

**FRIENDS OF THE ARTS-
REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**



Volunteer Coordinator's Comments

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and Staff, thank you for your interest in volunteering for Friends of the Arts. We appreciate the time, talents and energy our volunteers bring to the organization.

Our efforts to show appreciation and respect for volunteers include the creation of policies and procedures for our volunteer program. Our expectation is that these policies will provide a strong base for our partnership, so that we can focus more of our time and energy on providing quality arts programming for children and the community.

Thank you again for volunteering for Friends of the Arts. We look forward to a long and productive partnership.

Mission Statement

The mission of Friends of the Arts is to provide quality visual and performing arts that are affordable and accessible to children and adults as both observers and participants. Friends of the Arts is dedicated to arts education, enrichment and improving the patronage and support of New Hampshire artists. Our policy is that no individual will be turned away from participating in our programs due to insufficient funds.

History

Friends of the Arts is a 34 year old non-profit organization that provides comprehensive and affordable arts education programs for children, schools, and communities in Central New Hampshire. Each year Friends of the Arts reaches over 8,000 students in more than 40 schools.

Founded in 1973, Plymouth Friends of the Arts (as it was originally named) was only a seed in the imagination by John Terry Downs, Professor of Art at Plymouth State University. Believing that there was a need for cultural collaboration between the campus and the community, Downs, along with interested community members, formed the small support group known as Plymouth Friends of the Arts.

This group initiated receptions for gallery exhibits as well as music and theatre events. At the same time, another community organization known as Plymouth Performing Arts had been established to bring professional ensembles to the former Silver Hall, now Silver Center for the Arts. As a natural evolution, the two organizations merged in 1978 under the name of Plymouth Friends of the Arts. Today, Friends of the Arts has grown from a fertile seed into a strong and thriving regional arts council, bringing in national artists to perform and lecture at Silver Center for the Arts. Our children's art education programs engage over 8,500 students annually in over 40 schools.

Volunteer Program Mission Statement

Friends of the Arts values its volunteers and strives to strengthen our volunteer program to carry out our arts education programs, fundraising events and overall mission. Volunteers can join a committee, work on a long term project, or a one time event based on their interest and time available.

Definition of a Volunteer

A Volunteer is anyone who gives time to the organization without expectation of compensation; other than reimbursement of authorized expenses. A Volunteer must fill out an application and be officially accepted and enrolled by Friends of the Arts prior to any volunteer work. All volunteers will be provided with a Volunteer Description of their specific volunteer work, with a detailed description of qualifications, responsibilities, location and time frame, which also must be signed prior to volunteering. All Volunteers will have a staff supervisor to contact with any questions.

Non-discrimination Policy

Friends of the Arts is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and makes all volunteer acceptance decisions without regard to race, religion, sex, age, national origin, any lawful political group affiliation, sexual orientation, or any non-incapacitating disability.

Time Commitment

We appreciate the time commitment volunteers make to Friends of the Arts. Time commitments vary by volunteer assignment. Volunteers will be given a Volunteer Description of any and all assignments so that they can know in advance if what they are signing up for fits their schedule.

Attendance

If you will not be able to make your volunteer assignment, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at the Friends of the Arts office at 536-1182.

Dress Code

Volunteers are asked to dress appropriately for the task they will be performing and for the visibility they will have as representatives of Friends of the Arts. Volunteers are asked to dress cleanly in casual/business casual clothes. All arts education volunteers are required to wear a nametag (provided by FOA). Shirts and shoes are required at all times.

Confidentiality

Friends of the Arts Volunteers have an ethical and legal obligation to respect the privacy of our clients, and to protect and maintain the confidentiality of all information that we learn about our clients and members in the course of providing services to them. All records are confidential and legally protected and must be treated as such.

Substance Abuse Policy

Friends of the Arts does not allow abuse of drugs (legal or otherwise) during any time of volunteer service. FOA does not allow individuals under the influence of drugs to serve as volunteers in any capacity.

Volunteer Rights

- Volunteers are considered team members working with paid staff and the Board of Directors to fulfill Friends of the Arts mission and will be treated with the same respect and dignity.
- Volunteers have the right to be fully and honestly informed of volunteer descriptions and responsibilities, to receive training and orientation and to access information and assistance to help better fulfill their duties.

- Volunteers have the right to a safe and healthy work environment and to satisfying and meaningful work.
- Volunteer complaints and concerns will be received with thoughtful consideration and discussion between appropriate staff members and the executive director. All complaints will be treated as confidential. If resolution does not occur, appeals to the board of directors will be accepted.
- Volunteers will be covered by Friends of the Arts general liability insurance policy.

Length of Volunteer Service

All volunteer assignments have a specific timeframe dependant on the volunteer activity. Volunteers who join committees also have set terms (see by-laws). Volunteers are neither expected nor required to accept further services in a position at the end of their volunteer activity/set term, although they are welcomed to do so. Volunteers may seek different volunteer assignments within Friends of the Arts, or may retire from their volunteer service, provided to the Volunteer Coordinator verbally, or in writing.

Exit Survey

Volunteers who complete their term of service and opt not to continue serving as a volunteer will complete an exit survey. This survey gives the Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer an opportunity to evaluate their experience with the organization.

**FRIENDS OF THE ARTS REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

FOR YOUR SAFETY AND HEALTH

To minimize the risk of accidents and unsafe conditions while representing Friends of the Arts Regional Arts Council in the many different volunteer job descriptions, each volunteer shall:

- Follow the mission of the organization....to present quality visual and performing arts that are affordable and accessible to children and adults both as observers and participants. WE are dedicated to arts education, enrichment, and improving the patronage and support of NH artists.
- Use proper reasoning and care to prevent injury to herself/himself and to others
- Not lift anything they feel is too heavy or awkward and will not perform any act they feel is unsafe. If help is needed, please ask for it.
- Promptly report unsafe conditions, injuries, or medical emergency(ies) to the Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all information to which they are exposed as a volunteer, whether this information involves a member of the staff, volunteer, patron or other person involved in the overall business of the organization.
- Obey the speed limit, use a seatbelt and follow the rules of the road when engaged in any driving as required in the volunteer service description. For insurance purposes, a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of insurance is **REQUIRED** if driving on behalf of FOA.
- Refrain from smoking, drinking alcohol or using illegal drugs while volunteering. Being under the influence of intoxicating beverages or illegal drugs while volunteering is prohibited.
- Wash hands before and after serving refreshments as required in the volunteer service description.
- Wearing appropriate attire for the activity is appreciated as the volunteer is representing Friends of the Arts Regional Arts Council.

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**Volunteer Benefits
2007-2008**

- Evening Performance Volunteers will receive one free Sec. B ticket to the performance for which they are volunteering. All Evening Performance Volunteers must have a current membership with the Friends. If you will be bringing a guest, please call the Volunteer Coordinator with your credit card number. DO NOT call the Box Office.
- Member & Non-member volunteers will receive a free ticket in Sec. B to a FOA performance (based on availability) after accumulating **10** hours of volunteer service (except office volunteers). Transportation time to and from location not included. Board & Education Committee Members excluded unless volunteer work takes place outside of Committee.
- Office volunteers will receive 1 ticket to a FOA performance in Sec. B (based on availability) after accumulating 9 hours (3 Fridays) of volunteer service. At year's end (probably May) you will receive 2 tickets to a performance after accumulating an additional 12 hours (4 Fridays) of volunteer service.
- Non-Member volunteers will receive a free membership at the Supporter level to Friends of the Arts for the following year, after accumulating a "40-hour-week" of volunteer service.
- These benefits are good only for the current FOA calendar year.

**Amendments to this handbook are subject to review and approval by the Friends of the Arts Board of Directors.*

Board Approved: _____

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