

## **Aquarium Stranding Response Team Volunteer Requirements**

- Must be at least 18 years old
- Must be willing to commit to at least six months of service
- Must be able to commit to one on-call shift a week (same five hour shift each week)
- Must be able to arrive at the Marine Animal Care Center within 20 minutes of being called on your shift
- Must be able to lift and carry 25 pounds and assist with lifting and moving larger loads (re: lifting a 700 pound dolphin into the back of a pickup truck)
- Must be able to hike up to 5 miles on beaches carrying gear
- Must be able to work in extreme conditions including hot/cold weather, bugs, on water, and occasional long hours
- Must be comfortable and confident driving a large pick up truck and complete City of Virginia Beach Defensive Driving Course.
- Must be able to attend all mandatory trainings (one training every six to eight weeks)
- Must be comfortable around water
- All volunteers are required to go through a six week trial period before they receive t-shirt and official placement on Stranding Response Team

### **Volunteer Duties:**

- Respond to dead and live marine mammal and sea turtle strandings throughout the state of Virginia (at least 95% of stranded marine animals are dead upon stranding)
- Assist with marine mammal and sea turtle necropsy (animal autopsy), including note taking, sample collection, necropsy and clean up
- Assist with live animal rehab including food prep, tank maintenance, live area clean up and live animal transport
- Errand running and other duties as assigned

### **Perk/Benefits**

- Trainings that provide a wealth of knowledge about sea turtles and marine mammals
- Monthly Stranding Response Team updates, quarterly Aquarium newsletter and annual Stranding Response Team newsletter
- Membership privileges and discounts after 100 hours of service
- Annual volunteer party
- ID Badge and T-shirt after six week trial period
- Participation in Annual Dolphin Count
- Unique lifetime experiences and memories

A \$25 donation is required of all new volunteers joining the Stranding Response Team. This donation will help cover some expenses including t-shirts, sweatshirts, protective gear and other items as necessary. This is a non-refundable donation and is due immediately upon joining.