



NH Granite State Ambassadors

2023 Volunteer Policy Manual

www.NHGraniteStateAmbassadors.org 603-851-8624

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NH Granite State Ambassadors

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WELCOME

Whether you are already a Granite State Ambassador (GSA) or you are newly certified, we welcome you to our organization. NH Granite State Ambassadors (NHGSA) is a non-profit, charitable, 501(C)(3) organization that trains and manages volunteers and employees who serve at visitor information centers throughout the state of New Hampshire.



GSAs are volunteers, industry professionals, and residents of New Hampshire who have been trained and certified as “*New Hampshire Information Specialists*.” GSAs volunteer at our member visitor and information centers and special events. They may also work at hotels, chambers of commerce, museums, restaurants, real estate offices, and more! Each GSA is an important part of our success.

Without supporters like you, there would not be an NHGSA program. THANK YOU!

This manual was designed to help both NHGSA management and GSAs alike. We hope you will feel free to help us develop and update this manual as necessary.

Each of our partnering centers has its own specific interpretations of the “general” NHGSA systems. **Let this manual offer flexibility by providing a floor, rather than a ceiling, to allow for outstanding service.** On our website’s “For Current GSAs” section, you will find more detailed information on each individual center and event. Each center has its own policies and safety procedures. Please review the information and Desk Books provided at EACH location at which you choose to volunteer. The Center Manager will help you interpret the systems if you have any questions.

NOTE: Center Managers, GSAs who are designated employees of a visitor information center, may have additional policies and procedures that supersede this manual.

Granite State Ambassadors are held to the highest standards. We not only represent our company, partners, and sponsors, but we also represent NH and the entire hospitality industry. That is a heavy burden to carry. With that in mind, we have developed these guidelines to help you succeed.

This organization would not exist without our GSAs, and we know we can count on everyone to bring happy, sunny and smiling GSA faces to every volunteer location! We appreciate your time and your positive GSA customer service attitudes everywhere in the state.

Again, thank you for your service at welcome and information centers throughout our state!

HELP / CONTACT INFO

Our NHGSA staff is always at your service! Contact us at any time. We all work from our homes and overlap our schedules to give you maximum support.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS & E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Important numbers and emails for your center are posted on the Quick Reference Sheets for your center and are listed under the Contact and Visitor Center tabs on the website (www.nhgsa.com).

Should you need immediate assistance, never hesitate to contact Kelly's cell phone (yes, you can give it out) anytime for any NHGSA need.

Kelly and Emily work in tandem on almost everything, so don't worry about reaching out to the 'right' person. We are both available to help with anything you need.

NHGSA staff:

Kelly Bryer, Executive Director

Organization Leadership, Development, MHT Center Manager, Training Coordinator, Marketing & Website, Staff Support

GSA Cell: 603-851-8624 Kelly@nhgsa.com

Home office: PO Box 417, Campton NH 03223

Kelly's personal cell phone (603-960-0272) forwards into the GSA Cell Phone.

Emily McMaster, Operations and Communications Director

Manages our volunteer communications and educational opportunities, as well as partnerships with Centers, Volunteer Relations, Event Management, and brochure distribution at the airport.

603-244-0757 emily@nhgsa.com

Ashlee Rowley, On-Site Events Manager

Provides on-site volunteer management for our larger events. Reach out to Kelly or Emily first. We will send you Ashlee's number if you are signed up for her days.

Contractor:

Michelle Demirjian, Chief Financial Officer (Innovision Realty)

Manages our contracts, billing, financial tracking & reporting.

Michelle@nhgsa.com

Billing / Mailing Address (Michelle's office): 470 Mast Road, Goffstown NH 03045. Please note that Granite State Ambassadors does not have a physical office. Staff work from home.

IMAGE AND TEAMWORK



(summer - khaki bottoms)

GSA DRESS CODE

You are officially “on-duty” as a Granite State Ambassador at any customer contact points, including visitor information centers, tours, special events, and some meetings.

You must be in FULL uniform to receive credit for your volunteer time.



(winter - black bottoms)

The information sheet for each tour and event will detail any changes/exceptions to the GSA Uniform. Please read them carefully.

GSA Name Tag - Your badge alone or in a GSA neck wallet is required when volunteering at all locations and while attending all GSA functions. GSAs start out with paper badges. In June and November, we issue permanent green, 50-hour earned badges. In November, we issue both green and silver badges. You can order replacement badges up until a month before earned badges are issued through our online catalog.

GSA Volunteer Badge Samples



Earned at 1000 Hours or 10 Years (silver or gold)



Earned at 50 hours



Newer GSAs have hanging paper badges

GSA Logo Staff Shirt – At our certification trainings, we will have short sleeve embroidered polo shirts available for purchase for \$10 each (value \$30). Limit 1 discounted shirt per person. Granite State Ambassadors has covered the rest of the cost. New GSAs can take advantage of this offer one time for up to 1 year from the certification date. We do have limited stock and can't guarantee your size so please order early. If we have a sponsor for the shirts (their logo on your sleeve), the shirts are free to you.

If you are supplying your own uniform shirt, it must be hunter-green in color with no other logos, and your badge. We can have your personal shirts embroidered for you for \$10 per item. All shirts must be clean, unwrinkled, and sensible.

Several times a year we will solicit orders for additional GSA merchandise you may want, including vests, coats, hats, shirts... to place the order, we must meet our minimum of 24 items. Bulk orders save us all \$\$ and we retail price them at 20% over our cost. We have some shirts available for purchase in our inventory and do have samples to try on. Reach out to Kelly.



Lands End: You can order GSA embroidered shirts and merchandise from our Lands End store at any time. Shirts from here do NOT qualify for any of our GSA-sponsored discounts. The Lands End store gives you one more option to order personal items and is not our standard shirt supplier.

You can reach the Lands End store at: <https://business.landsend.com/store/granitestateambassadors/> The password is: **gsa1996**

Rule of thumb: If your shirt is plain, our large logo must be visible – either embroidered or with a large green badge.

Current approved exceptions: NH State House Visitor Center volunteers may wear the center's 200th Anniversary shirt with the large green GSA Logo'd permanent badge (not the smaller 10-year / 1000-hour badge). GSA logo must be prominent.

Some events require that we wear their event shirt. In this case, you must wear your GSA badge. GSA hats are okay in addition to your badge. We will tell you if this is the case on the event's information page on our website.

The Aviation Museum has its own museum shirt for you to wear when on duty. GSAs must wear their GSA badge.

NOTE: If you are working towards your free 50-hour shirt from our previous Uniform Incentive Program, we will still honor it. Reach out to kelly@nhgsa.com to make arrangements.

Pants/Shorts/Capris/Skirts – Allowed! Note: Some centers and special events do not allow shorts.

ICE OUT (Lake Winnepesaukee) – Columbus Day: Pants must be khaki in color, clean, unwrinkled, and sensible.

Day after Columbus Day – ICE OUT (Lake Winnepesaukee): Pants must be black in color, and clean, unwrinkled, and sensible.

Comfortable Shoes/Sneakers/Sandals

- No high heels
- Be aware of footwear policies at your center/event. (i.e.: no open-toed shoes)

Hats

- A GSA hat is preferable. Other NH, or non-logo'd hats, are acceptable where appropriate
- Hats with other state/team logos are not acceptable (Note: Boston Red Sox is not NH)

Pocketbooks

- No pocketbooks / purses are allowed on tours or at special events. You are on duty. Think of it this way - if you were a cashier at a store or waiting tables, would you have your purse on?
- Fanny-packs or small, *no-hands* wallets and wallet-style bags are allowed (approximately 6" X 4" in size)
- Small cinch backpacks may be allowed on some designated tours/events (this will be specified on the tour information sheet). This is for safety reasons. For example: a tour where we will be outside and you should have a windbreaker, water, and sunscreen available to you.

Other

- Please, no accessorizing. No scarves or other garments/accessories, including jumpers/overalls). GSA logo'd vests are an exception. If you are wearing a plain green vest and have a large GSA logo'd green badge – you must wear that badge (instead of a silver badge)
- GSA waterbottle holder is acceptable when we are on the move for a tour or at an event.



- Long-sleeve plain shirts may be worn underneath GSA Shirts. Acceptable colors are: hunter green, burgundy, black, navy blue, or white. The official State House Tour Sweater (burgundy) is approved apparel.

“There is power in numbers. If you have ever attended an event or a GSA tour in which the entire team is ‘in uniform’ you will understand that power. While ‘in uniform’ we are representing our state, our industry, and our company.” – Judi Window, Founder

Yes, you will see shade variations on our green. We realize not every person feels comfortable in every shirt, and manufacturers change their shades regularly. We want you to feel your best while being authentic. Please stay true to the color selection we offer in our store when choosing your shirt. Hunter Green is always preferred.

NHGSA ETHICS

We encourage a strong feeling of camaraderie and support among our GSAs while serving our communities and state. Working together is essential for seamless transitions between shifts and locations. Guests to our state should NOTICE our professionalism, training, and cooperation among ourselves and with State employees, and throughout the entire hospitality industry.

1. GSA to GSA, simply... Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you....
2. Communicate pleasantly and respectfully with other volunteers at all times. Do not gossip about others. If you have a problem with another GSA, speak to your Center Manager or our staff about the situation. If you have a problem with your Center Manager, speak to our staff or Board Chair.
3. Support your GSA partner while on duty. Each GSA has their own way to do things. We all bring our own special gifts to the position... that is what makes us great! Even if it is not how “you” would do it, it doesn’t mean it isn’t correct. After you have taken care of all the guests and they have left the area, discuss the differences with your partner. Be open to new ideas.
4. Smoking, vaping, alcohol, gummies, and illegal drugs are not permitted while on duty. Prescription drugs are to be used responsibly and are allowed as long as they do not affect your behavior, our guests, or your GSA partner. Alcohol may be allowed at occasional GSA tours and/or social events but is not to be consumed while you are “on duty” at a center. Smoking is only allowed during breaks and in designated smoking areas.
5. POSITIVE ATTITUDES prevail. Do not speak badly of any event, property, location, attraction, or other states, especially while on the premises for a tour, training, or gathering. Your personal opinions are important ONLY when you have something nice to say. Please remember that you are being hosted, and we ask that you don’t demand things be as you would like them if you were there on your own. Send your constructive feedback to Kelly or Emily, and we will forward it to the event organizers or center.
6. Do not discuss POLITICS, RELIGION, RACE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION/PREFERENCE, or SEX with guests, other GSAs, or staff while on duty. Someone is always listening and disagreeing with your point of view!

7. Specific visitor centers have policies regarding referring “members” or “paid participants” first. This means you should offer their member options first before offering other information. Be courteous of the organizations that support our GSA efforts and the financial needs to keep their centers open.
8. Be respectful of your center and center manager’s space. Please do not rearrange their things, or ‘move in’. Even if you are a regular, remember that it is their workspace and their equipment. Any on-duty perks are for on-duty only.

“I believe in setting an example for our industry. I encourage each GSA to set their own example by encouraging and helping others in our industry to meet and exceed the expectations of our guests to New Hampshire. Our goal is to always leave others, whether guests, hosts, or fellow GSAs, better than when we found them.” – Judi Window, Founder

OUR MISSION & CORE VALUES

Incorporators of NHGSA developed our mission in 1996. It has not changed since. Our Core Values were added in 1998 after the presentation of the “Governor’s Task Force on Tourism Report.”

“At the Governor’s Conference on Tourism in November 1998, participants identified 7 issues critical to the future of travel and tourism in NH. One of these issues was the development of the “Essence of New Hampshire” impact statement. The committee asked that all participants in NH’s Hospitality Industry use this statement as a ‘veil’ over their own missions... NHGSA did just that, adding the impact statement along with our own additions as our Core Values statement for our company.” – Judi Window, Founder



Our Mission

The Granite State Ambassadors program is dedicated to meeting and exceeding the informational needs of guests and residents of the State of New Hampshire through in-depth training and active participation of our certified Ambassadors.

Our Core Values

We believe in volunteerism, participation, and cooperation.

We believe in training and demonstrating the essence of NH Hospitality.

We believe that the following two themes define this “essence”:

Citizen Responsibility

A belief that individual citizens can and will take responsibility for our future.

Living Landscape

A strong attachment to the environment of the state, including both its natural resources and its built environments.

In short, we believe that New Hampshire will only be a good place to visit if it continues to be a good place to live. Visitors will come only if we work proactively to retain our scenic open spaces, rich historic and cultural attractions, and livable communities, as well as the social structure that values individuals and permits them regular opportunities to pitch in and make a difference.

VOLUNTEERING

Please note that NHGSA does not “OWN” any Visitor Center. We partner with many organizations that own visitor information centers, and all, except the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport Information Booth, are managed by the organization that owns the center.



You were given your login/password for the Online Calendar and Communication System (OCS) at your certification class. If you have ANY questions or apprehensions, we are here to help!

** NHGSA staff, Kelly or Emily, will help you find a mentor and sign you up for your first shifts.

Before you can begin volunteering, you must complete the following:

- Log into the Online Calendar System, and go to the PROFILE tab. Here you must update your information. **Emergency contacts are required.** *BE SURE TO CLICK SAVE AT THE BOTTOM OF EACH SECTION THAT YOU UPDATE.*

MY CENTER ASSIGNMENTS - **ONLY for GSAS!!

If you are a GSA, select only the centers you wish to see (and CURRENTLY DON'T SEE) shift openings for when you click "Schedule Me". To reduce the centers you view - email kelly@nhgsa.com with the centers you wish removed from your preferences.

- Assignment Preference:
- Canterbury Welcome Center (th fr sat) [Official Visitor Information Centers\State of New Hampshire]
 - Concord Region Visitor Center [Official Visitor Information Centers\Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce]
 - Exeter Visitor Center [Official Visitor Information Centers\Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce]
 - Greater Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce [Official Visitor Information Centers\Greater Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce]
 - Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce (W & F) [Official Visitor Information Centers\Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce]

- Select the centers you wish to volunteer at. Please NOTE: You will only be able to sign up to volunteer at centers that are checked off in your profile. *BE SURE TO CLICK SAVE AT THE BOTTOM!* Note – you **WILL** be able to see **ALL** events, tours, meetings, and activities on the calendar without checking them off in the list.
- There is an online video tutorial of our online calendar system on the For Current GSAs page.
- You are required to volunteer with a *seasoned* GSA mentor and/or your Center Manager **THREE (3) times at each** specific center before you can volunteer there on your own. **Contact Kelly or Emily to set up your initial mentor shifts!**
- Events **do not** require mentorship and will have an in-person or online orientation prior to each.

Each volunteer or tour opportunity has its own information posted on our website. You **MUST** read this information **BEFORE** signing up for anything.

SIGNING UP TO VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

You can sign up to volunteer at Member Centers and events and to attend tours through our Online Communication System (OCS) aka Online Calendar System. It is available through the “For Current GSAs” section of our website at www.nhgsa.com or www.NHGraniteStateAmbassadors.org. Both web addresses lead to the same website.

To give everyone an equal opportunity to choose shifts, on the 1st of each month, we open the visitor center sign-up calendars for 3 months ahead – at 7:00 am. For example, on March 1st, we make the June visitor center shifts available to sign-up. **You cannot “own” a specific time or shift.** If you have ANY difficulty finding a shift when you are available, contact our staff. We have a birds-eye view of the calendar and are happy to help! If you have a conflict on an opening date/time, we can sign you up after we open the calendars. Just ask.

At the center calendar openings (on 1st of month) – please limit the shifts you sign up for to one a week, per center, for the newly opened month. Wait 20 minutes, and then you can sign up for more. This lag allows the folks who volunteer/carpool together to have a shot at staying together since couples have to login, sign up, logout, then repeat for the other person. It is not intended to give anyone an advantage.

Remember, you are required to volunteer with a GSA mentor and /or your Center Manager three (3) times at each specific center before you can volunteer on your own. Our staff or the Center Manager will help you find a mentor and sign you up to get you started.

TO SIGN UP

- WATCH OUR DETAILED TUTORIAL ABOUT THE CALENDAR SYSTEM.
- Log into the Online Calendar System. Go to the CALENDAR tab and click a DATE.
- Choose a shift, tour, activity, or meeting and click “**Schedule Me.**” Remember, for a center’s schedule to show on this page, you must first check it off under MY PROFILE (save).
- If you need to cancel a shift, follow the steps above but click “**Remove Me**” to cancel your shift.
- If you arrive at a center for an open shift that you are not signed up for, please use the computer at the center to sign up for that shift. In case of an emergency, we need to know who is where.

If you have ANY difficulties finding a shift, logging in, or navigating... please ask. We are here for you!

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULING ETIQUETTE

- Remember – No one “owns” a specific time or shift.
- Please do not arrive early for your shift – or stay later – if others are already signed up. GSAs have committed their time to volunteer and want to fulfill their commitment and remain useful for the entire shift. It’s not fair if you come in early / stay late and displace them.
Please note that if you do show up early / stay late over someone else’s shift, and they are there, you will not receive credit for that time. If there is a mutually agreed upon circumstance, please note it on the tick sheet when you sign in/out.
- The shift schedules are strict. Please do not make up your own hours. Your Center Manager and other GSAs are counting on you being there for the times you are scheduled. There are exceptions for the late nights or very wee hours at the airport – please ask Kelly.
- You can only earn GSA hours for shifts posted by the center/event. For example, chamber staff posts certain shifts that are available because they need coverage during lunches or meetings. Just like us, they also need alone time to complete other tasks.
- Please remove yourself promptly from the calendars if you can’t make your shift. In case of an emergency at a center, we want every GSA accounted for. If you can’t access the calendars, let the staff know and we’ll do it for you. There are people who watch the calendar for last-minute cancellations (even in snowstorms). Others want to be aware if they are going to be alone during a shift.
- We do not want you to feel that you cannot cancel a shift. However, when GSAs are scheduled, the center managers generally plan to do other things and are counting on your presence. If you feel unsafe driving or are sick, please cancel your shift as soon as you can so they can plan accordingly.
- Please avoid the following:
 - Changing shift times at the last minute on a regular basis
 - Using a visitor center as a ‘hang out’ spot
 - Signing up for most or all the shifts in a center. If a center is not a popular one and you regularly fill the empty shifts, please wait and sign up for them the week prior. It’s important that the centers have the opportunity to grow their volunteer program. If you are their only or next to only volunteer and you get sick, they will have no coverage.
- As mentioned before, our sign-up system is designed to purposely give everyone an equal opportunity for each shift. We ask that you keep in mind that there are many GSAs who want an opportunity to volunteer at different centers and different shifts.

ACCUMULATING HOURS

In order to acknowledge that everyone likes to contribute to our success in different ways, GSAs earn hours for all forms of participation.

- **Volunteer Service hours** are those hours spent available to ACTIVELY SERVE GUESTS AND TRAVELERS at Visitor Centers and at Special Events.
- **Educational Hours** are those spent on GSA official tours, meetings, virtual presentations, virtual interviews, orientations (in-person and online), and trainings, *including certification training*.
- **Administrative Hours** are those spent on GSA committees, board of directors, and administrative tasks/assistance.

Tour eligibility criteria are based on accumulated **Volunteer Service Hours** only! Educational and Administrative hours will NOT COUNT towards tour eligibility requirements stated on the respective information page for participation. The reason for this is that businesses invite us for complimentary tours with the expectation of receiving guest referrals based on your impression and experience. If you don't actively volunteer, that expectation won't be met.

All hours are considered for hours-based awards at the AMBIEs Awards Luncheon.

Note: GSA Certification Training is educational hours, and does not count toward volunteer service hours.

Events: If there is space available at a GSA-managed or official partner event, a GSA may bring a spouse or friend to volunteer. The GSA should request to sign this person up, through GSA staff, and then the GSA may also earn their spouse's or friend's hours. In order to receive the credit, you must submit the *extra hours* through our Report Hours form.

TRACKING YOUR HOURS/ATTENDANCE

Your volunteer service hours are tracked from the tick sheets (Visitor Count Sheets) that you sign-in with at the Visitor Centers – ***not by the online calendar system***. Signing in on the tick sheet confirms that you arrived for your shift.

Please be sure to:

- Find the desk book. Some tick sheets are changed daily, and some are running a monthly sign-in.
- Fill in the tick sheet completely and SIGN IN for your shift. Please use your first name AND last initial to help us distinguish among volunteers.
- Please be neat and legible!

- Be sure to record all of your time. If you arrived 15 minutes early (because there was an open shift!) or stayed 15 minutes late to finish assisting a guest – record that too.

Day	Date	Name	Time in	Time out	Total hours	# of guests assisted
Monday	2/10/23	Kelly Bryer	9:00	12:15	3.25	
Monday	2/10/23	Emily McMaster	12:00	3:00	3	

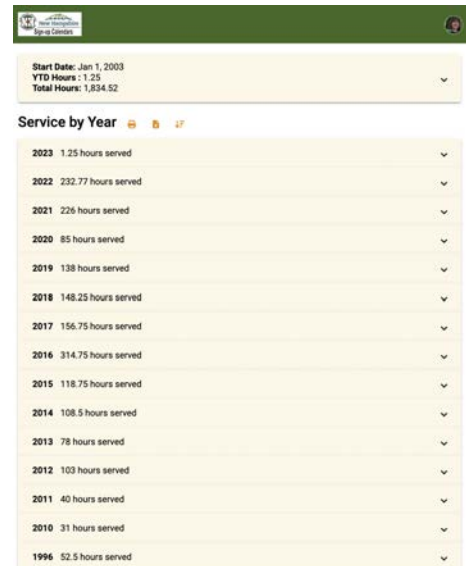
The manager on duty will submit your hours/ attendance for special events, meetings, tours and activities. If you have to submit your own hours, it will state it on the information page on our website. The link for the Report Hours form can be found on our website on the For Current GSAs page.

Some centers also have an additional sheet to track the types of questions you are asked.

You can view your hours on the Online Calendar System by clicking the SERVICE HISTORY tab. Click on YEAR, then click on DATE for details.

Recording Timeline – hours are posted 4-6 weeks behind:

- The first week of the month, the center manager will collect all the tick sheets from the prior month and email them to Emily.
- When all the centers’ emails are received, the tick sheets are sorted by date and entered into our online calendar system. You will see the progress live – so all the dates of that month may not have been entered when you peek at it.
- By the third week of the month, all the previous month’s hours have been recorded. At the top of the MY SERVICE history page, we will post when the month is complete, “Hours are now complete through....”



- If you have earned your 50-hours shirt, or you would like to attend a tour that is hours restricted, once you have volunteered the hours, you are eligible. You do not have to wait until they show in your account.
- From the SERVICE tab in the online calendars, you can print a report to help you figure out your mileage deduction as a volunteer for your taxes.

VOLUNTEERS IN GOOD STANDING

Volunteers who have 3 or more active volunteer service hours per year will remain “in good standing” (will remain active in our system). If you lapse, you can reactivate your membership at any time by contacting our staff – even if that lapse has been years! Know that we missed you.

TOUR ELIGIBILITY & POLICIES

Tour eligibility:

- Unless the tour has designated something different, volunteers who have accumulated 50 VOLUNTEER SERVICE hours, with 12 of those hours in the past 6 months, can attend most educational tours (General Rule of Thumb). Some educational tours will require 250 or 500+ accumulated service hours. Educational Hours and Administrative Hours do not count towards tour eligibility.
- Attendance/Participation for Tours and other learning opportunities earn Educational Hours in your file. All hours (educational, volunteer, and administrative) accumulate towards your awards for AMBIEs.
- Hours and eligibility guidelines will differ for each tour. You must read the Tour Information Page for specific guidelines.
- You can sign up for as many tours as you would like annually – we do ask that if you signed up for more than 4 in the past year at the calendar opening date/time, you wait 24 hours to sign up after the calendar opening date/time.
- If there are seats available on any tour 1 week prior to the tour date, any GSA can sign up to attend with no restrictions. There will not be an announcement - mark your calendar.
- Prior to attending any tour, before you leave the house, please review the tour’s information page. This is where any updates will be posted. Also, be sure to check your email!

Signups:

- Please try not to cancel your attendance for a tour during the 24 hours before the start time of the tour. Tour hosts have prepared their presentations or even food/drinks with a certain expected number. We want to honor and respect their time. Of course, we understand that emergencies and conflicts may happen. If you do need to cancel within 24 hours prior, **please DO NOT remove your name from the tour.** Instead, email GSA staff, and we will remove your name and fill your seat with someone from the waitlist.
- Waitlist: Please email GSA staff if the tour is full and you would like to be added to the waitlist. However, the sign-ups are still first-come, first-serve. If GSA staff sees an opening, they will do their best to accommodate the waitlist - no guarantees. Please also pay attention to the sign-ups.

Uniform Requirements:

- Standard GSA uniform applies, unless the information page says otherwise.
- Wear comfortable shoes/sneakers/sandals
 - No high heels
 - Be aware of specific footwear policies for the tour
- Non-logo'd hats are acceptable where appropriate. GSA hats are preferred. Hats with other state/team logos are not acceptable.
- No pocketbooks/purses are allowed. Again, you are on duty. If you wouldn't wear a purse at your job, please don't wear it on tour. We have provided you with a neck wallet to carry your belongings.
 - Fanny-packs or small, no-hands wallets and wallet-style bags are allowed (approximately 6" x 4" in size is maximum).
 - GSA neck-wallets are allowed and encouraged.
 - Small cinch backpacks may be allowed on some tours. If they are, it will be posted on the tour information page.
- Coats: If we are outside all day on a cold day, we understand that you might need a coat. If you have any green outer layers or darker colors, those are always preferred.

Tour Policies:

- Plan to arrive at the time we designate. Early arrivals cause additional stress for our hosts. Like us, they want to give you their full attention, but typically they are busy setting up to ensure you have the best learning experience possible with them.
- Phones: Unless you are taking a picture, phones are not allowed on tours. If you receive a phone call or text message that requires immediate attention, please step aside from the group to address it. Our tour organizers deserve our full, undivided attention at all times.
- It is expected that everyone will stay for the duration of the tour, even if it runs late. If the tour is one stop or 4 stops, participants are expected to participate in every stop (unless otherwise specified). While emergencies certainly arise, please plan accordingly for the full duration of the tour.
- Sending an email thank you note and providing feedback about your experience after the tour is expected. This policy also applies to virtual presentations. These notes not only show gratitude to our host but also demonstrate the word-of-mouth marketing our GSAs provide throughout the state. GSAs who provide feedback with an emailed thank you note and also CC Emily will receive an extra 'educational' hour.
- If something is not to your liking or you have a controversial comment, please don't call attention to it during the tour. Voice any concerns to the GSA staff person leading the group after.

PERKS AND INCENTIVES

Perks are offered to active GSAs in gratitude for your service and to generate referrals. Some perks require a specific number of volunteer hours, and some will only require that you are an active, certified GSA working in New Hampshire's tourism industry. A complete list of current GSA Perks is available on our website under "For Current GSAs." Perks are subject to change at any time, may depend on availability, and might have restrictions such as one per household. Please be prepared to show your GSA Membership Card. Member cards are issued at certification graduation and also at the AMBIEs as a perforated cut-out on your official annual letter.

Please do not use perks offered by/at specific centers when off duty, such as free parking, restrooms, drinks, or discounts. Please do not take a drink or snack 'to go.'

Perks are NOT transferable. For example, you cannot use the MHT parking permit for your friend's car.

AWARDS LUNCHEON

On November 9, 2023, we will hold an Awards Gala luncheon at Hart's Turkey Farm in Meredith. All GSAs are eligible to attend. There is no cost for the first 100 attendees. If the event is full and you would like to attend, or you would like to bring a friend or family member, tickets can be purchased for our cost depending on availability. This year our cost including tax and tip is \$35/pp.

PREPARING FOR DUTY

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

Guests depend on our knowledge of the immediate area and State to guide them through their visit. Therefore, all GSAs must be knowledgeable in many different details. If you are a skier, you might know about the events and activities at ski areas. Other GSAs may know how to give directions to the ski area, ski conditions, and general activities (via our Daily Ski Reports, websites, and tours). All GSAs should be aware of major events taking place at the community level and at the State level.

Here are some helpful hints to help prepare you for duty as a GSA:

- ✓ Read the entertainment section of the local and statewide newspaper (you might bring it to your shift).



- ✓ Review NH websites and our GSA Blogs for interesting ideas and information.
- ✓ What is the weather (today, this week)? You will be asked this question, so remember our mantra: **“It’s Always Sunny in NH.”** Think positively and bring ideas to help guests plan for rainy days in NH!
- ✓ Special Events in the State are always of interest. Again, know what is happening in the state and your area. Be prepared for questions on hotel vacancies (refer to VisitNH.gov or Chambers) and other big event issues, including traffic and road conditions – you can find info on traffic and road conditions at www.NewEngland511.org.

ON-DUTY

OPENING/CLOSING PROCEDURES

Each center will have specific tasks to complete when you arrive for duty. Sometimes your volunteer duty will require more than walking into the center, which is why you are required to volunteer with a GSA mentor and/or your Center Manager 3 times at each specific center before you can volunteer on your own. Refer to the Center’s Desk Book for specific opening and closing procedures.

SIGN-IN & TICK SHEETS

First Person on Duty for the Day:

If you are the first person on duty, prepare the “Visitor Count Sheet” / “Tick Sheet” for the day/month with the Date, Day, Special Events, Weather, or Situations for the Day/Week. The tick sheets remain in the Desk Book. At the end of each month, the Center Manager will email them to NHGSA staff to be entered into our system.

SIGN IN PLEASE

Whether you are the first person of the day, or the last, SIGN IN AT YOUR APPROPRIATE TIME SLOT! Your Center Manager will keep records of when you are on duty by comparing the calendar to the tick sheet. The tick sheet confirms that you did arrive for your shift. **Your hours are tracked by what is on the tick sheet (visitor count sheet) - not the online calendar.**

If you arrive for a shift at the last minute and you did not sign up via the online system - please use the computer at the center to put yourself into the calendar for that shift. This is important in helping us to track who is actually on duty in a center in case of an emergency. It also saves us time when we record your hours.

TICKS

We track our guests to provide information for NHGSA’s main office, center management, and for the state. Add a manual “tick or hash-mark” for each guest you personally serve. Total the ticks (visitor counts) at the end of your shift. Ticks are monitored for trends in guest traffic and show the GSA’s impact on a center when compared to the total center traffic.

For consistency in tracking how many guests we serve, the following is what counts as a “tick.” ***Only count contacts where you actually engage with a person beyond a smile and hello.*** Each of those is one tick. Engagement may start with “Good morning, is there anything I can help you with?”

Remember, this isn’t a competition. We don’t track how many ticks each GSA is getting. We track a monthly total for each location, and those totals are compared month-to-month and year-to-year. That is why having all GSAs on the same page with what constitutes a “tick” is important. If someone does it differently, it’s okay as long as they are consistent.

Tick sheets are also used to convey information to and from other GSAs and your Center Manager. The sections provided at the bottom of the tick sheets really help others to know what is happening, or who stopped by (Governor, Mayor, Legislator, etc.). If something is needed, damaged, or missing from the center, contact your center manager directly.

DESK BOOK or CENTER WEBSITE

Review the Desk Book when you arrive on duty at **each** center. If that center has a volunteer website, review that as well. It is important to review them at each center, as they will each have their own set of policies/procedures and available resources. The books are designed to help you with any quick information you may need at your fingertips. It also contains your “tick sheets.” The Center Manager or a designated volunteer will maintain the book to suit the needs of their center. If you have any suggestions, please speak with your Center Manager.

LITERATURE

Each center has its own set of rules and regulations regarding the types of literature that can be displayed at each center. Some centers operate on a “pay to play” system where only members are allowed to display literature, while others welcome all information.

It is important for you to be familiar with the policies of the center where you are volunteering. Refer to the information provided by your specific Center Manager and/or your GSA mentor.

Remember that you are only a volunteer! If you cannot help the guest/company, have them call your Center Manager.

Please Note:

- ***Please do NOT*** accept deliveries of cases of material at the airport.
- Volunteers are NOT to be delivering brochures to other centers and are NOT required to lift boxes or help unload trucks – no matter what anyone might tell you!
- Volunteers are not allowed to bring in their own materials for distribution.
- Do not overstep – remember, the center manager controls the literature and its placement.

TELEPHONES

Some centers have them; others do not. If your center has a telephone, you may or may not be asked to answer it. You or your guests may or may not be able to use it. Refer to the Center Manager or the DESK BOOK for the telephone rules and protocol for your center.

COMPUTERS & REGISTERS

Some centers have computers and cash registers; others do not. If your center requires you to use the computer or register, be sure you are trained and feel confident in its use.

Computers are a great way to give your guests up-to-the-minute, detailed information. We suggest all GSAs become familiar with the Internet and e-mail.

**Center computers and office equipment are not for personal use by GSA volunteers.*

ON-DUTY PARKING

Typically, all GSAs while on duty at *Member Centers & Events* will have free parking. There may be exceptions. Thank you for your understanding.

Each center will have different rules and regulations regarding parking. Ask your Center Manager and/or refer to the Desk Book for your center's procedures.

GSAs may have to pay for parking while serving at special events, meetings, non-member visitor centers, and other activities. Place the window cling you received during training in your car window to identify your vehicle as belonging to a GSA volunteer. Parking clings attach to the outside of your car windows.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SECURITY & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Visitor center security can be interpreted in many ways. Some centers have on-site law enforcement (such as the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport). Other centers have a working relationship with law enforcement (Downtown centers & State facilities).

Refer to the DESK BOOK for details on your center's security and law enforcement. NOTE: The airport has numerous protocols in place which you need to know. Be sure your mentor informs you.

MEDICAL & OTHER EMERGENCIES

Regardless of what is happening – KEEP A CALM HEAD. Do NOT take 'action' unless you are duly qualified or registered to do so. Your responsibilities as a GSA are to:

1. **Call for help**
2. Stay calm
3. Keep the center safe and the area secure
4. Know where emergency equipment is, like AEDs, to refer qualified persons

Refer to the Desk Book for your center's procedures. There may be additional information on protocols required by your center, such as incident reports.

** You should report ALL unusual happenings to your Center Manager (emergency or otherwise). There may be other procedures listed in your Desk Book.*

MEDIA POLICY

ALL MEDIA INQUIRIES ARE TO BE DIRECTED TO YOUR CENTER MANAGER OR TO GSA STAFF!!! We cannot stress this enough. This includes conversational type interviews, ESPECIALLY at hot-button locations such as the airport and downtown Manchester centers where GSAs operate alone. If you get caught up or caught off guard and you do talk to the press, please reach out to Kelly immediately (day or night). A heads-up can head-off issues. Conversations that seem innocent and/or even flattering can have negative consequences on the bigger picture or behind-the-scenes initiatives. We've lost centers and events because of these conversations.

If you see an article about NHGSA or one of our volunteers in the paper, please let us know. We don't always know what is being published.

If you have ANY questions about the media and the press, please call GSA's mainline (Kelly Bryer's cell) at 603-851-8624. Please give the press Kelly's business card.

Official Media Policy

When in Granite State Ambassador uniform, you are not you. You are representing Granite State Ambassadors, the organization that owns the center or event, and the State of New Hampshire.

Remember your role while on duty – you are a professional information specialist and there to do a job, which is to be helpful, answer their questions and make sure their experience and impression of New Hampshire is a positive one.

At some events, like the NH Primary, you will encounter celebrity members of the press, candidates, people of position... They are just people with a job to do. It can be tempting to engage with them as a super-fan or with disdain. Your personal opinions and issues cannot be brought into play directly or indirectly while on duty.

Do not chase anyone for autographs or photos. If they are at the visitor center, engaging with you directly, you can ask, but that is where it must end. If you are volunteering at the DoubleTree hotel for the Primary, you cannot ask for photos or autographs. We have to follow the same policies their staff does.

You are never 'off the record.' If your polite conversation starts to feel like an interview or if the questions are getting direct – stop. Explain to them that you are a volunteer and are not authorized to give interviews. Give them the business card of the organization's director. Remember, there are always larger issues and initiatives at play, which is why organizations have a designated spokesperson. A seemingly innocent conversation may jeopardize a project of the organization we contract with if the

messaging doesn't align.

There is a time and place for soap boxes and political questions. While on duty, you need to stay professional. You can, however, ask when the next rally or forum is so you can attend to express your opinions.

VOLUNTEER SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE SERVICE

NHGSA provides all our active GSAs CIMA Volunteer Insurance Service.

- Up to \$50,000 in medical expense reimbursement as a result of a covered accident;
- Up to \$1,000,000 in volunteer liability insurance.

Benefits are payable for eligible expenses that are in excess of benefits paid to the volunteer by any other health care plan. In the event no other health insurance exists, benefits will be payable on a primary basis.

For more information or to file a claim, reach out to Kelly at Kelly@nhgsa.com.

RECRUITMENT/HOW TO BECOME A GSA

As you already know, the NHGSA program could not work without you. This includes the continued recruitment of friends and family into the training classes. The easiest way to sign up is online. Anyone can sign up on our website (www.nhgsa.com). There is a link on our homepage to information for each training session held throughout the year.

You can give anyone a NHGSA Rack Card or Referral Card or other materials to help them find the information they need. You can personalize the referral cards. If these items are not at your center, please ask Kelly or Emily for a supply.

Remember, all NHGSA Certification Trainings are virtually the same. It doesn't matter which class you attend. Once you are certified, you can volunteer at any Official NHGSA Center throughout the state.

TERMINATION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteering privileges with New Hampshire Granite State Ambassadors are not a permanent arrangement; the right to volunteer with the organization is not of any specific duration.

Based on our commitment to providing the highest quality service to guests and residents of New Hampshire, and to our member centers, sponsors, and partners, New Hampshire Granite State Ambassadors reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's involvement within our programs. NHGSA has the right to ask a volunteer to leave an assignment immediately. In general, failure to adhere to the policies of New Hampshire Granite State Ambassadors is cause for immediate release.

Grounds for volunteer dismissal may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts
- Failure to abide by organization policies and procedures
- Unsatisfactory performance or misconduct
- Lack of cooperation, or other disrespectful conduct to fellow GSAs, staff, centers, events...
- Theft of property or misuse of program equipment or materials
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and/or illegal or unauthorized possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the volunteer environment
- Failing to perform volunteer duties as agreed
- Misusing your NHGSA identification card
- Mistreatment or inappropriate conduct toward guests, residents, co-workers, personnel of cooperating organizations, or staff

Name (print): _____