

WELCOME TO PIONEER NATION

THE VOLUNTEER CORPS AT PIONEER FARMS

Thank you for volunteering at Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms. As a primarily volunteer-run organization, we value the time you are donating. We hope that you enjoy your time at Pioneer Farms and are so happy to have you! Please use this document as a policy guide and resource. Questions or concerns? Let us know at volunteers@pioneerfarms.org

Beginning as a Volunteer

A 'volunteer' is anyone who performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of Pioneer Farms without compensation or expectation of compensation. A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by Pioneer Farms prior to performance of any task of volunteer service. Pioneer Farms reserves the right to refuse as volunteers those persons whom it does not deem suitable, for whatever reason.

Before their first shift, new volunteers must complete the following steps:

1. Fill out an online volunteer application found on our website:
<https://www.pioneerfarms.org/volunteer>
2. Pass a criminal background check.
3. Attend an orientation session.
*Optional : Attend auxiliary trainings-- depending on volunteer role/position.
4. If working in a public area, acquire a period-appropriate costume.

Additionally, we suggest you become familiar with the following:

- Pioneer Farms—it's history, mission, goals, rules, philosophy and chain of command.
- The setting and surroundings at Pioneer Farms, including the historic sites. You should feel comfortable with the environs and can give directions and information to others.
- Programs at Pioneer Farms, so you can give accurate information to visitors. Remember, volunteers are our best public relations!

Read this manual thoroughly and attend all training sessions. Extra reading and research about Texas history is encouraged.

Exceptions: Pioneer Farms accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, alternative sentencing or diversion programs, corporate volunteer programs, and other volunteer referral programs. In each case, a special agreement must be in place with the organization, school, or program from which the special-case volunteers originate. This agreement must identify responsibility for management and care of the volunteers.

About the Museum

Located on more than 90 acres at the northeast edge of Austin, Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms is a living-history museum that preserves and recreates life in Central Texas during the 1800s at restored

homesites and a rural village. With houses, outbuildings and animals, each are interpreted for a different period of the 19th century.

MISSION , VISION & GOALS

Pioneer Farms aims to create a premier learning center that interprets and preserves the histories and cultures of 19th century Central Texas. We will do so by teaching history through authentic, immersive experiences.

- Create engaging experiences.
- Encourage visitors of all ages to connect with the past.
- Provide Central Texas with a resource for hands-on historic learning.
- Create a welcoming environment for visitors of all backgrounds.

ORGANIZATION

The museum is owned and operated by the Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit. An 11-member Board of Governors meets monthly to direct museum policy and planning. A Board of Advisors assists the Board of Governors with strategy, planning and fundraising, meeting twice a year. The day-to-day operations are managed by an Executive Director, staff, and volunteers.

HISTORY

Texas Ranger Lt. James O. Rice, an original settler of Austin, laid claim to 1,280 acres at the northward crossing of Walnut Creek in the fall of 1844, including the site of Pioneer Farms. Eight years later, in 1852, Frederick and Harriet Jourdan settled on the site with eight children and nine slaves. They eventually amassed a 2,000-acre farm. They had four more children once settled in Texas. Of this twelve, only nine lived to adulthood.

In 1956, the Jourdan grandchildren, Laura and Eugene Giles, donated the core of their grandparents' property to the Heritage Society of Austin for a park to honor early-day settlers. Opened in 1975 with summer camps and later a single interpretive area, the museum was operated by the Austin Natural Science Association and its volunteer guild, later in cooperation with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. The parks department, in turn, operated the site under a lease with the Heritage Society after the association departed during the 1990s.

Over the years, the site grew from one historic area to three, offering a variety of weekday and Sunday programs. In 2003, the parks department turned over the management and operation to the Heritage Society, which established the Board of Governors. Since then, extensive repairs have been completed to both buildings and grounds, programs such as Pioneer School and Heritage Artisans have been successfully launched, new exhibits have been researched and installed, and the museum's first-ever entrance village was created as additional historic buildings are moved to the museum. The museum spun off into an independent tax-exempt foundation in 2016, after successfully establishing itself financially and operationally.

HISTORICAL SITES

Pioneer Farms has five historical interpretive areas, each representing a different era and lifestyles in the history of Central Texas. They include the following structures, many of them dating to the period of the site. Dates listed denote the interpretive period for each site.

- **1841 Tonkawa Encampment** featuring tipis, sweat lodge, fire circle, and landmark oak tree.
- **1868 German Immigrant Farm** that showcases the European settlers of this area. Site features the Kruger cabin, open bay barn, chicken house, and outhouse.
- **1873 Texian Farm** that portrays the white settlers who migrated to Texas from Virginia, Kentucky and other Eastern States. Site includes the Jourdan Cabin, barn, root cellar, chicken coop, smokehouse, outhouse, Swedish silo.
- **1886 Cotton Plantation** that highlights wealthy landowners in this area in the late 1800s. Featuring the Bell House, detached kitchen/textile rooms, smokehouse, outhouse, chicken coop, Scarborough barn, livestock enclosures.
- **1889 Sprinkle Corner** recreates a small farming community village. This includes the Tate House office building, the General Store, Wroe storefront (carriages), Wessels Dance Hall, Aynesworth-Wright House, Orsay House, blacksmith shop. Planned additions will include a church, woodworking shop, saloon.

Two additional interpretive sites are planned: An 1856 Tejano Farm to portray the Hispanic culture from the time Texas was a part of Mexico, and an 1881 Freeman’s Farm that highlights the successes of the freed slaves in this part of Texas.

PROGRAMS

The museum offers a variety of unique historical programming, ranging from weekday fieldtrips, special events, and the Pioneer School classes/workshops to scouting activities and hands-on community projects. All focus on utilizing our unique historical assets.

General Rules

The museum is governed by Policies and Procedures that are in place and enforced to ensure that all visitors and volunteers have a safe and enjoyable time while at Pioneer Farms.

COMMITMENT

Volunteers must volunteer a minimum of twice each calendar year to maintain an “active” volunteer status. Those who do not, will no longer be considered PF volunteers. After a year with no volunteer contact, the onboarding process must be completed again before continuing volunteer service.

THE DAY OF YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

- When you arrive, please check in immediately by signing in on the tablet at the General Store or the Museum Office. Signing in is required so that we can keep track of who is working on each day and will record volunteer hours to enable us to qualify for various grants.
- Check your area for modern intrusions, sweep floors, straighten beds or clean stalls, et cetera. Set up your planned activity. Volunteers should familiarize themselves with their work sites and report anything that is broken, missing or otherwise askew to supervisors or on the proper forms available in the Museum Office.
- Before you depart for the day from your assigned worksite, straighten your work area. Sweep or put away tools. Put all artifacts such as chairs, dishes, or harness back in the place where you found them at the start of your shift. Pick up trash around your site. Bag garbage and set out by the wagon road nearest to your work site for collection.

- Cancellation of programs usually will not be made until the day of the program, often within a few hours of the program start time. Check with the Museum Office or consult your supervisor for current information.

ETIQUETTE

- Volunteers are expected to be dependable and punctual. Volunteers are asked to inform their supervisor in advance of any impending absence so that alternative arrangements may be made as necessary.
- Volunteers are to be prepared for their assigned volunteer task, dressing appropriately and bringing any necessary equipment. You need to allow enough time to check in with day supervisor, change into costume and get to your assigned area and set up activities BEFORE Pioneer Farm opens to the public. Arriving 15-30 minutes early is the general rule.
- When interacting with the public or fellow volunteers, volunteers are to be polite and helpful regardless of the demeanor of the other party. Volunteers represent Pioneer Farms to the public and are expected to behave in a positive, professional manner.
- Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a Volunteer, whether this information involves a volunteer, guest, or involves Pioneer Farms business details or interests.
- Volunteers needing to drive to their work site to load or unload items, should have vehicles removed and in the designated parking lot no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the program. In order to preserve the natural elements of Pioneer Farms, volunteers are asked to refrain from driving or parking on grassy areas throughout the museum. All vehicles should be kept on the wagon roads. Driving on wagon roads is prohibited during programs or hours we are open to the public.
- For all programs and events, volunteers need to dress in period-appropriate clothing. You can make your own costume, and Pioneer Farms has some patterns to choose from. Patterns can also be purchased from stores such as Wal-Mart, or from any fabric store. You can also borrow a costume from Pioneer Farms. Please contact Evangelina Mangino (emanginol@gmail.com) for help. *Please return costumes if you make your own or decide you will no-longer volunteer.*
- Pioneer farms does not serve guests any food or drink prepared on sites as part of our programs and events. Those food items may be consumed by volunteers only. We are not licensed to distribute home-cooked foods. Snacks and drinks are available for guest purchase at the General Store and at locations throughout the farm during special events. Volunteers are encouraged to bring snacks and drink from home to meet individual needs, but these should be consumed out of sight of the visitors, since they are in modern packaging that will detract from the period - appropriate programs

CHILDREN

The museum encourages children to volunteer with their parents, relatives or legal guardians who are responsible for properly supervising those children at all times. Volunteers should remember: No one should be supervising the children under my care but me. Violations of proper conduct by children of volunteers can result in sanctions ranging from warnings to dismissal. Volunteers are responsible for the all liability, and hold the museum harmless, for the actions of the children under their care.

PETS

Pets are not allowed on Pioneer Farms property due to the presence of livestock. Service animals are allowed. Please encourage visitors with service animals to stay clear of the livestock on site—particularly the longhorns.

GARDENS

Pioneer Farms has a community garden located behind the Bell House. Volunteers and community members can rent a plot for a \$50 fee for the year. Plot renters are responsible for plot maintenance including weeding, watering, and planting. There are also communal plots for growing large crops like melons. Contact Michael McKee (Michaelmckee1015@gmail.com) to learn more about the garden or to get set up with a plot.

Vegetable and flower gardens at historic sites on the museum grounds are available for tillage by volunteers, so long as each is arranged for and approved in advance, in content and location, by the Executive Director or a designee. Plantings in all gardens must be period appropriate in appearance, and the gardens must be maintained in a manner that complements and supports the programming and site-specific history. Violations can result in the garden being cleared by the museum. The harvest of such gardens can be used and consumed by the volunteers who plant and tend the garden. Pioneer Farms assumes no responsibility for damage to or destruction of any garden by animals, visitors or other means.

SAFETY CONCERNS

All Pioneer Farms volunteers should be aware of the following hazards and should communicate their potential danger to participants in all programs and visitors. Pioneer farms carries liability and casualty insurance covering those persons in Volunteer Service, for the time they are on the museum grounds working as a volunteer, in amounts as determined appropriate by the Board of Governors.

- **WATER** : Walnut Creek and Giles Pond constitute drowning hazards. There are submerged sharp objects and snakes. These areas are off-limits unless guests and participants are closely supervised and prior approval.
- **FALLING HAZARDS** : Potential falling hazards exist in the barn lofts, in trees and on the cliffs along Walnut Creek, among other places at Pioneer Farms. These areas and other must be closely supervised, and access must be restricted or closely supervised.
- **LIVESTOCK** : Animals may kick, stomp, bite, scratch and otherwise injure visitors. No visitors are allowed inside corrals or stalls UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. Visitors should have contact with livestock only under the close supervision of trained volunteers.
- **SNAKES** : At least four species of venomous snakes are present seasonally at Pioneer Farms. Avoid brushy areas, woodpiles, cool or shaded areas, especially near water. Program participants should not be allowed to wander off alone from their groups. Be aware of First Aid treatment and emergency procedures. Snake Bite kits are included in each First Aid kit.
- **TOOLS** : Horseplay and playing is not allowed with or around hand tools at any time. Use of all tools should be closely supervised. No program participants are permitted to climb or play on machinery or implements.

- **INSECTS** : Several types of biting insects are seasonally present at Pioneer Farms. Insect bites can cause physical discomfort, anaphylactic shock and infection. Observe participants for those signs. Be aware of First Aid and emergency procedures.
- **PLANTS** : Contact with some plants at Pioneer Farms can cause poisoning, allergic reaction, skin irritation and stinging. Advise participants and visitors not to eat or handle any plant unless they know what it is, or they are being supervised in an activity. Especially watch out for and avoid Bull Nettle, Stinging Nettle and Vines and Poison Ivy. Be aware of First Aid and emergency procedures.
- **WEATHER** : Low-lying areas at Pioneer Farms are susceptible to flash flooding along Walnut Creek, and lightning strikes, tornadoes and high winds, and hail can occur during stormy weather. Avoid low-lying areas during heavy rainfall, move indoors during lightning storms, take cover in a low area not subject to flooding in the event of a tornado, and avoid areas where high winds may blow trees or other debris. Other weather hazards are related to sunny, hot weather — dehydration, sunburn, exhaustion or heat stroke. Drink water and eat nutritious foods to replace the loss of body fluids. Avoid overexposure to the sun and plan quiet, restful activities in a cool spot during the heat of the day.
- **FIRES** : The biggest menace and cause of property loss to settlers in the 1880s was fire. Don't let history repeat. Indoor or outdoor fires are to be built, lit and maintained only by staff who have been trained in the use of stoves, outdoor cooking sheds and cook sites. Fires are not to be overbuilt in either stoves, outdoor cooking sheds or cook sites. FIRES THAT ARE TOO BIG CAN CAUSE DAMAGE AND BURN BUILDINGS AND PEOPLE. All guests and children are to be kept a safe distance from all fires and hot stoves to prevent burns and injuries, and to maintain fire safety for everyone. No playing or horseplay is allowed around any fires or stoves. Fire extinguishers are provided inside the front door at each Historic Site, and at all other interpretation and program buildings. Familiarize yourself with the location of these and other safety appliances before you begin each work shift and make sure they are all in place and in operating condition.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency, volunteers should immediately summon assistance by radio or phone and render whatever first aid is needed and proper. Volunteers who are properly trained should administer CPR and first aid in the event of an emergency. In all other cases, volunteers should immediately summon appropriate authorities or properly trained volunteers by radio or phone. If appropriate call 911.

First Aid kits are provided at each farmstead, and inside other interpretative and program buildings. Familiarize yourself with the location and contents of these kits in case an emergency should arise during your shift. These kits include an assortment of bandages, ointments and other items designed to assist guests and volunteers who have received minor injuries on-site. They also include snake-bite kits for initial treatment. All injuries should be reported to a supervisor, who will document the injury on the proper form by the end of his or her shift.

Reports on all major accidents and emergencies are to be made using official forms contained in First Aid boxes at each Historic Site or in the Museum Office. These should be filled out by volunteers before they leave the museum on the day the incident occurs.

In the event of the following—please take the appropriate actions.

- **INJURIES** : In the event of an injury to a visitor or volunteer that requires immediate emergency care, call 9-1-1 and request an ambulance with emergency medical technicians. Briefly and calmly explain the nature of the injury or emergency and give specific location directions. The supervisor should then be notified. First aid treatment up to skill level is to be maintained until the emergency team arrives.
- **WEATHER** : Generally speaking, weather conditions will alert supervisors to approaching severe storms. Guests should be alerted and moved in an orderly fashion to a place of safety, where they should remain until the all-clear is given. The supervisor on duty will be responsible for ensuring that all guests and volunteers are accounted for.
- **FIRES** : Volunteers should immediately evacuate all volunteers and guests from the burning structure or area, to a safe area a safe distance at least 500 feet away. Volunteers should immediately summon assistance via radio or by calling 911 on a personal cell phone. In the event of a brush fire, guests and volunteers should move down roads away from the fire's direction of movement, to a place where they can be evacuated by car or other motorized vehicle, or on foot. Volunteers should make attempts to extinguish or contain the flames without endangering themselves or others.
- **FLOODING** : All low-lying areas along Walnut Creek should be evacuated in an orderly manner, in the event of a heavy, steady rain of two inches or more, and buildings should be used for temporary shelter by volunteers and guests from continuing rain, until such time as they can be moved safely to the Front Gate or other exit area.
- **REPAIRS** : Broken equipment or unsafe conditions for volunteers or guests should be reported immediately to your supervisor, on official forms available at each Historic Site and in the Museum Office, so that corrective action can be taken, and repairs made.

GRIEVANCES

If a volunteer has a problem with or about another volunteer, all efforts should be made to resolve the problem with that person. If resolution cannot be attained, then the problem should be brought to the attention of a supervisor. If resolution cannot be made at that level, the issue should then be brought to the Executive Director. Volunteers should maintain a professional attitude by not discussing disagreements or situations in front of or with guests or other volunteers.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- **ALCOHOL & DRUGS** : Pioneer Farms is a drug-free zone and wants to maintain a safe work environment for its guests and volunteers. While on Pioneer Farms property and/or while performing Farm business, Volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence of, using, possessing, selling or otherwise being involved with illegal drug or any controlled dangerous substance. Violators are subject to immediate dismissal, removal from the museum property and/or possible arrest.
- **FIREARMS** : Display or use of firearms on museum property is prohibited. Exceptions can be made when deemed appropriate by permission of the Executive Director. As a private establishment, we reserve the right to ban weapons on our premises to ensure a safe environment for all staff, volunteers, and visitors.

- **HARRASSMENT** : Harassment of any kind — verbal, physical or sexual — that might reasonably be expected to cause offense, embarrassment or humiliation to any volunteer or guest is prohibited. Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender or identity will not be tolerated. Violators are subject to termination and/or possible arrest.
- **MISUSE OF PROPERTY** : Volunteers are to use Pioneer Farms property appropriately, historic or otherwise. Historic buildings and artifacts are not to be “played with” or treated as toys. They are to be used only during interpretive programming. Contact staff with questions about object use or handling. No Pioneer Farms property is to be taken off-site without the express permission of the Director of Experience (claire.steffen@pioneerfarms.org)

PERFORMANCE

Pioneer Farms reserves the right to monitor and evaluate the work performance of all volunteers and to provide feedback to Volunteers on the performance at their assignments.

DISMISSAL

Volunteers may be discharged without warning for cause. Pioneer Farms reserves the right to request a volunteer to immediately leave the museum premises. Permanent bans may be issued if deemed appropriate by staff. Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unsafe or inappropriate behavior, misconduct or insubordination.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty or on premises.
- Theft of property or misuse of Pioneer Farms' funds, equipment or materials.
- Lies or falsification of records.
- Illegal, violent or unsafe acts.
- Abuse or mistreatment of guests, animals or volunteers.
- Failure to abide by Pioneer Farms policies or procedures.
- Disparagement, slurs or any other conduct or behavior demeaning to any individual or group—this includes racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, or otherwise.
- Unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of Pioneer Farms
- Any other conduct or actions inconsistent with any Pioneer Farms’ policies and procedures or the professional standard of behavior expected of volunteers

Important Numbers and Emails

Office/General Store 512-837-1215

Michael Ward, Interim Executive Director michael.ward@pioneerfarms.org 512-632-9561

Jesse Stamper, Director of Artisans artisans@pioneerfarms.org

Claire Steffen, Director of Experience claire.steffen@pioneerfarms.org

Evangelina Mangino, Volunteer Coordinator emanginol@gmail.com 512-791-1180

Matt Stephenson, Agriculture Lead motleyking@hotmail.com

Interpreting History

Your service as a volunteer at Central Texas' premier living history museum can be a rewarding and enriching experience, as you help recreate Texas' colorful history through our unique historical programming at our restored sites. Effective interpreters are enthusiastic, friendly and helpful toward visitors. A visitor is just as likely to remember a warm, smiling guide as he will facts about Pioneer Farms.

Interpretive manuals are available at each site that guide all programming and historical interpretation. The guides are usually kept in a black binder in a cabinet. The guide includes a history of the site, details of the historical story that is being interpreted there, and activities, games, recipes and other tips to help guide volunteers in correct historical interpretation for the site.

TIPS

- Be knowledgeable. The secret to being a good interpreter is to know as much as you possibly can about Pioneer Farms and its programs. Read all materials and take advantage of our research library to further your knowledge. Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know, I will research the answer to that", when asked something you do not know. Don't guess at the answer.
- Interpreters should be appropriately dressed. Do not let your 21st century ideas ruin the impression for the visitor. Don't let personal vanity stand in the way of furthering Pioneer Farms' goal of presenting Texas life as it was in the 1880s.
- Interpreters should not talk about personal matters, correct or argue with a fellow interpreter on site or in front of visitors. You build the image the visitor has about Pioneer Farms!
- Pioneer Farms needs people who are willing to work and carry on duties without constant supervision. You are an essential component of Pioneer Farms and contribute to its success. BE RESPONSIBLE.
- Interpreters must be flexible. Each visitor is different, and it is important for the interpreter to sense special interests of the visitor. Use comparison and contrast to relate to their existing knowledge and experience.
- Use questions when talking with guests. Don't just lecture but encourage discussion and questions from the group.
- New volunteers are encouraged to observe a program or two before participating in your first program.

Ask for more information or training on good interpretation!