

Tawas Point Lighthouse Lighthouse Keeper Program – 2017

The Lighthouse

The Tawas Point Lighthouse (ca. 1876) is a popular landmark in Tawas Point State Park, recognized throughout the Tawas Bay region. It attracts visitors from around the world. The lighthouse keeper program offers the unique opportunity to spend extended periods of time immersed in the lighthouse experience. Two shipwrecks sit off the shoreline of Tawas Point, providing additional historical and educational value to visitors.

Tawas Point State Park

Tawas Point State Park is located on the shores of Lake Huron, 2.5 miles southeast of East Tawas in Iosco County, Michigan. Sandy beaches on both Lake Huron and Tawas Bay, combined with the warm shallow waters of the bay, provide ideal swimming conditions at Tawas Point. Bird watchers find Tawas Point especially attractive because of the large populations of migratory birds that flock to the park. The park additionally offers 193 campsites and several cabin rental options, as well as 2 miles of hiking trails. The most iconic feature of the peninsula, however, is the Victorian-era Tawas Point Lighthouse.

Tawas Point Lighthouse Keeper Program

The Tawas Point Lighthouse Keeper Program is administered by the Michigan History Center (MHC), an agency in the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, assisted by the Friends of Tawas Point State Park. The program provides participating keepers with the privilege of living at one of Michigan's most notable lighthouses, and assisting in its preservation and presentation to the public.

Keeper Benefits

Lighthouse keepers are provided a minimum of two weeks of free lodging in the second-story quarters of the historic light keeper's dwelling which overlooks the scenic shores of Lake Huron. Accommodations include two bedrooms which can sleep up to three adults, along with a modern fully-equipped kitchen, shower and bath. Free parking is also provided. The keeper schedule is designed to allow participants time to enjoy recreational activities on their own while providing valuable volunteer services.

Who Is Eligible to be a Keeper?

Keepers serve in teams of two to four people and can be made up of family members and/or friends. A minimum of two keepers is required during all open hours. Keepers must be 18 years or older. People with knowledge of lighthouse lore or Great Lakes maritime history are especially encouraged to apply.

Minimum Requirements for all Keepers

Keepers must be willing to provide tours five days a week, Thursday through Monday, totaling 30 hours per week. Participants should also be comfortable speaking to the public, in good health, and able to climb the 85-step lighthouse tower as a regular part of daily tours. Other requirements include:

- Serve a minimum of two consecutive weeks
- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Provide your own food and toiletries
- Pass a background check
- A Recreation Passport for your vehicle is not required, but is preferred, as it supports state park operations.
- DNR employees are not eligible

Keeper Daily Duties

The primary responsibilities of keepers include greeting visitors, giving tours, and providing information about the lighthouse and Tawas area. In addition to providing an informative and educational experience, keepers will be asked to perform basic facility maintenance, sweeping floors, removing trash, and thoroughly cleaning the living quarters upon departure. The total commitment is about 35 hours per week, including tours.

Keeper Schedule of Duties

The 2017 Lighthouse Keepers Program will take place from May 17th through October 17th. Keepers are required to participate for periods of two consecutive weeks or more during this time. Keepers will be responsible for offering tours to the visiting public, Thursday through Monday, at scheduled times. The lighthouse will be closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays, giving keepers time for personal chores and sightseeing in the area.

Keeper Orientation and Training

All lighthouse keepers selected to participate will be asked to attend a training session presented by MHC interpreters at Tawas Point State Park. Information packets will be provided to all program participants, as well as additional orientation upon arrival.

Application Process

Interested individuals must complete the Tawas Point Lighthouse Keeper application form at www.michigan.gov/tawaslighthouse. Click on Lightkeeper Program under Explore. The form can be completed online or printed and mailed in. **Application reviews will begin February 1, 2017, and continue until all slots are filled.** For further information contact:

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