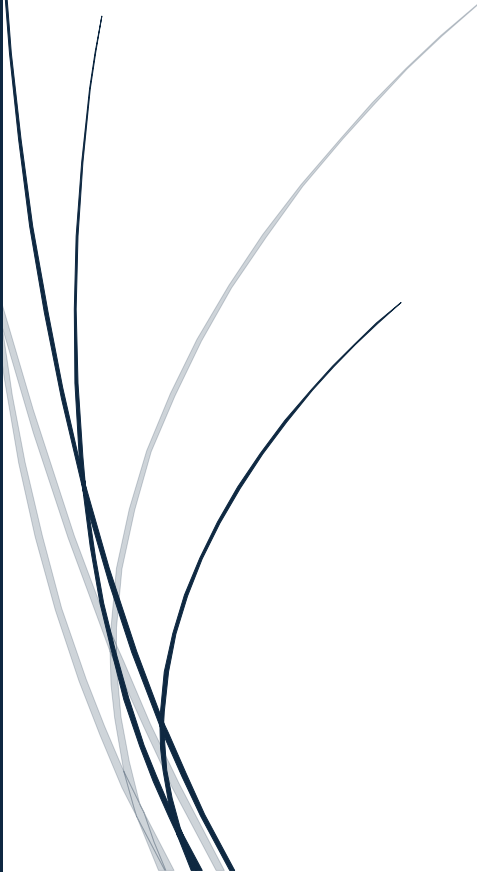




# Friends of the Fair Handbook

California Mid-State Fair Volunteer  
Program



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## Welcome

Hello and welcome to Friends of the Fair!

First off THANK YOU for your interest in becoming a Friend of the Fair (FOF). Friends of the Fair is a fun and interactive way to become more involved in the local fair and community. When becoming a Friend of the Fair you will get to help behind the scenes before, during and after the 12-day run of the California Mid-State Fair. There is something for everyone from being creative, to interacting with the vendors, and guests and so much more.

In this handbook you will learn more about the FOF Program. From the requirements to join, the different job descriptions, how to sign up, and all about your role in helping make the fair a better and brighter place for all our guests.

The Friends of the Fair is a fun group of people who love everything about the fair from the food, concerts, shopping, rides, and our personal favorite, all our exhibits.

The Friends of the Fair are an important part of making the fair so magical for all involved.

I look forward to meeting you and getting to know you as you start your journey with Friends of the Fair. I am always available if you have any questions or concerns about anything in this handbook or while you are working one of your shifts. All the fair staff and I are here to help in any way we can. You are not on your own.

Once again thank you for your interest and welcome to Friends of the Fair!

Sincerely,

Amanda Bean

[fof@midstatefair.com](mailto:fof@midstatefair.com)

Friends of the Fair Coordinator

# About Us

## California Mid-State Fair

"The Biggest Little Fair Anywhere!"

The Fair opened in 1946 and was first known as the San Luis Obispo County Fair. The California Mid-State Fair is held annually and runs for 12 days at the end of July. The Fair has hosted some of the biggest names in the music industry. Artists such as Aerosmith, Garth Brooks, Tom Petty, George Strait, Journey, Rod Stewart, Luke Bryan, Cardi B, Miranda Lambert, Dolly Parton, and Kenny Rodgers have all performed on our Main Grandstand Arena stage, among many others.

Facilities are located at 2198 Riverside Avenue in Paso Robles.

## History

"Friends of the Fair" is the California Mid-State Fair's volunteer organization. Established in 1995, the Friends of the Fair is a group of community members of all ages, who volunteer in many different areas before, during and after the Fair takes place.

## Friends of the Fair in a Nutshell

Volunteering with Friends of the Fair is an easy process and if you have any questions at any time the FOF Coordinator will be more than happy to help in any way. Our shifts are typically in 2-hour time spans, and you control your schedule, if you would like to work back-to-back shifts you are more than welcome to. Shifts during the fair are as follows.

### **Shift Options:**

1. Monday-Thursday
  - a. 4pm-6pm
  - b. 6pm-8pm
  - c. 8pm-10pm
2. Friday-Sunday
  - a. 12pm (noon)-2pm
  - b. 2pm-4pm
  - c. 4pm-6pm
  - d. 6pm-8pm
  - e. 8pm-10pm

Before and after fair hours will vary but will be sent out with notice ahead of time with all the specific details. All you need to do is fill out the FOF Application (see page 4) and you can join the Friends of the Fair.

## What is required of a Friend of the Fair

You can volunteer as little or as much as you want. That is up to you and the time you have available to volunteer. However, to qualify for a Friend of the Fair badge to enter the fair we require at least **10 hours** of volunteering, with you helping at one (1) workday or pre-fair shift and at least one (1) 2-hour shift during the fair. We have all sorts of hours during the fair, see days and hours above. However, we ask that if you commit to volunteering that you follow through with your commitment, as many of us will be relying on you. If there is illness or an emergency, you will be asked to contact the FOF Coordinator. Note: Volunteers under 16 years of age must always be supervised by an adult.

# Friends of the Fair Application

The Friends of the Fair Application can be found on the California Mid-State Fair website <https://www.midstatefair.com/fair/>. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on “Applications” find the one that says, “Friends of the Fair (Volunteer positions)” and click on the link. The link will take you to a Cognito Form, please fill out the form including all the required information, and your signature acknowledging that you read the release and waiver of liability agreement. Signatures must be by an adult for any volunteers who are under the age of 18. Please note that you will be required to fill this form every year to continue to volunteer with the Friends of the Fair.

## Main Contact

Please make sure the email address that you enter in the Friends of the Fair application is correct before submitting, as email is our preferred method of communication. Email communications will most likely take place starting in June when the fair season starts to ramp up. If you have a strong spam filter set up it is highly recommended that you add the FOF email into your contact list, the email is [fof@midstatefair.com](mailto:fof@midstatefair.com). That email will be your main contact leading up to the fair until the volunteer coordinator sends out additional contact information for during the fair.

During the fair your main contacts will be not only the volunteer coordinator, but also the heads of department in each of the different Exhibit’s areas. Before the fair you will be emailed a list of names and what areas they are in charge of so you know who to find for the beginning of your shift and who to get the most up-to-date information for your shift.

## SignUp Genius

Closer to the fair there will be two different SignUp Genius links emailed out to be able to pick the days, times, and jobs that you would like to work. We will have both a pre-fair and a during the fair SignUp Genius link.

Signing up is easy to do, all you have to do is click on the link that is sent and scroll through the different slots. Slots are organized by day, time slot and then job. Once you find what you want to sign up for you click the button “Sign Up”. You can pick one time slot or multiple shifts at the same sign-up session. SignUp Genius is available both on desktop and mobile. Depending on which one you are on, you may need to hit the “More” button at the bottom to be able to see all the dates.

Once you click “Sign Up” all you need to do is click “Save and Continue” and you will then be prompted to fill in some information including your name and phone number (only your name will be visible by anyone but fair staff. It is on this screen that you can also pick the quantity of people who will be working the shift if you are working with a friend or family member, just pick the number from the pull-down bar and when you are done, click the “Sign Up Now” button.

You will automatically be emailed a confirmation email with all your days, times, and locations. Closer to your shift you will be sent email reminders in case you forget to put your shift in your calendar.

In SignUp Genius you will also be able to delete your shift if needed, but we ask that you also contact us if you need to cancel your shift due to any kind of emergency.

If you need any help with SignUp Genius, you can always email or ask the volunteer coordinator for assistance.

# FOF Job List

Below is a list of the different jobs available, with a short job description, that you can volunteer. A more complete description can be found next in this handbook.

- **Workdays** - Workdays consist of cleaning, painting, building props for displays, moving props, and decorating elements.
- **Ag. Horticulture Dept.** - Assist staff and entrants on entry days, monitor building during Fair, and clerking on judging days.
- **Kids Day on the Farm** – Assist staff and kids in an interactive agricultural exhibit.
- **Floriculture Dept.** - Assist staff and entrants on entry days, monitor building during Fair, water plants as directed, and clerking on judging days.
- **Home Arts & Crafts Dept.** - Assist staff and entrants on entry days, monitor building during Fair, clerking on judging days, assist staff at demonstration sessions, and escort exhibitors to retrieve their entries the day after Fair closes.
- **Industrial Education Dept.** - Build props, paint, assist on entry and pick up days, and clerking/running on judging day.
- **Visual Arts Dept.** - Assist staff on entry and pick up days and help with displaying entries.
- **Information Booth & Lockers** - Assist Fairgoers by answering questions, providing directions, checking items into lockers, keeping records, and handling money for lockers.
- **Hospitality at Miss CMSF Pageant**- Greet and assist guests at the entrance before and during the Pageant, assist backstage before and during performances.

## Job Descriptions

- **Workdays** – These days consist of different projects that need to get done from arts and crafts to cleaning. Email messages will be sent out before workdays to let you know if there are any specific details including if there is anything we may ask you to bring along with you. We also have a post-fair workday which includes helping clean up and take down displays and get exhibits items ready for their owners to come and pick them up.
- **Building Monitor** – This is part of our pre-fair shifts. You can sit or walk around or a combination of both. You will basically be watching to make sure that people who don't look like they belong in the commercial buildings don't walk into and around the building as vendors are setting up, the vendors may have questions. If you are not able to answer them direct them to the vendor handbook on the fair's website, or the vendor office (the vendor office is attached to the main office and where the vendors pick up their packets.) More information specific to this job will be sent out closer to the days and time of the shifts.
- **Information Booth** – At the information booth you will answer questions and help fairgoers in many ways. There will be a book with all the important information that you will need to know to help answer frequently asked questions. In this location you will also be renting lockers to fairgoers. Information is posted on how to do this process, and it is very simple to do. This is also our “Lost Children” location so you will call event staff over and they will help reunite the child and parents. This is also the final stop of our scavenger hunt for both kids and adults. You will help them with their last stamp and be able to give them their prize.

- **Home Arts (Adults) & Home Arts (Youth)** – Our exhibits are split into an adult building and a youth building. These buildings hold arts and crafts, farm art, visual arts, baked goods, produce, and so much more that are entered by local children and adults to be judged and displayed. In the buildings you will be able to help answer patrons' questions and may be asked to help find the items that people turned in. The main priority is making sure that people don't touch or spill on any of the displays and assist the staff in the building in making sure that nothing is damaged or stolen.
- **Floriculture Building** – Like the other exhibits buildings your job will be very similar, but the items displayed in this building are cut flowers, succulents, and plants that have been entered into the fair by local adults and children. You may be asked on occasion to pull flowers that may have died, and to help water the live plants so they will be ready to be picked up at the end of the fair.
- **Kids Day on the Farm** – In this area you will be assisting staff members in different activities that the fair will be putting on for kids to be able to learn about the agricultural process. You will be told which part of the workshop you will be working on when you show up for your shift. You will get to work with kids as they enjoy their day at the fair.
- **Industrial Education Dept.** – This is not a specific sign up for shifts, but if you are interested in this area, you will receive a specific email with information from the head of the department on days when they are decorating, moving projects, and on the auction day.
- **Hospitality at Miss CMSF Pageant** – This is another area that is not a specific sign up, but if you are interested, email the FOF email and the coordinator will be able to help you get in contact with the people in charge to be able to get specific jobs, days and times including the Pageant, which takes place the first night of the fair.

## Map

Green – Livestock Office

Yellow – Industrial Education

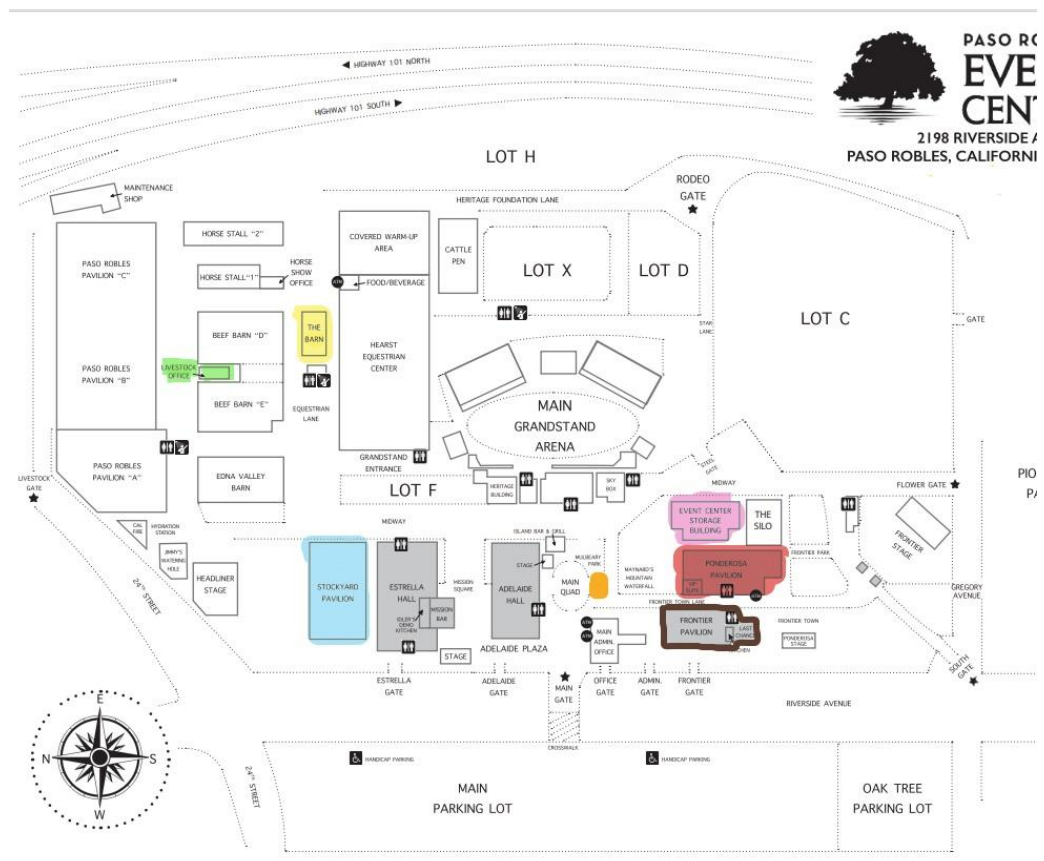
Blue – Kids Day on the Farm  
(Stockyard)

Orange – Information Booth

Pink – Floral Building

Red – Adult Building  
(Ponderosa Pavilion)

Brown Outline – Youth  
Building (Frontier Pavilion)





## Hour Tracking

We are using a time tracking system called “Track It Forward”. There are separate instructions for “Track It Forward”, but basically you can either download a free app and track your own hours, or you can use one of the two Kiosk locations to check in and check out of your volunteer shifts. One Kiosk will be in the Frontier Pavilion, (the Youth building see map the page before), and the other Kiosk will be in the Livestock Office (also will be shown on map above). The Kiosk in the Youth Building will be behind one of the fake walls along the back of the building. You will walk behind the curtain of our Friends of the Fair lounge where you will find the Kiosk as well as water and some snacks. The specific Kiosk instructions will be posted next to each Kiosk. Please make sure to report all volunteer hours, we need to not only track hours for your pass, but we also need to be able to report to the state the total number of our volunteer hours at the end of the fair. There will also be a box of denim aprons that say, “Friends of the Fair”. We would love for you to wear them while you are working, so feel free to grab one. You can take it home with you if you would like.

## Volunteer Incentives

The main incentive of being a Friend of the Fair is after signing up (more information about signing up for shifts can be found later) for at least **10 hours** of volunteer time each person will receive one (1) season pass to the fair that year. The badge will be printed with your name, photo, and credentials which can be used any day or time during the run of the 12-day fair. You can use your pass at any time, not just when you are volunteering. Many of our volunteers will come down to watch a free show, get some dinner and enjoy the fair in addition to working different shifts. This does not include free parking. There is a free shuttle service that you can use, for more information go to our website [www.midstatefair.com](http://www.midstatefair.com)

Friends of the Fair also has different achievement levels depending on the number of hours that one volunteers.

- 5-10 hours                      Cowpoke
- 11-19 hours                   Ranch Hand
- 20-39 hours                   Wrangler
- 40+ hours                     Trail Boss

Many of our Friends of the Fair choose to volunteer more hours than required because they enjoy all the different volunteer positions.

## Code of Conduct

While Friends of the Fair is a very fun and interactive volunteer position, our number one priority is always your safety as well as the fair goer’s safety.

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### What We Expect from You

#### 1. Be a Friendly Representative

- Greet everyone with a smile and a helpful attitude.



- Wear your volunteer badge and or apron while on duty.
- Reflect the values of community, kindness, and fairness.

## **2. Respect All People**

- Treat fairgoers, fellow volunteers, staff, and vendors with courtesy.
- No harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate behavior.
- Be inclusive and welcoming to all backgrounds.

## **3. Stay Safe**

- Follow all safety instructions and emergency procedures.
- Report hazards, injuries, or problems immediately.
- Don't handle dangerous situations alone—alert a staff member. (Please see main contact on page 4.)

## **4. Honor Your Commitment**

- Arrive on time and stay for your entire shift. (If you are riding the bus let the coordinator know so they can expect you a few minutes late.)
- If you can't make it, notify your coordinator as early as possible.

## **5. Stay Substance-Free**

- No drugs or alcohol during your shift.
- Don't volunteer under the influence.

## **6. Act Professionally**

- Keep phone use to a minimum while on duty.
- Dress appropriately for your role and the weather.
- Use fair property and supplies responsibly.

## **7. Maintain Privacy**

- Respect people's privacy and don't share sensitive info.

## **8. Children**

- If there are any volunteers under the age of 16, they are required to have an adult sign up with them.
- The adult is responsible for the child or children and please do not leave them alone at any point during your shift.

## **9. Ask for Help**

- If you face an issue, ask a staff member or coordinator for support.

- It is ok not to have all the answers, if you don't know something direct them to the best of your ability on where they may be able to get their question answered.
  - Speak up if something feels off—we're all in this together!
- 

### **🚫 Actions That May Lead to Dismissal**

- Harassment, theft, discrimination, or violence
- Unsafe or irresponsible behavior

## **What to Wear**

While you are on one of your shifts during the fair we request that you wear the Friends of the Fair apron that is provided as well as your fair badge that shows that you are a Friend of the Fair. We also highly recommend that you wear comfortable shoes during your shift as you may be walking around at times.

During workdays it is highly recommended that you wear clothing that you do not mind getting dirty. Jobs will vary but can include painting and other messy activities. Also, always check your email before any workday where specific information will be sent out as well as any items that we may ask you to bring along if you happen to have them available.

## **Safety**

If you are not familiar with the Paso Robles area, during the summer months when the fair takes place, there can be extreme heat. We ask that you bring a water bottle with you! Each of our FOF areas has a water refill station so you can make sure that you stay hydrated. Also, all the buildings have air conditioning and places to sit, so make sure you are taking care of yourself when it gets hot.

Please check the weather and dress accordingly to help prevent any heat-related problems. It is not uncommon for the public to overheat during the day. If you see anyone that looks like they are not doing well, please point them to a place to sit and notify staff who will be able to assist. If there is a true emergency do not hesitate to call 9-1-1 and let them know you are at the fair and your location. Medical personnel are on the grounds, and they will be dispatched to your location immediately.

