

OF301a and OF301b Form Instructions

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Overview and Definitions

Per Forest Service Manual, when a Forest or program identifies a need or opportunity well-suited for volunteers and reaches an agreement on the work a volunteer will perform, they must create a volunteer service agreement. A properly executed volunteer agreement is a key tool of successful volunteer program management.

The volunteer service agreement is a contract between the Forest Service and the volunteer. It identifies items such as rights and responsibilities, time frames, commitments, and support. It also outlines the conditions for reimbursements of expenses if reimbursement is to be provided.

This agreement is the Forest's or program's opportunity to define the expectations and parameters for service. It is also an opportunity for the prospective volunteer to ensure they understand the role and requirements and confirm their willingness to serve in that capacity. A properly executed volunteer service agreement is a key tool of successful volunteer program management.

A **volunteer service agreement for individual volunteers** is comprised of a completed OF301a form and a service description, and a **volunteer service agreement for group volunteers** is comprised of a completed OF301b form, OF301a form, and a service description.

Volunteer **service agreements** must contain the following information:

- Volunteer position title
- Supervisor
- Work location
- Time commitment
- Major duties of the volunteer position
- Safety considerations, including driving if required
- Benefits to volunteer, including housing if available
- Qualifications (knowledge, skills, experience, ability)
- Required training or certifications
- Whether personal property is required (list items)
- Whether reimbursements are authorized, for what, and up to what amount (see Reimbursing Volunteer Expenses)
- Volunteer and volunteer supervisor signature

For more overview and definitions details, please refer to the FSM 1830.

Summaries of OF301a and OF301b Forms

	OF301a (Individuals)	OF301b (Groups)
What is this form used for?	OF301a forms are used to engage individual volunteers and as the required form for group leaders.	<p>OF301b forms are used to engage an organized volunteer group or when holding a group or public volunteer event.</p> <p>While often used for one-day or short-term volunteer projects, the OF301b may also be used for volunteer groups which will volunteer together consistently on the same project (for example, a monthly trail crew whose group leader, group members, and service activities will remain the same). In this case, the volunteer program (1) must ensure any new members who join throughout the year also sign a volunteer service agreement and (2) that the volunteer program time keeping system accurately captures the dates and hours of service for specific group members.</p> <p>Additional copies of this form may be used to allow for sign-ups of large volunteer groups.</p>
What about groups of volunteers?	<p>In the event of an organized volunteer group, the group leader must fill out the OF301a form and all other group participants over the age of 18 in that group must fill out the OF301b form for Groups. Group volunteers under the age of 18 must also fill out the OF301a form.</p> <p>In the event of a public event without a pre-established group (such as a drop in volunteer event), either a partner or lead volunteer may serve as the group leader and fill out the OF301a form, while group members may complete an OF301b. If there is no suitable group leader, a OF301a form must be completed by each volunteer.</p> <p>Group leaders are responsible for ensuring every individual signed up for this form understands the duties to be</p>	<p>The OF301b form must always accompany an OF301a form for individuals, completed by the group leader.</p> <p>All volunteers who participate with a volunteer group, including on an episodic volunteer project, must be signed up on the OF301b form.</p> <p>Group volunteers may instead use an OF301a form in these cases: If the same volunteer already has a signed OF301a form for Individuals for the same volunteer assignment; they do not have to complete an OF301a form and OF301b form for the same volunteer assignment. If there is no suitable group leader who can complete an OF301a for the group (allowing group members to complete an OF301b), then a OF301a form must be completed by each volunteer.</p>

	<p>performed and the terms of the project. Group leaders must ensure that all paperwork for their group is completed (including contact information for each volunteer), and that all minors have parental/guardian consent.</p>	<p>Group leaders are responsible for ensuring every individual signed up for this form understands the duties to be performed and the terms of the project. Group leaders must ensure that all paperwork for their group is completed (including contact information for each volunteer), and that all minors have parental/guardian consent.</p> <p>Volunteers under the age of 18 may not use this form and must instead complete the OF301a form for Individuals.</p>
Are attachments required?	All other Volunteer Service Agreement forms/documents must be attached to each OF301a.	All other Volunteer Service Agreement forms/documents must be attached to the group leader's OF301b form.
When must this form be renewed?	OF301a forms and their other Volunteer Service documents must be reviewed and signed annually.	For recurring groups, OF301b forms and their other Volunteer Service Agreement documents must be reviewed and signed annually.
What are the retention requirements?	OF301a forms are legally binding documents and must be retained on file for three years beyond the date of termination, at which time should be destroyed. The forms contain personally identifiable information (PII) and should be secured according to federal guidelines.	OF301b forms are legally binding documents and must be retained on file for three years beyond the date of termination, at which time should be destroyed. The forms contain personally identifiable information (PII) and should be secured according to federal guidelines

OF301a Form Instructions

Box #	Instructions
Fields 1-12: Personal Contact Information	
1	<p>VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT TYPE (Choose 1)</p> <p>Check either the “Individual” box (only one volunteer) or the “Group” box (two or more volunteers).</p>
2	<p>NAME OF GROUP (if applicable)</p> <p>If applicable, enter the official name of the organized group. For one-time/day-of volunteer events to which the general public is invited and there is no sponsoring group, leave blank.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Greenfield Academy Service Club</i> • <i>Intellelevision Incorporated – Cohort A</i> • <i>Loma Sewing Circle</i> <p>If this box is checked, the individual filling out the OF301a form should be the group leader OR a volunteer group participant below the age of 18.</p>
3	<p>NAME OF VOLUNTEER OR GROUP LEADER COMPLETING FORM (Last, First)</p> <p>Enter the name (Last, First) of the individual volunteer. In the event of a volunteer group, this name should match with the “Group Leader” entry in the OF301b form.</p> <p><i>Example: Reynolds, Amanda</i></p>
4	<p>US CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT</p> <p>Mark either “Yes, I am a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident” or “No, I am not a US Citizen or Permanent Resident” as applicable. If “No, I am not a US Citizen or Permanent Resident”, list the visa type in the blank space. Note: foreign nationals and international volunteers are eligible to participate in the Volunteer program. However, information on status is necessary so that specific requirements can be met. See FSM 1830 for more information.</p>
5	<p>STREET ADDRESS, APT #</p> <p>Enter the street address of the individual volunteer’s or group leader’s permanent residence. If a permanent street address is not available, a PO box address may be utilized for mailing purposes.</p> <p><i>Example: 1151 Creekside Lane, Unit 879</i></p>
6	<p>CITY</p> <p>Enter the city of the individual volunteer’s or group leader’s permanent residence.</p> <p><i>Example: San Luis Obispo</i></p>
7	<p>STATE</p>

	<p>Enter the state of the individual volunteer’s or group leader’s permanent residence.</p> <p><i>Example: CA</i></p>
8	<p>ZIP CODE</p> <p>Enter the zip code of the individual volunteer’s or group leader’s permanent residence.</p> <p><i>Example: 93401</i></p>
9	<p>DATE OF BIRTH</p> <p>Enter the date of birth of the individual volunteer’s or group leader in the following format: month/day/year. Note: while previously only an age range was gathered, the updated version of OF301 forms (expiration 10/31/2024) were updated to capture date of birth to better align with Volunteer.gov data collection. An accurate date of birth, along with name and email address, is a unique identifier for all volunteers in Volunteer.gov and should be requested.</p> <p><i>Example: 11/28/1989</i></p>
10	<p>PHONE</p> <p>Enter the area code and phone number (either mobile phone or landline) of the volunteer individual or group leader. If the volunteer individual is below the age of 18, enter the parent/guardian’s phone number.</p> <p><i>Example: (555)-555-5555</i></p>
11	<p>EMAIL ADDRESS</p> <p>Enter the email address of the individual volunteer or group leader. If the volunteer individual is below the age of 18, enter the parent/guardian’s email address. If the volunteer does not have an email address, leave blank. An accurate email address, along with name and date of birth, is a unique identifier for all volunteers in Volunteer.gov and should be requested.</p> <p><i>Example: reynoldsamanda_89@gmail.com</i></p>
12	<p>DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (Optional): Please indicate both ethnicity and race and tell us if you are a veteran or have a disability. Multiracial respondents may select two or more races. This information will inform our understanding of diversity and inclusion among the volunteer force in the natural and cultural resource areas.</p> <p>No action required for this box; see below for selections.</p>
12a	<p>ETHNICITY (Select one)</p> <p>Mark either “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin” or “Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin” as applicable. This field is optional; see box 12 for more details. Note: this section aligns with Census language.</p>

12b	<p>RACE (Select one or more, regardless of ethnicity)</p> <p>Mark one or more fields as applicable. This field is optional; see box 12 for more details. Note: this section aligns with Census language.</p>
12c	<p>Are you a Military Veteran or Active-Duty Military?</p> <p>Mark either “Yes” or “No” as applicable. This field is optional; see box 12 for more detail.</p>
12d	<p>Do you have a disability?</p> <p>Mark either “Yes” or “No” as applicable. This field is optional; see box 12 for more detail.</p>
<p>Fields 13-19: Emergency Contact Information. If the individual volunteer is below the age of 18, these fields may be left blank in lieu of fields 28-37.</p>	
13	<p>NAME (Last, First)</p> <p>Enter the name (Last, First) of the emergency contact.</p> <p><i>Example: Reynolds, Henry</i></p>
14	<p>PHONE</p> <p>Enter the area code and phone number (either mobile phone or landline) of the emergency contact.</p> <p><i>Example: (555)-555-5555</i></p>
15	<p>EMAIL ADDRESS</p> <p>If available, enter the email address of the emergency contact.</p> <p><i>Example: rhenry909@gmail.com</i></p>
16	<p>STREET ADDRESS, APT #</p> <p>Enter the street address of the emergency contact’s permanent residence. If a permanent street address is not available, a PO box address may be utilized for mailing purposes.</p> <p><i>Example: 3355 Hamilton Drive</i></p>
17	<p>CITY</p> <p>Enter the city of the emergency contact’s permanent residence.</p> <p><i>Example: San Antonio</i></p>
18	<p>STATE</p> <p>Enter the state of the emergency contact’s permanent residence.</p> <p><i>Example: TX</i></p>

19	ZIP CODE
	<p>Enter the zip code of the emergency contact’s permanent residence.</p> <p><i>Example: 75771</i></p>
Fields 20-27: Government Official Completes This Section	
20	NAME OF AGENCY/BUREAU
	<p>Enter both “Forest Service” and the full name of the Forest/District/unit.</p> <p>Example: Forest Service/Pacific Northwest Research Station</p>
21	AGREEMENT #
	<p>Assign and record a unique agreement number for each group volunteer agreement for each year. This agreement number serves as a unique identifier for this agreement and may be used to track and record Volunteer activity in the Forest or program’s records. This standard format is recommended: 22-IV-110803100-0001.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22: The first two numbers designate the fiscal year • IV or VS: The next two letters designate the agreement Type. Use “IV” for an Individual Volunteer Agreement (OF-301a) and “VS” for a Group Volunteer Agreement (OF-301b). • ADMIN CODE: The next 8 numbers are the specific Forest Service issuing unit’s administrative code. The first two digists are always 11 which indicate Forest Service ad the sub-agency of USDA. The next two numbers are the Region or Station. The third set of numbers represents the Forest/Lab/Program Area. The fourth set of numbers indicates the District or Research Program Area. • 0001: The final four digits are sequential numbers for each agreement on a unit, for each year, beginning with 0001
22	AGENCY CONTACT NAME (Last, First)
	<p>List the full name for the main contact and/or supervisor of the individual volunteer/group leader under this agreement.</p> <p><i>Example: Volunteer Coordinator Sandy Rodriguez, Volunteer Supervisor Alex Sherman</i></p>
23	AGENCY CONTACT EMAIL & PHONE
	<p>List the email and phone number for the main contact and/or supervisor of the individual volunteer/group leader under this agreement.</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sandy.rodriguez@usda.gov, (555)-555-5555 • alex.sherman@usda.gov, (555)-555-5555
24	REIMBURSEMENTS APPROVED

	<p>Mark either “Yes” or “No” as applicable. If “Yes”, list the type and rate of reimbursement in the blank space or state ‘see Description of Service’ if further details are needed.</p>
<p>25</p>	<p>VOLUNTEER POSITION/GROUP PROJECT TITLE</p> <p>List the title of the volunteer assignment. If the form is for a group leader, this title should match the project title of the corresponding OF301b form.</p> <p>If the volunteer performs multiple duties at the park, either (1) all position titles must be listed accurately on the OF301a form, with their respective service description(s) attached or (2) multiple OF301a agreements may be used for the different positions.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wilderness Steward</i> • <i>Visitor Desk and Roving Interpretive Volunteer</i> • <i>Riverside Campground Cleanup Day</i>
<p>26</p>	<p>DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE TO BE PERFORMED. VOLUNTEER/SERVICE ACTIVITY ABSTRACT</p> <p>OF301a requires both an abstract in section 26 and an attached service description.</p> <p>Abstract: In section 26, include a short summary of the volunteer or service activity (may be only a few sentences) and the location of the volunteer activity (include duty station).</p> <p>Service description: Every volunteer service agreement must include a detailed service description that clearly specifies and describes the full extent of volunteer duties: abstract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer position title(s) • Supervisor(s) • Work location(s) • Time commitment(s) • Major duties of the volunteer position(s) • Safety considerations, including driving if required • Benefits to volunteer, including housing if available • Qualifications (knowledge, skills, experience, ability) • Required training or certifications • Whether personal property is required (list items) • Whether reimbursements are authorized, for what, and up to what amount • Volunteer and volunteer supervisor signature
<p>27</p>	<p>CHECK ALL THAT APPLY</p> <p>Select as many fields as applicable and ensure that the corresponding paperwork is attached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of service attached: A full service agreement should be attached.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OF301b Volunteer Sign-up Form for Groups attached: List of group participants attached - required if this is a group agreement. • Risk Assessment Attached: Risk Assessment information (Job Hazard Analysis) is attached and appropriate to Service Description. • Valid Driver’s License Required: Check if applicable. Required if volunteer will be driving a government vehicle. International volunteers will need to check with the individual state where their service will be performed, to determine what additional licensing may be required to operate a vehicle. Each situation may be different. • Background Investigation required: Check if applicable. Volunteers must meet the same background investigation requirements for Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) as FS employees, based on their service description. All non-employees here more than six months accumulatively need a background investigation (E.O. 10450) For fee collection, see FSM 6533.3; FSH 6509.14 section 11.1 for collection officer designation. • Medical Clearance Required: Check if Applicable. • Other: May include additional certifications such as SCUBA, EMT, commercial driver’s license, certificates of training, etc. as may be applicable to the Service Description.
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Fields 28-38: Parental Consent For Volunteers Under Age 18

28	<p>NAME</p> <p>NAME (Last, First)</p> <p>Enter the name (Last, First) of the parent/guardian.</p> <p><i>Example: Reynolds, Henry</i></p>
29	<p>PHONE</p> <p>Enter the area code and phone number (either mobile phone or landline) of the parent/guardian.</p> <p><i>Example: (555)-555-5555</i></p>
30	<p>EMAIL ADDRESS</p> <p>If available, enter the email address of the parent/guardian.</p> <p><i>Example: rhenry909@gmail.com</i></p>
31	<p>STREET ADDRESS, APT #</p> <p>Enter the street address of the parent/guardian’s permanent residence. If a permanent street address is not available, a PO box address may be utilized for mailing purposes.</p> <p><i>Example: 3355 Hamilton Drive</i></p>
32	<p>CITY</p>

	Enter the city of the parent/guardian's permanent residence. <i>Example: San Antonio</i>	
33	STATE Enter the state of the parent/guardian's permanent residence. <i>Example: TX</i>	
34	ZIP CODE Enter the zip code of the parent/guardian's permanent residence. <i>Example: 75771</i>	
35-36	<p>I affirm that I am the parent/guardian of the abovenamed volunteer. I understand that the agency volunteer program does not provide compensation, except as otherwise provided by law; and that the service will not confer on the volunteer the status of a Federal employee. I have read the attached description of the service that the volunteer will perform. I give my permission for _____ to participate in the specified volunteer activity.</p> <p>Enter the name of youth in the provided blank space. <i>Example: Amanda Reynolds</i></p>	
37-38	<p>Parent/Guardian Signature</p> <p>The parent/guardian provides their legal signature.</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>The parent/guardian provides the date of signature in the following format: month/day/year. <i>Example: 03/23/2022</i></p>
Fields 39-43: Volunteer & Group Leader Affirmation		
39	<p>Ensure the volunteer reads and understands the information in this box before they sign their OF301a. This section includes an acknowledgement of volunteer service with no compensation, a photo release, waiver statements, and a disclaimer about volunteer service and liability.</p> <p>All boxes, except for the photo consent field, are required to be checked before the individual volunteer/group leader begins their volunteer service. For volunteer groups, the group leader signs on behalf of group participants.</p> <p>I do hereby volunteer my services as described above, to assist in authorized activities at _____ and I agree to follow all applicable safety guidelines. See attached OF301b attached if a member of a group.</p> <p>Enter the full name of the FS unit in the provided blank space.</p>	

40-41	Signature of Volunteer or Group Leader The individual volunteer/group leader provides their legal signature. Minors should not sign this section; the parent/guardian signature in 37-38 replaces this signature.	Date The individual volunteer/group leader provides the date of signature in the following format: month/day/year. <i>Example: 03/23/2022</i>
42-43	Signature of Government Representative The OF301a form obligates the agency and therefore can only be signed and dated by a Forest Service Line or Staff Officer or their officially designated acting. Included are WO Directors, Regional Foresters and Deputies, Research Station Directors, Regional Directors, Forest Supervisors, District Rangers, Research Lab Managers, Research Program managers and the National Volunteers & Service Manager.	Date The main contact and/or supervisor of the individual volunteer/group leader provides the date of signature in the following format: month/day/year. <i>Example: 03/23/2022</i>
Fields 44-46: Termination of Agreement		
44	Agreement Terminated Date In the event of a volunteer service termination, enter the date of the last day of service in the following format: month/day/year. The last date of service on the OF301a form signifies the end of the volunteer's involvement with the FS unit as a volunteer, and so this field should be filled out only at the end of this volunteer's current service agreement. If the volunteer has completed other duties in their PD which had an end date prior to the end of the full agreement (ex: litter clean up on April 4, 2022), each specific date does not need to be recorded here; only the last date of service. <i>Example: 03/28/2022</i> The OF301a is a legally binding document and must be retained on file for at least three years beyond the date of termination. When no longer needed, the documents should be destroyed.	
45	Total Hours Completed Enter the number of hours contributed by the volunteer (or volunteers in the case of a volunteer group) under this agreement. If the nature of the volunteer service is	

	ongoing, enter the number of hours applicable for the duration of the year. OF301a forms must be renewed annually.
46	Signature of Government Representative The main contact and/or supervisor of the individual volunteer/group leader provides their legal signature.

OF301b Form Instructions

Form Portion	Instructions
Project Title	<p>Enter the name or title of activity that describes the project work, not the group name.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High Pines Trail Maintenance</i> • <i>Big Muddy Creek Streamside Restoration Project</i> • <i>Lighthouse Living History</i>
Group Name	<p>Enter the official name of the organized group. For one-time/day-of volunteer events to which the general public is invited and there is no sponsoring group, leave blank.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Greenfield Academy Service Club</i> • <i>Intellevision Incorporated – Cohort A</i> • <i>Loma Sewing Circle</i>
Agency	<p>Enter both “Forest Service” and the full name of the FS unit.</p> <p><i>Example: Forest Service/Pacific Northwest Research Station</i></p>
Group Leader	<p>Enter the name (Last, First) of a group’s liaison to the agency.</p> <p><i>Example: Nguyen, Kim</i></p>
Assignment #	<p>Taken from OF301a Box 21. Assign and record a unique agreement number for each group volunteer agreement for each year. This standard format is recommended: 22-VS-11083100-0001.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22: The first two numbers designate the fiscal year • VS: The next two letters designate the agreement Type. Use “IV” for an Individual Volunteer Agreement (OF-301a) and “VS” for a Group Volunteer Agreement (OF-301b). • ADMIN CODE: The next 8 numbers are the specific Forest Service issuing unit’s administrative code. • 0001: The final four digits are sequential numbers for each agreement on a unit, for each year, beginning with 0001. <p><i>Example: 22-VS-11083100-0001</i></p>
Volunteer Name	<p>Enter the name (Last, First) of each participant in the group.</p> <p><i>Example: Graham, Patricia</i></p>
Volunteer E-mail Address	<p>Enter the email address of each volunteer participant.</p> <p><i>Example: patricia_graham08@gmail.com</i></p>

Volunteer Telephone Number	<p>Enter the area code and phone number (either mobile phone or landline) of each volunteer participant.</p> <p><i>Example: (555)-555-5555</i></p>
Month & Year of Birth	<p>Enter the date of birth for each group volunteer participant, in the following format: month/year. This is used to ensure all volunteers participating are able to sign the OF301b. Volunteers under the age of 18 may not use this form and must instead complete an individual Volunteer Service Agreement (OF-301a).</p> <p><i>Example: 08/1989</i></p>
Volunteer Signature	Each group volunteer participant must sign the OF-301b form.
Health and Physical Condition Acknowledgement	The health requirement must be acknowledged by each individual.
Photograph Consent	Photograph consent must be acknowledged by each individual.