



2025 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® Navigator Handbook

***Creating the world premiere ballooning event with service,
dedication, kindness, and teamwork.***





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WELCOME LETTER FROM AIBF STAFF

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This Navigator Handbook has been prepared to inform you of AIBF's history, philosophy, volunteer program policies and procedures, as well as the benefits provided to you as a valued Navigator.

The policies in this Navigator Handbook are to be considered as guidelines. AIBF, at its option, may change, delete, suspend or discontinue any part or parts of the policies in this Navigator Handbook at any time without prior notice as business, legislation and economic conditions dictate.

Any such action shall apply to existing and future Navigators.

No statement or promise by a Team Leader or AIBF Staff Person, past or present, that is in conflict with this manual may be interpreted as a change in policy nor will it constitute an agreement with a Navigator.

This Navigator Handbook replaces (supersedes) any and all other or previous Navigator Handbook, volunteer handbooks or other AIBF policies whether written or oral.

Updated 2/25/2025. This version supersedes all previous versions.



Welcome to the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Thank you for joining the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta team of Navigators! You are now part of a group of volunteers, totaling over 1,000 people who make a great contribution to the sport of ballooning, the city of Albuquerque and the state of New Mexico.

You are now part of an organization that has an outstanding reputation for hospitality and safety. This can be accredited to everyone in the organization. While you are volunteering at Balloon Fiesta your gifts and talents will further improve the environment and quality of the event for all.

This handbook will provide answers to questions you may have about the AIBF Navigator program, policies and procedures. Please take the opportunity to read and understand this manual as you will be responsible for its content.

Let's have a great 2025 Balloon Fiesta!

Sincerely,

Tracey Hawkins
AIBF Navigator Manager



WHAT IS THE NAVIGATOR PROGRAM?

Why “Navigator”?

Navigate [nav-i-geyt]

verb (used with object), navigated, navigating.

1. to move on, over, or through (water, air, or land) in a ship or aircraft: *“to navigate a river”*
2. to direct, guide or manage a traveler on its course.
3. to ascertain or plot and control the course or position of (a ship, aircraft, etc.).
4. to pass over (the sea or other body of water), as a ship does.
5. to walk or find one's way on, in, or across: *“It was difficult to navigate the stairs in the dark”*

Navigator [nav-i-gey-ter]

noun

1. a person who navigates

Balloon Fiesta has evolved from being an annual local festival to that of a world-renowned, world-class event. Balloon Fiesta Navigators play a crucial role in ensuring that the hundreds of thousands of Balloon Fiesta guests have a world-class experience. As a result, the guest experience can no longer be left to chance.

No matter what you do in your role as a Navigator – whether you pack pilot packs, service breakfast, drive a shuttle cart, fill propane, or any of the numerous roles available – you are each in the role of offering outstanding guest (customer) service. Your guests may be the pilots, the general public, or other Navigators. Regardless – each of them deserves nothing less than world-class service.

As part of this effort, AIBF volunteers were re-named as **AIBF Navigators**. The word **Navigator** embodies the role we expect you to play for our guests – offering guidance, showing them the way, and confidently leading them to everything they need to have an outstanding experience.

While we still fully recognize and honor that you are volunteering your time, effort and skills, we hope that you step fully into the role of **Navigator**, offering guidance, leadership and confidence to guests, pilots and crew, fellow **Navigators** and staff. Wear the title proudly and show the world that Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Navigators are as world-class as the event.

Definition of an AIBF Navigator

A Navigator is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. A Navigator must be officially accepted and enrolled by Balloon Fiesta prior to performance of duties. Unless specifically stated, Navigators shall not be considered employees of the agency.



Additionally, a Balloon Fiesta Navigator is an individual who, beyond the confines of paid employment and normal responsibilities, contributes time and service to assist the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta in the accomplishment of its mission.

Role of the AIBF Navigator Manager

The Navigator Manager acts as the overall Navigator Manager and is responsible for recruitment and assignment of new Navigators, dissemination of training and information to Navigators, development and enforcement of Navigator policy, and implementation of program developments as determined with or by the Executive Director and the Event Director.

The Navigator Manager is Tracey Hawkins.

For questions about assignment, training, discounts, perks, accommodations, Volgistics or anything generally related to Navigating please contact: thawkins@balloonfiesta.com and 505-821-1000 x113

Role of the AIBF Board of Directors

Board members serve as volunteer leaders of AIBF. The objective of the board is to partner with and provide guidance to the Executive Director in developing and managing mission-related activities, operations, fiscal management, growth, development and public relations for the event and organization.

While the Board may oversee programs, plans and the progress of various operations, they are not involved in staff or volunteer management, or operational decision-making.

If you have questions regarding the AIBF Board, please contact the Navigator Manager.

Volunteer Classifications

Navigator

Individuals who have completed the Navigator application process, been assigned to a Navigator team, and completed all modules of the Navigator Basic Training. Navigators are under the direct supervision of an AIBF Staff Person, who may or may not be assisted by a volunteer Team Leader or Team Leaders. Navigators are critical to every area of operations, providing guest services, administrative services, balloon coordination and safety, set-up and logistics, on 45 different teams.

Team Leader

Navigators in a management, supervisory or assistant role to an AIBF Staff Person. Team Leaders fulfill many roles, including the interviewing and screening of potential team members, scheduling, area operations, and team management. To find who the Team Leader for your assigned team is, please reach out to the AIBF Staff member you are assigned too.

Chase Crew – Not Navigators

While chase crew members volunteer their time in assistance to the various pilots in Balloon Fiesta, they are not considered Navigators or AIBF volunteers. AIBF will assist in recruiting chase crew for pilots participating in the event, but does not supervise, train, schedule, manage or assume any responsibility for the performance or actions of that person. Chase Crew members do not qualify for Navigator benefits. There is a Navigator team, the Chase Crew Committee, dedicated to connecting potential crew with AIBF Pilots.



Service Group – Not considered Navigators

AIBF may contract with various organizations to handle various areas (admissions, parking, merchandise sales, etc.). Those organizations may utilize other affiliated groups as fundraising labor to operate these areas. AIBF does not supervise, train, schedule, manage or assume any responsibility for the performance or actions of these groups. Service groups do not qualify for Navigator benefits.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Navigator Code of Conduct

Navigators are representatives of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Your actions reflect not only upon yourselves but also upon Balloon Fiesta, its board, staff and the other Navigators. Navigators should maintain the highest standards in the conduct of their activities so they and the Balloon Fiesta continue to be above reproach.

Violations of the code of conduct, or any Balloon Fiesta policy/procedure constitutes misconduct and may be subject to immediate dismissal by any AIBF Staff member.

Imagine planning your dream vacation. You hope that everything will meet your expectations. You are, after all, spending your hard-earned dollars for the experience. Imagine, perhaps, that this is the biggest vacation you've taken in a long time – maybe ever.

This could be true for the hundreds of thousands of guests, hundreds of pilots, crew, Navigators, sponsors or media who come to Balloon Fiesta. And whether this is their first visit or their 49th, they should have the same outstanding experience. It's up to you to make that happen for each person you come in contact with.

Each Navigator is responsible for conducting his or her duties and representing the organizations with integrity. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Putting the safety of all first.
- Treating everyone with respect, fairness and consideration regardless of race, gender, age, religion, ability, or sexual orientation.
- Working cooperatively as a team member with staff and other Navigators. If for some reason you cannot make your shift, contact the appropriate individual and let them know.
- Maintaining confidentiality of non-public information, and not acting upon such information for personal gain.
- Being truthful and accurate in all communications, records and reporting.
- Remembering this is a family event - keep language and behavior appropriate.
- Keeping personal opinions and actions separate from those made as a representative of AIBF. Remember when wearing your Navigator t-shirt, jacket, or other apparel you are representing the organization. If you are not "on duty" and do not wish to respond to guest inquiries, please dress in street attire. If you are wearing Navigator apparel, please do your best to get them the assistance they need, regardless of your duty status.
- Keeping AIBF staff informed of progress, concerns and problems within the area(s) volunteered.



- Avoiding any situation where personal interests are, or appear to be, in conflict with Balloon Fiesta interests. We can outline and enforce policies and procedures, but the “culture” behind an organization is what makes it positive – or negative. Below are the dos and don’ts we hope you’ll embrace to generate a positive culture of outstanding service and comradery.

Do

- Treat everyone with respect and compassion.
- Understand their enthusiasm and, at times, frustration.
- Make the best possible choices you can to ensure the guest is valued and served.
- Greet each session with “beginners’ eyes” and see the event as if you’re attending for the first time.
- Take care of yourself. Eat. Rest.
- Ask for help. We do our best to fully staff every Navigator team.
- Buddy up. Please use the buddy system in all storage areas.
- Remember what makes Balloon Fiesta enjoyable for you and reconnect with that.
- Have fun, make friends, and enjoy the event!

Don’t

- No tolerance policy for stealing, lying, being under the influence of any kind while on shift, and demonstrations of severe anger.
- Ignore safety procedures and policies. Safety is the number-one priority at the event.
- Lose patience when asked the same question by guest after guest. It’s their first time asking the question. If you find that the same question is asked repeatedly, then consider that we’re not doing our job in informing the guests and keep a list to give to the Staff Person who oversees your area.
- Bad-mouth, vent or gossip about Balloon Fiesta, its staff, board, other Navigators, or anyone else at the event. This includes online and in person interactions. We understand that things don’t always run smoothly, and you might have suggestions for staff. Please remember that everyone is doing their best.
- Work too many shifts. It doesn’t serve anyone if you’re overworked.
- Party too much. While Balloon Fiesta is a great time to reconnect with your friends, you’re still expected to be at the top of your game for each and every shift. Take it easy on the parties, late nights and alcohol.

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES

Insurance for Navigators

In general, AIBF insurance covers incidents caused by Navigators while they are performing volunteer duties for AIBF.

AIBF will provide an accident insurance policy that will cover Navigators’ medical expenses incurred when performing duties as an AIBF Navigator up to \$10,000. However, AIBF does not provide primary health/medical insurance and Navigators should turn to their personal health and medical insurance if injured.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs can seriously impair an individual’s judgment and reactions leading to an increased risk of accidents and injuries occurring. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of all Navigators by having clear rules in place regarding use and possession of alcohol and drugs.



No Navigator will

- Report or try to report for work when unfit due to alcohol or drugs (whether legal or not)
- Be in the possession of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace
- Supply others with drugs
- Supply others with alcohol while on shift as a Navigator
- Consume alcohol or drugs or abuse any substance while on duty.
- Whether a Navigator is fit for work is a matter for the reasonable opinion of management.

In addition, Navigators must

- Ensure they are aware of the side effects of any prescription drugs.
- Advise their Team Leader or a member of the staff immediately of any side effects of prescription drugs, which may affect work performance or the health and safety of themselves or others.
- Make the team lead or AIBF Staff member aware immediately if they are asked to perform a task they should not due to medication or health concerns of any kind.

When there is a reasonable belief that an individual is under the influence of alcohol or drugs on reporting for work or during the course of work, the Navigator will be dismissed from service immediately. In addition, possession of, or dealing illegal drugs on the premises will, without exception, be reported to law enforcement.

Confidentiality

Navigators are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a Navigator, whether this information involves a single staff member, Navigator, sponsor, guest, or other person or involves overall Balloon Fiesta business.

Conflict of Interest

All Navigators shall immediately disclose any business, commercial or financial interest where such interest might be construed as being in real, potential or apparent conflict with their official duties to AIBF.

Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy

All Navigators have a right to work in an environment free from discrimination and harassing conduct, including sexual harassment. Harassment or discrimination on the basis of a Navigator's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship or any other characteristic protected by applicable law is expressly prohibited under this policy.

Any Navigator who believes he or she is being harassed or discriminated against, or any Navigator who becomes aware of harassment or discrimination, should promptly notify his or her Team Leader or AIBF staff. If the Navigator believes that the Team Leader or AIBF staff is the harasser or discriminator, or if a Navigator is uncomfortable discussing harassment or discrimination with his or her Team Leader or AIBF staff, the volunteer should contact AIBF's Director of Operations or Executive Director.

Upon notification of a harassment or discrimination complaint, a confidential and impartial investigation will be promptly commenced and will include direct interviews with involved parties and where necessary with Navigators who may be witnesses or have knowledge of matters relating to the complaint. The parties to the complaint will be notified of the findings and their options.



This policy also expressly prohibits retaliation of any kind against any Navigator bringing a complaint or assisting in the investigation of a complaint.

Recruitment and Equal Opportunity

AIBF does not discriminate against, nor does it tolerate discrimination against or harassment of, any person based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, citizenship or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Volunteers are recruited based upon their skills, abilities and suitability to perform Navigator responsibilities.

Speaking on Behalf of Balloon Fiesta

If approached by the media under any circumstances, direct them to our Navigator Manager. All media requests will be filtered through our Media Relations Group. If you are asked for an interview by the Navigator Manager you are permitted to conduct the interview so long as you abide by the code of conduct outlined in this handbook.

Intellectual Property

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta name and logos are registered or copyrighted property and may not be used without express written permission.

Social Networking

Navigators are not required to act as AIBF advocates with personal social networking accounts. However, Navigators are required to abide by the code of conduct online as well, which includes NO bad-mouthing, venting or gossiping about Balloon Fiesta, its staff, board, other Navigators, or anyone else at the event.

Navigators are in charge of their own presence online. However, if Navigators do want to engage with support campaigns or other networking as it relates to AIBF, we ask that they follow these guidelines:

- *Respect* - Follow the Code of Conduct included in this policy manual. Any time a Navigator presents themselves as a representative of AIBF, they are expected to operate within these guidelines. Failure to do so may impact their status and position as a Navigator.
- *Disclosure* - If Navigators type, post or share anything about AIBF, it is the Navigator's duty to disclose their relationship to the organization. Use your real name, identify that you are an AIBF Navigator, and be clear about your role.
- *Responsibility* - Remember if you're online, you're on the record.
- *Common Sense* - The lines between public and private, personal and professional can be blurred in social networking. By identifying yourself as AIBF Navigator, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about Balloon Fiesta online.

Gratuity or Tips

AIBF **prohibits** the solicitation of any gratuities and doing so is grounds for dismissal. It is preferred that unsolicited gratuities are not accepted. However, if refusing the gratuity will offend the guest, the Navigator may accept the gratuity and turn it in to the Team Leader.



Reimbursements

Navigators are not authorized to spend money on behalf of AIBF without prior authorization in writing. Pre-authorized expenses incurred while fulfilling assigned duties may be reimbursed with submission of an Expense Reimbursement Authorization Form (see appendix), signed by the appropriate parties.

AIBF does not reimburse Navigators for mileage, parking expenses, meals, uniform cleaning services, refreshments, child care, telephone or postage expenses for work done at home, special clothing, or additional personal automobile insurance premiums necessitated solely by volunteer involvement.

DRESS CODE

Navigators working at the Balloon Fiesta are expected to dress appropriately for the event environment, maintaining good grooming and personal cleanliness. A neat and professional appearance is expected at all times.

Navigator shirts are provided each year. It is preferred that Navigators wear this shirt throughout the current event, but Navigator/Volunteer shirts from previous years may also be worn.

Navigators may wear jeans, slacks, and shorts as appropriate for their area and tasks, but these and all other clothing items must be clean and neat. Torn or tattered items are not allowed.

Navigators are asked to wear their jacket, as it serves as a uniform, identifiable by the guest. Jackets from past years may also be worn but must be clean and neat.

Various teams may require specific uniform items such as safety vests. Please discuss the proper attire for your job with your Team Leader.

Identification

All Navigators should have AIBF identification while performing their duties. Navigators will also be required to wear i.d. badges, indicating their name, title, and other pertinent information. These forms of i.d. must be worn at all times while working an assigned shift. These badges may also serve as access credentials, allowing entry into such locations as the Navigator Hospitality Tent or other areas. Public Safety may refuse entry to Navigators trying to enter without the appropriate identification.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Applications

All prospective Navigators must complete a Navigator Application form. Annually, applications will open February 1 and remain open until August 15 or until positions are filled. This registration includes a waiver, contact information for the applicant, and emergency contact information. If registration is incomplete, the applicant cannot be placed. Applicants will not be allowed access to the event nor issued their Navigator Packs without a completed registration. This also includes uploading a photo for security purposes. Pictures must be of the head and shoulder area, no sun glasses, and no hats. Applicants are not considered Navigators until the application has been accepted and assigned by the Navigator Manager.



Assignment

Navigators will be recruited without regard to gender, handicap, age, race, sexual orientation, or other condition. However, some assignments will require certain physical abilities. Recruitment will also focus on supporting the mission of AIBF, as well as that of leveraging community resources and maximizing the trend of “volun-tourism” – visiting tourists interested in volunteering.

Upon review of the application, the Navigator Manager might contact and/or interview the applicant, then either assign them to a team, or forward them to the appropriate AIBF Staff Person or Team Leader for an additional interview. Upon being assigned to a team, the Navigator will then receive a formal welcome email notification.

Confirmation of active status may only be given by the AIBF Navigator Manager. No Navigator shall begin performance of any position until they have been officially accepted for that position and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork.

No Navigator shall serve on more than one team, unless authorized by the Navigator Manager prior to the current year’s event. This practice is discouraged and only allowed in special circumstances.

Team transfers must also be approved by the Navigator Manager. If requested by the Navigator, this should be done in advance of the event, to accommodate any area-specific training and to assist the Team Leader in accurate scheduling. But team transfers may happen during the event in select instances.

What You Can Expect

AIBF will Provide

1. A suitable assignment based upon your interests, skills and availability, as well as AIBF needs.
2. Orientation and training to help you perform your job.
3. The opportunity to work as part of a team, to contribute to the community and event, and to be recognized for your contribution.
4. The support you need to do your job, including necessary equipment, supplies, work space and helpful supervision.
5. The opportunity to give feedback about your AIBF volunteer experience.
6. The chance to grow and develop as a volunteer through participation in other AIBF activities, special training events, meetings and more responsible positions.
7. Proper supervision in an appropriate work setting.

Your responsibility as a Navigator

1. Be realistic and candid in accepting your assignment, taking into consideration your interests, skills and availability, as well as the needs of AIBF.
2. Learn your volunteer assignment as well as you can by completing all required training, asking questions and staying in touch with your Team Leader.
3. Contribute to AIBF by being reliable and dependable in doing your job and working with AIBF staff and fellow Navigators.
4. Follow all policies and guidelines of AIBF, observe all safety procedures, and engage in appropriate public behavior at all times.



5. Develop your skills as a Navigator by participating in training and development opportunities. Learn as much as you can to do the best job possible.

Youth Navigators

Navigators under 18 years of age may fill certain Navigator positions. Staff members will evaluate the abilities and competency of all Navigators and assign appropriate, safe activities as availability and conditions permit. Youth Navigators shall not be placed in any position involving alcohol sales, crowd management or areas which may endanger them.

Youth ages 14-18 years old may volunteer in limited, specific group activities and settings under the direct supervision of adults (e.g., a group of scouts under the direction of leaders) upon approval by the Team Leader for that area.

Youths merely accompanying an adult Navigator are not considered a youth volunteer nor do they receive any Navigator benefits. All Navigators under the age of 18 must have a waiver signed by a parent/guardian.

Emergency Contact and Medical Condition Information

It is the responsibility of each Navigator to regularly update their personal contact information and emergency contact information in their Navigator profile, available at <https://balloonfiesta.com/Volunteers-Existing>.

When appropriate, Navigators with life-threatening or serious health conditions should notify AIBF staff and Team Leaders of the condition and what, if any action should be taken in the event of emergency.

Voluntary Work Agreement

Navigator positions are “at will” and neither the Navigator nor AIBF have entered into a contract regarding the duration of the relationship. Navigators are free to terminate their position at any time, with or without reason. Likewise, AIBF has the right to terminate, transfer, make changes in the nature of the volunteer assignment, or otherwise discipline a Navigator at any time, with or without reason.

Background and Motor Vehicle Department Checks

AIBF strives to maintain a safe and productive workplace with honest, trustworthy, qualified, reliable and non-violent volunteers and employees who do not present a risk of harm to their co-workers or others. AIBF reserves the right to perform, or a third party to perform, reference and background checks at any time. All background checks will be performed in accordance with applicable federal and/or state law.

Background checks may include volunteer history and education verification, criminal history, and sex offender registry review, where available, and licensure and motor vehicle record if appropriate to the position. In conducting background checks, AIBF may use consumer reporting agencies to gather and report information in the form of consumer or investigative consumer reports. All reference and background check results will be maintained in a confidential file by the Executive Director’s designee.

Supervision

Executive Director

The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing the administration, programs (including the Navigator program) and strategic plan of AIBF.



Navigator Manager

The Navigator Manager acts as the overall Navigator Manager and is responsible for recruitment and assignment of new Navigators, dissemination of training and information to Team Leaders, AIBF Staff and Navigators, development and enforcement of Navigator policy, and implementation of program developments as determined with or by the Executive Director or the Event Director.

AIBF Staff Person

An AIBF Staff Person will supervise and coordinate with a Team Leader(s). The AIBF Staff Person is responsible for communicating pertinent event and policy topics with the Team Leader(s) and ensuring that that information is communicated to team members. AIBF Staff have the authority to interview, hire, suspend reassign or dismiss Navigators.

Team Leaders and AIBF Staff Persons will liaise with the Navigator Manager to fill teams, manage training and deal with conflicts, reviews and/or dismissals.

Team Leader

Supervision of Navigators will address the needs of both the Navigator and the organization. Every Navigator will have a clearly identified supervisor who will be responsible for day-to-day consultation, support, and direction. That supervisor will be a Team Leader(s). In some cases, teams do not have a Team Leader, in which case the AIBF Staff Person who oversees that area will act as supervisor.

Team Leads will have knowledge, temperament and skill for their area. Team Leaders and/or an AIBF Staff person are responsible for interviewing, scheduling and managing a Navigator once they have been assigned to a team. They are also responsible for area-specific communications, as well as enforcement of policies, training, discipline, and coordinating with the Event Coordinator (Manager) on the status of all team members.

Team Leaders will liaise with the AIBF Staff Person, providing progress reports, notice of any problems or concerns, and/or input regarding Navigator work performance on an as needed basis.

Team Leader/s have the authority to interview, hire, or suspend Navigators, as well as the authority to recommend reassignment or dismissal.

Flow of Information through the Navigator Program

Navigators should address any questions, issues or concerns first with a Team Leader. If the Team Leader is unavailable or unable to assist, the issue should be taken up with the supervising AIBF Staff Manager. If the question is about a general policy, the Navigator should contact the Navigator Manager.

If issues arise that cannot be addressed by any of these parties, the Navigator Manager will determine the next course of action, and whether the Executive Director should be involved.

Team Leads and AIBF Staff members with suggestions on policy change for the future should contact the NAB member who represents their team area. The NAB will present areas of concern and suggestions at the NAB meeting with the Navigator Manager.



Grievance/Complaint Procedure

Navigators should promptly report a concern to his or her Team Leader. The Team Leader will investigate the matter, report the issue to the AIBF Staff Person, and take appropriate action.

Any Team Leader or AIBF Staff Person who receives a concern alleging a violation of the Harassment Policy will notify the Navigator Manager immediately. Navigators are strongly encouraged to follow the steps listed below to discuss any concerns with their supervisor.

If the concern the Navigator is having involves his or her Team Leader, the Navigator should report his or her concern to the AIBF Staff Person who will review the situation. If the AIBF Staff Person reviews the situation and cannot resolve the issue, the Navigator will be notified for further action.

If the problem is not resolved by the AIBF Staff Person, the Navigator is encouraged to seek assistance from the Navigator Manager. In an effort to resolve the problem, the Navigator Manager will consider the facts, investigate, review the findings and recommendations with Executive Director and respond back to the Navigator. The Navigator may be asked to put the concern in writing and provide appropriate documentation.

If a Navigator is not satisfied with the decision of the Navigator Manager, he or she may prepare a written summary of the concerns and request that the matter be reviewed by the Executive Director. In these instances, the decision of the Executive Director is final.

If the Navigator's concern involves the Executive Director, the volunteer should report his/her concern to the Navigator Manager who will notify the AIBF Board President and undertake an investigation. The investigation will include a full examination of the facts (which may include a review of the written summary of the Navigator's statement, discussions with individuals concerned, and a further investigation if necessary) and will advise the Navigator of its decision. The decision of the AIBF Board President is final.

Navigator Dismissal

Navigators who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of AIBF or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal.

Dismissal

Navigators may be discharged without warning. AIBF has the right to request a Navigator to leave immediately. Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing volunteer assignment
- Theft of property or misuse of AIBF funds, equipment or materials
- Lies or falsification of records
- Illegal, violent or unsafe acts
- Abuse or mistreatment of guests, AIBF Staff, fellow Navigators, or other parties
- Failure to abide by AIBF policy or procedure
- Failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance
- Unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of AIBF
- Actions, attitude or behavior that undermines the ultimate goal of maintaining a safe event and offering outstanding guest service



Team Leaders may immediately suspend a Navigator and ask them to leave until they are contacted by an AIBF Staff member. AIBF Staff may immediately dismiss a Navigator.

Training

Basic Training

To assure that all Navigators interacting directly with Balloon Fiesta guests are providing consistent service and accurate information, it has been determined that online video training is the most convenient, and accessible format for the Navigator program as we have Navigators from all over the Nation and a few international Navigators.

Navigators are required to watch **Five Basic Training videos**. The video topics are, and must be renewed as follows:

| TOPIC | MUST BE RENEWED |
|---|-----------------|
| Welcome Video An introduction to the Navigator Manager, Navigator Program and The Gator Way. | Every year |
| History Parts 1 & 2 An overview of the history of hot air ballooning, gas ballooning and Balloon Fiesta. | Every 3 years |
| Guest Service The Navigator standards for excellent guest service and how to provide one of a kind experiences at Balloon Fiesta. | Every year |
| Public Safety Video Balloon Fiesta Public Safety Director Sean Wallace talks about what you can expect, instructions for dealing with emergencies, and some tips for dealing with a guest who is not the perfect participant. | Every year |
| 2025 Event Information All of the new details and pertinent information for this year's event. | Every year |

All videos are required for first time Navigators

AIBF acknowledges that some Navigators may not have access to computers or the internet, therefore use of AIBF computers are available by appointment so that Navigators may access these trainings.

Area-Specific Training

Individual areas may involve additional training and/or orientation. The schedule and minimum requirements for that training is to be determined by the AIBF Staff Person responsible for that area, in cooperation with the Team Leader, if applicable. They will also determine and communicate to the Navigator if this training is mandatory in order to serve on that particular team.

AIBF staff and Team Leaders are not required to accommodate Navigators who are unable to participate in area-specific training. We recommend that if a Navigator cannot participate in any mandatory training that they be reassigned to a different team.



SAFETY, SECURITY AND LOSS PREVENTION

Public Safety

As a Navigator, Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta requests that you recognize emergencies quickly, calmly and accurately. All Navigators are encouraged to constantly be alert for potential hazards to public safety.

All safety concerns, including suspicious behavior, persons or packages, should be immediately directed to the Public Safety Command Post just east of Main Street and south of the Main Street Stage. **You may also contact Public Safety by calling 505-821-7300 from any telephone.**

IN ANY EMERGENCY SITUATION, DO NOT PLACE YOURSELF OR OTHERS IN DANGER!

Emergency Procedures

In the event of any type of life-threatening emergency to the guests of Balloon Fiesta, the directions of the appropriate professional authority (e.g. Police Department, Fire Department) shall take precedence. Balloon Fiesta procedures are designed to provide a basic model to follow in emergencies, but do not take priority over professional “on the scene” control of specific situations.

On-field assistance includes Albuquerque Police Department, (including the bomb squad), Albuquerque Fire Department, New Mexico State Police, Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Office, US Marshall’s office, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), FBI and Homeland Security.

When handling any emergency situation, report it clearly, calmly and accurately to the Public Safety Command Post by phone or in person. If your duties include the use of an AIBF radio, there will be an emergency channel to contact Public Safety.

- Remain calm; do not panic.
- Follow all instructions from the leads, staff or public safety officials.
- Maintain alertness and work with a Navigator buddy.
- Do not spread rumors. Refer all media questions to the media tent.

The priority for all paid security and volunteer Balloon Fiesta personnel shall be the safety of all affected personnel and enforcement of the organizational security guidelines. Sworn Police Officers shall assist Balloon Fiesta personnel in the enforcement of Balloon Fiesta guidelines as they become or are made aware of specific situations of violation.

Lost Persons Procedures

Lost Adults

Lost adults should be directed to leave messages for their party at the Public Safety building.

Adults Reporting Missing Children

Remain calm and obtain a complete description of the lost child, including age, height, hair color and clothing. Briefly search the immediate area. If child is not located, immediately notify team lead, staff and Police/Public Safety. Follow instructions made by Police/Public Safety.



Encountering a Lost Child/Child and Reporting Missing Adults

- Remain calm. Introduce yourself with your name and state that you are a Navigator with AIBF and will help them find their adult(s). Reassure that child that they are safe.
- Obtain a description of the adults, if possible, including names, age, clothing, hair color, approximate height and weight, who else is with them and any other details that may help. If a child is uncommunicative, notify Public Safety.
- Stay with the child and ideally in the same location. Often the adults are busy searching for the child and it is easier for them to come to you.
- Ask another Navigator to notify the appropriate personnel.
- In some cases, a child may be more comfortable with another Navigator (i.e., male vs. female, older vs. younger, etc.). Do not take this personally.
- At no time should a child be left unaccompanied.
- Interest the child in conversation, your pins, or another novelty to calm them while other AIBF individuals work to find the adult(s).
- Follow any directions Public Safety may give you.

Personal Safety and Security

In order to provide a secure, safe and healthy work environment for volunteers, AIBF periodically provides information to Navigators about workplace safety and security issues through regular internal communication means such as emails, newsletters or other written communications.

Navigators are discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash or other personal valuables to work unless absolutely necessary. AIBF is not responsible for volunteers' personal items that are lost or stolen.

Navigators should feel free to report, without fear of retaliation, any condition which they believe poses a safety, health or security risk in the workplace.

AIBF will investigate such reports promptly and thoroughly and take appropriate corrective action. Further, any comments or jokes regarding threats of violence will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately and promptly.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, Navigators should immediately notify their Team Leader.

Use of AIBF Vehicles

Navigators may be required to drive a car, cart or other vehicle as part of their responsibilities. Navigators who drive as part of their responsibilities are required to do so in a friendly, courteous and safe manner. Only those Navigators who meet the qualifications of the AIBF vehicle policy, and pass an MVR background check, are allowed to operate AIBF vehicles or operate a personal vehicle on AIBF business.

Drivers are responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle. At no time are they permitted to subject an AIBF vehicle to abuse through careless or reckless operation.

Drivers are required to notify AIBF of license suspensions or revocations, and to report accidents or damage to company vehicles no matter how insignificant they appear within 24 hours. Drivers who fail to comply with these rules may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.



If provided, seat belts must be used at all times, by both the driver and all occupants of the vehicle. Failure to properly use seat belts will also be cause for disciplinary action. No volunteer, while operating an AIBF vehicle, or while driving his or her personal vehicle on AIBF business, may use a hand-held cellular telephone. Smoking is prohibited in AIBF vehicles.

No driver may operate a motor vehicle while the driver's ability or alertness is so impaired, through fatigue, illness, taking medication or any other cause, as to make it unsafe for the driver to operate the vehicle. Volunteers who drive AIBF vehicles while under such conditions, which could impair their driving ability, face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Drivers can be disqualified from driving vehicles for a number of reasons, including involvement in a number of accidents, or a demonstration of disregard for the safety of the public, as evidence by excessive speeding, reckless driving, driving under the influence, driving while his/her license is suspended or revoked, other evidence of reckless driving, failure to report an accident and/or breaking any motor vehicle laws.

Parking and traffic fines incurred while utilizing AIBF vehicles are the responsibility of the driver and will not be paid by AIBF.

Vehicle Safety Rules

These apply to golf carts, ATVs, mules, and any other AIBF vehicles:

- All drivers must carry a current, valid driver's license with them while operating the vehicle.
- All carts must be registered with AIBF and display a registration placard.
- Usage of carts will be solely for purposes related to the effective operation of the Balloon Fiesta.
- Driving under the influence of drugs and or alcohol will NOT be tolerated.
- No reckless or careless driving will be allowed.
- No open alcohol containers are allowed in cart while cart is in motion.
- Pedestrians have the right-of-way.
- **DO NOT** leave keys in an unattended cart.
- **DO NOT** make changes or modifications to ANY cart.
- The operator is responsible for any damage to the cart, ATV, or mule and also responsible for any damage or injury caused by operation of the cart.
- Navigators must drive the cart they are assigned. Carts will have individual identification numbers, letters, or other i.d. Note this identifying number and ensure you are entering the correct cart before driving.
- When picking up an assigned cart or vehicle or taking over the cart or vehicle for your shift, inspect the vehicle, note any damage, and report the damage to your Team Leader before driving the vehicle.
- Immediately report to Public Safety if your cart is missing.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND ANY AIBF STAFF MEMBER HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO WITHDRAW DRIVING PRIVILEGES FROM ANY OPERATOR IF AN INFRACTION OF ANY OF THE ABOVE RULES IS OBSERVED.

AIBF Property

AIBF works to prevent property loss of any kind. All property used to conduct business belongs to AIBF. AIBF assumes no liability for personal property brought into the workplace or any AIBF worksite.



Handling Money

There are to be two persons who are unrelated to each other counting cash, coin and checks. A Cash Count Worksheet must be completed and signed by each person and submitted with money that is turned in. If an adding machine is available, a tape needs to be run totaling the cash and checks.

All funds must be delivered **DAILY** to an AIBF employee and the Navigator **MUST** remain present while the employee counts the cash and checks. (This is for the protection of the Navigator.) If daily delivery of funds is not made, or if the funds counted by the AIBF employee do not match the cash count worksheet, the Navigators involved will be subject to disciplinary action.

NAVIGATOR BENEFITS

Minimum Work Requirements

Navigators are expected to work a minimum of 5 shifts or equivalent of 25 hours and preferential assignments will be given to those who can work 5 or more shifts. Shift length may vary from team to team, but is, on average, 6 hours and coincides with a Balloon Fiesta "session." There are 14 balloon event sessions.

Applicants who are unable to work a minimum of 5 should contact their applicable Team Leader to determine if working for fewer shifts is available.

Benefits are distributed based on meeting the minimum work requirements.

Navigator Packs

Navigators who meet the minimum requirement of 5 shifts or the equivalent of 25 hours will receive a Navigator pack, which includes:

- Admission into the 9-day event
- Parking for the 9-day event
- Access to the Navigator Hospitality Tent for snacks and beverages when assigned to volunteer
- Invitations to a variety of Balloon Fiesta parties
- The current year's Navigator shirt
- The current year's Navigator lapel pin
- The current year's program and calendar
- The current year's Navigator jacket

The number of hours varies from team to team, and the Navigator is expected to stay on until duties are completed, not a specific time.

If the Navigator fails to meet the minimum requirements, the AIBF Staff Person and/or Team Leader may then determine if the Navigator is welcome to volunteer at future events, and if so, whether any conditions may be appropriate.

Social Calendar

Navigators are invited to a variety of parties during Balloon Fiesta. Tickets are required to access each party, and the time, date and location will appear on the ticket. These tickets can be found in the Navigator Pack upon pick-up.

Generally, these are the parties that are open to Navigators.



| Date | Event | Hours | Location |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 st Saturday | Welcome Party | 11:00am - 1:00pm | Sid Cutter Pilots' Pavilion |
| Monday | Navigator Appreciation Party | 11:00am - 1:00pm | Sid Cutter Pilots' Pavilion |
| Wednesday | Pilot Picnic/Zoo Party | 1:00pm - 4:00pm | Sid Cutter Pilot's Pavilion |
| 2 nd Saturday | Awards Party | 10:30am – 1:00pm | Sid Cutter Pilots' Pavilion |

On the dates when parties are thrown, lunch will not be served in the Navigator Hospitality Tent.

Navigator Hospitality Tent

The Navigator Hospitality Tent is intended to provide food and beverages to all Navigators who are serving shifts during the Balloon Fiesta event, and in some circumstances, prior to the event, for activities such as Pilot Registration. Basic, simple food will be provided on a limited basis, as will beverages and light snacks. While AIBF will do its best to ensure that there is some food available at all times, it cannot be guaranteed that a full meal will be provided at all hours. The Navigator Hospitality Tent is open the following hours:

**October 2nd and 3rd Set-Up will be from 9:00-2:00pm*

| Date | Tent Hours | |
|--------------|------------------|---|
| 1st Saturday | 3:30am - 10:30am | Welcome Party (11:00am – 1:00pm) Sid Cutter Pilots Pavilion |
| | 3:00pm – 8:00pm | |
| | | |
| 1st Sunday | 3:30am - 10:30am | |
| | 3:00pm – 8:00pm | |
| | | |
| Monday | 3:30am - 10:30am | Navigator Party (11:00am – 1:00pm) Sid Cutter Pilots Pavilion |
| | | No PM service |
| | | |
| Tuesday | 3:30am – 10:30am | No PM service |
| | | |
| | | |
| Wednesday | 3:30am – 10:30am | Pilot Picnic (1:00pm – 4:00pm) |
| | | No PM service |
| | | |
| Thursday | 3:30am - 10:30am | |
| | 3:00pm – 8:00pm | |
| | | |
| Friday | 3:30am – 10:30am | |
| | 3:00pm – 8:00pm | |
| | | |
| 2nd Saturday | 3:30am - 10:30am | Awards Party (10:30am - 1:00pm) Sid Cutter Pilots Pavilion |
| | 3:00pm – 8:00pm | |
| | | |
| 2nd Sunday | 3:30am – 12:00pm | |



While socializing at the Navigator Tent is encouraged, loitering is not. Please do not neglect your volunteer shift.

Meals are intended for Navigators actively serving a shift. Navigators who are not working a scheduled shift, as well as friends and family of Navigators are asked to not eat at the Navigator Tent to ensure that there is enough food for those who are on shift.

Earning RV Accommodations

Balloon Fiesta makes a limited number of RV spaces available for Navigators to earn. These RV spaces are intended for Navigators who cannot attend the event without an RV accommodation. These RV spaces are not guaranteed reservations; if you'd like a guaranteed reservation, you will need to reserve and pay for an RV space through the RV reservations website. While we would like to be able to accommodate all requests, we have a limited number of camping spots, and an even more limited quantity of premium campsites.

We will consider all requests submitted through an online form between **March and April of the event year**. Volunteers **MUST** commit to a minimum of 40 hours to be considered for an RV space. The following criteria will be followed:

- 40-50 hours volunteered **per person** in 1 calendar year = 1/2 off dry camping (Normally \$60/night)
- 51-120 hours volunteered **for one person or 40+ hours each for two people in the RV** in 1 calendar year = free dry camping (Normally \$60/night)

Not everyone who meets these requirements will receive an RV space. An RV space from these limited number of spaces is not guaranteed until you receive an official email from the Navigator Manager. These notifications will be made by the 6-month date in May.

Hours are not combined with another Navigator. Hour requirements will be tracked by checking the shifts you schedule and work, you may be required to track your hours electronically. Navigators must abide by all standard rules and regulations that apply to RV camping.

Note: Out-of-town and out-of-state Navigators are given preference when awarding RV spaces. Local Navigators will be assigned an RV space based on availability.

Event Discounts

Navigators who work 5 or more shifts qualify for the following event discounts:

| Ticket | Retail Price | Navigator Price | Restrictions |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|--|
| General Admission | \$15 | \$6.00 | Maximum quantity of 10 tickets per Navigator. Must be purchased online. Not available for purchase at the gates. |

Individual ticket discount codes will be distributed by email in September from the Navigator Manager.



EVENT POLICIES

Navigators are asked to observe and enforce the following policies. If you observe someone violating these policies, please notify Public Safety, AIBF Staff or your Team Leader.

ALL PERSONS, BAGS, AND VEHICLES ENTERING BALLOON FIESTA PARK ARE SUBJECT TO SEARCH

Distribution of Printed Material/Signage

Only printed material authorized by Balloon Fiesta may be distributed on Balloon Fiesta Park during the 9-day event. Any person distributing unauthorized material will be asked to dispose of the material or leave the park, under supervision. No one is authorized to distribute printed material (other than balloon cards) outside a rented booth.

Anyone distributing unauthorized material should be reported immediately to the Sponsor Information Center, located in the Golf Pro Shop west of the Sponsor Hospitality Area, south side of the field. Sponsor representatives can determine whether the distribution has been authorized.

No person is allowed to install, carry or hold a sign promoting any political candidate, political viewpoint or organization. Such signs should be treated as unauthorized printed material and reported to the Sponsor Information Center and the Public Safety Building.

Gates/Public Admission

All persons entering Balloon Fiesta Park via public admission gates must possess a valid ticket or credential, including Navigators. All Tickets must be surrendered, torn, or punched (as applicable). Gates open at 4:30 a.m. for morning sessions and 3:00 p.m. for evening sessions.

Unauthorized Access

Any person or vehicle determined to have gained unauthorized access to Balloon Fiesta Park shall be immediately removed by Public Safety.

Vehicle Access

All vehicles must have a valid vehicle pass to enter Balloon Fiesta Park. Vehicles without required passes or credentials will not be allowed access. Any vehicle on site without proper credential or in unapproved areas is subject to tow. Only Public Safety may authorize towing of any vehicle.

Inappropriate Behavior

All persons whose behavior is deemed inappropriate shall be brought to the attention of Public Safety. Should such behavior not be corrected or cause safety concern for other guests, the individuals involved shall be escorted from Balloon Fiesta Park by security guards or law enforcement officers. Admission tickets are revocable licenses and AIBF can decide to require a ticket holder to leave.

Product Sales

No sales are allowed outside the booths on Main Street, with the exceptions of the sales of programs, calendars, and glow products by authorized vendors. Any violations of this rule should be reported to Public Safety.



Delays and Cancellations

How is it determined if an event is cancelled?

The only reason a session may be cancelled is for the safety of the pilots, Navigators and/or guests at the Park. Balloon Fiesta understands there are tens of thousands of people, including guests, concessionaires and Navigators anticipating a successful event and have spent their time and money to see the balloons.

When determining whether a session is "cancelled" and rain checks issued, balloon *inflations* are the determining factor, rather than flights. Both morning and evening events involve inflation, while glows do not involve flight. Generally, the criterion for cancellation is whether or not a significant number of balloons are able to inflate.

From whom does that official announcement come?

Before the beginning of a balloon event the Executive Director must coordinate with the Board President before a cancellation can be called. After the session has begun, the Balloonmeister has the ultimate authority to make the decision.

How do Navigators find out if a session is cancelled?

- The cancellation decision will be conveyed to the Team Leads for each area.
- The Flight Officials will raise the red signal flag near the Main Street Stage, in the center of Main Street, when balloon operations are cancelled. A yellow flag means that the decision is pending, and the green flag means that inflation is a "go!"
- Video walls will be present each of the Main Stage The cancellation message will be displayed on those walls.
- AIBF Staff will communicate with their Team Leaders as they are informed of event plans.

It's important to wait to receive the message from one of these official sources.



Gate Numbers

As of 2021, the gate numbers throughout Balloon Fiesta Park have changed. Please check the gate nearest you to confirm the correct number.

