

### 10 Organizational Standards for Quality Volunteer Management

The following ten organizational standards for quality volunteer management, values for volunteering involvement and guiding principles for volunteer management were adapted from The Canadian Code for Volunteering Involvement with some modifications.

### Laying the Organizational Foundation for a Volunteer Program:

- 1. Mission Based Approach: The board of directors, leadership and staff acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organizations purpose and mission. Thus creating an organizational culture of volunteer inclusiveness. Board of Directors:
  - Board of directors adopts a statement declaring the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's mission
  - The organization's planning process incorporates how volunteers are a resource to the overall mission of the organization
  - The board has approved the overall goals for volunteer involvement
  - Volunteer involvement goals are evaluated regularly by the board of directors

#### Staff:

- Staff is given training and recognition to work effectively with volunteers and are aware of the differences between staff and volunteer roles within the organization
- Volunteers are included as equal members of the team

#### Leadership:

- A budget is allocated for volunteer involvement
- Adequate space and equipment are allocated for volunteers to perform their assignments
- Appropriate insurance is purchased to minimize volunteer and organizational liability
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- Input from volunteers is welcomed and solicited for the organization's planning and evaluation
- Volunteers are encouraged to grow within the organization
- Volunteers are included as equal members of the team
- A written job description for the person designated as the organizations volunteer manager is developed and reviewed regularly
- 2. Policies and Procedures (HR): Policies and procedures are adopted by the organization to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.
  - Governance and operational policies are in place, reviewed regularly and incorporate volunteer involvement practices
  - Policies and procedures are followed consistently and equitable
  - Policies and procedures are consistent with Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, antidiscrimination laws, and privacy and confidentiality protection laws
  - Records are kept for each volunteer using a confidential, secure system respecting the privacy of personal information
  - The organization keeps informed of new legislation and updates with the Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, antidiscrimination laws, and privacy and confidentiality protection laws
  - Policies relating to screening practices are developed, adopted, and clearly communicated to staff and volunteers
- 3. Volunteer Management: The organization has a clearly designated individual with appropriate qualifications responsible for the volunteer program.
  - The designated person is a member of the management or administrative team
  - A written job description for the designated person is developed and reviewed regularly and includes feedback from both staff and volunteers
  - Professional development opportunities are provided on a regular basis



- The designated person works collaboratively with staff, the local volunteer center and other organizations to encourage the effectiveness of the volunteer program
- 4. Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement: The impact and contribution of volunteers and the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.
  - Performance goals are established annually for the volunteer program
  - Achievement of performance goals is assessed on an annual basis
  - Volunteer involvement goals are evaluated regularly by the board of directors
  - Opportunities exist for volunteers to give feedback to the organization about their involvement
  - Opportunities exist for the clients/organizations served by the volunteer to give feedback

### The Volunteer Program:

### Part I: Developing Volunteer Roles and Getting the Right Volunteers

- 5. Recruitment: Volunteer recruitment incorporates internal and external strategies to reach out and involve a diverse volunteer base
  - Recruitment messages are realistic and clear about the volunteer positions and expectations
  - Various techniques are used to recruit volunteers
  - Recruitment messages advise that screening procedures are in place
  - Genuine effort is made to recruit and select volunteers from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences to represent the community served by the organization
  - Selection of volunteers is based on actual requirements and predetermined screening measures



- 6. Developing Volunteer Position Descriptions: Volunteer position descriptions address the mission or purpose of the organization and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and background of the volunteer and the organization
  - Volunteer position descriptions have written descriptions that include duties, responsibilities, skills needed, time required and benefits
  - Volunteers and staff are consulted when developing new volunteer positions
  - Volunteer position descriptions are developed to reflect the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteers
  - Volunteer position descriptions are reviewed periodically with staff and volunteers to ensure relevance and value
  - Volunteers with special requirements and challenges can become involved with the organization
  - The level of risk is assessed and minimized for all volunteer positions
- 7. Screening and Interviewing: A clearly communicated screening and interviewing process is adopted and consistently applied by the organization
  - Screening is considered to be an essential process that continues throughout the volunteer's involvement with the organization
  - Policies related to screening and interviewing practices are developed adopted and clearly communicated to staff and volunteers
  - Screening and interviewing practices are delivered consistently and are based on the volunteer position descriptions to avoid bias or discrimination in the selection of volunteers
  - Required job skills or qualifications are based on the volunteer position descriptions to avoid bias or discrimination in the selection of volunteers

Part II: Creating an Environment where Volunteers Feel they Belong and Want to stay

- 8. Orientation and Training: Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices, including the rights and responsibilities of
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# volunteers. Each volunteer receives training customized to the volunteer's position and the individual needs of the volunteer

- Volunteers receive information on the history, mission and structure of the organization
- Volunteers receive information on the policies and procedures that relate to their position
- Volunteers are given adequate training for performing their position without <sup>i</sup>putting themselves or others at risk
- Volunteers are informed of boundaries and limits of their position and the process of reporting grievances
- Volunteers have ongoing training opportunities to upgrade their skills and to learn of changes in the organization

# 9. Supervision: Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback

- The complexity and risk of each position determines the level of supervision
- Volunteers are welcomed and introduced to their supervisors at the start of their assignment
- The performance of volunteers is evaluated on a regular basis
- Volunteers are given and encouraged to use mechanisms for providing input to the organization
- Situations requiring reprimand and dismissal follow policies and procedures fairly and consistently while respecting the safety and dignity of all concerned

# 10. Recognition and Retention: The contributions of volunteers are consistently acknowledged with formal and informal methods of recognition

- Senior management publicly acknowledges the efforts of the volunteers
- Formal methods of recognition are delivered consistently
- Informal methods of recognition are delivered in a timely and appropriate manner



- Management provides regular feedback to volunteers on performance goals
- Opportunities exist for volunteers to give feedback to the organization about their involvement

### Values for Volunteer Involvement

- Volunteer involvement is vital to a just and democratic society. It fosters civic responsibility, participation and interaction
- Volunteer involvement strengthens communities. It promotes change and development by identifying and responding to community needs
- Volunteer involvement mutually benefits both the volunteer and organization. It
  increases the capacity of organizations to accomplish their goals, and provides
  volunteers with opportunities to develop and contribute
- Volunteer involvement is based on relationships. It creates opportunities for volunteer
  organizations to accomplish goals by engaging and involving volunteers, and it allows
  volunteers an opportunity to grow and give back to the community in meaningful way
  through voluntary organizations

### **Guiding Principles for Volunteer Involvement**

- Volunteers have rights. Voluntary organizations recognize that volunteers are a vital human resource and will commit to the appropriate infrastructure to support them
  - o The organization's practices ensure effective volunteer engagement
  - The organization commits to providing a safe and supportive environment for volunteers
- Volunteers have responsibilities. Volunteers make a commitment and are accountable to the organization
  - Volunteers will act with respect for beneficiaries, organizations, and community
  - Volunteer will act responsibly and with integrity



# The Volunteer's Bill of RIGHTS & Responsibilities

# It is your right:

# It is your responsibility:

1. To be assigned a task that is worthwhile and challenging.	<ul> <li>Not to take on more responsibility than you can handle.</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b> To receive the orientation, training, and supervision needed to do the job.	• To meet time commitments or to provide notice so alternative arrangements can be made.
<b>3.</b> To feel that your efforts have real purpose and contribute to the organization's mission.	<ul> <li>To perform the tasks assigned to you to the best of your ability.</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b> To receive useful feedback and evaluation on the volunteer work that you perform.	To provide input on ways your tasks might be better performed.
<b>5.</b> To be treated with respect and as an equal partner within the organization.	<ul> <li>To follow organizational policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b> To be trusted with confidential information necessary to carry out your assignment.	To respect those confidences entrusted to you.

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<b>7.</b> To be kept informed about relevant matters within the organization.	To be open-minded and respectful towards opinions shared with you.
<b>8.</b> To expect that your time will not be wasted because of poor planning or poor coordination by the organization.	• To notify the organization in advance of absences or schedule changes that may affect them.
<b>9.</b> To ask any questions that will clarify a task or assignment.	•To accept reasonable tasks without complaints.
<b>10.</b> To give an organization input or advice on how to better accommodate the needs of their future volunteers.	•To communicate and work with others in the organization if the task calls for it.

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