



Okee-Teen Volunteer Program Application

Position Description: This new program aims to increase environmental knowledge and encourage teens, ages 15 to 17, to develop essential work skills that will help them reach their educational and career goals. Teens will have the opportunity to work hands-on with our ambassador animals, develop public speaking skills, make new friends, and secure references for scholarships and internships, all while earning community service hours. Participants can take advantage of leadership and career exploration opportunities by taking on special projects and, once safe to do so, attending presentations and trainings. We want our teens, as future stewards of the natural world, to get the most out of their volunteer experience here at ONC!

Volunteer Requirements:

- 15 years of age or older
- Not for court-ordered community service hours
- Commitment for a minimum of one year
- Commitment requires *at minimum*- four hours of volunteer time every two weeks
- No more than 3 unexcused absences, strikes, or combination thereof during the one year period
 - An excused absence includes: family emergencies, illness, and unforeseen circumstances out of the agreeing party's control.
- The teen volunteer assumes all responsibility for the application process and direct communication with the volunteer coordinator

Directions: Please follow the checklist below and once complete, send in your application materials to ONC's Volunteer Coordinator.

- CERVIS Application submitted online
- Background Check form submitted online
- Personal Short Essays – **Must be typed.** *Email directly to Volunteer Coordinator*
- Teacher/Mentor Recommendation Letter from a non-related adult. (**Have your reference email their letter directly to the ONC staff with the applicant's name as the subject line**)
- Applications must be received with all required pieces by **the due date stated per the volunteer coordinator via email correspondence.**

Due to a high volume of applicants, late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered, but are encouraged to apply for the following term

How the application process works:

Once you have submitted all the required application materials:

- We will email you to confirm receipt of your completed application
- Chosen applicants will be contacted to set up an interview

Once you have been selected to volunteer at ONC:

- We will approve your CERVIS application and the County Coordinator will run your background check

Once background check returns clear:

- Volunteer Handbook Code of Conduct form signed by teen **and** parent/guardian.
- Read Okeehetee Nature Center Volunteer Manual
- Okeehetee Nature Center Volunteer Manual form signed by teen **and** parent/guardian

***For existing teen volunteers:** All teen volunteers will be required to reapply for the program after each year of service. Your previous volunteer performance at ONC will be factored into your overall score. All Okee-Teens will be evaluated every 3 months for career development.*

RETURN APPLICATION MATERIALS TO:

**Okeehetee Nature Center Staff
7715 Forest Hill Boulevard
West Palm Beach, FL 33413**

Questions? Email us at ONC@pbcgov.org or leave us a message (561) 233-1400.

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- Short Answer Questions -



Instructions: Please type your answers using 12pt font; do not handwrite. Some questions are multi-part, so please read the questions completely and answer all questions fully to achieve optimal points. Please be mindful of spelling, grammar and word count maximums for each question.

Mission statement:

“Okeehelée Nature Center (ONC) is dedicated to fostering an awareness and appreciation of the environment by providing enriching experiences and opportunities for personal encounters with the natural world. We pursue this passion to reach a diverse community through environmentally based recreational activities by utilizing our unique assets and location.”

1. Tell us how becoming a volunteer at ONC will help you reach your educational and/or career goals? **(MAX 300 words)**

2. Ultimately, our goal for the Okee-Teen program is to foster your passions for the natural world and mold you into a steward of our South Florida flora and fauna. Describe a conservation issue that you feel strongly about and tell us what you have done or plan to do to get involved? **(MAX 300 words)**

3. Some people may want to volunteer at ONC just so they can handle the animals, but cleaning up animal feces, scrubbing dishes and working in unfavorable weather conditions are also part of volunteering here. Does this impact your motivation to volunteer at ONC? If not, explain how you will deal with performing the less-than-glamorous aspects of the job. **(MAX 200 words)**



Okee-Teen Volunteer Application **- Letter of Recommendation -**

Applicant's Name: _____
Recommender's Name: _____
Recommender's Email: _____ Years Known: _____
Relationship to Applicant: _____

This letter is used to evaluate potential teen volunteers at Okeeheelee Nature Center. **For consideration, this letter must be returned by the due date provided in the email you received.** Thank you for sharing your recommendation with us.

Signature _____ Date _____

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Email: ONC@pbcgov.org
Phone: (561) 233-1400