

IS WORK CAMPING OR CAMP HOSTING FOR YOU?

Volunteer? Paid?
Where? When?
What is the difference?

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INTRODUCTION

Who are we? We have been RVing for over 20 years and have camped in 49 states including Alaska, 6 Canadian Provinces and 1 Canadian Territory-the Yukon. Along the way we have experienced the good, the bad and the ugly of all sorts of camping experiences.

In May 2023 we became full time RV travelers. In our 5+ years prior to “launching full time” we did a lot of planning and research. From the start we had decided that at some point we would augment our travels with doing work camping and/or camp hosting.

This presentation will help to provide insights into why we made this decision, how we went about finding “gigs” and what we have learned along the way.



PURPOSE OF THE PRESENTATION

- Share essential information
- Provide Resources for finding positions
- Relay our experiences (+ & -)
- Is it right for you? Your travel goals?



OVERVIEW- WHAT IS IT?

In our opinion there **IS** a difference between Camp Hosting & Work Camping:

CAMP HOSTING:

- **Typically volunteer in nature in exchange for a campsite at no charge based on a minimum amount of hours per week.**
- The work is routine, **self-directed with limited to no direct supervision** on a daily basis. You may be required to submit weekly reports.
- **Does not follow a set schedule per say.** You are “ON” when people check in, to make sites ready for the next guests, & to clean facilities and grounds
- Often **you are the only eyes, ears and voice of (limited) authority** in the campground. You also present the “positive image” for the campground.
- You may or may not be the only camp host, depending on size of the facility.
- If you are the ONLY camp host, you must **consider yourself available pretty much 24/7** and may be approached by guests at any time day/night.
- **You may or may not be responsible to collect camping fees**, sell firewood, etc. You may have to be able to physically carry/move heavier objects or run some power equipment.
- You **may or may not be responsible for cleaning** bathrooms, showers, emptying trash, replenishing supplies to public facilities

BENEFITS: more flexible schedule, work at your own pace and time schedule for the most part. Interact with fellow campers on a more relaxed basis. You get a free campsite (usually full hookup but not always especially out in the Western USA) and this can save you a bundle on camping fees. You get to know the local area very well and saves you money on gas from not having to travel with your RV. As a volunteer, you are viewed as a “special resource” and we feel more greatly appreciated for your services. YOU can negotiate time off, responsibilities, etc. easier as a volunteer.

You set your own pace! No need to get up and out by 7AM!

KEY POINTS

THESE TYPES OF POSITIONS ARE **NOT** FOR EVERYONE!



If you get
antsy camping
somewhere for
more than a
month....



If you are not a
“people person”
and prefer
solitude when
camping



If you do not
like dirty work
or cannot lift
or move
heavier objects

WORK CAMPING:

Work camping can take many forms depending on location, type of employer and size of facility. In general terms here are some of the things we found about work camping:

- You **may or may not have a completely free FHU campsite.**
- Some employers charge a reduced fee, some require a certain amount of hours worked to “pay off” your weekly campsite, some may offer actual lodging in the form of dormitories, small cabins, or may not offer any accommodations or campsite at all.
- Typically your **work schedule is set** with a time to report to work, time for meal breaks/breaks and time to leave. Hours per week vary but often a minimum of 25 to 40+ hours are the norm.
- **Some work camping gigs pay an hourly rate**, some only pay a stipend at the end of your commitment, some offer bonuses if you complete your agreed time length commitment.
- Work camping is **more like a “seasonal part time or full time job”** and has many of the same requirements. However, normally there are NO benefits like sick time, paid leave, vacations, insurance.
- You **may or may not be issued a uniform** or partial uniform (official T-shirt, hat, etc) to wear and be required to provide a standard of shorts, slacks, etc. i.e. khaki shorts, pants, etc.
- You may or may not have other work campers and **need to cover for each other** on days/weeks off.
- **Normally you have a set routine**, work duties, direct report to **person/supervisor on site.**
- You typically will fill out a **time sheet** or punch a clock.
- While you still represent the facility you **may or may not have direct interaction with guests depending on your work duties.**

BENEFITS OF EITHER TYPE



Save BIG \$\$
on camping
fees & travel
expenses!



Awesome
Locations to
Explore!



Keeps skills
fresh & body
strong



Meet great
people, feel
part of a
community

BEST FOOT FORWARD-HOW TO PREPARE!

Applying for a Camp Host or Work Camp position is just like applying for any other job you may have had!

- Create a resume; life skills & RV skills help!
- Apply
- Follow up in a timely manner
- Keep communication ongoing
- Get a contract! – at least an email outlining specifics including: your specific job duties, hours/schedule, campsite provided/location, start/end dates, any compensation, perks, etc.





RESOURCES & LINKS WHERE TO FIND POSITIONS:

Today there are MANY online resources to find Camp Host and Work Camp positions.

- **Simply search Facebook** for these groups! Prospective employers post there! AND you can also see feedback from current workers/host reviews on locations.
- **Subscribe to www.Workampers.com** *(we started a paid subscription a few years prior to use their tutorials, build our online resume, take their online workshops and use their tools!)*
- Inquire **directly at a campground!**
- Create a profile and **job seek on www.Volunteer.gov** *(this is where we found our NPS Moores Creek National Battlefield work camping position- we signed up for only a 2-month stay. These are all US Gov listings)*
- Most States all have **State Park Volunteer Portals**, you can apply online and select parks of interest.
- **KamperJobs.com** *(this is a free email, lists openings by state.*

OUR PERSONAL FINAL THOUGHTS AND EXPERIENCES:

- We prefer to work for **Government operations only**, not private campgrounds/corporate campgrounds
- **We prefer Camp Hosting** because of its flexibility of daily schedules. *(we are retired, we don't want to get to work by 8AM and punch a clock anymore!)*
- We lean towards positions where we do not have to **handle any cash/reservations or credit card processing**.
- We prefer to **volunteer rather than be paid**. *Volunteers seems to be less pressure, more relaxed and appreciated by employers*
- We ALWAYS get at **least a final confirmation email** from an employer stating the specifics of the position. When possible we sign an actual contract.
- We always have **fulfilled our duty obligations**, met or exceeded employer expectations and finished our commitments on a positive footing.
- We make sure to **keep communication lines open** during the hiring process, while on site, and even afterwards. This keeps "bridges" in great condition instead of burning them!



**WE HOPE THIS HAS HELPED
YOU DECIDE IF THIS IS RIGHT
FOR YOU! THANK YOU!**