



Botanical
GARDEN
OF THE OZARKS

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The Botanical Garden of the Ozark is a member-supported public garden dedicated to education and environmental awareness, and serving as a community destination for unique nature experiences.

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Volunteer Handbook

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WELCOME AND THANK YOU

Greetings and a very warm welcome to the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks!

We are thrilled to have you join our team as a volunteer and extend our appreciation for the contribution of your time and skills.

This handbook is specifically tailored to prepare you for your role as a volunteer by offering you a comprehensive understanding of our best practices and procedures. We encourage you to review it thoroughly now and refer to it periodically.

Our goal is to provide you with meaningful, engaging ways to support BGO. We are grateful for your interest in our organization and are here to make your volunteer experience an enjoyable one.

On behalf of the professional staff of BGO and our board of directors, thank you and welcome aboard!

Sincerely,

Ashley Wardlow
Executive Director

THE PURPOSE OF THE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks Volunteer Handbook serves as a valuable resource to familiarize you with our organization and the expectations of volunteering. Please take a moment to review it thoroughly and ensure you understand and adhere to the policies outlined within.

We understand that while we've tried to cover as much as possible in the handbook, there may be instances not addressed here. Additionally, we may periodically revise this handbook as needed. Should you have any questions, please feel free to ask for clarification. Your understanding and comfort are paramount, and we're here to help!

THE ORGANIZATION

Mission

The Botanical Garden of the Ozark is a member-supported public garden dedicated to education and environmental awareness, and serving as a community destination for unique nature experiences.

History

1993 | The Friends of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, a group of like-minded horticulture and gardening enthusiasts, agreed that they wanted to form a non-profit organization.

1994 | The Botanical Garden Society of the Ozarks was incorporated as a non-profit organization.

1997 | The Botanical Garden Society of the Ozarks, under the guidance of the Executive Director at the time, signed a lease with the City of Fayetteville for the land BGO sits on today.

2001 | The Master Plan was completed during the tenure of Carl Totemeier, who served as Volunteer Executive Director of BGO from 2002 until his death in 2004.

2003 | The Master Plan was approved by the City of Fayetteville along with a revised lease agreement that permits BGO to lease its site for a minimum of 100 years.

Construction of the timber frame building began. The Red Suspenders Timber Frame Guild of New Hampshire held a workshop for about 25 participants who camped onsite during the first week of construction. Local volunteers and University of Arkansas School of Architecture

professors and their students also worked on the project. Today, this building represents BGO's primary site.

2005 | Volunteers created an educational event about butterflies with 800 children participating. From there, volunteers added other programs. At one point, over 4,000 children were visiting BGO annually before it officially opened to the public.

2005 was also the year that construction of BGO's gardens began under the leadership of Scott Starr, the first Director of Operations at BGO, whose salary was underwritten by a generous donation from Ed Clement. The original plan included only nine gardens. Today, there are twelve themed gardens inside the gates.

2006 | The Tyson Terrace was completed and the Carl A. Totemeier Horticulture Center was dedicated, with former U.S. Senator Dale Bumpers as the keynote speaker. The large space on the first floor of BGO's timber frame building is known as the Totemeier Event Hall. Today, this space is used for private events like parties and weddings, and classes & workshops held indoors.

2007 | Under Paige Mullhollan, who served as volunteer Executive Director from 2007 through the first half of 2009, BGO opened to the public and continues to operate as a tax-exempt organization, as defined by Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code. Its EIN is 71-0750464.

How BGO Operates

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, our governance structure plays a vital role in guiding our organization and ensuring its success.

Our Board of Directors, composed of dedicated volunteers, provides leadership drawn from the business and professional community of Northwest Arkansas. Together, they bring a wealth of expertise to our organization's decision-making processes.

In addition to the Board of Directors, the Governance, Internal Affairs, and External Affairs committees contribute significantly to shaping the future direction of our organization. Each plays a pivotal role in ensuring effective governance and strategic planning.

Finally, the Executive Director is responsible for our administrative structure. Charged with overseeing the recruitment, management, and, when necessary, the departure of professional staff, the Executive Director plays a crucial role in the day-to-day operations of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks.

BGO Hours and Holidays

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is open Tuesday - Sunday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. BGO is closed on Monday. Note that our closed date will change to Thursday after April 8, 2024.

BGO observes those holidays designated by the United States government. Additionally, in the spirit of celebrating and fostering a festive atmosphere, our organization will be closed on Christmas Eve. BGO will be open to the public on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth National Independence Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.

Observed holidays and closures will be noted in the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks calendar.

Holidays that fall on a weekend will be observed following the Federal Government's schedule, except for New Year's Day. New Year's Day will be observed on the preceding Friday in the event January 1 falls on a weekend.

Until further notice, BGO will be closed on business days falling between Christmas and New Year's Day.

How BGO is Financed

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, we greatly appreciate the support we receive from our members, the revenue generated from events and programs, admissions, donations, and our partnerships with granting organizations.

Every event and program we host is made possible through the hard work of a dedicated team and incurs associated costs. We are mindful of these factors when managing the budget for each event or program to ensure that we can continue to offer enriching experiences to our community while maintaining financial responsibility.

BGO Membership

Starting April 1, 2024, we are pleased to introduce an updated membership model at BGO. It's been over six years since the last update, and during this time, our garden has flourished, with more classes, events, and guests than ever before! Membership helps ensure our continued growth and we benchmark with value in mind, offering pricing and benefits comparable to other area gardens and amenities.

The BGO membership model now includes

- **A new member level:** Dual Membership, for two-adult households with no children

- **Discounts for even more of our guests:** Students, educators, members of the military, and guests over 65 all now qualify for membership discounts.
- **Greater flexibility:** Members can choose recurring monthly payments (like a Netflix subscription or gym membership) rather than an annual renewal.

We'll also continue to offer our **Instant Membership** program to first-time guests and/or those paying regular admission. This program allows visitors to apply part or all of their admission toward the purchase of a membership should they wish to join that day.

We are proud of our membership offerings and we look to you to help us communicate the many benefits of becoming a BGO member.

Questions or concerns about membership may be directed to the Manager on Duty (MOD), or you may take a message for the Director, Philanthropy.

BGO Signature Events

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, we host several signature events that provide our guests with unforgettable nature experiences all year round. From Terrific Tuesday Nights to Firefly Fling, Chefs in the Garden, and Jingle Bell Jog, there's always something exciting happening. If you're eager to discover what's coming up next, we invite you to visit the BGO website to learn more.

BGO Educational Programs

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, fostering lifelong learning is at the core of our mission, and we're delighted to offer a range of educational opportunities for individuals of all ages.

For adults eager to expand their knowledge, we provide a diverse array of classes throughout the year covering topics such as gardening, butterflies, nature walks, and bird-watching, among others. To discover our current offerings and secure your spot, we encourage you to explore our website.

For educators seeking enriching experiences for their students, we extend the opportunity for school field trips led by our experienced staff or dedicated volunteers. These engaging tours, thoughtfully designed with age-appropriate content, require advance reservations via our website at least two weeks prior to the visit.

Additionally, our Little Sprouts program offers our youngest visitors an enjoyable and educational experience filled with stories, songs, crafts, and more. While registration is suggested, admission for participating children is complimentary. Accompanying adults who are

BGO members also enjoy free admission, while non-member adults are invited to join us for a nominal fee.

Should you have any further inquiries regarding our educational programs, please reach out to our Director of Education.

VOLUNTEERING 101

Volunteer Opportunities

Though not formally employed by the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, volunteers greatly increase the capacity of the BGO professional staff through the gift of their time and skills. The types of volunteer roles available change annually and, often, seasonally. MyImpact is the software BGO uses to create and fill volunteer opportunities. Creating a profile in MyImpact will enable you to view and sign up for the most current volunteer offerings.

Volunteer Orientation

Volunteer Orientation is managed by the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks' Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator. Orientation sessions are offered three (3) times per year.

Information given may include, but is not limited to:

- Volunteer standards and regulations
- Volunteer opportunities
- Shift sign-up
- Recording volunteer hours
- Volunteer Rewards Program
- Safety rules and procedures, location of safety or protective equipment
- Location of tornado shelters and emergency evacuation plans/routes
- Tour of the work area, including location of equipment, supplies, etc.
- Introduction to other volunteers and members of the BGO professional staff
- Location of authorized parking areas
- Schedule for lunch breaks and appropriate break areas

It is natural that you should have questions as a volunteer. If the information you need is not addressed in orientation or in this handbook, please ask the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator for assistance: volunteer@bgozarks.org

Shift Sign-Up

To schedule volunteer shifts, we request that all volunteers utilize their MyImpact profile at <https://www.myimpactpage.com/>. Go to the "Opportunities" tab, select your preferred

volunteer opportunity, and click on the "Sign Up" button. For any inquiries or assistance with MyImpact, please refer to the MyImpact tutorial or email us at volunteer@bgozarks.org.

Recording Volunteer Hours

Volunteers may utilize their MyImpact profile at <https://www.myimpactpage.com/> to record volunteer hours. Simply navigate to the "Hours" tab, select the activity you participated in, enter the date, then input the number of hours and minutes volunteered. After completing, click the "Save" button. For any inquiries or assistance with MyImpact, please refer to the MyImpact tutorial or email us at volunteer@bgozarks.org.

Volunteer Dismissal

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, we are committed to supporting volunteers in performing at their best. In the rare instance where performance-related issues arise, a resolution procedure may be initiated. The terms for this procedure will be determined by the Executive Director and/or the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator on a case-by-case basis.

In the event that a volunteer violates BGO policy, our approach is to place them on probation, with clear communication about the specific concerns provided in writing. In more serious cases, where the infraction is deemed severe, immediate dismissal may be warranted. Note that only the Executive Director holds the authority to dismiss volunteers.

VOLUNTEER CONDUCT AND POLICIES

Personal Conduct

Since the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is judged to a great extent by the conduct of its employees and volunteers, it is most important that your conduct be above reproach. Orderly, courteous, and respectful conduct should always be observed. Any conduct that involves threatening or harassing remarks toward another person may result in dismissal.

While we want you to focus on what you CAN do through this document, we want to remind you there are a few things you just can't do. Any of the following conduct, in addition to the full policies outlined in this document, could result in dismissal:

- The use of language that denigrates others, racial or gender slurs, criticism of national origin, ethnicity or sexual preferences, criticism of religious beliefs, or comments used to make another person feel uncomfortable
- Possessing a firearm where possession of a firearm is otherwise prohibited by signs posted in accordance with state or federal law
- Failure to report any acts of theft or fraud

- Falsification, misrepresentation, or omission of facts in discussions or official documents
- Violation of cash handling/cash management policies
- Failure to protect members' information, which includes but is not limited to credit card information or any other form of personally identifiable member information
- Reporting to a volunteer shift under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or abuse of prescription drugs
- Commission of any criminal offense (other than a minor traffic violation) while volunteering or on BGO property
- Bringing potentially hazardous or dangerous items on BGO property
- Violence or engaging in threats of violence in the workplace
- Violation of BGO practices, policies and/or procedures

Attendance

We greatly appreciate your commitment as a volunteer and, if for any reason you are unable to report to your scheduled shift, we ask that you notify the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at your earliest convenience. If you are unable to reach the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, please contact the Executive Director.

If neither the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator nor the Executive Director may be reached, please call the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks office (479-750-2620) and leave a message for the Manager on Duty. Your proactive communication allows us to efficiently manage volunteer scheduling and ensures the smooth operation of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks.

Checking In and Out

Please plan to arrive for your shift ten (10) minutes before its scheduled start. Upon arrival, check in with the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, Manager on Duty, or shift supervisor, so they may relay information pertinent to your shift, supply you with materials needed, and answer any questions you may have.

When concluding your shift, check out with the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, Manager on Duty, or shift supervisor before departing, so that you may return any materials, provide relevant project updates, or share other information. Any information that is important for other volunteers to know should also be relayed at this time.

Dress Code

Volunteers are encouraged to dress appropriately for the activity required by their shift. If working outside, volunteers should dress for the weather, keeping in mind that their shift may include time in the greenhouse. Closed-toed shoes are recommended for all volunteers. The Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator can provide additional guidance, as needed.

During your shift, please plan to wear the name badge given to you at check-in and return it to the Admissions Office when checking out. While use of previously issued name badges is not permitted, volunteers may keep these badges as a memento. Beginning in 2025, volunteers with at least 50 service hours recorded in MyImpact may request a personalized name badge. BGO will order and distribute these annually.

Harassment

Harassment is any annoying, persistent act or action that singles out a person to that person's objection or detriment. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Verbal abuse or ridicule
- Interference with another volunteer or employee's work
- Displaying or distributing sexually offensive or racist materials
- Unwanted intimate physical contact
- Making offensive sexual or racial innuendoes

It is each volunteer's responsibility to ensure that their conduct does not include or imply harassment in any form. Volunteers should report harassment or suspected harassment to the Executive Director or to the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator. Complaints will be treated as confidentially as is practicable under the circumstances. Each complaint will be fully investigated, and a determination of the facts and any corrective action will be made on a case-by-case basis.

BGO will not tolerate harassment or any form of retaliation against a volunteer who has either initiated or cooperated in the investigation of alleged harassment. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.

Sexual Harassment

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks will not tolerate sexual harassment of its employees or volunteers by anyone. Volunteers who are found to have sexually harassed others will be dismissed.

At BGO, sexual harassment is defined as:

- Unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances including fondling, touching, patting, pinching or any other similar physical contact considered unacceptable by another individual
- Requests or demands for sexual favors, whether subtle or blatant, or whether in the form of a pressure or request for any type of sexual favor accompanied by an implied or stated promise of preferential treatment or negative consequence

- Verbal abuse or kidding that is sexually oriented and considered unacceptable by another individual, including comments about bodily appearance where such comments go beyond mere courtesy; inappropriate jokes; or any other tasteless, sexually oriented comments, innuendoes or actions that offend others
- Engaging in any type of sexually oriented conduct that would unreasonably interfere with another's work

Normal, courteous, respectful, pleasant, non-coercive interactions that are acceptable to both parties are not considered to be sexual harassment.

Any volunteer who believes they have been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately to the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator or the Executive Director. A prompt investigation of the complaints will be undertaken immediately in as confidential a manner as is practicable under the circumstances.

BGO encourages any volunteer to raise questions they may have regarding discrimination with the Executive Director or the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator.

Ethics and Reporting Compliance

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, our commitment to compliance with all applicable laws and regulations is paramount. We hold our directors, officers, employees, and volunteers to the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct. It is expected that volunteers conduct themselves in a manner that fosters public trust in their commitment to BGO's best interests, impartiality, and integrity.

In navigating the complexities of ethical decision-making, we encourage volunteers to exercise good judgment. If ever faced with a situation where determining the proper course of action proves challenging, we ask that you disclose the matter to the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator and/or the Executive Director. The Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator will promptly inform the Executive Director.

Ethical violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for volunteers. If any volunteer becomes aware of an ethical violation, we encourage them to report it to the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator and the Executive Director. Additionally, volunteers with questions regarding whether specific conduct aligns with the standards in the ethics policy are welcome to contact the Executive Director for guidance.

Your commitment to upholding ethical standards is crucial to maintaining the trust and reputation of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks. We appreciate your dedication to these principles.

Confidential and Proprietary Nature of Information

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks confidentiality is essential to our operations. It is crucial to keep matters handled by BGO in strict confidence and disclosing information about projects or initiatives that have not been publicly announced is strictly prohibited.

For those with access to BGO business and financial information, preserving the security and confidentiality of such data is imperative. This information should be utilized solely for conducting BGO business or as otherwise authorized. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of information may result in immediate dismissal.

When using BGO computers, information, networks, or resources for business purposes, volunteers are expected to demonstrate responsible and ethical behavior. This includes safeguarding the confidentiality and security of accessed data and ensuring its use aligns with BGO business. Proper storage, access control, and disposal of private and confidential data, in any form, are individual responsibilities. Volunteers are also encouraged to promptly report any known or suspected security violations to the Executive Director.

It's important to note that BGO retains ownership of all information gathered, stored, or maintained for business purposes, regardless of the form (electronic or printed) or location. Violation of any provision in this section may lead to consequences including but not limited to, eliminating access to BGO systems, potential criminal prosecution, restitution for improper use of services, and disciplinary sanctions in accordance with relevant BGO policy.

Background Screening Policy

In alignment with our commitment to creating a secure and trustworthy environment, the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks conducts thorough background checks for positions involving exposure to cash and financial account information, as well as positions that involve direct interaction with children. This essential screening process includes an assessment of relevant criminal history, credit history, and other pertinent information. The goal is to safeguard both our financial integrity and the well-being of those under our care. The results of these background checks will be handled confidentially and BGO will cover the expense.

Chemical Use/Abuse Policy

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is committed to providing a safe environment, obeying the law, and fostering the well-being and health of its employees and volunteers. That commitment

is jeopardized when any employee or volunteer illegally uses drugs or alcohol on the job, comes to work impaired or under the influence, or possesses, distributes, or sells drugs or alcohol in the workplace. Therefore, the BGO has established the following policy:

- It is a violation of policy for any employee or volunteer to possess, sell, trade, or offer for sale illegal drugs or to otherwise engage in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol.
- It is a violation of policy for anyone to report to work or volunteer while impaired or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- It is a violation of policy for anyone to use prescription drugs illegally. (However, nothing in this policy precludes the appropriate use of legally prescribed medications.)
- Any staff member or volunteer who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The goal of this policy is to balance our respect for an individual's privacy with the need to maintain a safe, productive, and drug/alcohol-free environment.

Whistleblower Policy

At the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, we uphold a commitment to high standards of business and personal ethics among our directors, officers, volunteers, and employees. In the execution of their duties and responsibilities, it is paramount that representatives practice honesty and integrity, adhering to all applicable laws and regulations.

To ensure compliance, all directors, officers, volunteers, and employees are entrusted with the responsibility to follow this policy and report any violations or suspected violations through our Whistleblower Policy. If any individual reasonably believes that a policy, practice, or activity of BGO or another entity with a business relationship with BGO is in violation of the law, they are encouraged to file a written complaint with the Executive Director.

Individuals filing a complaint concerning a suspected violation must act in good faith and possess reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosed information indicates a violation. BGO commits to non-retaliation against any employee or volunteer who discloses, or threatens to disclose, any activity, policy, or practice they reasonably believe is in violation of the law or a mandated rule or regulation, or against a clear mandate of public policy. However, any unsubstantiated allegations made maliciously or knowingly false will be treated as a serious disciplinary offense.

Suspected violations can be submitted on a confidential basis in writing by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports will be handled with confidentiality to the extent possible, ensuring a thorough investigation is conducted promptly. Appropriate corrective action will be taken if deemed warranted by the investigation.

Email and Technology Policy

Botanical Garden of the Ozarks policies prohibiting offensive, intimidating, or harassing materials in the workplace apply with equal force to material communicated through, or stored on, electronic systems. Violation of BGO's email and technology policy or any other abuse of the BGO network may result in dismissal.

Volunteers are expected to adhere to all computer security precautions established by BGO. Proper use of login credentials is crucial, and volunteers should refrain from leaving computers unattended. Additionally, using someone else's passwords or installing personal software on BGO's electronic equipment without approval from the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator or the Executive Director is strictly prohibited.

All data, communications, and information, including content transmitted or stored on the system, are considered BGO property and are subject to inspection and/or monitoring at any time. The electronic systems owned by BGO are designated for transacting BGO business and are not the personal property of volunteers, even if volunteers have a personal code to enter such systems.

BGO retains the right to access, examine, or disclose any material transmitted or stored on its systems, including email. BGO further reserves the right to monitor the use of such systems and inspect information contained in them, with or without notice, even when data is stored under the volunteer's personal code.

Social Media Policy

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks recognizes the importance of social media to its mission and strategy, and also recognizes the desire of many volunteers to engage in social media activities during personal time. The following are basic guidelines for appropriate social media use by BGO volunteers:

- Unless authorized, posts on social media should not imply that the volunteer speaks on behalf of BGO.
- Information placed on social media must comply with BGO policies related to confidentiality and disclosure of proprietary data.
- Volunteers should refrain from engaging in illegal speech online
- Volunteers should keep in mind that images, posts, comments, and any other online content may be linked to BGO by some readers, regardless of disclaimers.

Online conduct violating the policies in this handbook and affecting BGO members or those working/volunteering for BGO may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

News Media Policy

Statements to the news media on behalf of BGO should only be made by the Executive Director. Other employees and volunteers must refrain from speaking on behalf of BGO unless express permission is granted by the Executive Director.

Name and Likeness Policy

Volunteers at Botanical Garden of the Ozarks agree to the use of their name, words, and likeness for promotional purposes as determined by BGO. This includes publishing photographs taken during BGO events or programs.

Smoking Policy

BGO observes the City of Fayetteville's smoking prohibition in city-owned recreational facilities, parks, and trails. Smoking and use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vapor devices, or heated devices are prohibited on all parts of the BGO site.

FINANCIAL MATTERS**Cash Handling**

All funds received by BGO are to be directed immediately to the Executive Director or their designated representative. During events, a receipt process and dual control are necessary for the secure delivery of all funds to the Executive Director. Neither employees nor volunteers should ever have cash in their personal possession without a dual control process.

Dual control, a practice involving two (2) individuals to witness cash handling processes, is essential for transparency and accountability. Whenever possible, both participants should be BGO employees. In situations where two (2) BGO employees are unavailable, one (1) volunteer may assist. Cash should never be handled without at least one (1) BGO employee present.

As cash is stored in the Admissions Office, this area should never be left unattended. If, during your shift, you need to step away from your post in the Admissions Office, please contact the Manager on Duty or your shift supervisor to ensure coverage.

Fiscal Misconduct

Fiscal misconduct, including fraud, embezzlement, or any violation of BGO's financial policies, should be reported immediately to the Executive Director. Investigations will be conducted confidentially, and any required restitution will be pursued and enforced.

GENERAL OPERATING PRACTICES

Emergency Procedure

An emergency is any significant threat to operations that can have a negative consequence if not handled properly. Examples include injuries, severe weather, lost guest(s), fire, etc.

In the event of an emergency, immediately notify the Manager on Duty, your shift supervisor, or another member of the professional staff. As needed, ensure that all gates are open so that guests may easily exit and so that emergency vehicles and personnel may enter.

Do **not** move an injured person unless necessary to prevent further injury. You may attempt to make them as comfortable as possible, but do **not** administer first aid.

If the injured person is able to perform their own first aid, or if their guardian is present and able to administer first aid, they may do so. Retrieve the first aid kit from the nearest location. If the injured person is unable to perform their own first aid and/or if the emergency warrants, call 911.

In the event that a guest is missing, first collect their name, age, physical description (including clothing), and last known location. Then, use the phone or walkie talkie to alert other volunteers and members of the professional staff. Close all gates and lock-down all points of entry or exit. During an event, go to the stage and ask the emcee to make an announcement, asking the lost guest to meet with their party under the arbor. Once resolved, notify volunteers and professional staff to lift lock-down.

Accidents on the Job

Should a volunteer receive injuries during the performance of his or her duties, please notify the Executive Director or supervisor immediately.

Office Security

For safety and security reasons, no volunteer may hold keys belonging to the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks. Volunteers requiring access to any locked property within BGO grounds may contact the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, the Manager on Duty, or their volunteer shift supervisor.

In an effort to safeguard personal belongings, we recommend that volunteers store valuables in a secure location out of sight. It's advised not to leave purses or packages unattended on

desktops or in reception areas. Please be aware that BGO cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen items.

The last person to exit the office at the end of each workday is expected to turn off all lights and lock all the doors to the building. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

If any volunteer observes an unusual occurrence or encounters a suspicious person on-site, they should promptly report it to the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, the Manager on Duty, or their volunteer shift supervisor.

Solicitors

Persons who are not employees of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks are not permitted to come upon or remain on non-public areas of BGO premises for the purpose of making solicitations, posting or distributing cards, literature, notices or any other material of any kind without the prior written approval of the Executive Director.

Shared and Public Areas

All BGO employees and volunteers play a vital role in maintaining the cleanliness of our shared and public areas. Additionally, we ask that employees and volunteers take the initiative to keep their personal workspaces orderly.

In the kitchen, we appreciate your efforts to dispose of trash in the appropriate receptacle, wash and put away dishes you've used, and leave the entire area in a clean and tidy condition. Food waste and recyclables should be placed in the designated bins. When bringing lunch or other food items from home, we recommend storing them in the refrigerator or in a cupboard. To avoid oversight, employees and volunteers are encouraged to periodically check for any remaining food or personal items. Your attention to these details contributes to a welcoming and organized environment for everyone.

On-Site Storage

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks utilizes on-site storage to hold surplus supplies, tools, and equipment. It is the responsibility of all BGO employees and volunteers to maintain these storage areas at the same standard as our shared and public office areas.

Noise

In order to maintain a productive and efficient work environment, we request that volunteers minimize unnecessary noise and refrain from engaging in loud conversations.

Telephone Etiquette

Courteous telephone etiquette is essential, as this form of communication is often our initial point of contact with a guest, prospective member, or potential advocate for BGO. What a caller hears from you might well form their first impression of our organization!

Promptly answering calls is key to providing excellent service, as delays can be frustrating for callers. If information needs to be looked up, it's preferable to ask for permission to call back promptly.

When answering incoming calls, a greeting such as "Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, this is [your first name]. How may I assist you?" is recommended.

At the end of the call, inquire if there's anything else you can assist with by saying, "Is there anything else I could help you with right now?" Conclude with "Thank you for calling and have a great day!"

For callers seeking specific departments or professional staff members, please transfer them to the appropriate person or provide their work email address. It's important not to disclose personal cell phone numbers. Any deviation from this protocol may result in probation or dismissal.

Hospitality

The people who visit the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks are our honored guests and should be treated as such. If they come in often and you know them, call them by name. Strive to be friendly and pleasant in all interactions. In situations where a guest may need to wait, make every effort to keep the wait brief and ensure their comfort.

Mail

First class mail should be used only when necessary. Postage is the same as money, and therefore, a budget item and accountable. Sending personal items through the mailing system is not permitted and is considered a violation of policy, which may result in dismissal.

BGO Equipment and Services

Office equipment such as computers, printers, fax machines, copiers, Internet, email, and postage, among others, are designated for BGO business use exclusively. It is imperative that volunteers refrain from utilizing these resources for any other purpose, whether during or after office hours. Each volunteer assumes the responsibility for the proper care, maintenance, and safeguarding of the office equipment at their disposal, including desks, chairs, files, and particularly electronic equipment like computers and projectors.

Furthermore, the care, maintenance, and protection of gardening equipment, including tools, equipment, plants, media, and greenhouse materials, are also the shared responsibility of our volunteers. These items are the property of BGO and are intended to be used strictly as directed. It is essential to seek approval from the Executive Director before relocating or removing any BGO equipment or furnishings. Your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines ensures the longevity and efficient use of our resources.

Use of BGO Facilities by Other Organizations

The meeting rooms at BGO are available for use by other organizations during office hours, subject to prior approval by the Executive Director. Requests for after-hours usage by external organizations should be directed to the Executive Director. It is important to note that organizations utilizing BGO facilities for meetings are responsible for any damages incurred to the building or its contents.

Use of BGO Facilities for Staff/Personal Functions

Hosting personal functions such as wedding or baby showers, birthday celebrations, or anniversary events within BGO premises requires explicit written consent from the Executive Director. If granted approval, these events must be scheduled after normal office hours.

VOLUNTEER FAQs

Where do I find the most current information about BGO events and programs?

Details of all events and programs may be found on the BGO website, using the “Calendar” button in the upper right-hand corner of the home page.

Each event and program has an assigned contact person who can answer questions or supply additional information, as needed.

How do I transfer a phone call?

To transfer a phone call, press the recipient’s button, then hang up.

To transfer a phone call to a recipient’s voicemail box, press “transfer,” select the recipient’s button, then hang up.

In the event that a written message is requested by the caller, or if the BGO staff member does not have an assigned phone, messages may be given to the Manager on Duty. Be sure to include the caller’s first and last name, phone number, and email address, along with the message.

How do I check voicemail messages in the Admissions Office?

If the “Gen. Box” button is flashing, you can listen to the voicemail by pressing the flashing button and listening to the following prompts. You may then follow-up with the caller to either supply an answer to their question or the contact information of the appropriate BGO professional staff member who can help them.

How do I record injuries, medical emergencies, acts of vandalism, etc?

When necessary, an Incident Form should be filled out by the staff member, volunteer, or intern with the most information related to the incident. Incident Forms are located in the Admissions Office. Completed Incident Forms should be returned to the Manager on Duty.

What are our policies related to wedding bookings?

While we are unable to accommodate drop-in inquiries, guests who arrive without an appointment may view the space at no charge. To schedule an appointment, guests should email events@bgozarks.org.

Admission is waived for guests who have already booked BGO for their wedding and are visiting in advance of their event.

Guests wishing to make a deposit may leave a check with the Director, Sales and Events or the Director of Finance. Credit card payments by phone should be directed to the Director, Sales and Events or the Director of Finance during regular business hours. Deposits are **not** to be left at the Admissions Office.

GUEST FAQs

Is admission free?

Yes, admission is free for BGO members. Admission for non-members is available on the BGO website.

Is BGO part of the American Horticultural Society's reciprocal gardens program?

BGO is proud to be part of the reciprocal gardens program. A full list of other participating gardens is available online at: ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/rap/find/statebystate

Can I purchase a membership as a gift?

Certainly! Annual memberships make an excellent gift for friends and loved ones.

Can we bring a picnic?

Absolutely! Picnics are permitted in designated areas. Please thoroughly clean up after your picnic, using the recycling and trash bins available on the trail near the BGO entrance.

Are dogs allowed at BGO?

At this time, only service animals are allowed. Leashed dogs are welcome on the Lake Fayetteville trail. By law, we do not ask for documentation or proof of service animal training, nor are animals required to wear a service animal vest. As a best practice, and in the spirit of extending a warm welcome to all our visitors, it is BGO policy to take the word of our guests regarding their service animals.

What items are not allowed at BGO?

Drones, firearms, fireworks, bicycles, motorized scooters, glass containers, and smoking (including use of e-cigarettes) are all prohibited.

Is BGO wheelchair accessible?

Yes, we are proudly wheelchair accessible. A ramp from the Founder's Garden will lead you to our other paved and gravel paths.

Does BGO have a restroom I may use?

Yes! Guests are welcome to use our facilities during operating hours.

How big is BGO?

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks sits on 6 developed acres and 40 undeveloped acres.

Does BGO sell food and drinks?

While many of our events and programs are catered, we do not sell food and drinks on-site. There is a water fountain with a bottle filler on-site. Guests may also use the water fountain and dog bowl located at the Lake Fayetteville trailhead south of the Garden.

Does BGO have a Lost & Found?

Yes, our Lost & Found is located in the Admissions Office. We will record your name, contact information, and a brief description of the missing item, so that we may notify you of its return.

Do you have a First Aid kit available?

Yes, please visit the Admissions Office for basic First Aid needs. In the event of a serious injury or illness, call 911.

Does BGO allow guests to pick flowers, collect vegetables, etc?

Though it's tempting, we ask that guests refrain from altering the Garden in any way.

Can I donate caterpillars and/or butterflies to BGO?

At this time, we cannot accept caterpillars, butterflies or chrysalids.

How can I learn more about dedicating a tree, bench, or brick to a loved one?

Thank you for your interest! Please contact the Director of Philanthropy to learn more.

What is BGO's gift acceptance policy?

At this time, we cannot accept unsolicited gifts of artwork, sculpture, plant specimens, gardening tools, equipment, jewelry, vehicles, real estate or other assets with unusual liabilities attached.

What is BGO's professional photography policy?

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is a beautiful setting for professional photographs. To ensure the perfect experience, we require a scheduled appointment. Permit applications may be found online.

Between May and October, weekend shoots are very limited, as this is our busiest time for rentals and signature events. We ask that guests leave pathways and entrances clear for others to pass. Plants, plant labels, and containers should not be disturbed.

The photo permit fee is \$95.00 and includes two (2) hours for up to five (5) people, to occur during regular business hours. Access after-hours is available for an additional \$100.00 fee.

On the day of a scheduled photo shoot, guests will need to check in at the Admissions Office upon arrival. The photo shoot permit fee is due in-full at this time, if not already paid. The Admissions Office volunteer may then issue a press pass lanyard (in the desk drawer) to the photographer. The lanyard must be returned to the Admissions Office at the conclusion of the shoot.

Can I rent space at BGO?

Yes, the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is available for various corporate functions, including conferences, meetings, and retreats. BGO is also available for private events, including bridal showers, baby showers, and children’s birthday parties.

Guests may email events@bgozarks.org for availability.

Can I get married at BGO?

Yes! The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is regularly voted the “Best Place to Get Married” by readers of CitiScapes magazine. Rental fees vary and BGO can accommodate up to 800 guests. Appointments are required for those considering BGO as a wedding venue.

Guests may email events@bgozarks.org for availability.

CONCLUSION

In this handbook, the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks aims to address various aspects that will assist and engage you as a volunteer. While we strive to encompass a wide range of topics, it's important to acknowledge that no handbook can anticipate every scenario or provide all-encompassing answers. Thus, not all BGO policies, procedures, or benefits are fully outlined herein. This handbook supersedes all previous editions and related documents pertaining to volunteering at BGO.

Periodic revisions will be made to this handbook as needed to reflect changing conditions. BGO reserves the right, at its discretion and with or without notice, to modify or discontinue policies and practices as necessary. For more detailed or specific information, reference to other official documents may be required.

Your questions, suggestions, or feedback are valuable to us. Please feel free to reach out to the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator or the Executive Director.

We appreciate your interest in volunteering and look forward to an ongoing relationship with you!

VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

This handbook describes important information about the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks and I understand that I should consult the Executive Director regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

Since the information, policies and benefits described herein are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur at any time, without notice to volunteers. Every effort will be made to communicate any changes through written notice. I understand that revised information may supersede, modify or eliminate existing policies.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

DATE: _____ Volunteer Signature: _____

Volunteer Name (printed): _____