



# Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum

## Volunteer Handbook

May 2025

### Volunteer Handbook Policies

**Note:** These procedures supersede any other information you may have received on rules and regulations for Volunteers. Even if you have been a Volunteer since the opening of the Museum, you are asked to note any changes in policy and/or procedures by reading this packet.

## Table of Contents

Volunteer Mission Statement/Rights and Responsibilities.....	3
Library and Museum Rights and Responsibilities.....	4
Volunteer Shifts and Commitment.....	5
Training and Supervision/Duties/Volunteer Position Descriptions.....	6
Dress Code and Badging.....	7
Arrival/Sign In/Breaks.....	8
Assisting Visitors/Absences.....	9
Benefits of Being a Volunteer.....	10
Emergency Procedures.....	11
General Information Regarding the Library and Museum.....	12
Gerald R. Ford Library Fast Facts.....	13
Gerald R. Ford Museum Fast Facts.....	14
Support of the Library and Museum.....	15

## Volunteer Mission Statement

The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum is responsible for preserving and educating the public on the records and holdings of President Gerald R. Ford. Included in these records and holdings are: official records (both paper and audiovisual), personal papers, and artifacts. It is your duty as a volunteer to help use these resources to tell the story of President and Mrs. Ford.

## Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a Volunteer, you have the right to:

- Be assigned a job that is worthwhile, with the freedom to use existing skills or develop new ones.
- Receive comprehensive orientation and training.
- Be kept informed of new exhibits, and changes inside the Museum.
- Expect supervision that will allow a Volunteer to know that his/her work is effective.
- Be appreciated and receive recognition for services.

As a Volunteer, your responsibilities include:

- Fill out all necessary paperwork required by NARA to become a Volunteer.
- Fulfill your hourly commitment.
- Schedule a substitute, when necessary.
- Keep accurate records of your service.
- Attend training sessions and additional meetings as required.
- Respect confidential information.
- Represent the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum with respect and dignity.
- Respect the privacy of all public figures.
- Provide suggestions to the Volunteer Coordinator which might increase the effectiveness of the Volunteer Program.
- Notify the Volunteer Coordinator if you are no longer able to perform your duties as a Volunteer.
- When exiting the program, the required NARA form (NARA 3006) will be filled out, and you will return your ID card.

## Library and Museum Rights and Responsibilities

The Library and Museum has a right to:

- Know the Volunteer will fulfill his/her commitment.
- Know the Volunteer will represent the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum with respect and dignity.
- Know that the Volunteer will not go beyond his/her competencies and authority.
- Know that the Volunteer will use good judgment and will report to the Volunteer Coordinator any problem situations that he/she is unable to solve.
- Expect the Volunteer to maintain an open communication with the Volunteer Coordinator so the program can benefit from his/her views and experience.

The Library and Museum responsibilities include:

- Assess needs and define the Volunteer positions.
- Prepare staff members to accept and respect the Volunteer as a co-worker.
- Provide proper training and support for the Volunteer.
- Recognize the contributions of the Volunteers.
- Reserve the right to evaluate a Volunteer's performance.
- Maintain mandated NARA records.

## Volunteer Shifts and Commitment

---

### Gallery Guides:

- **Monday – Saturday**  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
  - **Sunday**  
12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- 

### Docents and Special Events:

- As needed. Assignments will come from the Volunteer Coordinator.
- 

All Volunteers have a contribution to make! We welcome everyone's special gifts and talents in the program. Your committed availability is important and greatly appreciated.

### Commitment Pledge:

All Volunteers will provide a minimum commitment of two hours per month or 24 hours per year to maintain an active status. These hours can be spent as a Gallery Guide, Docent, or working a Special Event.

The minimum commitment may increase as we grow the program. Notice will be given 6 months in advance of commitment changes.

If unable to meet the monthly commitment, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator that a Leave of Absence is necessary.

## Training and Supervision

All Volunteers are required to attend all training sessions offered by the Library and Museum staff. If a Volunteer cannot attend a training, it is the Volunteer's responsibility to meet with the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the information that was distributed during the training session.

A resource library will be available in the Education Office. Volunteers are welcome to check out any material. Topics include the Presidency, First Ladies, the White House, Gerald and Betty Ford, and temporary exhibit information. Please make recommendations for additional information to the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Duties

All Volunteers should be physically and mentally able to perform the duties in which they have been assigned. If you feel you are not able to perform the duty assigned, please talk with the Volunteer Coordinator. Sometimes it may become necessary for the Volunteer Coordinator to assess a Volunteer's ability to fulfill all duties in order to continue to participate in the Volunteer Program.

## Volunteer Position Descriptions

**Docent:** Museum docents (volunteer tour guides) are responsible for giving guided tours in both the permanent and diverse featured exhibitions. Tours are offered to K-12th grade school groups, and are conducted weekdays during the school year. Sometimes adult groups will require tours as well. TRAINING: New Volunteer Orientation, exhibit training on both permanent and featured exhibits. Shadow at minimum three tours.

**Gallery Guide:** Gallery Guides are experts in one or more Museum exhibit galleries. They greet visitors as they enter a gallery, answer questions, and provide a general gallery orientation on request. TRAINING: New Volunteer Orientation, exhibit training on permanent exhibit – focusing specifically on one or more galleries. Shadow two shifts.

**Special Events:** Special Event Volunteers assist Museum Staff with a variety of activities, from helping children with craft projects and serving birthday cake, to assisting with the logistics (seating, guest check-in, transportation) during special programs and lectures. TRAINING: New Volunteer Orientation, general exhibit training, event specific training.

**\*We expect all our Volunteers to become proficient in giving Docent-led tours or becoming Gallery Guides. To be considered for Special Events you must also serve as a Docent or Gallery Guide.**

## Badging and Dress Code

### ID Card

Each Volunteer will complete the NARA form 6006 to receive an ID card. The ID card is white and will have your picture on the front. It must be worn while on duty in the building and be available to show security when requested. ID cards must be renewed based on the expiration date noted on the badge. An email will be generated from USAccess.gov when it is near expiration.

### Name Tag

You will be given a gold engraved name tag. Please wear this each time you are on duty. You are welcome to take your name tag home with you if you remember to bring it for your shifts. If you would prefer, you can leave it in the Education Office.

### Dress Code

The Museum will provide one navy blue polo shirt for each Volunteer. Volunteers can purchase additional shirts from the approved list if they desire. While the polo shirts are an option, the Museum dress code for public-facing volunteers is “business casual”. Here are some guidelines:

- Museum-provided name tag must be worn at all times when volunteering.
- Museum-provided ID badge must be worn at all times when volunteering.
- TOPS: Museum-provided polo *or* (legacy) Museum-provided cardigan *or* jacket over dress shirt / Museum-provided polo.
  - Solid color, not patterns.
- BOTTOMS: Solid color slacks / knee-length or longer skirt
  - No shorts *EXCEPT* for outdoor events
- SHOES should be business casual, comfortable, and offer good support.
  - No sandals or flip-flops.

## Arriving for your shift

Upon arrival, Volunteers with their ID cards can enter through either the main entrance of the Museum or the staff entrance. Prior to receiving their ID card, volunteers must enter through the main entrance, where the Security Officer will verify the Volunteer's identity, sign them in, and issue a temporary pass.

Next, all volunteers should proceed to the staff reception area and use the Volunteer Log to sign-in for their shift. Feel free to put personal belongings in the lockers available in the copy room, located off the staff reception area.

Cell phones should not be used while on duty. If you chose to keep your cell phone in your pocket, please place it on vibrate or silent. If a call must be accepted during your shift, please take a short break and take it in the staff area or outside.

After your shift is complete, sign-out of the log book.

## Sign-in Procedures

All Volunteers must sign in during their shift. The Volunteer Log is located in the staff reception area. Record the date, code of shift and number of hours worked. Please use the following codes: **(M/T)** Meeting or Training; **(D)** Docent; **(SE)** Special Event; **(GG)** Gallery Guide.

- If you forget to log your hours, please do so the next time you come in.
- Each month, hours are totaled and noted. These numbers are reported to NARA each quarter.
- Please round all hours to the nearest whole.

## Break Room

The staff break room is available for all Docents to enjoy a cup of coffee, visit, and catch up on the news and announcements of the Library and Museum. Complimentary coffee is located in the staff reception area.

## Breaks

Each Volunteer should try to take time out of his/her shift to take a break. Food and drink are not allowed in the exhibit gallery.

## Assisting Visitors

**Restrooms** are located on both floors of the Museum. Men's and Women's are located behind the Museum Store near the entrance. On the second floor, all-gender bathrooms are located near the temporary exhibit display and Men's and Women's are located inside the DeVos Learning Center.

### **Odds and Ends:**

The Museum Store is located at the entrance of the Museum and has a few snack items for sale. Photography is allowed without flash throughout the core exhibits. If no photography is allowed, signs will be posted. If a visitor should experience a medical issue or fall, immediately report the incident to a Security Guard.

### **Exhibit Questions/Issues:**

Should you have a specific question regarding an item on display or notice an exhibit in need of repair, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **VIP Visitors:**

It is the policy of the Museum that staff and docents not detain VIP visitors for autographs, photographs, conversations, etc. This policy includes any Ford Family, celebrities, and public figures. Please remember that their presence at the facility must also remain confidential. Volunteers are not allowed to comment to the media.

## Absences

- **Unexpected Absences:**

All Volunteers must notify the Volunteer Coordinator if you will be late or absent. You can do so via email or by phone call. Please leave a message if no one answers.

- **Planned Absences:**

All Volunteers are required to notify the Volunteer Coordinator when they will be gone during an assigned shift.

- **Excessive Absences:**

Special allowances will be made in the event of absences because of illness, accidents, family matters, etc. However, numerous absences with failure to notify the Volunteer Coordinator may be cause for dismissal from the program.

- **No Show Absences:**

For all Volunteers, a "no show" absence for 2 shifts within 1 calendar year is grounds for dismissal from the Volunteer Program. An absence is considered a "no show" if no prior notice is given or no phone call/email/voice mail message is received on the day of the Volunteer's regular shift. Exceptions will be made in case of medical or family emergencies.

- **In the event of inclement weather** around the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, check with local television stations to see if the Museum has closed. All weather closing will be announced to local media.

## Benefits of Being a Volunteer

Thank You! We know you have lots of opportunities in Grand Rapids to volunteer, and we appreciate you choosing to spend your time with us.

- Pins and Service Recognition
- One free uniform top
- Small tokens of our appreciation
- 2 Museum Passes per quarter to use at your discretion
- Free admission for yourself
- Advance notice of speakers and events
- Parking Privilege in the Staff Parking Lot
- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Month luncheon (held in April)
- Annual awards dinner (held in October)

# Security & Emergency Procedures

Call chain for reporting ALL emergencies:

- All fire, medical, or acts of violence-related emergencies should be reported to 911 immediately followed by a call to the Security Office.
- For all other emergencies (below), your first point of contact will be the Security Office. If they are unable to be reached, contact the Facilities Manager followed by the Deputy Director.

---

Primary Point of Contacts:

**Onsite Security (24/7):** (616) 254-0383

**Facilities Manager (24/7):** Joshua Dawson – 808-381-3412 (available via text/phone call)

**Site Security Supervisor:** Tony Whitehead – (616) 446-6606

**Deputy Director:** Joel Westphal - (703) 424-4793

---

## **In the event of a Medical Emergency...**

1. Contact 911

2. Contact the Security Office

The Security Office will meet First Responders

## **In the event of Fire / Smoke...**

1. Activate Fire Alarm & Contact 911

2. Contact the Security Office

The Security office will contact the Facilities Manager, et. al.

## **In the event of a Flood...**

1. Contact the Security Office

The Security office will contact the Facilities Manager and the appropriate service contractor

## **In the event of a Power Outage, Loss of Heat or AC, or similar building systems...**

1. Contact the Security office

The Security office will contact the Facilities Manager and the appropriate service contractor

---

## **What is an Emergency:**

An Emergency is anything or anyone that poses an IMMEDIATE threat to personnel, property, or equipment.

## **Firearms:**

The Gerald R. Ford Museum is a Federal facility, and Federal law prohibits the possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons in Federal facilities and Federal court facilities by all persons not specifically authorized by 18 U.S.C. 930 (RE: § 102-74.440, Code of Federal Regulations).

## **Use the rule: “See something, Say something!”**

## General Information Regarding the Library and Museum

The Gerald R. Ford Commemorative Committee (a nonprofit corporation) was established when Congressman Ford was appointed to the Vice Presidency in December 1973. The purpose of the organization was to honor Ford's service to the community and the nation. The committee's members were prominent civic leaders in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Major planning and fundraising efforts did not begin until President Ford had committed his papers and memorabilia to a Presidential library operated by the National Archives, by a letter of December 13, 1976, to the Archivist. At that time the National Archives, President Ford, The University of Michigan, and the city of Grand Rapids agreed to place the Ford Museum in Grand Rapids and a Library at The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. The Gerald R. Ford Library-Museum Fund was established to receive funds for both facilities. The Vice President for Development at the University assisted in this collection process. The University also offered several sites on its campus for its library; it received no compensation for the site selected. In Grand Rapids the city, county, and state made major contributions to the construction costs of the museum. The state appropriated one million dollars in each of three years to be dispensed throughout the city to construct the museum. The county also contributed funds for landscaping and other exterior appointments. The Committee received the land from the city at no cost.

The principal fundraiser for the library and museum was President Ford. He was assisted by several business leaders in Michigan and a professional fundraising organization retained by The University of Michigan. Major contributors were foundations and individuals in Michigan and other individuals in the United States and abroad who had served in the Ford administration or who had an interest in honoring President Ford.

## Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Fast Facts

- **Groundbreaking**  
Original: 1979
- **Opening Date (to public)**  
April 27, 1981
- **The Collection**
  - 23 million pages of documents
  - 325,000 still photographs
  - 3,500 video hours
  - 3,000 audio hours
  - 787,000 feet of motion picture film

The 1974-77 presidential papers of Gerald Ford and his White House staff form the core collection. These are supplemented by the pre- and post-presidential papers of Gerald Ford, the papers of Betty Ford, collections of Federal records, and more. Former government officials have donated personal papers.

The Library is located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on the North Campus of the University of Michigan, Gerald Ford's alma mater (B.A., 1935).

### **Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library**

1000 Beal Ave.

Ann Arbor, MI 48109

734-205-0555

[fordlibrarymuseum.gov](http://fordlibrarymuseum.gov)

**Hours:** Monday – Friday

8:45 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

*Closed all official government holidays*

## Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum Fast Facts

- **Groundbreaking**  
Original: 1980  
Addition: May 2002  
DeVos Learning Center and Exhibit Renovation: June 2016
- **Opening Date (to public)**  
September 18, 1981
- **Cost of Building**  
Original: \$6 Million  
Addition: \$4.3 Million  
DeVos Learning Center and Exhibit Renovation: \$15 Million
- **Square Footage**  
Original: 46,000 sqft  
Addition: 56,610 sq ft (11,000 sqft permanent / 4,050 sqft temporary)  
DeVos Learning Center: 8,000 sqft (2,983 sq ft classroom space)
- **Statues on the Grounds**

<b><i>Gerald R. Ford</i></b> <b>J. Brett Grill</b> American 1979 - Bronze, 2011 Cast 2011 <i>On loan from the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation</i>	<b><i>Betty Ford</i></b> <b>J. Brett Grill</b> American 1979 – Bronze, 2018 Cast 2018 <i>On loan from the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation – gift of the Secchia Family</i>	<b><i>Man in Space</i></b> <b>Judson Nelson</b> American 1943 - Bronze, 1984 Cast 1984
<b><i>Number 48</i></b> <b>Stuart Padnos</b> American 1922 – 2012 Steel, 2003 <i>Gift of the Padnos Family</i>		

- Building design was by Marvin DeWinter Associates of Grand Rapids.
- Quotation at the front door and Presidential Seal were carved by Harold Vogel of Virginia. The Seal is limestone and measures 11 ft in diameter.
- The exhibits have been renovated 2 times since the opening. In 1997 and again in 2016.

### Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum

303 Pearl St. NW

Grand Rapids MI 49504

616-254-0400

[fordlibrarymuseum.gov](http://fordlibrarymuseum.gov)

**Hours:** Monday – Saturday

Sunday

*Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day*

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

## Support of the Library and Museum

### **National Archives and Records Administration**

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the nation's record keeper. Of all documents and materials created in the course of business conducted by the United States Federal government, only 1%-3% are so important for legal or historical reasons that they are kept by us forever. The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum are part of the Presidential Library branch of the National Archives. Presidential Libraries and Museums promote understanding of the presidency and the American experience. We preserve and provide access to historical materials, support research, and create interactive programs and exhibits that educate and inspire. There are 14 Presidential Libraries in the nation.

### **Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation**

The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation fosters increased awareness of the life, career, values and legacy of America's 38th President. It does so through activities designed to promote the high ideals of integrity, honesty, and candor that defined President Ford's extraordinary career of public service. The Foundation promotes the ideals, values, commitment to public service and historical legacy of President Gerald R. Ford and further promotes greater civic engagement and recognition of integrity wherever it exists in the public arena. It supports permanent and changing exhibits designed to promote historical literacy; conferences; educational outreach and other programs, both scholarly and popular, including at the Gerald R. Ford Library and Museum.