



# Volunteer Handbook 2015-2016

*FIRST Volunteer Resources  
Department*  
Questions? Comments? Concerns?  
[volunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:volunteer@usfirst.org)

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# Section 1 - *FIRST*® Volunteer Resources Department

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## Mission Statement

The Mission of the Volunteer Resources Department is to recruit, train and recognize all *FIRST* Volunteers. *FIRST* offers a rewarding and lasting experience that defines the success of *FIRST* as a Volunteer driven organization. Our goal is to help promote the mission, values, and culture of the organization while supporting Volunteer growth by recognizing their passion, dedication, and expertise.

## Introduction

Welcome and many thanks for your interest in Volunteering for a *FIRST* program. *FIRST* programs are run almost entirely by Volunteers, who are a crucial link to the success of the organization worldwide. Because of your interest and efforts, *FIRST* will continue to grow and strengthen, providing opportunities for young people ages 6 through 18.

We are very happy you have joined our team of dedicated Volunteers. Our Volunteers come from all walks of life and join together to support *FIRST* programs. With more than 150,000 Volunteers worldwide supporting all *FIRST* programs, we truly are a Volunteer driven organization. Our programs would not be successful without your commitment.

This handbook contains information and general policies and practices of *FIRST*. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contents, as it will answer many questions concerning your volunteering. In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, *FIRST* reserves the right to change, add to, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in the handbook.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us for general inquiries at [volunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:volunteer@usfirst.org). For program specific questions please contact:

Jr.FLL Volunteer: [JrFLLvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:JrFLLvolunteer@usfirst.org)

FLL Volunteer: [FLLvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:FLLvolunteer@usfirst.org)

FTC Volunteer: [FTCvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:FTCvolunteer@usfirst.org)

FRC Volunteer: [FRCvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:FRCvolunteer@usfirst.org)

Again, we thank you for your interest in *FIRST* and hope that you enjoy the excitement, the camaraderie, and the many fulfilling experiences that you will take home with you.

## Section 2 - Who We Are

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### **FIRST Vision**

“To transform our culture by creating a world where science and technology are celebrated and where young people dream of becoming science and technology leaders.” — Dean Kamen, Founder

### **FIRST Mission**

Our mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting Mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, which inspire innovation and foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

### **Gracious Professionalism®**

Dr. Woodie Flowers, *FIRST* National Advisor and Pappalardo Professor Emeritus of Mechanical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, coined the term Gracious Professionalism®.



Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of *FIRST*. It's a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.

With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions. Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. They avoid treating anyone like losers. No chest thumping tough talk, but no sticky-sweet platitudes either. Knowledge, competition, and empathy are comfortably blended.

In the long run, Gracious Professionalism is part of pursuing a meaningful life. One can add to society and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing one has acted with integrity and sensitivity.

## What You Can Expect From *FIRST*®

As a Volunteer for a *FIRST* program you play an important role in making our vision a reality. *FIRST* is a Volunteer driven organization and the success of the organization depends on you. *FIRST* has many different Volunteer opportunities to offer. Each opportunity offers a variety of exciting experiences. We want to inform you about the expectations you can have as a *FIRST* Volunteer.

**Communication** — Communications will occur through event organizers. They will be available to answer all your questions prior to and during the event.

**Training** — You will receive training specific to your assigned job either before, or on the morning of the event.

**Volunteer T-Shirt and Name Badge** — Depending on the program and event, you may be given a t-shirt and name badge. These designate you as a *FIRST* Volunteer for the day. They allow you access to the area of your Volunteer job and are your ticket to the Volunteer lounge for food and refreshments throughout the day.

**Year of Service Pins** — Year of Service Pins are a small token of appreciation for the countless hours *FIRST* Volunteers dedicate to our organization. Regions participating in Service Pin program present Year of Service Pins to volunteers for the milestone years 1,3,5,10,15 and 20.

**And a Whole Lot More!** — It doesn't matter which *FIRST* program you volunteer for, you will always walk away at the end of the day with a sense of pride and fulfillment, knowing that you have helped children experience what they never might have without *FIRST* and without your support.



*“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”*

Benjamin Franklin

Author, Inventor, Scientist, &  
Diplomat

## Description of *FIRST*® Programs

### What is Junior *FIRST*® LEGO® League?

Junior *FIRST*® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) is an exciting opportunity for the youngest budding scientists. It encompasses the core concepts of all *FIRST* programs to inspire, excite, and introduce children to the wonders of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

Jr.FLL:

- Teaches the benefits of teamwork
- Sparks initial interest in science and technology
- Introduces basic design skills through a hands-on approach with the familiarity and fun of LEGO building
- Provides a culture of sharing and learning from others
- The goal of Jr.FLL is to provide an experience that will capture a child's inherent curiosity and creativity and direct it toward discovering the possibilities of improving the world around them through understanding, thought, planning, and technology.

### How to Register as a Jr.FLL Volunteer

To become a Jr.FLL Volunteer, contact the Jr.FLL Partner in your area. A list of Jr.FLL Partners can be found on the *FIRST* website at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/regionalcontact.aspx>.

In addition to the above, please visit our Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) and register as a Volunteer at: <http://www.usfirst.org/vims>.

### What is *FIRST*® LEGO® League?

*FIRST*® LEGO® League (FLL®) is an exciting and fun global robotics program that ignites an enthusiasm for discovery of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) in children ages 9 to 16 (9 to 14 in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico). More information can be found on the FLL website at: <http://www.firstlegoleague.com>.

Each year FLL teams embark on an adventurous challenge based on current, real-world issues. Guided by a team Coach, and assisted by Mentors, the children:

- Research and solve real-world problems based on the Challenge theme
- Present their research and solutions

- Build an autonomous robot using engineering concepts

Using the yearly Challenges, FLL:

- Entices children to think like scientists and engineers
- Provides a fun, creative, hands-on learning experience
- Teaches children to experiment and overcome obstacles
- Builds self-esteem and confidence
- Inspires children to participate in science and technology
- No matter what the child's subject interest, FLL offers an opportunity for engagement. Whether it is by creativity, technology, or research, FLL dares children to test, explore, expand, or completely change thoughts and approaches for different sciences each year.

## How to Register as a FLL Volunteer

To become a FLL Volunteer, contact the FLL Partner in your area. A list of FLL Partners can be found on the *FIRST* website at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/regionalcontact.aspx>.

In addition to the above, please visit our Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) and register as a Volunteer at: <http://www.usfirst.org/vims>.

## What is *FIRST*® Tech Challenge?

*FIRST*® Tech Challenge (FTC®) is a robotics competition for grades 7 to 12 and is based on a sports model. Teams of approximately 15 students are responsible for designing, building, and programming their robots to compete in an alliance format against other teams. The robot kit is reusable from year-to-year and is programmed using a variety of languages.

Teams, including Coaches, Mentors, and Volunteers, are required to develop strategy and build robots based on sound engineering principles. Awards are given for the competition as well as for community outreach, design, and other real-world accomplishments.

FTC® is about teaching students the value of hard work, innovation and creativity. It goes beyond competition by teaching teenagers the importance of working together, sharing ideas, and treating each other with respect and dignity.



## How to Register as a FTC Volunteer

To become a FTC Volunteer, contact the FTC Partner in your area. A list of FTC Partners can be found on the *FIRST* website at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/regionalcontact.aspx>.

In addition to the above, please visit our Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) and register as a Volunteer at: <http://www.usfirst.org/vims>.

## What is *FIRST*® Robotics Competition?

*FIRST*® Robotics Competition (FRC®) is a unique varsity Sport for the Mind™ designed to help high-school-aged young people discover how interesting and rewarding the life of engineers and researchers can be.

FRC challenges teams of young people guided by their Mentors to solve a common problem in a six-week time frame using a standard “kit of parts” and a common set of rules. Teams build robots from the parts and enter them in competitions designed by Dean Kamen and a committee of engineers and other professionals.

*FIRST* redefines winning for these students by rewarding them for excellence in design, demonstrated team spirit, Gracious Professionalism, maturity, and the ability to overcome obstacles. Scoring the most points is a secondary goal. Winning means building partnerships that last.

What is unique about the FRC program?

- It is a sport where the participants play with the pros and learn from them
- Designing and building a robot is a fascinating real-world professional experience
- Competing on stage brings participants as much excitement and adrenaline rush as conventional varsity tournaments
- The game rules and challenge is different every year

## How to Register as a FRC Volunteer

To become a FRC Volunteer, please visit our Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) and register as a Volunteer at: <http://www.usfirst.org/vims>.

## **FIRST® Championship**

The *FIRST* Championship is the culmination of the season for all programs. Currently held in the Edward Jones Dome and Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri in April, more than 600 robots compete on multiple fields.

The *FIRST* Championship is, by far, the biggest *FIRST* event of the year. It is a coming together of programs and combines the FRC Championship, the FTC World Championship, the FLL World Festival and the Jr.FLL World Festival Exposition under one roof.

More information can be found on the *FIRST* website at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/first-championship>

## **How to Register as a *FIRST* Championship Event Volunteer**

To become a *FIRST* Championship Volunteer in St. Louis, Missouri, please visit our Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) and register as a Volunteer at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/vims>

You can find the *FIRST* Championship event under the drop-down state list for “Missouri”.

## Section 3 - Coaches and Mentors

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Mentors and Coaches are the keystone of our programs. The descriptions below outline the definition of *Coach* and *Mentor* for each of *FIRST*'s four programs: Junior *FIRST* LEGO League, *FIRST* LEGO League, *FIRST* Tech Challenge, and *FIRST* Robotics Competition.

### Junior *FIRST* LEGO League

#### Jr.FLL Coach

Coaches guide teams through their challenge, which includes creating a LEGO model with a motorized part and making a 'Show Me' poster that explains what the team learned. They keep teams on track and ask "leading questions," but they are mainly there to make sure the children have fun.

#### Jr.FLL Mentor

Mentors, at the Jr.FLL level, help Coaches organize events as well as find resources and events in their area.

### *FIRST* LEGO League

#### FLL Coach

An FLL Coach provides support to his or her team and guides them in completing the season's Challenge. The Coach asks questions, encourages the team to explore options, promotes teamwork and participation by all members, exemplifies Gracious Professionalism, reinforces FLL's Core Values, and commits to having fun.

#### FLL Mentor

An FLL Mentor has a certain expertise a team may need. The Mentor may contribute their expertise through instruction, guidance to the team, or serve as a resource on a one-time or multiple-time basis. Mentors may be experts on the yearly challenge theme.

## **FIRST Tech Challenge**

*\*\*The FTC program does not distinguish between the roles of a Coach or Mentor\*\**

An FTC Coach/Mentor works with his or her students by helping them to develop skills and to design and build a successful robot. They guide teams through any issues they encounter, making them stronger in both their school and personal lives. They inspire students in ways far beyond science and technology and enable both students and adults to appreciate the value of sportsmanship, teamwork, and Gracious Professionalism in a way that might not be possible otherwise.

## **FIRST Robotics Competition**

FRC Mentors play a vital role in the success of their students. Mentors work extensively with team members during the build season, designing, building, and fabricating a functional robot for Competition. Their expertise is the catalyst for the team's and students' success.

FRC Mentors are the major distinction between the FRC program and other robotic competitions as they are wholly the professional role model for the student. Mentors engage and inspire students in ways far beyond science and technology. They enable both students and adults to appreciate the value of sportsmanship, teamwork, and Gracious Professionalism.

*Resources for Coaches and Mentors for each program can be found on our website at:*  
<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/coachesmentors>

“GO FOR IT! I was a little apprehensive at first, given the fact that I am not real computer savvy, but that is not even an issue. The most important thing is to be there for the kids; it's not about you. The kids are amazing in what they can and will accomplish. This program is designed for the kids, and designed for them to run with it, have fun, and hopefully gain an interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math...I believe we are cultivating our leaders for tomorrow.”

Greg T.  
FLL Coach

## Section 4

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### Event Volunteer Position Descriptions

Available Volunteer positions vary depending on the program and event. The following is a general description of most event Volunteer positions. Where indicated, Key Volunteer positions denote positions that require additional commitment and training. For a complete list of volunteer positions and descriptions, please visit the following website and select your program of interest:

<http://www.usfirst.org/community/volunteers/volunteer-roles>

**Ambassador (FRC)** – Ambassadors interact with teams and serve as role models for team students and Mentors.

**Ambassador Coordinator (FTC, FRC)** – The Ambassador Coordinator assists in facilitating the Ambassador Program, an invited guest program.

**Awards Assistants (FRC, FTC)** – Awards Assistants are responsible for the unpacking, cleaning, marking, organizing, and distribution of the various awards, trophies, and medallions awarded at Event Ceremonies.

**Crowd Control (All programs)** – Crowd Control Volunteers facilitate smooth pedestrian traffic flow throughout the facility, monitor the audience, and keep walkways and aisles clear and the crowd flowing. Effective crowd control is critical to a safe and well organized event.

**Field Assembly (FLL, FTC, FRC)** – Field Assembly Volunteers assist with assembly of the competition playing field(s) prior to the event.

**Field Control System Operator (FTC)** – Operates the field control system, field side. The Field Control System Operator plays a critical role in match play.

**Field Disassembly** (FLL, FTC, FRC) – Field Disassembly Volunteers assist with disassembly of the competition playing field after the event.

**Field Reset/Repair** (FLL, FTC, FRC) – Volunteers repair and reset the playing field after each team match. They play a critical role in ensuring smooth flow of match play and maintaining pace of the event and safety on the field.

**Field Supervisor/Manager** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Field Supervisor/Manager participates in field construction and maintenance; directs activity on the field to ensure smooth execution of the matches and plays a critical role in ensuring smooth flow of match play and maintaining the pace of the event.

**Field Tech Advisor** (FTC - Key Volunteer Position) – Works with teams and the technology on field to ensure connectivity between robots and field control.

**Floater** (All programs) – Volunteer Floaters provide assistance in various areas as determined by the Volunteer Coordinator. Floaters frequently help with last-minute tasks identified by event staff and Key Volunteers.

**Game Announcer** (FLL, FTC, FRC, Key Volunteer Position) – The Game Announcer works as part of a team with the Master of Ceremonies to energize the teams and spectators, generate and maintain interest, enthusiasm, and excitement throughout the matches. The Game Announcer gives play-by-play commentary for each match and plays a critical role in ensuring smooth flow of match play while maintaining the pace of the event.

**Head Referee** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Head Referee is responsible for training, directing, and supervising all Referees. Oversees all scoring processes and procedures and has final authority for decisions regarding team scores.

**Judge** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – Judges are responsible for selecting team and student award recipients for all judged awards.

**Judge Advisor** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – Judge Advisors are experienced Judges that advise the team of Judges at a particular event. They do not vote on award recipients.

**Judge Assistant** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Judge Assistant is responsible for assisting the Judge Advisor throughout the event, including providing computer support (word processing) and performing other duties as assigned.

**Lead Robot Inspector** (FRC, FTC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Lead Robot Inspector oversees and performs mandatory robot inspection and weigh-in processes to ensure compliance with robot construction rules.

**Lead Safety Advisor** (FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Lead Safety Advisor works with a team of Safety Advisors to increase the awareness of safety among all *FIRST* participants.

**Lead Team Queuer** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Lead Team Queuer is responsible for robot traffic between the Pit and the playing field. This individual trains Team Queuing Volunteers and stages and positions teams in preparation for the start of matches.

**Machine Shop Shuttle Driver** (FRC) – The Machine Shop Shuttle Driver is responsible for transporting team members from the venue site to the Machine Shop and back to the venue site for those venues where the machine shop is not physically located at the venue.

**Master of Ceremonies** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Master of Ceremonies (a.k.a. MC or Emcee) is the primary individual responsible for setting the tone of the competition. The Emcee creates and sustains an exciting and fun atmosphere throughout the event. The Emcee is the most visible presence at the event; she or he embodies the spirit of *FIRST* and is the consummate *FIRST* ambassador. The Master of Ceremonies works with the Game Announcer as a team to ensure a well-organized and thrilling event.

**Official Scorer** (FRC) – Using tools provided by *FIRST*, the Official Scoring individuals are responsible for recording points scored by teams as they occur during each game match.

**Pit Administration Supervisor** (FLL, FTC, FRC - Key Volunteer Position) – The Pit Administration Supervisor is responsible for setting up the Pit area, training the Volunteers, and managing all activities in the Pit including coordination of Pit Administration Table, team interface, and collaborating with Emergency Medical Technicians.

**Pit Administration Support** (FLL, FTC, FRC) – These Volunteers assist the Pit Administration Supervisor and will provide direction, assistance, information, and support to teams in the Pit.

**Pit Announcer** (FRC, Sometimes FTC) – The Pit Announcer’s primary duty is to call teams to the queuing area, and make general announcements via use of the public address system. The Pit Announcer works in collaboration with the Team Queuing Volunteers to facilitate adherence to team match schedule.

**Referee** (FLL, FTC, FRC) – Referees observe team matches, identify rule violations, and “call” them. Referees calculate the official score of the matches and participate in deliberations regarding contested calls. Referees work under the direction of the Head Referee

**Reviewer** (Jr.FLL) – Reviews the teams’ models and Show Me Posters, then collaborates with other Reviewers to assign awards to all teams.

**Robot Inspector** (FRC, FTC) – Robot Inspectors perform mandatory robot inspections and (FRC weigh-ins) to ensure compliance with robot construction rules. The Robot Inspectors determine inspection outcome decisions (pass/fail), may also perform random inspections, and work under the direction of the Lead Robot Inspector.

**Safety Advisor** (FRC) – Safety Advisors are involved in ongoing safety assessment during the entire event and work under the direction of the Lead Safety Advisor.



**Scorekeeper (FLL, FRC, FTC)/Field Power Control (FRC - Key Volunteer Position)** – The Scorekeeper/Field Power Controllers manage and operate the scoring and field control systems, input scores into the system from the Head Referee, print reports as needed and upload data onto the *FIRST* website as required.

**Spare Parts Attendant (FRC)** – This Volunteer team consists of a minimum of two individuals who are responsible for managing distribution of spare kit of parts materials to teams and loaning control system parts.

**Team Activities (Jr.FLL)** – Assist with setup and breakdown of team activity space, oversees activity area, and assists with an organized rotation of teams in and out of each activity.

**Team Escorts (Jr.FLL)** – Help keep event flowing and on time. Assists teams with finding table space as well as the way to other areas of the expo. This person should be very aware of the schedule and needs to be able to keep track of more than one thing at a time.

**Team Queuing (FLL, FTC, FRC)** – Team Queuing Volunteers are responsible for managing team traffic to and from the playing field. Team Queuers will stage and position teams in preparation for the start of matches.

**VIP/Media Registration and Information Table Attendant (All programs)** – The VIP/Media Registration and Information Table Attendant assists the VIP Reception Coordinator and Media/PR Coordinator with VIP/Media Registration and Information Table operations. This individual helps to facilitate a positive VIP and Media experience at the event.

**Volunteer Registration and Information Table Attendant (All programs)** – The Volunteer Registration and Information Table Attendant manages all activities at the Volunteer Information and Registration Table, and provides direction, assistance, and information to event Volunteers and attendees.

# Training

## Event Volunteer Training

*FIRST* provides appropriate training according to each Volunteer position. Some Volunteer positions require focused trainings that may last a day or two, while other positions can be learned at the event itself. If a role or procedure is not properly explained, please ask for further clarification.

## Event Volunteer Testing

Some *FIRST* Volunteer positions will require the Volunteer to complete a test before they are permitted to hold their volunteer role. The tests consist of information presented during training. Please check the detailed Volunteer position description to see if the position you are interested in requires testing.

## Team Volunteer Training

*FIRST* may provide program specific trainings, workshops, and/or informative material to Coaches and Mentors. Depending on your program, you may find this information through the *FIRST* website, on the *FIRST* forums, or through your regional contact.



*“Stay involved. As rewarding as one day volunteering with these students is, or as a season mentoring them is, it is completely incomparable to seeing the amazing growth of individuals and communities as they grow their FIRST programs over time.”*

Ashley C.  
FRC Mentor & Former  
Student

## Section 5 - Policies

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### ***FIRST* Overview on Safety**

*FIRST* asks everyone involved in *FIRST* programs to place the highest priority on safety, looking out not only for one's own safety but also the safety of others. Do not hesitate to speak up or act in the interest of safety.

### **Code of Conduct**

In accepting a Volunteer position with *FIRST*, you have a responsibility to *FIRST* and to your fellow Volunteers to adhere to certain guidelines for conduct.

When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow Volunteers to follow these standards of conduct, then our organization will be a better place to volunteer for everyone.

Generally speaking, we expect every Volunteer to act in a mature and responsible manner at all times. If you have any questions concerning any Volunteer conduct or safety rule, or any unacceptable activity at a *FIRST* event, please contact your Volunteer Coordinator.

- Treat everyone fairly, regardless of gender, ethnic background, religion, political belief, or economic status.
- Conduct yourself in a manner that demonstrates a positive role model and a responsible representative of *FIRST*.
- Consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of *FIRST* and of Volunteering.
- Respect the dignity of the participants and all other Volunteers.
- Whenever possible, ensure the safety of participants and Volunteers.
- Refrain from public criticism of participants or other Volunteers.
- Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, or otherwise offensive language while volunteering.
- Abstain from and discourage the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products in conjunction with the *FIRST* event.

Report any incident to your Volunteer Coordinator that might be contrary to this

Volunteer Standard of Conduct.

## **Dress Code**

Take your lead from the Volunteer Coordinator at the event and dress appropriately for the job you are doing. It is best to neither overdress or under dress. Casual clothing is fine, but we ask that your attire be neat and conservative.

Personal appearance should be a matter of concern for each Volunteer. If your Volunteer Coordinator feels your attire is out of place, you may be asked to leave your Volunteer place until you are properly attired.

## **Equal Opportunity**

*FIRST* provides equal Volunteering opportunity for everyone regardless of age, sex, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, marital status, sexual orientation, political belief, or disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions. All matters relating to Volunteering are based upon ability to perform the job, as well as dependability and reliability.

## **Minimum Age Requirement**

The minimum age requirement of a *FIRST* volunteer is **13 years old**. The Event Manager can accept volunteers who are under 13 years old as long as there is direct adult supervision of that volunteer by an adult who has responsibility for the child. *The Partner or Regional Director reserves the right to **increase** the volunteer age limit for their region at their discretion.* A minor must have a parent or guardian give written permission to volunteer. In addition, the *FIRST* [Consent and Release Forms](#) will need to be signed by a parent or guardian for any volunteer under age 18. You will not be able to screen them in the same manner as you do adults, but interviews and references are still appropriate for minors, if dictated by local standards.

## **Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policies**

*FIRST* intends to provide a Volunteer environment that is pleasant, healthful, comfortable, and free from intimidation, hostility or other offenses, which might interfere with Volunteer performance. Harassment of any sort — verbal, physical, and visual — will not be tolerated. Harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to: words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, physical contact, or violence.

## **Non-Solicitation Policy**

As a *FIRST* Volunteer, you may not accept any tips or gifts with a monetary value from clients, their families or friends. We do not want to create an atmosphere where our clients feel obligated to reward *FIRST* Volunteers for doing their job.

Also, you may not promote or solicit your own business enterprise, political agenda, or religious beliefs while Volunteering with us. Solicitation for a private charity is also prohibited.

## **Termination Policy**

*FIRST* is an at-will agency and has the right to terminate a Volunteer without cause, but will always consider the cause leading to the termination. In general, failure to adhere to policies of *FIRST* is cause for immediate release.

*FIRST* has the right to ask a Volunteer to leave the facility immediately.

Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination.
- Reporting for a Volunteer assignment under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Theft of property or misuse of agency funds, equipment, or materials.
- Misusing your *FIRST* identification badge.
- Falsifying statements on the application or during the interview process.
- Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts.
- Abuse or mistreatment of clients or Volunteers.
- Releasing confidential information.
- Unwillingness to support and further the mission of the organization.

## **Volunteers and Their Children**

A *FIRST* competition is a busy place, and volunteers should not bring children with them if they are too young to be at the event alone. Adult volunteers cannot be responsible for supervising their children while on duty. Children under the minimum age are welcome, but they must have appropriate supervision other than the person volunteering.

## Walk-On Event Volunteer

Volunteers who have not registered or registered late in VIMS and have not been screened must complete a *FIRST* Walk-On Event Volunteer Application Form and be placed with a screened volunteer throughout the event. Volunteers that walk-on should read and complete the [FIRST Walk-On Event Volunteer Policy and Application](#).

## Youth Protection Program

*FIRST* will strive to create an environment in which team members can grow, learn, and have fun with minimal risk of injury. *FIRST* will strive to inform everyone involved in its programs of its Youth Protection Program (*FIRST* YPP), and related resources, and provide assistance in meeting its standards.

*FIRST* expects all volunteers to adhere to all provisions of the *FIRST* YPP, including recommendations as well as requirements. *FIRST* recommends that the standards set forth by the *FIRST* YPP be applied outside of the U.S. and Canada to the extent possible. At a minimum, local regulations regarding youth protection should be complied with.

Prior to serving at any *FIRST* Official event, all event volunteers must register in the *FIRST* Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS):

[https://my.usfirst.org/FIRSTPortal/Login/VIMS\\_Login.aspx](https://my.usfirst.org/FIRSTPortal/Login/VIMS_Login.aspx)

Please visit the [FIRST Youth Protection Program webpage](#) for up to date materials including the *FIRST* Youth Protection Guide and **more information regarding the YPP screening/clearance process and what to expect.**



*“Of all of the things that people do with their spare time....bowl, play cards, or whatever; there is nothing that can compare to the rewards of FIRST. There is a volunteer position for people of any skill level. You can help an individual team or help at competitions; there is plenty of choice. You can even do both. Smile and everyone smiles back.”*

*Dave K.*

*FRC Mentor*

## Section 6 - Forms

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### **Conflict of Interest Form**

Each Key Position Volunteer is required to sign a Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Statement, such as Field Supervisors, Judges, Robot Inspectors, Referees, Scorekeeper/Field Power Controllers, Team Queuers, and Safety Advisors. A Volunteer who has a relationship with a team is not excluded from serving in these positions, but he/she must disclose any relationship he/she has with a competing team and agree not to bias any match process and/or results. [Conflict of Interest Form](#)

### **Consent and Release Form**

At or prior to a *FIRST* event, each participant must sign a “Consent, Release, Hold Harmless and Authorization to Reproduce Physical Likeness” form. The consent form is available when registering in The Volunteer and Information Matching. [Consent and Release Form](#)

### **Medical Incident Form**

All injuries or illnesses that occur at a *FIRST* event must be reported to *FIRST* through the Medical Incident Form that is available at each event. [Medical Incident Report Form](#)

### **Non-Medical Incident Form**

While *FIRST* desires every Volunteer and participant to receive fair and impartial treatment at all times, it does recognize that conflicts, misunderstandings, and other behavioral problems will arise from time to time. These concerns or problems may involve other event Volunteers, event participants, Mentors, or *FIRST* policies. Although most misunderstandings can and should be resolved on an informal basis, more formal provisions have been made to report and resolve incidents that may occur at a *FIRST* event.

The Non-Medical Incident Form is available at each event. [Non-Medical Incident Form](#)

## Walk-On Event Volunteer Form

In order for someone to volunteer as a Walk-On Event Volunteer they must adhere to the *FIRST* Walk-On Event Volunteer Policy and complete the [Walk-On Event Volunteer Application](#).

## Section 7 - Additional Opportunities and Resources

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### ***FIRST* Senior Mentor Program**

Demand for *FIRST* has increased so rapidly and organically that it continues to face a growing challenge to sustain the infrastructure needed to support this growth. Founded in 2005, the *FIRST* Senior Mentor program prides itself in its cross-program, grass-roots approach. Through outreach events, expositions and demonstrations they are able to attract new Volunteers, Mentors and Coaches to sustain and support both rookie and veteran teams.

The *FIRST* Senior Mentor program is a critical addition to an organization that needs people on the ground, working in a hands-on environment, filling in the gaps of support to whomever and whatever is needed. *FIRST* Senior Mentors, or FSMs, are both technical and non-technical individuals and bring with them a vast array of background and experience.

### **AmeriCorps VISTA Program**

The VISTA program at *FIRST* strives to match an AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer to our field structure in support of teams within underserved communities. The *FIRST* AmeriCorps VISTA mission is to create and expand the vision of *FIRST* by working in areas that have been deemed underserved: lower socio-economic communities, rural areas, and areas that have little to no support or resources to be able to easily access STEM initiatives. VISTAs work closely with all teams in their area as general support, with a strong focus in underserved populations.



## Section 8 - Contact Information

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### Feedback

An efficient, successful operation and satisfied Volunteers go hand in hand. The *FIRST* Volunteer Resources Department welcomes your feedback and suggestions.

Volunteer grievances are of concern to *FIRST*, regardless of whether the problems are large or small. Please communicate with us directly via one of the program volunteer support email links below.

### Mailing Address:

#### *FIRST*

200 Bedford Street

Manchester, NH 03101

**Email:** General inquiries at [volunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:volunteer@usfirst.org)

Program specific inquiries at

Jr.FLL Volunteer: [JrFLLvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:JrFLLvolunteer@usfirst.org)

FLL Volunteer: [FLLvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:FLLvolunteer@usfirst.org)

FTC Volunteer: [FTCvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:FTCvolunteer@usfirst.org)

FRC Volunteer: [FRCvolunteer@usfirst.org](mailto:FRCvolunteer@usfirst.org)

### Phone:

603-666-3906 or (800)871-8326

### Fax:

603 666-3907

### Hours:

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm ET

**For contacts in your area, please visit**

<http://www.usfirst.org>

