

Winter Volunteer: *Frequently Asked Questions*



• What is Outdoors for All?

Outdoors for All is one of the largest non-profit organizations in the Pacific Northwest that provides year-round outdoor recreational opportunities to over 2400 children and adults with disabilities. Summer activities include hiking, cycling, rock climbing, water skiing, kayaking, camping trips and day camps. Winter activities include downhill skiing, cross country skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing. Outdoors for All also gives private, individual, and group lessons and will provide assessments for adaptive equipment and equipment rentals.

• Who does Outdoors for All serve?

Outdoors for All serves individuals, ages 5 and up, with all types of disabilities including physical, sensory, and intellectual disabilities.

• Why volunteer with Outdoors for All?

It's a great way to take on exciting challenges, meet new friends, participate in outdoor recreation, and play a crucial role in enabling children and adults with disabilities to do the same. Other benefits may include a discounted season pass, pro deals, and/or trainings and clinics to improve your ability in outdoor activities.

• What is the minimum age to volunteer?

The minimum age to volunteer is 16. We do accept volunteers ages 13-15 in our winter and day camp Cadet Programs.

• What is the time commitment?

Please refer to our website and online calendar to see all of the Outdoors for All volunteer opportunities. Volunteers can register for the 7 week lesson series in Jan/Feb at one of the two mountains – The Summit at Snoqualmie or Stevens Pass. If 7 weeks is too much of a commitment, many 1 day volunteer opportunities exist as well as volunteering as a part time instructor. Part time instructors still need to attend all required training, and must let leads/staff know their dates of availability prior to volunteering.

• What level of skill must I possess to be an instructor?

Unsure on your skill level? That's ok, you can still register and attend on-mountain trainings. Outdoors for All will teach you what you need to know about teaching, adaptive equipment use, and will also assess your skills and match you appropriately with a student or recommend the appropriate volunteer role. Snowshoeing requires no previous experience. For Nordic Ski, Downhill Ski and Snowboard instructors, intermediate skills are recommended, but no previous instructor experience is necessary.

• I don't know how to ski or snowboard, or don't want to teach on snow, can I still volunteer?

Yes! Off snow volunteer roles include: Van driver, van chaperone, office assistant, Lodge chaperone, and equipment manager.

• How will I be paired with a participant?

Participant/volunteer matching is based on the level of volunteer discipline training, skill, and preference. Staff and Lead Volunteers will evaluate new volunteers during on-mountain trainings and pair them with a student appropriately matched for their experience and skill level. Please note: We do our best to place volunteers in their first choice, but this is not always possible, due to the program needs and volunteer availability. Primary volunteers will be notified with a confirmation letter that includes the student assignment after on-mountain trainings. On rare occasions, some volunteers may not find out their student assignment until the first day of lessons. Part time and secondary instructors will not receive a student assignment until the day of.

• What if I am unable to follow through with my volunteer commitment?

While we understand that illness and emergencies occur, we ask that you make every effort to attend the activities for which you register. We base the number of participants we can accept on the number of volunteers who register. Which means when a volunteer cancels, many times we are unable to serve the participant. If you sign up for the full 7 week series it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to work with the Lead Volunteer or Staff to make sure there is coverage for the student, especially if you know in advance what days you will miss. Please let the Outdoors for All office know as soon as possible if you need to cancel so we can find part time instructors. For last minute cancellations please call and leave a message on the Outdoors for All Hotline 206-838-4995. Volunteers who purchase a discounted season pass will also be asked to make up any missed lessons in another program. If a volunteer misses an unacceptable number of lessons, Outdoors for All may revoke the Season Pass privilege at which time the volunteer will lose the pass or be responsible to pay the full value of the season pass.

• Do I need my own equipment?

Yes, you need to provide your own personal equipment for on-snow volunteer positions. If you do not have equipment, rentals are available through mountain rental shops or in-town ski and outdoor shops.

• How do I find a carpool?

Outdoors for All is NOT responsible for organizing volunteer carpools. Usually, volunteers within programs organize their own carpool arrangements. Dryland and on-mountain trainings are a great opportunity to meet other volunteers and coordinate carpools.

• If it's raining and/or storming will lessons be cancelled?

Lessons are only cancelled due to road closures, or when the ski areas close due to extreme conditions and special circumstances. To find out if a program is cancelled or delayed, ALWAYS check the program hotline at 206-838-4995. Please check road conditions by calling 511 from a cell phone before heading to the mountain.

• How do I get my season Pass?

Instructors and returning non-instructor volunteers who commit to the 7 week programs are eligible for the season pass discount. Returning volunteers will receive their season pass application once they complete the online training. New volunteers will receive the season pass application after the on-mountain training in December. Lift tickets are complimentary for each lesson day for all volunteers who decide to opt out of the seasons pass option or if they are a part time instructor.

• I'm new, how do I know which program to sign up for?

Saturdays at the Summit (Nordic and Alpine) are our highest need programs. Many volunteers choose their program based on which ski area they like to ski or ride or based on which day they are available. All programs need volunteers, it's best to choose the one that matches your availability and location preference.

• I can't make the (Dryland/on-snow) training, can I still volunteer?

Contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@outdoorsforall.org or call 206-838-6030 x208 to discuss alternatives.

• Why do I have to pay a fee for training?

Volunteer training fees are for new volunteers and cover the cost of lift tickets, clinician fees, and facility use.

• Where do I find the training schedule and which trainings are required?

Please visit our website for the exact requirements and schedule.