

Volunteer Resource Guide

Roles and Responsibilities of the Volunteer

What rights, responsibilities and expectations can I anticipate? Volunteering is a two-way street; it is about what you give and what you receive. Here's what you can expect from an organization, and what an organization can expect from you in return.

As a volunteer, I have the **right** to:

- A clear, written position description
- A carefully planned volunteer position that is worthwhile and challenging and will help me learn, grow, and develop
- Information on the organization's mission, policies, structures, and funding
- An orientation session, on-going training, and evaluation
- Support from a designated volunteer or staff person
- Respectful treatment as a co-worker
- Appropriate and timely recognition
- Information about what is happening in the organization
- Reimbursement for approved out-of-pocket expenses where funds are available
- Insurance coverage while performing volunteer duties
- Receive feedback on the work I do

As a volunteer, I have the **responsibility** to:

- Only accept a position I feel will meet my needs, skills, interests, values, and available time
- Do my job to the best of my ability
- Ensure that I understand the organization's policies, structure and mission
- Fulfill my commitments
- Respect confidentiality
- Treat co-workers and clients with courtesy and professionalism
- Understand the function of paid staff and for staying within the bounds of the volunteer placement description

For more information on what you can expect during your volunteer experience, please call our office!

Finding a good volunteer program

Your level of satisfaction with a volunteer position often depends on the quality of the volunteer program itself. Finding a good program starts with asking the right questions.

1) First, ask friends and family if they know any organizations that they would recommend as having a good volunteer program.

2) Next, contact the places you are thinking of volunteering at and set up a time to meet with them to get information about their organization and their volunteer program. Think of a list of questions that you would like to ask about the organization so you can take it with you when you meet with them. Some examples of questions to ask might be:

- Do they have a training program?

- What is the process to become a volunteer?
- What types of opportunities are available?
- What is the length of commitment?
- What are the perks?

3) A surefire way to find out if an organization has a well-run volunteer program is to speak to a current or former volunteer. The volunteer coordinator is likely to ask you for references, so why not ask them for the same thing? Doing as much research as possible before you commit to a position is likely to lead to a better match between you and the organization, and that benefits everyone!

4) Keep in mind that there will likely be things they will ask of you. What they require will depend on the position you are applying for, but you may have to:

- Submit a resume;
- Fill out an application;
- Come in for an interview;
- Provide a police record check;
- Provide a drivers license abstract; and,
- Make a time commitment (minimum number of hours per week or a certain length of time as a volunteer with their organization).

If you get stumped during any stage of this process - give us a call!