



**GEORGIA
RADIO READING
SERVICE**

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Georgia Radio Reading Service—GaRRS!

You have joined a team of talented volunteers whose goal is to provide quality broadcasts of books, newspapers, magazines and other printed information for blind, visually-impaired, and print-impaired listeners in Georgia. We are pleased to add you to our volunteer corps and hope our association is long, fruitful, and enjoyable.

Our standards are high. With your time, dedication, and talents, we will maintain our reputation as one of the premiere radio reading services in the country. As a volunteer, you are the heart of GaRRS, whether you put in two, ten, or twenty hours each week.

GaRRS serves individuals who are blind, visually-impaired, and print-impaired. We strive to make available to our audience via the spoken word printed material at the same time it is available to sighted persons. We strive to understand and meet the needs of our listeners while ensuring the highest quality in our reading and presentation of programs.

GaRRS Volunteer Benefits

- ❑ Provide an invaluable quality-of-life service to others
- ❑ Network and establish friendships with other volunteers – by connecting in the studios, at a workshop or annual potluck, or via our private GaRRS Volunteer Facebook group.
- ❑ Keep up with current news and literature
- ❑ Practice and improve vocal and technical skills
- ❑ Attending workshops with industry professionals
- ❑ Where applicable, annual tax deduction for commute mileage to GaRRS

GaRRS Volunteer Responsibilities

- ❑ Be on time. Give advance notice to the Volunteer Manager (at least 48 hours when possible) if you cannot meet an obligation. Call or email if you will be late for a scheduled shift or appointment. Commitments are the lifeblood of GaRRS.
- ❑ Be part of a team. Be willing to accept supervision from the staff.
- ❑ Ask questions about anything you do not understand. If you are uncomfortable or unsure about the use of equipment, ask for help.
- ❑ Do not editorialize or make extraneous comments when reading. Read only the text. GaRRS is strictly a print-substitute service.

ABOUT GARRS

What We Do

The mission of the Georgia Radio Reading Service is to improve the quality of life for every Georgian who is blind, visually-impaired, or has difficulty with the printed word. Volunteer readers from across Georgia record approximately 200 different programs each month including essential local information, local and national newspapers, popular books, and an array of magazines and quality-of-life programming. The programming is broadcast 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and accessed by using a special radio, through our online webstream, by telephone, or by using a mobile app. Through these means we are able to provide our listeners with information, entertainment, and connections to their local communities.

Those We Serve

The GaRRS listening audience is as diverse as our programming. We provide our service free-of-charge to any resident of Georgia who is visually-impaired or otherwise print-disabled. Some listeners are blind from birth, while others lost their sight through illness, age, or accident. Some have retained sufficient vision to remain physically active but lack enough vision to read. GaRRS listeners also include senior citizens who have trouble reading and people with physical or mental impairments that make handling printed material difficult such as: macular degeneration, blindness or low vision, stroke, glaucoma, cataracts, retinitis pigmentosa, parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, dyslexia, and other reading disabilities.

How It Works

Our programming is provided free of charge through the generosity of our supporters and donors. Funding is also provided in part by contributions from listeners. Individuals can listen online, through a special GaRRS radio, over the phone, on Amazon Alexa devices, or through an app. To start listening, individuals must request a password to stream the broadcast online, or you can request a radio that will be sent to your home. We also have an extensive archive of previously-aired shows that can be accessed on our website.

Hours of Operation

Staff are available Monday through Friday 6:00 AM-5:00 PM and Saturday & Sunday 7:00 AM-3:00 PM. The office is locked after hours, but the recording booths are accessible for recording by a code if needed.

Staff

Executive Director – Rebecca Arayan, 404-685-2822 or rarayan@garrs.org
Volunteer Manager - Rachel Ruckart, 404-685-2823 or rruckart@garrs.org
Production Manager – Walter Frazier, 404-685-2824 or wfrazier@garrs.org
Office Manager – Karen Pennerman, 404-685-2832 or kpennerman@garrs.org
Producers – 404-685-2825
 Sam Lake – slake@garrs.org
 John Osgood – josgood@garrs.org
 Jasmine Seabron – jseabron@garrs.org
 Eric Singer – esinger@garrs.org

Location

GaRRS is located in the Georgia Public Broadcasting building.
260 14th St NW
Atlanta, GA 30318

Parking

From 14th Street, enter the driveway between the Georgia Tech Research Institute building and Georgia Public Broadcasting and approach the parking gate. After the entrance gate rises, proceed to the right and up the ramp into the garage. All visitors must park in the visitor designated areas on the 2nd level between the two elevator banks. All visitor spaces have a four-hour limit. GA Tech police patrol the garage and will ticket if you are outside of the 2nd level visitor parking area. If you will be visiting GaRRS for more than four hours, please ensure the Volunteer Manager gives you the proper parking pass to display on your car for the 5th and 6th level. Take the elevators clearly marked "GPB" to the ground floor and exit to your right. Take another right and follow the entrance hallway to the security desk located in the GPB Atrium. You will be asked to sign in, and security personnel will call GaRRS staff to show you to the office.

Volunteer Opportunity Descriptions

Board Member

Board members provide leadership and oversight to the organization. GaRRS has a Board of up to 15 individuals passionate about serving individuals who are print impaired. Officers include a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Board meets 6 times a year and is responsible for policy and the financial well-being of the organization.

Reading Positions

Although we attempt to make reading assignments based on a volunteer's interests, please note that we also must consider our current program needs as well as our assessment of what would be the best match for a volunteer's reading strengths. Most assignments described below require a reader commitment to GaRRS of once a week for two hours.

Book Reader

Book readers will read at least one episode per week of the book assigned to them. Missed episodes should be made up as soon as possible. GaRRS is proud to broadcast best-selling books while they are still current. The reading commitment is two hours one day a week.

Magazine Reader

GaRRS broadcasts recordings from more than 90 different magazines each week. Magazine readings air weekly. The commitment is two hours one day a week.

Newspaper Reader

GaRRS airs daily recordings of several national and state newspapers. Some newspapers air daily and some air weekly. The time commitment is two hours one day a week.

Show Host

This assignment will include conducting interviews with guests, voicing standard lead-ins, intros and outros, providing your own reading materials and a commitment to provide the show each time it airs. This opportunity is a rare special assignment; commitment is flexible.

Utility Reader

The utility reader will read printed materials as assigned by the Volunteer Manager. This is a fun position if you enjoy reading a variety of materials. You also can sample the diverse programs we offer by substituting for readers who are absent. Utility readers commit to two hours one day a week and read whatever is needed that day.

Recruitment, Selection and General Volunteer Procedures

Recruitment

Many of our volunteer applicants come to us via referrals from our current volunteers. We also recruit volunteers via churches, synagogues, conferences, social groups, voiceover professionals as well as via social media – Facebook, NextDoor, Reddit, Instagram, etc.

Applications

Interested volunteers can apply via our online application on our website at <https://garrs.org/volunteer/become-a-volunteer/>– or they can download an application and email or mail it to the Volunteer Manager.

Auditions

After completing the application, potential volunteers are invited to schedule an audition via SignUp.com. To move forward as a volunteer, applicants must successfully complete an audio recording audition which takes about 20 minutes. The audition includes a 100-word pronunciation test, a short newspaper article, and a short fictional excerpt. The audition is a recorded exercise and takes place at our studios. We also allow auditions to take place remotely via cell phone recordings.

Training

Training is provided via a Training Video, written Training Guidelines, and in-person instruction. Upon the successful completion of Training, volunteers have the option of choosing the assignment that best suits their schedule and interests from the available volunteer opportunities. Both in-studio and remote recording options are available.

Scheduling

Volunteer readers may record in one of our five studios. The booth calendar is available online at <https://teamup.com/ks7b1e41b740455f21> and shows available times and space. **The recording booths on weeknights and weekends are first come, first served. We do not reserve booths after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays or anytime on the weekends.** And sometimes the booth schedules get mixed around – volunteers should feel free to go in another booth or to check with staff if they are early and want to switch assigned booths. We appreciate that our volunteers are flexible!

To reserve a sound booth between 6:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. please contact the Volunteer Manager.

Logging Hours

Volunteers record their hours on the sign-in sheet in the office, and they also have the option of recording hours using BetterImpact.com. Please be sure and track your hours in your BetterImpact.com account if you require them for tax purposes.

Feedback

GaRRS strives to give feedback twice per year. Volunteers are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Manager if they would like specific feedback. The Volunteer Manager may offer additional training and suggestions to increase recording quality. Volunteers may also be asked to change assigned readings if they are not a good fit for their current program.

Absences & Lateness

Volunteers are critical to GaRRS' mission. If you cannot make your volunteer shift for whatever reason, please notify the Volunteer Manager as soon as possible.

Resignation

We ask that volunteers who resign provide as much notice as possible via an email to the Volunteer Manager.

Termination

Those volunteers whose performance is unsatisfactory are told of their deficiency, counseled on improving their work, and then re-evaluated. Failure to conform to the quality standard over time may become grounds for termination.

Recognition

Volunteers are recognized for superior service in monthly newsletters, during volunteer appreciation week, and at an annual potluck.

Emergency Procedures

Fire & Fire Drills

Whenever there is a Fire Alarm it should be treated as a REAL Fire. Begin evacuation procedures immediately.

- Remember to assist or direct other employees, guests or visitors to evacuate the building with you as quickly as possible.

- Proceed to the sidewalk and/or parking lot on Holly Street away from the patio. Do not assemble on the sidewalk located in front of the facility on 14th Street. Do not assemble between the GPB and GTRI buildings driveway. All personnel must move at least 250 feet away from the building.
- If you see smoke or fire and the fire alarm does not go off, PULL the nearest manual fire pull box station to activate the fire alarm system.
- In the event you smell smoke, immediately call Security (404-685-2300 or extension 2300).

Inclement Weather

The safety of our volunteers is a priority for GaRRS. We realize there are emergency situations caused by inclement weather. Should inclement weather occur during the weekday, GaRRS will make the determination regarding what time the business will close. The office will be open for recording, but staff will not be present to assist with issues. During all business closures, any volunteers who can work remotely will be encouraged to do so.

All efforts will be made to notify volunteers of any programming changes or office closures will be made as quickly as possible. Examples of communication include phone calls, emails, and public service announcements.

Tornados

The Designated Assembly Area inside of the building is the hallway next to Studio C in the basement level.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Audio/Video/Visual Image/Interview Release Policy

Volunteers grant permission to the Georgia Radio Reading Service (GaRRS) to take and use audio, video, or visual image content of them; and/or interview them and use their quotes and information provided; and/or use any audio/video/visual image/concept ideas produced by them, which they represent that they took or otherwise created and which are not an impermissible or otherwise unlawful copy, duplication, or reproduction of another person's work. Content includes, but is not limited to, text, software, scripts, graphics,

photos, digital images, drawings, renderings, voices, sounds, music, videos, audio recordings, audiovisual combinations, and any associated or accompanying written communications or descriptions.

Volunteers agree that GARRS owns the audio/video/visual image/ interview content collected and all rights related to such content. Volunteers further agree that without notification, GaRRS, its employees, and agents may use the audio/video/visual image/interview content at its sole discretion in any print, electronic, or other media or format, including, but not limited to, websites, print or digital publications, presentations, educational courses, videos, film, promotions, broadcasts, advertisements, posters, video signage, radio, social media, as well as for certain approved uses.

Volunteers waive any right to inspect or approve the finished images or any printed or electronic matter that may be used with them. Volunteers further agree to participate in and/or provide audio/video/visual image/interview content to GARRS without the promise of compensation or remuneration in any form whatsoever, and volunteers waive any claim for compensation or remuneration of any kind for GaRRS' use or publication for the audio/video/visual image/interview content.

Volunteers release GaRRS and any firm authorized to publish, broadcast, and/or distribute a finished product containing the audio/video/visual image/interview content, from any claims, damages, or liability, including attorneys' fees, that volunteers may ever have in connection with the taking or use of the audio/video/visual image/interview content or material used with the audio/video/visual image/interview content, including, but not limited to, any and all claims for copyright infringement, invasion of privacy, defamation, false light, or misappropriation of name, likeness, or image.

Use Restrictions Policy

Volunteers agree not to reproduce, retransmit, disseminate, sell, offer for sale, distribute, publish, broadcast, modify, circulate or commercially exploit the information available through their services in any manner or for any purposes without the express written consent of GaRRS, nor to use the information available made available to them by GaRRS for any unlawful purpose.

Confidentiality Policy

Volunteers agree to respect the confidentiality and privacy of listeners and contacts of the Georgia Radio Reading Service. Confidential information includes but is not limited to plans, employment information, social security numbers, dates of birth, news story sources, staff members, volunteers, and listeners' phone numbers and any other information they might be privy to in the course of their volunteer role. Any information of a confidential nature that volunteers are exposed to must remain confidential and is not to be discussed with anyone outside of the radio station. Any breach of trust of confidentiality will result in the termination of the volunteer.

Intellectual Property Protections

Volunteers agree that all copyright rights, patent rights, trade secret rights and other intellectual property rights, associated with any ideas, concepts, techniques, inventions, processes or works of authorship created, prepared, produced, authored, edited, amended,

conceived, or reduced to practice by Volunteers on behalf of, or for the benefit of, the GaRRS or its affiliates at any time (the “Works”) belong exclusively to GaRRS or its affiliates. GaRRS, its successor and affiliates shall retain all right, title, and interest in and to all Works, and any inventions (patentable or otherwise), discoveries, improvements or copyrightable works (collectively, “Intellectual Property”) that Volunteers create in connection with the performance of Volunteers’ services for GaRRS. At GaRRS’s expense, Volunteers shall provide all reasonable assistance requested by GaRRS in its registration and/or protection of the Intellectual Property.

Drug Free Policy

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is not allowed on GaRRS program sites. Additionally, volunteers may not be impaired by any substance while serving. Such action may result in your immediate dismissal from the volunteer position.

Equal Volunteering Opportunity

GaRRS 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.

Harassment Policy

GaRRS is committed to a work environment that is professional and harassment-free for all employees and volunteers. Harassment includes, without limitations, verbal, physical, visual, and innuendo. It also includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact and other verbal or physical conduct, or visual forms of harassment of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment or is used as the basis for unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for employees and volunteers. Volunteers should report any issues to the Executive Director or Board Chair.

Liability Policy

Volunteers agree, that in connection with their involvement in activities undertaken for, and the participation and support of the Georgia Radio Reading Service (GaRRS), they, for themselves, their heirs, assigns, executors, and administrators release and discharge GaRRS, its Board of Directors, its employees, agents, and volunteers from all claims, demands, and actions for injuries to release and hold GaRRS, its Board of Directors, its employees, agent, and volunteers harmless from any cause or action, claim, or suit arising therefrom. They hereby attest that their attendance and involvement in such activities is voluntary, that they are participating at their own risk, and that they have read the foregoing terms and conditions of this release.

Non-Smoking Policy

Smoking by our employees, volunteers, clients, or vendors in any interior offices or spaces of any building occupied by GaRRS is not allowed. There is also no smoking permitted within 20 feet of any entryway, vent, or doorway to interior buildings.

Whistleblower Policy

Each director, volunteer, and employee of GaRRS has an obligation to report (a) questionable or improper accounting or auditing matters, and (b) violations and suspected violations of GaRRS' Code (hereinafter collectively referred to as concerns). Anyone reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates an improper accounting or auditing practice, or a violation of the Codes.

All reported concerns will be forwarded to the Board of Directors. The Board shall be responsible for investigating and making appropriate recommendations with respect to all reported concerns. Directors and other volunteers should submit concerns in writing directly to the President of the Board of Directors. Contact information for the President of the Board may be obtained through the Office Manager.

The Board of Directors shall address all reported concerns. The President of the Board shall immediately notify the Executive Director of any such report. The President of the Board will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the concern within five business days, if possible. It will not be possible to acknowledge receipt of anonymously submitted concerns.

Reports of concerns, and investigations pertaining thereto, shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. Disclosure of reports of concerns to individuals not involved in the investigation will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.