

Docents

Frequently Asked Questions



1. **What is a Docent?**

The word “docent” is derived from the Latin word meaning “to teach.” Docents are specially trained volunteers that teach our visitors about wildlife and conservation, help with special events, and greatly enhance the visitor experience through their interactions around the Oakland Zoo.

2. **Do I need to complete an application?**

Individuals interested in becoming a Docent must complete and submit an application by June 30, 2019. Applications may be submitted via email, fax, or regular mail.

3. **Do I need to attend an orientation meeting?**

Attendance at one of the orientations is mandatory for all applicants. Orientation meetings will be held May - August 2019. These orientation meetings will include an overview of the program, a zoo tour, and a short interview.

4. **When will I know if I have been accepted into the Docent Training Program?**

Applicants will be contacted within one week of attending orientation regarding the status of their application and acceptance into the program.

5. **When does the training begin?**

Training begins in August, 2019.

6. **How long is the training?**

The 14-week training program is scheduled for August - December, 2019. Classes will be held each Saturday from 8:30 am-3:00 pm.

7. **How much does the training cost?**

The training fee of \$100.00 covers all training materials, background check, volunteer shirt, nametag, and graduation bag.

8. **How many volunteer hours do I need to complete each year and how long must I commit to being a Docent?**

Docents must make a 1-year commitment. They must complete 70 hours of volunteer service and earn 4 continuing education credits each year. Oakland Zoo provides many opportunities to earn CE credits through various training classes, lectures, and “brown bag” talks.

9. **What if I can’t attend one of the Saturday training classes?**

Trainees can miss up to 3 classes and still be eligible to complete the training. All missed homework assignments must be completed and submitted within two weeks of the absence. Trainees should notify the training committee prior to the absence if possible.