



Program Mission

To motivate and enable people to become active stewards of Colorado's natural resources.

Essential Eligibility Criteria for Volunteering

Please read through the following list of essential eligibility requirements ("EEC"). These requirements are not intended to be exclusionary, but to identify the necessary and fundamental elements of participation – integrally tied to safety and risk management considerations and consistent with VOC's mission.

Please Note: These EEC do not encompass all criteria for participation in a Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado ("VOC") program. You can find more details in the individual project descriptions, the pre-project email details that you'll receive upon registration, and the Volunteer Waiver. Participation is also conditional on VOC's receipt of a signed electronic or paper waiver.

Importantly, these EEC are intended to be helpful and constructive for all participants who are considering attending our programs. However, these EEC are only intended to give an overall picture of EEC for VOC activities and do not encompass every criteria or function of the various activities you may encounter on a given program. *Please read individual project descriptions prior to registering to help you determine if you are eligible to volunteer.*

If you have any questions or concerns about the ability to meet the criteria, please contact Dan Williams at 303-715-1010 ext. 117

VOC Essential Eligibility Criteria for Volunteering Applies generally to all activities and programs

All participants must:

- Support a physically, emotionally, and mentally healthy learning environment for all participants in alignment with the VOC mission.
- Work effectively as a member of the volunteer project. This includes taking personal responsibility (for your belongings and behavior), effectively communicating ideas and concerns on an individual and group level, accepting differences, and possessing a willingness to put the needs of the group before those of the individual.

There are also mental and physical requirements to ensure safety:

- Be in general good health and physical condition, specifically:
 - Ability to move safely up and down trails on potentially uneven terrain
 - Ability to perform and sustain different levels of physical outdoor labor



- Level of physical difficulty and duration of work varies by volunteer event. Levels are rated on a scale of easy, moderate, and difficult and can be found here: http://www.voc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/VOC%20Project%20Difficulty%20Criteria_FINAL.pdf. Minimum age requirements are also listed.

Volunteers are expected to self select into appropriate projects based on project difficulty level and the project description.

- Ability to follow visual cues and information independently on “difficult” and “moderate” projects;
 - Or with the assistance of a personally pre-arranged, accompanying individual or adaptive equipment on “easy”, lower-risk projects.
- Ability to understand and follow instructions given to you orally, individually, or to the group, including the ability to perceive hazards/risks and respond to instructions regarding hazards/risks such as steep cliffs or loose rocks.
 - Ability to do so requires the ability to independently hear (in english) on “difficult”, higher-risk projects;
 - Or the ability to communicate via personally, pre-arranged alternative methods or via a personally, pre-arranged interpreter on “moderate” and “easy”, lower-risk projects. If you do not independently hear or speak (in english), please contact voc@voc.org upon registration to inform the staff.
- Be able to effectively communicate with or to other participants or leaders regarding potential hazards/risks, personal distress, injury or need for assistance, where darkness, high wind or other factors may impede communication.
 - Ability to do so requires the ability to independently speak/hear (in english) on “difficult”, higher-risk projects;
 - Or the ability to communicate via personally pre-arranged alternative methods or interpreter on “moderate” and “easy”, lower-risk projects. If you do not independently hear or speak (in english), please contact voc@voc.org upon registration to inform the staff.
- Ability to act reliably and responsibly around hazards/risks even when not directly supervised.
- Ability to perform necessary self-care independently or with the assistance of a personally pre-arranged accompanying individual or in an outdoor environment that could be remote depending on the individual volunteer project, including personal hygiene and toileting needs, adequate hydration and dressing appropriately for weather conditions
- Depending on the project, be able to competently and independently navigate a variety of outdoor terrain. This may include, but is not limited to: traveling on and off-trail in sometimes steep and difficult terrain in the mountains, desert or other remote outdoor environments, often carrying weight.



- Carry weight, whether it be personal or group belongings, gear or provisions, independently or with the assistance of a companion. Weight required varies, see project description for details.
- Remain alert and focused for several hours at a time while traveling through varied outdoor environments.
- Tolerate being outdoors in all types of weather, at varying elevations from 5,000 – 14, 000 ft., with a variety of potential stimuli, including bugs, extreme temperature changes, intense sunlight, wind, and wild animals.
- Depending on project location, tolerate being several hours or up to a day away from medical facilities.
- Tolerate potential changes in diet (or bring your own food), group living, possibly long days filled with physically challenging activities, and a routine that is likely much different than your routine at home.
- Get oneself in and out of a vehicle independently or with the assistance of a pre-arranged, accompanying individual.
- Learn skills and engage in tasks to support yourself and the group (individually or with the assistance of a pre-arranged, accompanying individual), including those necessary for working and/or living in outdoor settings. This may include, but is not limited to: various outdoor work skills to support project efforts, cooking, setting up and taking down a camp, washing dishes, caring for group gear, and camp site clean-up.
- Interact responsibly in a group and support a team approach, understanding that every participant shares in the responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of the group.
- Respond appropriately in the face of unexpected challenges such as inclement weather, changes in itinerary, unfamiliar surroundings, homesickness.