



MISSION POINT LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER HANDBOOK

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Point Lighthouse is dedicated to providing educational experiences relating to the maritime history of Old Mission Peninsula and the Great Lakes region. The mission of the Lighthouse Keeper Program is to engage the public in the interpretation and restoration of the lighthouse by offering opportunities to invest personal time and dedication.

HISTORY

Mission Point Lighthouse served as an active lighthouse from its establishment in 1870, until it was replaced with an automated offshore light in 1933. The lighthouse was vacant from this time until 1948, when a group of township residents came together to purchase the lighthouse for the community. Since then, caretakers have lived in the lighthouse and various remodeling and restoration projects have occurred. The lighthouse and park are owned by the Peninsula Township and residents of the township are given extra attention and free entry to the upstairs.

In its most recent history, the Mission Point Lighthouse has been added to the National and State Historic Register, and has been opened to the public for tours. The Lighthouse Keeper Program began in 2008, and has welcomed a group of individuals who have invested time, energy, and passion into Mission Point Lighthouse. By joining the keeper program, you are following in line with many who have dedicated time to the lighthouse in the past years. You make it possible for the lighthouse to remain open to the public, to keep moving toward restoration and continuous preservation, and to interpret the site for other individuals from around the world. We couldn't do it without you!

KEEPER IMAGE AND IDENTIFICATION:

Keepers should always strive to provide visitors to the lighthouse with a positive experience similar to what they would find at other historical sites open to the public. Clothing may be casual and comfortable, but suitable for greeting visitors. Shorts and T-shirts are appropriate for warm weather, but the following items are **not**: tank tops, any clothing with holes or too tight, bathing suits, pajama pants, bare feet or flip-flops. You will be given a keeper nametag to wear during the working hours of your stay. Please wear it straight at front right or left chest area. You are required to wear the nametag at all times when you are on duty then return it upon leaving.

GENERAL CONDUCT OF KEEPERS:

NO smoking is permitted inside the buildings. Smoking outside must be done well away from all buildings and all waste materials must be picked up and disposed of properly. NO alcoholic beverages are allowed on the premises, either inside or outside the lighthouse. NO pets are permitted inside the lighthouse, except service animals, and only to the 2nd floor not in the tower. Keepers cannot have pets staying at the lighthouse, *no* exceptions.

SCOPE OF DUTIES

As a lighthouse keeper, you have the unique opportunity to leave a lasting impression on the lighthouse in several ways. Lighthouse keepers are required to greet the public, have them sign the guest book and provide basic historic information about the lighthouse, run the admissions/gift shop counter, and complete or report minor building and grounds maintenance. The primary duty during the open season [daily May – October, and weekends (Friday-Sunday) in November] will be to run the gift shop and ensure that all guests have a positive experience while visiting Mission Point Lighthouse. During slower times, keepers will be assigned projects according to their talents and interests. Some who stay at the lighthouse would prefer to paint, organize, clean, or to prepare interpretation materials. Keepers are welcome during the off-season and then no retail duties are needed. It is helpful to visitors if the Lighthouse Keepers are familiar with the area and are patrons of local businesses. We encourage you to use the services and products of the local businesses.

Keepers report to and work under the Lighthouse Manager and will be in charge of the gift shop and admissions during **all** open hours. The Lighthouse Manager is a part-time employee of the Peninsula Township. Our retail setup includes tax on all items and is very simple to learn. You are expected to follow the tasks as you are asked and trained by the manager. Lunch is handled by relieving each other from the gift shop for a break. *No food* is allowed on the gift shop counter for visitors to see and keepers must not eat in front of the visitors. Beverages are certainly acceptable. This is a common policy for any retail situation. Daily cleaning of lighthouse public areas is necessary, including sweeping, vacuuming, insect removal, and window washing as needed. Do not touch the artifacts without training. Keepers must be comfortable with speaking to the public, be able to climb all the stairs a few times a day, efficiently handle money, understand all retail duties and work long hours. The Lighthouse Manager prefers Keepers that are able and willing to make good judgements regarding visitors and leave the lighthouse in better shape than when they arrived. Any suggestions and information for the Lighthouse Manager can be written down and placed on the black tray on the dining room shelf. This is the best place to put non-urgent correspondence for the Manager.

THE MUSEUM & TOWER:

The keepers will let the visitors know the first floor is FREE to view and there is a small fee to go upstairs for a self-guided tour. Keepers will emphasize safety precautions for the visitors when they proceed up into the tower. This is done by simply saying, “after you have viewed the 2nd floor museum, then you can climb the tower steps and the last set of steps are *up like a ladder and down like a ladder.*” Daily cleaning of the tower is necessary and required, including washing dirty windows, wiping down the railings, sweeping, washing and vacuuming of all tower steps. All exhibits must be checked and maintained a couple times daily. Any damage of the building or exhibits must be immediately reported to the Lighthouse Manager.

GIFT SHOP:

Keepers will be trained on all gift shop procedures, including receiving packages, pricing, stocking, and operating the Square Point-of-Sale system. Daily cleaning of the gift shop is also necessary. The gift shop can become very busy and crowded, especially during the summer months. It's necessary to have two keepers for the busy season. One person to float through visitors, check the 2nd floor and tower occasionally, while the other runs the cash register and helps folks in the gift shop. You are to relieve each other for lunch. The Peninsula Township controls the hours of all the businesses in the area and you must abide by the advertised hours.

The gift shop does not sell any beverages or food. Visitors are encouraged to bring their picnic items and use the park picnic tables. The only public water fountain is near the picnic tables between the lighthouse and the log cabin, outside the white fence.

PHONE DUTIES:

A telephone is provided in the Keeper's residence. This number is 231-223-7324. One handset needs to be on the shop counter during open hours. Keepers are required to answer the lighthouse phone (say: *Mission Point Lighthouse*) and try your best to answer the caller's questions in a pleasant manner. When giving directions to someone driving to the lighthouse, feel free to mention that the park restrooms are in poor condition and they should stop at the local Peninsula Market on Center Road and use their public restroom. Any questions you cannot answer are directed to the Lighthouse Manager. Do not let a visitor leave the gift shop with the lighthouse phone.

Those who need to make long-distance calls are asked to charge them to their personal phone cards or reverse the charges, as the Lighthouse does not have long distance service. You may bring your cell phone, but the reception is not always the best at this location. WIFI is free and works well.

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS MAINTENANCE:

If there is time during the busy season, keepers will be responsible for buildings and grounds maintenance throughout the day. This may include painting, sweeping down buildings, changing light bulbs, building or fixing displays, carpentry, etc. Many weeks are extremely busy in the gift shop and museum and there is no time for other outside tasks. The gift shop and museum are the number one priority for the keeper. But we appreciate that you stay busy during the open hours. Finding things to do is necessary too. If this is unclear, certainly contact the Lighthouse Manager for direction and suggestions. The program is designed to meet your skills, and abilities during your week stay. Please inform the Lighthouse Manager of any special projects you may want to work on during your stay, so that we may have the appropriate materials ready upon your arrival.

The only public restrooms at the park are the two outhouses between the parking lot and the lighthouse. The park outhouses are **NOT** the responsibility of the keepers. The maintenance person paid by the Peninsula Township maintains the outhouses and the park trash cans. However, if they need servicing, the keeper needs to call the maintenance person. There are however, additional large rolls of toilet tissue in a plastic container in the garage. If a visitor tells you that it is out, you can put a large tissue roll in the outhouse prior to the maintenance service's arrival.

WEDDINGS:

There are weddings at our park weekly. The Peninsula Town Board has determined that the Lighthouse is **no longer** to reserve areas on the lawn and beach front for any type of event. This is a public space. Couples are welcome to have your wedding on the beach, or next to the house when the gate is unlocked. But it will have to be a **spontaneous brief event with few people in attendance**. Of course, no cost involved as well. There are, however, park regulations that need to be followed by any users seeking to hold a gathering in the property. For example, large structures such as tents, benches, and rows of chairs are **not** allowed. *All members of the wedding party MUST respect the other park visitors and have NO authority to break park rules or control other park or lighthouse visitors' behavior or experience.* Keepers must contact the Lighthouse Manager or police if wedding party does not comply with the rules. Donations to the lighthouse are encouraged from the wedding party.

KEEPER ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:

Keepers will be given at minimum one day off *per week stay*. We have Monday scheduled as the day off. This can vary during the summertime due to scheduling of local volunteers. If you feel that you will need more time off, please make arrangements with the Lighthouse Manager prior to your arrival. Keepers are expected to arrive at 12:00 noon on your scheduled arrival date in order to complete orientation procedures. On the day of your departure, please plan to work at the gift shop until 12:00 noon while the Manager prepares to orient the new keepers.

LIVING QUARTERS:

You will find the living quarters to be cozy and comfortable during your stay. They include the kitchen, living room, bedroom and bathroom. The quarters are well equipped with dishes, cooking utensils, appliances, cable TV, WIFI, washer and dryer, and a gas BBQ grill. **Keepers are not allowed to use the wood burning fireplace.** Fireplace is for décor only. All paper products (bathroom tissue, paper towel, napkins) and cleaning supplies are provided. Please notify the Lighthouse Manager if we are running low on any products. The keeper must not allow visitors to use the lighthouse keeper toilet. Also, **discretion must be used in letting visitors view the keeper's quarters.** DO NOT mention viewing the keepers' quarters to EVERY visitor.

The quarters are heated, but unfortunately not air-conditioned. Fans are provided for your use. If you choose to leave windows open due to the summer heat, **you must remember to shut them if the weather changes to rain.** Please keep in mind, the keeper is trusted to be responsible for maintaining a historic building and carelessness is unacceptable.

WHAT TO BRING:

Keepers provide their own food and toiletries. You will also need to bring bed sheets (we have 2 twin beds), blankets, pillows, towels, and washcloths. Mosquito repellent is recommended – after all, we are surrounded by beautiful 200 acres of woods by the water!

GENERAL INTERIOR MAINTENANCE & APPEARANCE:

Please keep the display areas and living quarters as neat and clean as possible during your stay. There are always surfaces and corners of the lighthouse to clean. Everything must be clean when the keeper leaves and the new keeper arrives. The goal of the keeper is to leave the house in better shape than when you arrived.

GENERAL EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE & APPEARANCE:

One of your duties is to keep the exterior of the lighthouse grounds clean and attractive. Keepers must check the lighthouse grounds for trash twice a day and put it in a trash can. We have one can in the garage for trash and one for recycled materials. All boxes need to be flattened. Please water the outside planters with the watering cans provided. Keepers are also asked to keep the sand/dirt swept from walks, porches and all steps. This is necessary to maintain the appearance of the facility and to insure the safety of all.

Because the light station is a registered historic site, the use of campers and tents is not permitted. Keepers' vehicles must be parked in the designated lighthouse parking area. You are limited to two vehicles on the site.

Please do not leave personal items such as beach towels, chairs, shoes, rafts and grills on the porch and sidewalks or in other outdoor areas of the lighthouse. You can use the garage for storage of chairs etc. There is a gas grill on site for keeper use and must be returned to the garage when not in use. We want to ensure that our visitors have a clean, uncluttered view of the lighthouse in their photographs.

LIGHTHOUSE SECURITY:

All exterior doors must remain locked at all times for the house and garage. The only exterior door of the lighthouse that is ever left unlocked is the front entrance and only during the hours the lighthouse is open to the public. Upon arrival each couple will be issued one set of keys. A keeper should be in possession of his or her keys at all times to avoid being locked out of the lighthouse. The park is open daily until 10pm, so in the summer months there typically are many visitors in the park for the sunset and sometimes it is past 10pm. The Lighthouse Manager controls the alarm system remotely. Usage of the alarm varies during the year. The Park Commission cannot be responsible for items that may be lost or stolen.

LOST & FOUND: There is a small L&F plastic box under the cash register for small items and to keep notes. Any larger items are placed in the garage large L&F plastic container. It is the township policy to hold items for at least a season or year. Do not make judgments on items, contact the manager with questions. It is the Lighthouse Manager's job to handle any complicated situations in regards to L&F. Contact the manager with further questions.

THE HISTORIC COLLECTIONS:

The collections of Mission Point Lighthouse are defined as all accessioned historical materials. Through these collections the Peninsula Township preserves and interprets the Mission Point Lighthouse property and its significance to the economic and social development of the Old Mission Peninsula.

LIGHTHOUSE RESTORATION:

The Peninsula Township Park Commission has ongoing restoration projects in accordance with the Secretary of Interiors' Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. No alterations to the facility, temporary or permanent, are permitted without prior written approval of the Park Commission.

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Keepers who receive inquiries from the press or other media about the Mission Point Lighthouse or its programs should refer all the inquiries to the Lighthouse Manager.

GUESTS:

The Park Commission understands that friends and relatives are very interested in this unique experience and may want to visit you while you are here. Because Keepers are very busy during the hours the lighthouse is open, the Board has established some guidelines for guests:

There is no room for overnight guests and it is **not** allowed. Friends and relatives who visit during your stay are directed to park their vehicles in the regular parking area. Friends and relatives are **not** permitted to help in the gift shop or tower during hours of operations, under any circumstance. Keepers are asked to meet with and entertain their guests **after** the lighthouse closes at 5:00 P.M.

OUR KEEPER PROGRAM:

Upon completion of reading this handbook, if you feel this sounds like a good fit for you, GREAT! Please then complete the application and submit all the required information. If you prefer to be a keeper in the off-season, not when the store is open, please apply and mention your talents to help with the up-keep of our little lighthouse.

It is the Lighthouse Manager's choice and discretion for placing the keepers on the scheduled keeper calendar.

Note from the Lighthouse Manager: My best keepers for the open season understand their position is 60-70% retail duties and the rest is hospitality responsibilities. Keepers need to be high energy, friendly, accommodating and retail-minded. Mission Point Keepers need to be interested in the Old Mission Peninsula area and be helpful with questions from tourists. Keepers need to remember their work is first and foremost for the benefit of the visitors and the preservation of the lighthouse. This position is *not* about you. I want the keepers to be able to make good judgements when issues arise and contact me immediately with difficult issues and questions. Keepers go through training with me and need to ask questions if things are unclear. I want keepers that don't cause me more work and that leave the house in better shape than when they arrived.