

The Woodlands 
WATERWAY arts festival
APRIL 10, 11 & 12, 2026

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 2026

ALL VOLUNTEERS are asked to attend **ONE Volunteer Orientation**. First-time volunteers, **PLEASE** consider attending an **IN-PERSON** meeting.

Tuesday, March 31, 2026: 6 PM - 7 PM (Zoom)

Tuesday, April 7, 2026: 10 AM - 11 AM (In-Person)

The Woodlands Arts Council offices,
9450 Grogans Mill Rd, Ste. 160
The Woodlands, TX 77380

Tuesday, April 7, 2026: 6 PM-7 PM (In-Person)*

Kevin Brady Community Center,
2250 Buckthorne Place
The Woodlands, TX 77380

***Beverage Servers, Gates & Ticket Scanners**, and **Load-In/Load-Out assistance** are encouraged to attend the evening orientation to meet committee chairs for job-specific info.

**Thank you for volunteering your time & talent at
The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival!**
“Where dreams take shape...”

The Woodlands Arts Council’s mission is to provide regional, cultural, and educational enrichment opportunities that encourage, support, and promote the performing and visual arts.

By volunteering, you are helping ***make that dream possible***. You are truly making art matter in our community. Each year, nearly 600 dedicated volunteers come together to bring our events to life, and we are deeply grateful for the time, energy, and heart you give in support of the arts.

In 2026, we continue to build on the Festival’s remarkable legacy—one rooted in creativity, connection, and possibility. This celebration of the arts draws patrons and visitors from across the nation and will feature 200 talented artists from around the country, each bringing their own vision and dream to share along The Woodlands Waterway.

We are pleased to offer each volunteer complimentary admission to the Festival, with the opportunity to browse and shop before or after your assigned shift. In addition, volunteers will receive a commemorative Festival volunteer T-shirt, water, and snacks during their shift. Those who volunteer for two or more shifts will receive an additional guest ticket. Be sure to pick up your commemorative Volunteer Pin at Volunteer Check-in upon completing your shift, and enjoy a 10% discount at the Festival merchandise booth when you show your pin.

You will be part of a fast-paced, inspiring environment filled with creativity and energy. We enthusiastically invite your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers to join you in volunteering at the Festival or at one of our many events throughout the year. Thank you for helping us dream boldly and for your continued dedication to the arts in our community.

With Appreciation,

Jenny Carattini-Wright, Executive Director & CEO
Courtney Myers, Volunteer Coordinator

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VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE - CONTACT INFORMATION

Courtney Myers, Volunteer Coordinator
Email: Volunteers@TheWoodlandsArtsCouncil.org

VOLUNTEER – GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival relies on volunteers to perform critical duties that contribute to the event's success. *Be sure to browse and shop the festival before and after your shift!*

Every volunteer will receive a commemorative t-shirt to be worn ONLY during their working shift and NOT while visiting the festival before or after their shift(s). You will also receive a wristband for re-entry to the festival when you are off your shift. T-shirts will be available for pickup at in-person volunteer training sessions or on the day of your shift. If you plan to pick up your volunteer t-shirt on the day of your shift, a changing tent will be on-site. To help guests identify our team, please do not wear any other branded shirts or hats with logos alongside ours unless you are representing a sponsor.

We appreciate you and all that you do to support the festival!

As a volunteer, we ask that you display warm and welcoming courtesy to patrons and artists, perform your duties with a commitment to the festival's overall success, and represent the community in a positive light.

Please **be on time** for your assignments; communicate any issues, concerns, or delays to the Volunteer Coordinators; remain at your posts until a relief volunteer is available; and **complete your shift by remaining at your post until relieved**. Relief volunteers will be available to accommodate breaks and any unforeseen emergencies.

Volunteers will be assigned to various duties. While all positions are important to the arts festival's overall success, the Volunteer Coordinator will assign individuals to ensure critical posts are prioritized. We understand there may be restrictions and requests for specific posts or working partner assignments. We will do our best to accommodate requests and ask that each volunteer understand that we may need to adjust assignments to ensure all positions are always covered. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility.

The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival provides a highly desirable venue for artists and a unique, positive experience for our community.

WE THANK YOU for your dedicated participation in this outstanding community event!!

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

Shifts vary by job assignment, but most are 2.5 to 5.5 hours on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We will do our best to accommodate your requested volunteer area, but please understand that we may need to adjust your assignment based on Festival needs at the time.

Please be ready to pitch in wherever needed and prepared to work your entire shift!

- This is a rain-or-shine event! Dress for the weather and wear comfortable clothing and shoes. It's a good idea to bring a hat and sunscreen, along with any other items you may need for outdoor activities. Please do not bring valuables, and remember that we cannot store any personal items at Volunteer Check-in.
- Volunteer commemorative t-shirts are to be worn ONLY during your working shift(s) and not while visiting the festival before or after your shift(s).
- Be prompt and allow yourself plenty of time before your shift starts. Please **check in 30 minutes before your shift begins.**
- If you are unable to make your shift and cannot find someone to cover, please contact us immediately by email.
- Do not leave your assigned area (except in an emergency) until the next shift has arrived and is prepared to take over.
- **No outside drinks or water are allowed at the Festival due to Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission regulations. However, FREE bottled water is available to all volunteers at all Gates and Beverage Booths, as well as at two on-site water fountains.**
- We encourage ALL volunteers (new and returning) to review the Volunteer Handbook before the Festival. This will not only keep you informed of any changes but also help ensure a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

VOLUNTEER PARKING & CHECK-IN

Volunteer Check-in is on the first floor of the Town Center Parking Garage, off Six Pines Drive. Volunteers may park in the garage free of charge during their shift.

Arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled volunteer time to allow time for parking, check-in, and getting to your assigned location.

At check-in, you will receive your Volunteer Wrist Band, which grants you entry to the Festival. If you did not receive your t-shirt, it will be available at check-in.

Don't forget to pick up your commemorative Volunteer Pin at Volunteer Check-in upon completion of your shift! Show your Pin at the Festival merchandise booth to receive a 10% discount on your purchase.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If you are immediately involved in an incident (medical, confrontational, or other), please complete an incident report. Copies are available at each gate. Leave the report with the gate supervisor at a gate.

- In an **extreme emergency, call 911.**
- For any other **minor emergency**, contact any Festival Committee member or security personnel with a radio. Radios are also stationed at each admission gate, volunteer tent, and beverage booth.
- The **First Aid Tent is located between ARTopoly and the Palette Cafe** dining area. They can help with minor emergencies and provide a place to rest for guests who may be overheated or need water.
- We will have security at each gate and an EMS bike team available to respond to medical or security emergencies.
- The **First Aid Tent** is also the home base for any **Lost Children or Lost Adults** who need to be reunited with their party. If you find a lost child, contact someone with a radio and provide a description (age, gender, clothing), but not a name. Our security team will alert staff on the radio and reunite the child with their parents or guardians at the First Aid Tent as quickly as possible.
- **Lost & Found** is at Gate 4 (Town Center Parking Garage).

FESTIVAL JOBS/ACTIVITIES

Artist Check-in:

Greet the artists as they arrive with a SMILE, distribute artist information packets, and ensure all paperwork is complete. All volunteers must be 18 years or older.

Artist Relations:

PHYSICAL STAMINA REQUIRED. A LOT OF WALKING. LIGHT LIFTING MAY BE REQUIRED. All volunteers must be 18 years or older. Walk the venue and assist artists as needed during Festival hours, including sitting in an artist's booth for a quick break, delivering patron purchases, running quick errands, and reporting any artist concerns to the Artist Relations Festival Leads. Artist Relations Tent: assist with artists' requests or coordinate other Artist Relations volunteers' efforts.

Artist Relations/Patron Art Pick-up:

Receive, organize alphabetically, oversee, and release items to patrons upon request. Purchased art will be delivered to the pickup site by the Artist Relations team. Heavy lifting may be required. All volunteers must be 18 years or older. No art is to be released to a patron without a proper receipt.

Artist Breakfast:

Volunteers will assist with the Artist Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings by setting up breakfast items and coffee, welcoming artists, and assisting with cleanup. Patrons will sit there during the festival. Please leave it clean!

ARTopoly Volunteers:

Volunteers work with The Woodlands Children's Museum to staff the ARTopoly tent and the Arts and Culture Stage. Set up chairs and tables before the festival opens, assist children with art projects during the festival, keep art areas neat, and strike tables and chairs as needed.

Beverage Servers:

Volunteers will be responsible for dispensing and serving drinks to Festival Patrons at assigned locations throughout the festival (assignments will be made on the day of the event). Each booth will have a paid, TABC-certified Beverage Captain. *(If you are interested in being a Beverage Captain, please email Dominic@TheWoodlandsArtsCouncil.org)*

Requirements and Expectations for this position include:

- Must be 18 years of age
- TABC Certification is a plus.
- Requires standing for extended periods of time
- Comfortable with processing credit card payments using a credit card scanner
- Can be a fast-paced, energetic environment

Beverage Stocker:

Beverage stockers will not dispense or serve drinks to Festival patrons, but will support the Beverage servers. Tasks include transporting and replenishing ice, keeping beverage stations neat, and ensuring supplies are ready. Location assignments will be made on the day of the event.

Requirements and Expectations for this position include:

- **Must be 15 years of age**
- Requires standing for extended periods of time
- Can be a fast-paced, sometimes hectic environment

Books on the Green:

Hosted by Village Books, Volunteers will answer questions, assist with book sales, and arrange seating for readings and special guests. Friendly faces and the ability to multitask are important.

Early Inspiration Gallery:

The Early Inspiration Gallery **is an exclusive area for children (under 12) to purchase art.** Volunteers will answer questions, assist with art sales to children, and promote the Young Makers Market. All sales are \$5. Knowledge of The Woodlands Arts Council's mission and the ability to multitask are a must.

Early Inspiration Gallery – Setup:

Unload and transport donated artwork and other items from vehicles to the tent. Arrange art, signage, and decorate the space. Organize supplies. Dress for outside work.

Festival Market:

Volunteers will assist with the sale of Festival merchandise to patrons. Responsibilities include processing credit card payments, operating a credit card scanner, and maintaining order in the merchandise area and market areas.

Festival Market – Setup or Teardown:

Volunteers will help set up the Festival Market the day before the festival or break it down on Sunday after hours. This includes transferring Festival merchandise between the storage PODS and the market. Requires light to medium lifting and the ability to drive a golf cart to move merchandise. Great for someone who enjoys merchandising or setting up a sales table.

Flex Team:

Ready to do whatever is needed to support the Festival! This is a “fill-in” spot to cover any last-minute requirements. We will do our best to make assignments at check-in; however, please be aware that there may be some delay in receiving your assignment while we evaluate the Festival’s needs. Thank you for being flexible!

Gates - Greeters & Scanners:

The empowered & tech-savvy SMILING helper. Will use provided equipment to scan tickets for guest entry, assist guests with scanning QR codes to purchase tickets, answer FAQs, and support traffic flow. May be in direct sun for a large portion of each shift. Great for someone who plans to volunteer both days!

Load-In – Rovers (Thursday & Friday):

Assist artists in entering the venue with minimal hassle and facilitate quick unloading to minimize blocking access to the festival grounds by incoming artists. Volunteers are NOT to handle art WITHOUT Artist approval. MUST be able to lift and carry heavy items.

Load-Out – Rovers (Sunday):

Assist artists with loading materials and exiting the venue with minimal hassle. Volunteers are NOT to handle art without the artist's approval. MUST be able to lift and carry heavy items.

Palette Cafe Stage - Assistant:

Must be proactive, cheerful, and able to drive a golf cart and carry or load heavy items when requested by the band. Duties may include helping performers as they arrive in the parking lot for load-in, assisting the stage crew during a performance, and remaining until the performers are finished and ready for load-out. Volunteers will be around loud music, and it is often hot.

Terrace Hospitality Lounge:

There are many roles required for this area: welcome and check in guests, assist with food preparation and display, resupply food and beverage areas, ensure seating is organized, check in guest packages, and ensure the area is clean and tidy. You may answer general

Festival questions and will have Festival information and FAQs available for your review.

Town Center Parking Garage Attendant:

Must be 18 years or older. This position requires standing, holding, and using a tablet to process credit card transactions, as well as some work outdoors. Identify VIP guest passes, process credit card payments, and be familiar with the festival hours, gates, and restroom locations.

Volunteer Check-In:

Assist Volunteers as they arrive on Festival Days. This includes updating the Volunteer check-in program, directing Volunteers to their assigned Festival positions, distributing t-shirts and wristbands, and presenting commemorative Volunteer Pins upon completion of shifts and check-out. This can be a fast-paced, sometimes hectic environment. We will be checking on Volunteers (via a golf cart when possible) throughout the Festival grounds to provide needed breaks, water, and to answer any questions.

Keep it Clean Team:

This shift is for volunteers who enjoy moving around. You will be based in one of the Cafes, helping wipe tables, clear trash as needed, and organize seating. You will also walk around the Cafe to pick up any dropped trash and put it in the bins. The Festival will provide gloves and other supplies. Please report any major problems to the operations team. A cleaning crew will oversee the emptying and replacement of trash bins; this is not your responsibility. Please interact with patrons if they ask questions.

**Thank you for your time and support of the
The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival 2026!**