



2026 Guidelines for On Island - Volunteer Keeper www.southfox.org

There is a \$200 fee per person that helps to offset transportation costs to the island. Payment can be made at: <https://southfoxlighthouse.org/donate/> Please note your donation as a volunteer trip to the station.

Volunteers must be current on their membership dues, which is \$25 per year.

DUTIES ON THE ISLAND

While South Fox Island offers stunning scenery and a one-of-a-kind experience, this position requires full commitment to the work at hand. Responsibilities include maintaining the property and supporting visitors.

You can anticipate daily “work” days around 6 hours per day as well as assisting with meal preparation and clean-up. This still leaves time for walks to the west beach that are phenomenal and shouldn't be missed.

Projects will be varied. We welcome your help with landscaping, painting, cleaning, or other maintenance responsibilities, which will be defined by team leaders. Generally materials and tools are provided, but you are welcome to bring personal tools appropriate for agreed projects

Tour Guide - Please do some research/reading on the station and buildings on our website or Facebook so you are prepared to answer visitor questions.

It's important for you just to be present, which allows us to have buildings open for visitors and provide basic interpretation. You aren't expected to be an expert. You may or may not be the only group at the station during your stay. At times, we may have contractors or work crews who overlap with your stay.

TRANSPORTATION

We use Manitou Transit in Leland for transportation to the island, which takes approximately 1-1.5 hours. Due to weather, we cannot guarantee transit dates to/from the island. We may go a day early or be delayed a day so your schedule must be relatively flexible. As an offshore station, safety takes priority over schedule and trips are weather dependent. Please plan on a few days' variance by packing extra foods, medications, etc.

On the day of departure, you will drop your gear off at the dock area in Fishtown and then drive to the off site parking area and walk back. Allow 45-60 minutes if you are driving, or 30 minutes if you are being dropped off.

PACKING

Keep in mind that everything you bring must be loaded on the boat and hauled up the hill to the buildings. All trash must be stored and removed from the island so try to limit excess packaging. Avoid glass, if possible, due to weight and breakage potential.

Duffels with handles or Ikea bags that zip work nicely for loading/unloading. If not waterproof, consider packing contents (especially bedding) in plastic bags. Buckets with lids work well as do Rubbermaid-type containers both for transit and rodent-proof storage on-island.

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

Solar shower if lake temperatures are too cold for bathing.

Cell phone with solar charger; we do have a solar system and generators for recharging.

Flashlights and/or lanterns.

Hygiene products and toilet paper (stored in a mouse-proof container).

Water bottle.

Clothes: Include wind/rain gear and layers as water temps can make evenings cool, even in summer. Water shoes and/or an extra pair of shoes. Consider “old clothes” if you are painting or performing maintenance.

Bug spray, sunscreen, personal medicines, etc. There is a first aid kit on the island with the basics, but if you have special needs, please bring your own supplies.

Garbage bags

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QUARTERS

There are two full size beds in the Assistant Keepers House and two full size beds and two twin beds in the 1867 lighthouse. It is recommended that you bring a sleeping bag, pillow, and sheets to fit a full size mattress.

There is no running water or electricity, but there is an outhouse and we have a solar power system that we charge portable generators with.

There is a rechargeable shower that runs from the rain barrel. You can also bring a solar shower or take a bath in the lake. Plans are underway to build a shower.

No food is allowed in the Assistant Keepers House or the Lighthouse to help avoid rodent problems.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Food will be handled as a team. Typically one or two people buy the food for the week and members of the team split the expense and reimburse the buyers.

You will be responsible for helping prepare two or three group meals, unless you prefer to prepare your own meals. Please communicate any dietary needs to the team leader.

A small refrigerator with freezer, propane stoves, cooking equipment (pots, pans, plates, coffee maker, cutlery), and outside grill are available.

Breakfast: hot/cold cereal, milk, dried fruit, single serve fruit and applesauce, nuts, granola bars, eggs, pancakes, etc.

Lunch & Dinner: Canned or dried foods, refried beans, instant rice, pasta & potato mixes, peanut butter, tortillas, canned tuna, salmon, chicken, corned beef hash, beef stew, chili, canned vegetables, canned 3-bean salad, etc.

Snacks: bananas, chips, crackers, beef jerky

Beverages: coffee/tea/cocoa, water-flavor packets. We do have a water filtration system so you do not need to bring water.

SAFETY

You will be asked to sign a liability release before departure.

DO NOT use ladders unless there are others nearby to assist.. Please refrain from using chainsaws, setting up scaffolding or doing other potentially dangerous tasks unless you are properly trained **Work safe and play safe—always have a buddy!** We've never had a medical evacuation. Don't be our first!

Beware of poison ivy. While we treat the grounds around the buildings for poison ivy, we can't get it all. Dawn dish soap is recommended for washing up after working on the landscaping.

Check for ticks daily on yourself and companions: Tick-borne Lyme disease can generally be avoided by removing ticks within 24 hours.

In case of emergency evacuation: The station is within the Leelanau County 911 zone and emergency procedures will be reviewed upon landing at the island. Call 911.

Once a day, the team leader should plan on a quick text or call to the island coordinator on the mainland as a confirmation that you are "OK".

There is an **"Island Phone"** that is designated for communicating with the mainland. That phone number is **231-620-4612**. Texts are the preferred communication method to coordinate departure times.

DEPARTING THE ISLAND

Pack out what you bring. You are responsible for recycling and disposing of any trash you generate.

On your departure day, please have your gear staged on the beach so we can load and unload quickly.

Do not remove anything from the island that you did not bring.

This is truly a wonderful, historic, and scenic location. It will be a unique and rewarding experience that you will remember for a lifetime. The Light Station is a special place and a gem in the crown of Great Lakes maritime history.

Thank you for helping to preserve history! Enjoy!

If you have any questions, contact Your team leader, Linda Posler 231-735-3977, or Catherine Allchin 231-883-7645 southfoxisland@gmail.com