.

Serious Accidents

In case of an emergency, please call 911. KBS staff undergo safety training during onboarding and yearly first aid certification. Volunteers must follow staff directions in case of an emergency.

In case of an accident

MSU/KBS employee must fill out an Incident Report Form. The form should be submitted to the Office of Risk Management at riskmgmt@msu.edu within 24 hours of the incident or as soon as possible. Employees can obtain an injury report at <https://rmi.msu.edu/assets/rmidocuments/InjuryPropertyDamageReport.pdf>.

Minor Accidents Only

Each unit has a first aid kit for minor accidents involving staff or volunteers.

Stings

If the person has a history of allergies to stings or experiences difficulty breathing, call 911 immediately. If the person carries medication for stings, assist them in taking it.

Outdoor Fire

In case of an uncontrolled outdoor fire, please call 911 immediately. It is crucial for everyone, including staff, volunteers, and the general public, to move to a safe area away from the fire. Please note that KBS conducts controlled burns on the property, and we notify first responders before starting a controlled burn.

Indoor Fire

In case of fire, evacuate the building immediately and call 911. If it's small, trained staff may use extinguishers.

Please find the contact information for KBS units, grounds, and security below:

Unit	Phone	Email
Bird Sanctuary	269-671-2510	birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu
Conference Center	269-377-4930	conference@kbs.msu.edu
Kellogg Farm	269-671-2509	kelloggfarm@kbs.msu.edu
Kellogg Forest	269-671-4597	kettleri@msu.edu
Maintenance (24-Hour)	269-207-4787	n/a
Manor House	269-671-2160	manorhouse@kbs.msu.edu
Operations & Safety Coordinator	517-230-2002	facilities@kbs.msu.edu
Security Guard	269-217-5948	n/a
Volunteer Coordinator	269-671-2263	volunteers@kbs.msu.edu

UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

If you are unclear about these policies, please seek clarification from a staff mentor or refer to the policy statements available on the MSU website.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy

MSU is dedicated to providing equal opportunities for all individuals and upholding a non-discrimination policy. Additionally, the university is committed to taking affirmative action to ensure all individuals are treated fairly and equitably.

MSU Policies related to Title IX

The MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy and Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy apply to all MSU students, employees, or third-party community members, including Youth Program participants.

University Reporting Protocols: Child Abuse and Other Harm to Children

The University strives to offer all individuals a safe and supportive learning and working environment. In support of that goal, the University has established reporting protocols for its employees and volunteers with

respect to child abuse and other harm to children. Please visit the [University's Reporting Protocols](#) website to read more about this policy.

MSU's Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)

OIE accepts calls, emails, and walk-in reports regarding any matters related to discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, and stalking. OIE staff can help you file a report, investigate your report, and connect you with resources. <https://oie.msu.edu/>

Firearms Policy

University personnel and visitors are prohibited from possessing or using firearms on any university property or during employment. This applies even if they have a permit. Visit the university website for more information on the [firearms policy](#).

University Policy on a Drug-Free Workplace

The [University Policy on a Drug-Free Workplace](#) covers all MSU facilities, buildings, vehicles, KBS units, and Kellogg Forest. In addition, MSU, and all of KBS, is [Tobacco & Smoke-free campus](#).

Consequences

Non-compliance with policies may lead to termination by the organization or yourself. If necessary, KBS administration will provide written documentation outlining required behavior changes or termination.

KBS will periodically review this handbook and may make changes, including terminating or modifying any benefits or provisions. Please keep a copy for your records.