



Origins Game Fair Volunteer Handbook

Volunteers are a vital part of Origins Game Fair. They are part of what brings Origins to life! Many volunteers have been with us for years. New or old we value each and every volunteer for their hard work and dedication to the show.

This handbook will help you learn the basics of volunteering, show policies and some helpful information about the show.

Why Volunteer

People volunteer for many reasons. They believe in Origins and want to help make it the best it can be for Attendees. The community of volunteers, many of our volunteers have been working together for years and only see each other at Origins. And of course the PERKS, being able to offset some of the cost to attend Origins. Then there is the volunteer party after the convention, where we distribute swag to volunteer who have given more than 16 hours of their time to Origins.

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General Volunteer Information

In this section you will find the information on how to apply, and what is required.

How do I sign up to be an Origins Volunteer?

- To volunteer you will need a Tabletop.events account. On the Origins Game Fair 2023 Tabletop.event there is an option for volunteering under the Attend tab at the top, there you will answer some questions and then once you have officially applied you will be able to see the shifts available. For more information on the process of volunteering Tabletop.events had detailed instructions here:
<https://help.tabletop.events/article/99-apply-to-volunteer>

Do I need any special qualifications to be a volunteer?

- All volunteers are expected to be courteous, professional, and eager to help. We have positions available for any skill set. The main requirement is customer service. All volunteer positions work with attendees in some manner. Some positions have more contact than others. All volunteers do need to pass a basic background check.
- To help volunteers arrive at the show informed we will be scheduling at least one Volunteer Zoom Call and one Lead Volunteer Zoom Call.

What does the background check consist of?

- The background check is a very basic check. Volunteers will get an email from Corescreening, fill it out and return it. GAMA does not receive your social security number and only receives basic public record information.

If I want to Volunteer, should I buy a badge?

- No, a volunteer badge will be assigned to your Tabletop.events account (TTE) after the approval of your volunteer hours. Any badges purchased before receiving your volunteer badge will be subject to the refund fees laid out during the registration process.

How do I get my badge if I volunteer?

- After shifts have been approved and the background check returned a badge will be applied to your Tabletopevents.com account.
- If for any reason Origins sells out one or all the days of the convention, Volunteer badges are still included. Don't worry.
- If you have requested an additional badge as one of your perks you will be sent a code to use in Tabletop.events.

What is a lead and how do I become one

- Volunteer Leads are usually volunteers that have worked with us in the past and have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills. They are appointed positions that are in charge of specific areas at the show. They are the starting line of defense in any area, handle many things including fielding attendee questions and managing their volunteer teams. If you are an Origins volunteer fitting this criteria and are interested in becoming a Volunteer Lead, please email Cynthia Tuck (Events Coordinator). If a position becomes available you could be considered, we can't offer if we don't know you are interested.

Are Game Masters volunteers?

- Game Masters run specific games at the show and are not considered part of the volunteer program. To know more click [HERE](#).

Can my child volunteer?

- Due to insurance and the requirement of a background checks for all GAMA volunteers we require our volunteers to be over the age of 18.

Can I sign up on-site?

- NO. All volunteers must sign up in advance to submit to a background check and be placed in an area to work. We can no longer accept on-site volunteer signups.

Information on Volunteer shifts

This section deals with how shifts are created and tips on selecting a shift and making a schedule.

How are shifts created?

- When creating the overall schedule, we try to create a schedule that has shifts in 4-6 hour blocks of time overlapping other shifts so at no point do we have all the volunteers changing over at one time. Individual schedules are more left up to the volunteer, do they like morning or afternoons...

How are shifts set up for General Volunteers?

- The volunteer shift schedule is set up based on the needs of the position.
- Shifts are usually 4 hours long. Occasionally the position requires a 6 hour shift, these shifts tend to be very easy positions.
- Whenever possible we structure the shifts to have an overlap so when there is a shift change not everyone leaves at once.
- Lead shifts are scheduled differently. We build the lead schedule together with the leads in the area, their shift length varies.

- Should I volunteer all my shifts in one area?
- That is individual preference. Some people like to move around, some like to be in one area. Priority is given to multiple shifts in one area when approving shifts.

How are Volunteer shifts approved?

- While we do value all volunteers equally there are a variety of different things that go into approving shifts to make a workable schedule.
- When approving volunteer shifts volunteers who have more overall hours or all hours in one location are prioritized. This allows the volunteers who are trying to reach a higher perk level to build a schedule.
- We often just roll a die! If you don't get the assignment, you were looking for it is nothing personal, it is possible it just came down to a roll of the die. Please request a different position.

Does my shift get a break?

- If you need a bathroom break, please advise your lead, and go. We ask that you don't wait until the last minute, we do not want the desk unattended because everyone needed to talk to mother nature at once. Please remember the rest of your team will be expecting your return, a bathroom break is not the time to wander the rest of the convention.
- If you have two 4 hour shifts back-to-back in the same area you are entitled to a 30-minute break. Please work with your lead to schedule the appropriate time. Breaks must be scheduled with the lead.
- If you have a set time that you **MUST** eat or be somewhere, please do not schedule a shift for that time span. While we will do our best to accommodate you, we cannot guarantee any specific time slots for breaks.

Perks, Perks and more Perks

Perks are how Origins show some of our appreciation to Volunteers. The more you volunteer the more perks you earn. The perks cap out with what we offer our leads. This section gives extra information on the perks offered.

I have volunteered under 16 hours, how do I get the discount on a full show badge instead of just a day badge?

- Once your shifts have been approved Email Cynthia and she will email you a discount code to use to purchase a full show badge instead of the day badge for the days you are working / selected.

How will my 10% off at the Origins Store Work?

- Each volunteer will receive one coupon good for 10% off total purchase at the Origins Store. You must use credit or debit to use the 10% off.

What are the optional perks?

- Optional perks are additional benefits you can earn along with the automatic perks including badge. We realize not all volunteers want a portion of a hotel room, or a parking pass. We allow you to choose which extra benefit you will receive. Volunteers working 32 or more hours will receive two optional perks, they must be different options except for badges, you may choose the additional badge option twice. Note: Hotels are limited, have a deadline and provided on a first-come basis.

What does ¼ of a hotel room mean?

- If you have earned the perk of ¼ of a hotel room, it means that Origins will place you into a hotel room with up to 3 other volunteers. You will know the volunteers ahead of time so you can plan for sleeping. (Will someone bring an air mattress...)

- We do our best to place you with people you know. If you and 3 of your friends all volunteer to earn ¼ of a room, we can place you together. A great reason to encourage friends to volunteer.
- Hotel rooms for volunteers are check in on Wednesday and check out on Sunday morning by 11am. Some hotel check out times may vary, so be sure to check their website or give them a call to check. Leads can request the check in date of Tuesday night.
- Parking is not included with your hotel room

What if I select the Hotel Stipend?

- GAMA will reimburse you the flat fee mentioned in perk rewards towards your hotel. YOU MUST MAKE YOUR OWN RESERVATIONS. GAMA takes no responsibility to ensure you have a room. As with the food stipend you will receive this reimbursement after completing all your shifts and turning in your time sheet.

If I earn a partial hotel room, can I pay the difference for the rest of the room?

- No. If you would like a room to yourself, please select the hotel reimbursement and book your own hotel room. GAMA has a limited number of rooms we reserve for our Volunteers and GM's, one person per room could contribute to not having enough for everyone.

Is parking paid for as part of the hotel?

- No, parking connected with hotels is not covered in our perks. If you qualify for a parking pass it is not in a lot connected to the hotel.

How do parking passes work?

- If you chose the parking pass option, you will be given the choice of 5 one day parking passes or one pass good for 5 days.
- The one-day parking pass will ONLY be good for up to 24 hours, if your car remains parked for over 24 hours the pass will no longer be valid and a replacement for multiple days will not be issued.

Does my parking pass have in and out privileges?

- No. Currently none of the parking passes allow for coming and going at will.

What is the Food Reimbursement?

- We realize volunteering can be hungry work and you need sustenance to survive. The food stipend is just our way of helping to reimburse for the expense of food. It will be provided in check form after all your shifts have been completed.

What happens at the Volunteer Appreciation Party?

- The appreciation party is where we try and show our volunteers how much they mean to us by distributing games provided by sponsoring companies, and our continued gratitude for all your hard work. The party takes place after the close of the convention, usually at 6pm on Sunday in the back of the gaming hall. What the party looks like has evolved over the years and due to Covid and volunteers wanting to get home it is more of a festive give away than an actual party. We release the volunteers to start to select items

to take home in order of hours volunteered. The argument could be made that it was more of a feeding frenzy...

At the Show

This section covers things you need to know as a volunteer at the show!

What is the dress code for Volunteering

- Volunteers shall maintain a neat, professional and dignified appearance.
- Practice personal hygiene – come to work clean, wash hands
- Wear your Origins Volunteer T-shirt
- Bottoms should be clean and neat, not ripped up. Shorts or Skirts are acceptable but should be at least knee length.
- Shoes should be appropriate for the position you are in. Example: If you are in the exhibit hall during set up wear close toe shoes, it is a construction zone as booths are created. Flats are always recommended.
- Absolutely no explicit words or images on clothing.
- Refrain from clothing or accessories with political party affiliation while volunteering.

Where do I pick up my badge and supplies?

- You will pick up your badge at registration just like all attendee's. Your T-shirt, time sheet and any other information needed will be picked up at the Help Desk. Registration is on the north end of the convention center by Goodale Ave, and the giant head. The Help Desk is near registration across from the escalators that form the back of registration.

Do I need to get my time sheet signed off?

- Yes, you will turn in your time sheet after your last shift to get any perks you have earned. Having them signed by a lead shows you were at your shift. Your shifts will need to be signed off on to receive any after shift perks.

What if I work extra hours?

- Extra hours should be approved by a lead and entered at the bottom of your time sheet as a new shift, even if it is just an hour. If your extra time boosts, you into a different perk bracket GAMA will reconcile the difference between brackets where it is able. The reconciliation will happen after the convention so some perks would not be available.

Are water and snacks provided?

- Water and snacks will be provided, it will be in a different area than in 2022, we are still working out the logistics. While we do our best to provide a variety and enough quantity supplies do run out. Please remember snacks provided are not meant to be a replacement for an actual meal.

Can I bring a beverage or snack with me to my shift?

- We encourage everyone to bring a water bottle and stay hydrated during the convention! We do ask that water bottles and other beverages are kept under the table. Snacks are permitted during slow times in your shift, it is preferable if you step away from the desk while eating. While snacks are permitted, please use your break to eat your meal. Please be careful not to spill on any equipment or paperwork and clean up after yourself.

Will I be able to sit down during my shift?

- That entirely depends on what position you have volunteered for. Many shifts are a mix of sitting and getting up to help attendees. We want to make sure you have a position that fits your physical needs. Please look at the description of the position and if you have any questions email Cynthia.tuck@gama.org

What if I have a problem?

- If at the convention start with your lead, they may have the answer.
- You can always go to Cynthia, she is generally easy to find at Registration. Her cell phone number is 330-730-9357 – text usually work better, but calling an option.
- If you can't get ahold of Cynthia, the help desk has contact numbers for the rest of the Origins staff.
- If you have a problem not during the dates of the convention, contact Cynthia.