



### What are the benefits?

Volunteering has many rewards. First Guides develop new skills, serve as role models, and share their knowledge of the natural world with visitors. In addition, service in the First Guides volunteer program can enhance college applications and job resumes. After completing their first year, First Guides will receive a certificate.

### Orientation, Fee, and Course Times

Volunteers are required to attend an orientation.

**The orientation will be held**

**June 20, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m..**

The cost of the First Guides program is \$50. This is a one-time fee that includes formal training by Science Center staff, a collared shirt, and supplies. Contact the Volunteer Manger for scholarship information.

### 2026 Course Sessions:

**June 25, 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.**

**June 27, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

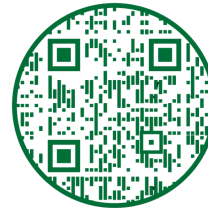
**June 28, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**June 30, 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.**

### How to Apply

To apply to the First Guides program, request an application from your school, contact SLNSC or visit our website's Volunteer page at [nhnature.org](http://nhnature.org).

Please send the completed application to the Volunteer Manager at the address below by **May 30, 2026**.



**Squam Lakes Natural Science Center**  
PO Box 173, Holderness, NH 03245

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# First Guides

## TEEN VOLUNTEERS



# Share your love of Nature!

**NEARER TO NATURE**  
[nhnature.org](http://nhnature.org)

# First Guides

## Who are the First Guides?

First Guides is a volunteer program at Squam Lakes Natural Science Center specifically designed for teens. The First Guides program gives teens a chance to volunteer alongside wild animals from our collection and, at 16 years old, may opt to be trained to handle some animals.

First Guides are between 14 and 17 years old by July 1. Candidates submit a completed First Guides application form by May 30, 2026, and attend training in June. First Guides arrange their transportation to and from the Science Center.



## What will First Guides do?

The primary function of a First Guide is to be an educational presence on the Exhibit Trail. First Guides complete a training course to learn various skills, and practice those skills with adult volunteer mentors. First Guides are invited to return annually. Volunteer opportunities include greeting visitors on the trail, presenting biofacts, speaking about various animals, participating in a Community Action Program, and more.



## What is the time commitment?

During the first year, First Guides donate 32 hours by November 1, including 20 hours of formal classes. Additional training is ongoing and scheduled at will. Returning First Guides donate 12 hours annually after their first year to remain active in the program.



## What topics are included in formal training?

Formal training sessions are with adult docent trainees and include sessions on Interpretation, resources, practice time, an introduction to Animal Care, and more!

## Who are First Guide Mentors?

First Guide Mentors are adult volunteer docents trained to assist First Guides on the exhibit trail. Mentors often have a live animal with them as they greet visitors. First Guides joining them demonstrate related biofacts and engage in discussion with visitors.

