



## FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY POLICY

# Volunteer Program

*Effective Date:* 11/12/2011

*Legal Review Date:*

*Next Review Date:* 11/12/2020

*Replaces:*

### 1.1 Overall Policy on Utilization of Volunteers

The achievement of the goals of the Feather River Rail Society is best served by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, the Feather River Rail Society accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the Feather River Rail Society and within all appropriate programs and activities. All Feather River Rail Society and staff are encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve and to assist in recruitment of volunteers from the community.

### 1.2 Purpose of Volunteer Policies

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. These policies are intended for internal management guidance only, and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The Feather River Rail Society reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Changes to or exceptions from these policies may only be granted by the Volunteer Program Manager, and must be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the Volunteer Program Manager.

### 1.3 Scope of Volunteer Policies

Unless specifically stated, these policies apply to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken on or on behalf of the Feather River Rail Society, and to all departments and sites of operation of the Feather River Rail Society.

### 1.4 Role of the Volunteer Management Department

The productive utilization of volunteers requires a planned and organized effort. The function of the volunteer management department is to provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer management within the Feather River Rail Society, and to direct and assist staff and volunteer efforts to jointly provide more productive services. The department shall also bear responsibility for maintaining liaison with other volunteer programs in the community. The Volunteer Program Manager shall bear primary responsibility for planning for effective volunteer utilization, for assisting staff and department heads in identifying productive and creative volunteer roles, for recruiting suitable volunteers, and for tracking and evaluating the contribution of volunteers to the Feather River Rail Society.

### 1.5 Definition of Volunteer

A 'volunteer' is anyone who without compensation/reimbursement or an expectation of compensation/reimbursement, that performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Feather River Rail Society. A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by the Feather River Rail Society prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as 'employees' of the Feather River Rail Society.

All volunteers must be active (or higher classification) member of the Feather River Rail Society.  
(Associate and institutional membership do not meet this requirement)

### 1.6 Special Case Volunteers

The Feather River Rail Society also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, alternative sentencing or diversion programs, corporate volunteer programs, and other volunteer referral programs. In each of these cases, however, a special agreement must be in effect with the organization, school, or program from whom the special case volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and care of the volunteers.

## **1.7 Definition of Staff**

A staff person is anyone who with compensation (Paid Employee) performs work or tasks under an employment contract or employment option at the direction of and on behalf of the Feather River Rail Society. The Feather River Rail Society has the sole discretion to employ or terminate employment of any staff member at any time.

All staff members must be active member of the Feather River Rail Society.

## **1.8 Employees as Volunteers**

The Feather River Rail Society accepts the services of staff as volunteers. This service is accepted provided that the volunteer service is provided totally without any coercive nature, involves work which is outside the scope of normal staff duties, and is provided outside of usual working hours. Family members of staff are allowed to volunteer with the Feather River Rail Society. When family members are enrolled as volunteers, they will not be placed under the direct supervision or within the same department as other members of their family who are employees.

## **1.9 Clients and Relatives as Volunteers**

Feather River Rail Society clients may be accepted as volunteers, where such service does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with provision of services to the client or to others. Relatives of clients may also serve as volunteers, but will not be placed in a position of direct service or relationship to members of their family who are receiving services.

## **Service at the Discretion of the Feather River Rail Society**

The Feather River Rail Society accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the Feather River Rail Society. Volunteers agree that the Feather River Rail Society may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the Feather River Rail Society. The volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer's relationship with the Feather River Rail Society. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

## **1.10 Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to the Feather River Rail Society and its staff. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the Feather River Rail Society.

## **1.11 Scope of Volunteer Involvement**

Volunteers may be utilized in all programs and activities of the Feather River Rail Society, and serve at all levels of skill and decision-making.

# **Volunteer Management Procedures**

## **2.1 Maintenance of Records**

A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer with the Feather River Rail Society, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work, and awards received. Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to the Volunteer Management Department in a timely and accurate fashion.

Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

## **2.2 Two Hat Policy**

Members of the Feather River Rail Society's board of directors are accepted as direct service volunteers with the Feather River Rail Society.

## **2.3 Conflict of Interest**

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the Feather River Rail Society, whether personal, philosophical, or financial shall be accepted or serve as a volunteer with the Feather River Rail Society. (See Conflict of Interest Policy, Code of Conduct)

## **2.4 Representation of the Feather River Rail Society**

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate the Feather River Rail Society, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate department head, board of directors and/or staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the Feather River Rail Society as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

## **2.5 Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, client, or other person or involves overall Feather River Rail Society business.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the Feather River Rail Society or other corrective action. (See Policies and Procedures)

## **2.6 Worksite**

Work sites may be on or off the property owned and operated by the Feather River Rail Society. In most cases the worksite is at the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California. Special events are held both on and off the Western Pacific Railroad Museum property.

## **2.7 Dress Code**

As representatives of the Feather River Rail Society, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. (See department head for dress code)

## **2.8 Timesheets**

Individual volunteers are responsible for the accurate completion and timely submission of timesheets. This may be by written forms and/or computer logging.

# **Volunteer Recruitment and Selection**

## **3.1 Position Descriptions**

Volunteer staff, just as paid staff, require a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the position which they are expected to fill. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a position description must be developed for each volunteer position. This position will be given to each accepted volunteer and utilized in subsequent management and evaluation efforts. Position descriptions should be reviewed and updated at least every two years, or whenever the work involved in the position changes substantially.

All position descriptions shall include a description of the purpose and duties of the position, a designated supervisor and worksite, a timeframe for the performance of the job, a listing of job qualifications, and a description of job benefits. The Volunteer Management Department is available to assist staff in the development of volunteer jobs and position descriptions.

### **3.2 Staff Requests for Volunteers**

Requests for volunteers shall be submitted in writing by interested department heads, supervisors and staff members complete with a draft position description and a requested timeframe. All parties should understand that the recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by creative and interesting jobs and by advance notice. The Volunteer Management Department reserves the right to refuse to recruit or place any volunteers until these requirements are prepared to make effective use of volunteer resources.

### **3.3 Recruitment**

Volunteers shall be recruited by the Feather River Rail Society on a pro-active basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, handicap, age, race or other condition. The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of the Feather River Rail Society. Volunteers may be recruited through either an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. No final acceptance of a volunteer shall take place without a specific written volunteer position description for that volunteer.

### **3.4 Recruitment of Minors**

Volunteers who have not reached their age of majority must have the written consent of a parent or guardian prior to volunteering. The volunteer services assigned to a minor should be performed in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

### **3.5 Interviewing**

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for and interest in that position. The interview should determine the qualifications of the volunteer, their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position, and should answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position. Interviews may be conducted either in person or by other means.

### **3.6 Health Screening**

If there are physical requirements necessary for performance of a volunteer task, a screening or testing procedure may be required to ascertain the ability of the volunteer to safely perform the task.

### **3.7 Criminal Records Check**

As appropriate for the protection of the community, other volunteers and staff, volunteers in certain assignments may be asked to submit to a background criminal check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background check may be refused assignment.

### **3.8 Placement with At Risk Clients**

Where volunteers are to be placed in direct contact with at risk clients, additional screening procedures may be instituted. These procedures may include reference checks, direct background investigation, criminal investigation, etc. Volunteers who refuse permission for conduct of these checks will not be accepted for placement with clients.

### **3.9 Certificate of Ability**

Any potential volunteer who indicates that they are under the care of a physician for either physical or psychological treatment may be asked to present a certificate from the physician as to their ability to satisfactorily and safely perform their volunteer duties. Volunteers under a course of treatment which might affect their volunteer work will not be accepted without written verification of suitability from their physician.

Any volunteer who, after acceptance and assignment by the Feather River Rail Society, enters a course of treatment which might adversely impact upon the performance of their volunteer duties should consult with the Volunteer Program Manager.

### **3.10 Placement**

In placing a volunteer in a position, attention shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the volunteer position. No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the supervising volunteer or staff can be met: No volunteer should be assigned to a 'make-work' position and no position should be given to an unqualified or uninterested volunteer.

### **3.11 Staff**

Participation in Interviewing and Placement Wherever possible, staff who will be working with the volunteer should participate in the design and conduct of the interview. Final assignment of a potential volunteer should not take place without review and approval of appropriate staff with whom the volunteer will be working.

### **3.12 Acceptance and Appointment**

Service as a volunteer with the Feather River Rail Society shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer position. Notice may only be given by an authorized representative of the Feather River Rail Society, who will normally be the Volunteer Program Manager. No volunteer shall begin performance of any position until they have been officially accepted for that position and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer shall complete all necessary enrollment paperwork and shall receive a copy of their job description and agreement of service with the Feather River Rail Society.

### **3.13 Probationary Period**

All volunteer placements shall initially be done on a trial period of 60 days. At the end of this period a second interview of the volunteer shall be conducted, at which point either the volunteer or Feather River Rail Society staff may request a re-assignment of the volunteer to a different position or may determine the unsuitability of the volunteer for a position within the Feather River Rail Society.

In some cases there are additional requirements that must be met to remain in service in the Operating Department.

### **3.14 Re-Assignment**

Volunteers who are at any time re-assigned to a new position shall receive all appropriate orientation and training for that position before they begin work. In addition, any screening procedures appropriate for that specific position must be completed, even if the volunteer has already been working with the Feather River Rail Society.

### **3.15 Professional Services**

Volunteers shall not perform professional services for which certification or licensing is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. A copy of such certificate or license should be maintained by the Volunteer Management Department. Some example are, Electrical, General Engineering, General Contractor, ect.

### **3.16 Length of Service**

All volunteer positions may not have a set term of duration. It may be recommended that so terms of service shall not be longer than one-year, with an option for renewal at the discretion of both parties. All volunteer assignments with a limit of service, may end at the conclusion of their first term, without expectation or requirement of re-assignment of that position to the incumbent.

Volunteers are neither expected nor required to accept further service in a position at the end of their set term, although they are welcome to do so in most cases are a on-going assignment. The volunteer may instead seek a different volunteer assignment within the Feather River Rail Society, or may retire from volunteer service.

### **3.17 Leave of Absence**

At the discretion of the supervisor, leaves of absence shall be granted to volunteers. This leave of absence will not alter or effect the position held by the volunteer and/or the previously agreed upon ending date of the volunteer's term of service. Leave of Absences shall not affect the membership in the Feather River Rail Society.

# **Volunteer Training and Development**

## **4.1 Orientation**

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the Feather River Rail Society, an orientation on the nature and operation of the program or activity for which they are recruited, and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position which they are accepting in that effort.

## **4.2 On-the-Job Training**

Volunteers will receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

## **4.3 Staff Involvement in Orientation and Training**

Staff members with responsibility over delivery of services should have an active role in the design and delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers. Those staff members who will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

## **4.4 Volunteer Involvement in Orientation and Training**

Experienced volunteers should be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training.

Volunteer department heads and supervisors with responsibility over delivery of services should have an active role in the design and delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers. Those department heads and supervisors who will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

## **4.5 Continuing Education**

Just as staff, volunteers should attempt to improve their levels of skill during their terms of service. Additional training and educational opportunities should be made available to volunteers during their connection with the Feather River Rail Society. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current volunteer assignment as well as more general information, and might be provided either by the Feather River Rail Society or by assisting the volunteer to participate in educational programs provided by other groups.

## **4.6 Conference Attendance**

Volunteers are authorized to attend conferences and meetings which are relevant to their volunteer assignments, including both those of the Feather River Rail Society and of other organization. Prior approval from the volunteer's supervisor should be obtained before attending any conference or meeting if attendance will incur any expense or if a reimbursement of expenses is sought.

# **Volunteer Supervision and Evaluation**

## **5.1 Requirement of a Supervisor**

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the Feather River Rail Society must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. In some cases consultation may be done by telephone or email.

## **5.2 Volunteers as Volunteer Supervisors**

A volunteer may act as a department head, supervisor or other person in charge of other volunteers, provided that the supervising volunteer is under the supervision of the President or the Board of Directors.

### **5.3 Volunteer/Staff Relationships**

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the Feather River Rail Society, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential for the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

### **5.4 Acceptance of Volunteers by Staff**

Since individual staff members are in a better position to determine the requirements of their work and their own abilities, no volunteer will be assigned to work with a staff person without the consent of the Volunteer Management Department and the staff member. Since volunteers are considered a valuable resource in performing the Feather River Rail Society's work, staff is encouraged to seriously consider creative ways in which volunteers might be of service and to consult with the Volunteer Management Department if they feel in need of assistance or additional training.

### **5.5 Staff Volunteer Management Training**

An orientation on working with volunteers will be provided to all staff. In-service training on effective volunteer utilization will be provided to those staff members who are highly involved in volunteer management.

### **5.6 Volunteer Involvement in Staff Evaluation**

Examination of their effective utilization of volunteers may be a component in the evaluation of staff persons who are assigned to work with volunteers. In such cases, supervisors should ask for the input and participation of volunteers in evaluating staff performance.

### **5.7 Staff Involvement in Volunteer Evaluation**

Affected staff should be involved in all evaluation and work assignments of volunteers with whom they are connected.

### **5.8 Lines of Communication**

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate memos, materials, and meetings relevant to the work assignments. To facilitate the receipt of this information on a timely basis, volunteers should be included on all distribution schedules and should be assigned a site or mailbox for receipt on information distributed in their absence. Primary responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer receives such information will rest with the direct supervisor of the volunteer. Lines of communication should operate in both directions, and should exist both formally and informally. Volunteers should be consulted regarding all decisions which would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

### **5.9 Absenteeism**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular scheduled and timely basis. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made.

### **5.10 Substitution**

Volunteers may be encouraged to find a substitute for any upcoming absences which might be filled by another volunteer. Such substitution should be taken following notification to the supervisor and care should be taken to find a substitute who is qualified for the position. Substitutes may only be recruited from those who are currently enrolled as volunteers with the Feather River Rail Society.

### **5.11 Standards of Performance**

Standards of performance shall be established for each volunteer position. These standards should list the work to be done in that position, measurable indicators of whether the work was accomplished, and appropriate timelines for accomplishment of the work. Creation of these standards will be a joint function of staff and the volunteer assigned to the position, and a copy of the standards should be provided to the volunteer along with a copy of their job description at the

beginning of their assignment.

## **5.12 Evaluations**

Volunteers shall receive periodic evaluations to review their work. The evaluation session is utilized to review the performance of the volunteer, to suggest any changes in work style, to seek suggestions from the volunteer on means of enhancing the volunteer's relationship with the Feather River Rail Society, to convey appreciation to the volunteer, and to ascertain the continued interest of the volunteer in serving in that position. Evaluations should include both an examination of the volunteer's performance of position responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position or project with which the volunteer is connected.

The evaluation session is an opportunity for both the volunteer and the Feather River Rail Society to examine and improve their relationship.

## **5.13 Written Basis for Evaluation**

The position description and standards of performance for a volunteer position should form the basis of an evaluation. A written record should be kept of each evaluation session.

## **5.14 Staff Responsibility for Evaluation**

It shall be the responsibility of each staff person in a supervisory relationship with a volunteer to schedule and perform periodic evaluation and to maintain records of the evaluation.

## **5.15 Corrective Action**

In appropriate situations, corrective action may be taken following an evaluation. Examples of corrective action include the requirement of additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service.

## **5.16 Dismissal of a Volunteer**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the Feather River Rail Society or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisors and officers.. Prior to dismissal of a volunteer, supervisors should seek the consultation and assistance of the Volunteer Program Manager. In any case the dismissal of a volunteer will not affect their membership in the Feather River Rail Society unless there is a violation of the bylaws of the society.

## **5.17 Reasons for Dismissal**

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of Feather River Rail Society equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of the general public, volunteers, or co-workers, failure to abide by Feather River Rail Society policies and procedures, failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

## **5.18 Concerns and Grievances**

Decisions involving corrective action of a volunteer may be reviewed for appropriateness. If corrective action is taken, the affected volunteer shall be informed of the procedures for expressing their concern or grievance.

## **5.19 Notice of Departure or Re-Assignment of a Volunteer**

In the event that a volunteer departs the Feather River Rail Society, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new position, it shall be the responsibility of the Volunteer Management Department to inform those affected departments, staff and clients that the volunteer is no longer assigned to work with them. In cases of dismissal for cause, this notification should be given in writing and should clearly indicate that any further contact with the volunteer is outside any scope of relationship with the Feather River Rail Society.



## **5.20 Resignation**

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the Feather River Rail Society at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision.

## **5.21 Exit Interviews**

Exit interviews, where possible, should be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improving the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the Feather River Rail Society.

## **5.22 Communication with the Volunteer Management Department**

Department Heads, Supervisors and Staff who are supervising volunteers are responsible for maintaining regular communication with the Volunteer Management Department on the status of volunteers, and are responsible for the timely provision of all necessary paperwork to the Department. The Department should be informed immediately of any substantial change in the work or status of a volunteer and should be consulted in advance before any corrective action is taken.

## **5.23 Evaluation of Feather River Rail Society Volunteer Utilization**

The Volunteer Management Department shall conduct an annual evaluation of the utilization of volunteers by the Feather River Rail Society. This evaluation shall include information gathered from volunteers, department heads, supervisors and staff.

# **Volunteer Support and Recognition**

## **6.1 Reimbursement of Expenses**

Volunteers may be eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking business for the Feather River Rail Society. All reimbursements must be submitted on reimbursement forms and approved by the President, prior to the submission to the treasurer and/or bookkeeper for payment. The Volunteer Management Department shall distribute information to all volunteers regarding specific reimbursable items. Prior approval must be sought for any expenditure.

## **6.2 Access to Feather River Rail Society Property and Materials**

As appropriate, volunteers shall have access to Feather River Rail Society property and materials necessary to fulfill their duties, and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. Property and materials shall be utilized only when directly required for Feather River Rail Society purposes. This policy includes access to and use of Feather River Rail Society vehicles.

## **6.3 Insurance**

Liability, Accident and Health Insurance is **not** provided for any volunteers engaged in Feather River Rail Society business. Volunteers are Encouraged to consult with their own insurance agents regarding the extension of their personal insurance to include community volunteer work.

## **6.4 Recognition**

An annual volunteer recognition event will be conducted to highlight and reward the contribution of volunteers to the Feather River Rail Society. Volunteers will be consulted and involved in order to develop an appropriate format for the event.

## **6.5 Informal Recognition**

All staff and volunteers responsible for volunteer supervision are encouraged to undertake on-going methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from simple "Thank You's" to a concerted effort to include volunteers as full participants in program decision making and implementation.

## **6.6 Volunteer Career Paths**

Volunteers are encouraged to grow and develop their skills while serving with the Feather River Rail Society, and are to be assisted through promotion to new volunteer jobs to assume additional and greater responsibilities. If so desired by the volunteer, the Feather River Rail Society should assist the volunteer in maintaining appropriate records of volunteer experience that would assist the volunteer in future career opportunities, both paid and volunteer.

## **6.7 Staff Recognition**

The Volunteer Management Department shall design a program for recognition of staff who work well with volunteers and shall consult with volunteers to identify appropriate staff to receive such awards

## **References**

1. Policies and Procedures
2. Department Procedures
3. Conflict of Interest Policy
4. Code of Conduct