



Volunteer with the Out On The Lakeshore!

Help us make West Michigan “home” for LGBTQ+ & allies

Mission: *To provide a constant source of support and understanding to the LGBTQ+ community of the greater Holland area. We seek to create a community in which all persons are afforded equal rights and opportunities.*

Vision: *A community that welcomes all people. It is our desire that all forms of discrimination are removed in order to create a safe, open, and accepting environment for all the LGBTQ+ community. We strive to provide education, events and resources necessary to foster understanding, and to advocate within Holland for a community that accepts and embraces all.*

Beliefs:

1. All members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community regardless of age, ability, race, gender, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, or gender identity deserve to be welcomed, celebrated and to become an integral part of a healthy society.
2. The inherent dignity, value and worth of all human beings must be upheld regardless of age, ability, race, gender, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
3. Violence, racism, gender injustice, classism and homophobia must be eradicated.
4. All individuals have a right and responsibility to full participation in society.
5. We should strive to develop an attitude of acceptance, appreciation and affirmation of all forms of diversity. Diversity is an asset.
6. Investing in youth is essential for their future and our community.
7. We should strive to develop a culture that fosters social activism that works to counter injustice.
8. It is our responsibility to challenge popular culture, media, faith communities, religious institutions and texts that perpetuate the devaluation of people based on age, ability, race, gender, class, sexual orientation and gender identity.
9. We should strive as an organization to be as "green" as possible at all times in all places. Everyone has a responsibility to work for a healthy and sustainable natural environment.



Out On The Lakeshore

Serving West Michigan's LGBTQ+

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Director

Dear New Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Out On The Lakeshore. We are happy and grateful to have you aboard. Volunteers are essential to the prosperity of this organization and you have just joined a team that carries the mission of OOTL into the community and the future. OOTL is successful because we have dedicated volunteers like you.

To begin volunteering:

1. Review the entire contents of this packet, agree to and sign the Confidentiality Policy, complete the Volunteer Application and Background Check Authorization Forms, and return the completed forms to OOTL.
2. Attend an OOTL volunteer orientation. You will be contacted regarding volunteer orientation or you may schedule a time with staff.
3. Once placed as an OOTL volunteer you may be required to attend other, program-specific training sessions. These training sessions may deal with topics related to, but not limited to, diversity & inclusion, identifying sexual harassment, education & advocacy issues, adult programming, or youth outreach.

If you have additional questions that are not answered within this packet, please feel free to contact our office. Regular office hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00 - 5:00 pm, or you can schedule a time with staff by emailing info@outonthelakeshore.org.

Thank you again for your interest in becoming a member of the OOTL team and we look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Sorensen

Director | Out On The Lakeshore



Volunteer Coordination

Screening, Training and Supervision Procedure

It is important to make sure that individuals and programs suit each other well in order to ensure a positive experience for both program participants and volunteers. As such, we have developed a thorough method for screening, training and supervising volunteers. The various components are described below.

The screening process is aimed at determining which applicants would best serve our volunteer needs and which applicants would be best served by volunteering at OOTL. Our screening includes an application, an orientation, and a background check. The first step is to complete and return the enclosed application and background check forms. The Volunteer Committee will review your application and background check and conduct an orientation session. Orientation sessions are scheduled monthly.

Individuals will be deemed inappropriate to volunteer at OOTL if they:

- Have ever been convicted of a sex-related crime
- Have ever been convicted of a violent crime
- Have been convicted of a drug-related crime within the last three years

OOTL also reserves the right to not place volunteers in certain programming areas or with certain tasks based on the information learned through the process of criminal background check.

The training process serves a variety of functions for new volunteers. First, it introduces, explains, and helps you to develop the skills necessary for the volunteer job. Second, it provides socialization to the atmosphere and working environment at OOTL. Third, it gives you an opportunity to meet and get to know other volunteers, board members, and staff at OOTL.

The following guidelines must be adhered to while volunteering with the OOTL:

These guidelines represent broadly accepted standards of care for youth. Deviations from the recommended policies require clearly documented justification and approval from the Out On The Lakeshore Director or the Program Lead. Deviations from the required policies will not generally be permitted.

1. Individuals who perform functions or duties that regularly require interaction with minors in a private setting or without direct supervision on-site must receive a criminal history check.
2. Employees and volunteers who complete and pass a criminal history check are required to have a new criminal history check every year.
3. The recommended supervision for on-site programs is at least two staff or trained volunteers for every event or program activity until the youth participation exceeds 10, at which point for every additional 10 youth, 1 adult staff or trained volunteer will be present. NOTE: These ratios may change for specific activities.
4. Staff and trained volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone with one, unrelated youth. Another staff and/or trained volunteer should be made aware prior to an unavoidable one-on-one event.
5. Youth should be within visual and/or hearing supervision of volunteers or staff at all times. Exceptions to visual supervision include restroom use. Under these circumstances staff or volunteers should respect youth privacy but remain within hearing supervision by waiting nearby.
6. Staff and trained volunteers charged with supervising a group of youth will remain in sight and sound supervision of that group until relieved by another staff or volunteer.
7. Youth should not be in situations where they are alone with another unrelated youth for more than a few minutes. For example, avoiding prolonged periods in restrooms reduces the risk of youth-youth abuse.
8. Staff or volunteers who do not follow these stated policies are not allowed to work with youth.
9. Staff and trained volunteers serving OOTL youth programs are required to complete two forms annually.
 - a. The Volunteer Packet
 - b. The Criminal History Background Check
10. Volunteer service may be suspended or terminated at any time for any non-discriminatory reason at the discretion of the Out On The Lakeshore Director. Dismissals shall be made in consultation with the OOTL Board of Directors.

Social Controls to Protect Youth

Research reports that social norms established to protect youth in a community present a barrier to abuse. Support materials, trainings and supervision should reflect these social norms. Best-practice barriers to abuse include:

1. Safety is everyone's shared responsibility. Safety is always the guiding principle.
2. Meetings and events may occur in open places where others may observe (through windows in doors) and feel welcome to enter easily (not behind closed or locked doors). Create an open, welcoming environment.
3. Two or more adults are engaged with youth. There is safety in numbers.
4. The physical and emotional state of all youth is observed each time they participate. Signs of injury or suspected child abuse must be reported.
5. The need for confidentiality is respected at all times.
6. Personal space is respected for all participants. Appropriate touching is always visible, open, and not secretive. Appropriate touching avoids contact with private body parts. Touching should be in response to the need of the youth - not the needs of the adult.
7. Bullying, hazing or secret initiations are never allowed.
8. Youth are guided by trained staff and volunteers toward healthy and responsible communications which may include sexual orientation, gender identity, and social injustice.

Appropriate Boundaries Between Youth and Adults

Below is a list of frequently encountered areas of concern related to appropriate boundaries. None of these areas is always a definite indication of a problem. In fact, when done publicly and with proper supervisor approval, many would be considered well-intentioned and positive. However, when done without proper consideration and approval, they can be indicative of an adult or youth forming the beginnings of an inappropriate relationship. One goal of training should be to clearly define safe and respectful relationships and discuss potential areas for concern as listed below. Training should also ensure that supervisors are equipped to be on the lookout for these indicators and know when to look more closely at a situation as having potential for inappropriate boundary crossing.

1. Social media communication with youth: Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.
2. Cell phone communication, including texting.
3. Outside-of-work interaction including babysitting, providing transportation, taking a youth for a soda/treat as a reward, etc.
4. Discussing personal issues and information with youth or within earshot of youth. This includes any subject that one would normally discuss with a same-age friend: i.e. relationships, finances, family, gossip-type information, etc.
5. Using coarse or foul language around youth. Repeated use around youth can be a signal to youth that the adult is not concerned with social norms. In the extreme case, this is a method which a perpetrator will "cast a wide net" to elicit a response from a vulnerable youth.
6. "Holding contracts" with youth. Holding a contract with a youth means agreeing to keep a secret with a youth, however innocuous it may seem. Example: Staff A observes Youth X taking an extra snack despite instructions that it is one snack/camper. Staff A responds by saying "It's a good thing only I saw you, Staff B would be really mad." Two things happen as a result. First, Staff A now has leverage with which to manipulate Youth X and Youth X now knows that Staff A is willing to operate outside the authority of the other staff. This is one of the most common precursors to deviant behavior by adults and youth.
7. Physical contact. This issue has a great deal of complexity and requires some training. Training points include public/private contact, gender awareness, age awareness, frequency and the "needy" youth, awareness of one's own needs, the role of horseplay, etc.
8. Consistent application of authority among youth. It is human nature to relate more closely to some youth than others. However, it becomes a boundary issue when adults apply their authority inconsistently and some youth receive consideration not available to others.

Media Policy

Advances in technology are enabling new forms of social interaction that may extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras or recording devices. The following policies are meant to ensure the appropriate use of digital media:

1. Inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, cell phones or digital devices is prohibited. It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in restrooms or other areas where privacy is expected by participants.
2. Parents or guardians of those people under the age of 18 must sign and select the appropriate box on the last page of this packet (Youth Volunteer Consent and Release Form) regarding media releases before pictures or videos can be used for reports, advertising or promotional materials.

Supervision and ongoing training of volunteers is done through regular contact with the Volunteer Committee and OOTL staff, and applicable meetings related to one's area of volunteering. This will provide an opportunity to get to know each other better, which will help us be more effective as a team. It will also provide an opportunity for feedback, questions, or concerns.

Out On The Lakeshore Confidentiality Policy

Confidentiality of all information pertaining to members or program participants of the OOTL must be maintained at all times. Employees, **volunteers** and providers of contracted services **will not disclose any information concerning the participation of or any personal information concerning any member or participant in OOTL services.** This includes but is not limited to:

1. Any and all information contained in a membership file or mailing list.
2. Any and all information contained in a program participation file.
3. Any health information.
4. Enrollment or **participation in any program.**

By signing below, I agree to keep all information and/or discussions of program participants and members confidential.

Signature

Date



Volunteer Application

All information on this form is kept strictly confidential

Is discretion necessary
when calling or mailing?
Circle: **YES** or **NO**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Cell - Work - Home (Circle one)

Email Address: _____ Credentials: _____

Current Employer: _____ Occupation: _____

Gender Pronouns: _____ Birth Date: _____

What is the best way to contact you? (Circle one) Phone Email

May we mail you information in our OOTL envelopes or leave you a telephone message using our name?
(Circle one) Yes No

Which of the following interests you? Please check selections from the choices below.

- Receptionist (Answer emails/phone calls, assist walk-ins, etc.)
- Adult programming
- Youth Programming
- PRIDE Celebration
- Special Events (Thanksgiving Dinner, Drag Brunch, PRIDE Nights, etc.)
- Fundraising
- Grant writing
- Communications, Advertising, Website Management, etc.
- Facilities management (cleaning, organization, etc.)

Do you have any special skills that could be used in your roll as a volunteer (graphic design, yoga instructor, organizational skills, etc. – ANY special skill could serve a purpose).

Why are you interested in volunteering at OOTL?

Emergency Contact Information*:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Contact Number: _____ Alternative #: _____

*** Please note that we do not use discretion when contacting emergency person.**

Background Check Authorization—Adult Volunteers ONLY

Michigan State Police
Central Records Division
Freedom of Information – Name Inquiries
7150 Harris Drive
Lansing, MI 48193

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Out On The Lakeshore is a non-profit organization. Our federal ID number is 81-3619194.

Below is the information needed to perform the criminal history record check under the Freedom of Information Act.

Please Print:

Name: _____
First Middle Last

Address: _____
No. & Street City State Zip Code

Date of Birth: _____ Other names used: _____

Gender: _____

Race: _____

Driver's License #: _____

Thank you.

Requested by: , Executive Director

I give Out On The Lakeshore permission to make this inquiry.

Applicant Signature Date

Office Use Only BG Pass: YES / NO First Contact Date _____ Other Contact _____ Vol. email list: ___ Constant Contact: ___ Master Data: ___



Youth Volunteer Consent and Release Form

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Thank you for reviewing this packet and encouraging your child to volunteer at OOTL. Volunteers are crucial to our mission. OOTL requires receipt of this release, signed by a parent or guardian, before a minor may serve as a volunteer. Volunteers under 16 years must also be accompanied by a responsible adult. Please read and sign the following to give your child permission to volunteer at OOTL. Feel free to call 616.994.8090 if you have any questions.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the following:

1. My child's work will be supervised by OOTL staff and/or adult volunteers. I believe that my child is mature enough to behave appropriately while he or she volunteers.
2. That my child will adhere to all of OOTL's policies and procedures.

I release OOTL, its staff, independent contractors working on behalf of OOTL, sponsors, board members, volunteers and agents from any and all claims and liabilities (including costs and attorney fees) arising out of or in any way connected to my child's volunteer activities, unless the claim is based upon the conduct of an OOTL employee in the course and scope of his or her employment. I further agree to indemnify and hold OOTL harmless from any and all claims arising from my conduct or the conduct of my child while he or she is volunteering for OOTL.

Name of Youth (print): _____

Youth's Date of Birth: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (print): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Today's Date: _____

- I agree to allow OOTL use of photographs taken of my child in the course of participation in activities sponsored by the OOTL. I understand OOTL intends to use such photographs or video images only in connection with official OOTL publications or media promotions.
- I do not extend permission to OOTL to photograph my child.