

Volunteer Position Descriptions

Position descriptions are one of the most useful tools for a volunteer manager. They are excellent recruitment tools and may also help agency staff understand the distinction between paid and unpaid staff. Position descriptions also help the volunteer fully understand their value to your organization and their role in serving the community.

Use the following worksheet to create volunteer position descriptions for your organization. You do not need to complete each item – only use what is applicable for your organization's needs.

Position Description Worksheet

Title:

Purpose:

Description of Duties:

Qualifications:

Examples include, but are not limited to: Ability to use a computer, bilingual, ability to lift 40 pounds, and access to transportation.

Time Requirements:

Orientation/Training:

Benefits:

Examples include, but are not limited to: Free parking, tickets to a neighborhood event, membership, skill development, and job and/or college reference.

Evaluation and Reporting Procedures:

Location:

Supervisor:

Agency Contact:

Policies and Procedures

Policies are principles or rules that tell people what to do. Procedures are a series of steps that direct people how to do what they must do. There is no template for an organization or a volunteer program. Each must be flexible enough to respond to its own realities of people, funding, community needs, and vision.

Reasons to Define Policies for Volunteers

- Connect the volunteer program to the larger organization and community;
- Provide structure for management;
- Formalize decisions, ensure continuity, and promote equality and standardization;
- Increase volunteer satisfaction, productivity, and retention; and
- Clarify responsibilities and ensure accountability.

Types of Policies

- Aid to program effectiveness;
- Rule to specify expectations and guide actions;
- Statement of belief, position, and value; and
- Risk management.

How do you Make Policies Effective?

- Follow them;
- Have a clear system for enforcement;
- Ensure consistent application; and
- Hold volunteers accountable.

Accountability

Develop a form every volunteer must sign, stating that the volunteer:

- Acknowledges that he/she has received and read a copy of the policies and procedures;
- Agrees to abide by them; and
- Understands that failure to do so may result in termination.

Depending on your organization's risk assessment, this may not be necessary for one-day, event volunteers, but should be implemented for all long-term volunteers such as Board members and committee volunteers.

Key Steps in Policy Development

When creating policies for your organization, consider incorporating the following:

- Recognize volunteer involvement;
- Acknowledge volunteers' importance within the organization;
- Develop policies about volunteer involvement;
- Develop operational guidelines, standards, and procedures for volunteer involvement such as recognition and promotion; and
- Ensure volunteer program evaluation, compliance with established policies and procedures, and regular policy review.

Policy Issues to Consider

- Insurance;
- Benefits;
- Screening;
- Background checks;
- Confidentiality;
- Alcohol and drugs;
- Volunteer-staff relationships;
- Anti-discrimination/diversity;
- Sexual harassment;
- Health and safety;
- Legal liability;
- Volunteer records;
- Dress code;
- Media contact;
- Speaking on behalf of the organization;
- Standard of conduct;
- Probation;
- Reimbursement;
- Absence;
- Incident reports/emergency procedures;
- Grievance; and
- Termination.

Sample Policies and Procedures

- 1.) When volunteers are going to be absent from their assignment, they should call the volunteer manager and/or their supervisor at least 24 hours in advance.
- 2.) Volunteers are prohibited from drinking alcohol prior to, or during his or her assigned shift at any neighborhood event. Failure to adhere to this policy is sufficient grounds for immediate termination.
- 3.) All volunteers are required to sign-in and out on the volunteer sign-in sheet.
- 4.) Financials and proposed project materials are confidential and are to be held in strict confidence.

- 5.) Volunteers are prohibited from responding to media requests for information about the organization unless he or she has received prior approval from the Executive Director and/or the Promotions Committee Chairperson.

All policies and procedures should be reviewed and approved by your legal counsel.

Recognition

Volunteer recognition is a key component of any volunteer program.

Tips for Good Recognition

- The most important way to recognize someone is to place him or her in a meaningful position that matches his or her interests and skills. A job that the person enjoys and does well will give the greatest satisfaction.
- Personalize the recognition to the individual and the occasion. What would make this particular person feel special in this case? A major trap we fall into is giving the type of recognition that we would like to receive rather than what would be most meaningful to the recipient.
- When possible, include others in giving out recognition. Recognition can come from (or be presented by) community members, Board members, a community leader, a peer, or elected official. This can make the event more special.
- Don't let yourself become too predictable in how and when you give recognition. Small surprises go a long way.
- Recognize the full scope of efforts. You can recognize quantity of hours, but don't forget quality and effort on projects. Give credit in more than one category so that you don't forget those who can't give a lot of time but give a lot of heart.
- Recognition should be given as soon after the service as possible. If you do a yearly recognition event, plan ways to give recognition throughout the year also.
- There are a million different ways to recognize and thank people. Make sure that you use more than one. Funny, creative, formal, or personal – each time your thanks can be different.
- Make sure the recognition is fair and appropriate for the achievement.
- Give recognition for what you want more of!
- Look for ways to recognize volunteers that are free or low-cost. Do not believe the falsehood that it takes a lot of time and money to recognize volunteers.

A Few Ideas for Volunteer Recognition

- Put up a volunteer suggestion box;
- Send a card – birthday, holiday, just for fun, or thanks;
- Arrange for neighborhood discounts;
- Plan for an annual recognition event;
- Provide tickets to a neighborhood event or museum;
- Ask for input into annual work plans and/or decisions that affect them;
- Invite volunteers to staff and/or Board meetings;
- Accommodate personal needs;
- Feed them – everybody loves food;
- Have a volunteer bulletin board;
- Give more responsibility – promote them;
- Send newsworthy events to the media;
- Enlist them to train other volunteers;

Baltimore Main Streets
Volunteer Program Foundation Materials

- Plan staff and volunteer social events;
- Include a “Recognition Edition” in your newsletter and/or website;
- Write a letter of appreciation to the volunteer’s employer;
- Offer letters of recommendation for college and/or job applications;
- Track your organization’s results and publicize them;
- Name a tree or bench in a volunteer’s honor;
- Provide opportunities for training;
- Ask elected officials for Citations for Outstanding Service (Mayor, Councilmember, Governor, Congress Person);
- Free membership in your organization; and
- Say thank you!

Volunteer Tracking

Keeping accurate records of volunteers is key to the success of your volunteer program. Accurate record keeping ensures that you can thank and recognize volunteers, contact them in case of emergency, and accurately report volunteer contributions.

Sign-in Sheets

Every volunteer should be required to sign in every time he or she volunteers. This is especially important with large groups of episodic or one-time volunteers.

Sample Sign-in Sheet

Date: _____
Event: _____
Page Number: _____

Main Street Volunteer Sign-in

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	E-MAIL

Volunteer Tracking Spreadsheet

Tracking a program's total volunteer contributions allows a coordinator to quickly access a list of volunteers, total volunteer hours contributed and notes on volunteers.

Sample Volunteer Tracking Spreadsheet

Last Name	First Name	Address	PHONE	E-MAIL	VOLUNTEER DATES	TOTAL HOURS VOLUNTEERED	NOTES
Smith	Bob	123 Fake Street, Town, MD 21201	555-555-5555	bsmith@smith.org	1/05/05, 2/07/05, 3/13/07	12	Out of Country 3/05-2/07

Volunteer Program Resources

Websites

www.volunteermatch.com

At this website you can post volunteer opportunities for free, locate volunteer opportunities, and find resources to help you further develop your volunteer program.

www.idealists.org

Nonprofits may post volunteer opportunities for free at this website.

www.craigslist.com

Locate your City or State and post your volunteer opportunities for free.

www.usafreedomcorps.gov

At this website you can post volunteer opportunities for free, locate volunteer opportunities, and find resources to help you further develop your volunteer program.

www.presidentialserviceawards.com

The President's Volunteer Service Award recognizes individuals, families, and groups that have achieved a certain standard – measured by the number of hours served over a 12-month period or cumulative hours earned over the course of a lifetime. At this website you can track your volunteer hours for free and order Presidential Service Awards that may include a letter from the President, a pin, and a certificate. Depending on what package you choose the cost is no more than \$2.00 per award.

www.pointsoflight.org

At this website you can locate your local volunteer center, find resources to help further develop your volunteer program, learn about volunteer award programs, and more.

www.independentsector.org

At this website you can locate the hourly rate for volunteer service by State and the current National rate, which is \$18.04 per hour. This is also a great source for research papers and statistics on volunteer management.

www.energizeinc.com

This website is created by one of volunteer management's leading authorities, Susan Ellis. It has a large number of best practices submitted by volunteer coordinators in the field worldwide. You can also order books and other volunteer management materials.

www.aarp.org

At this website you can post your volunteer opportunities and order copies of *Older Volunteers: A Valuable Resource* and *To Serve, Not to Be Served*. Both are free and provide advice to older volunteers on what to expect from the volunteer experience, as well as advice to organizations on the special needs and abilities of older volunteers.

Books

The following books are great sources of information regarding volunteer program development.

101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment, 1988, Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard, ISBN 0-911029-13-3

Secrets of Motivation: How to Get and Keep Volunteers and Paid Staff!, 1991, Sue Vineyard, ISBN 0-911029-44-3

The Volunteer Development Toolbox, 1993, Marilyn MacKenzie and Gail Moore, ISBN: 0-911029-41-9

Volunteer Management: Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community, 1996, Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch, ISBN: 0-911029-45-1

From the Top Down: The Executive Role in Volunteer Program Success, 2004, Susan J. Ellis, ISBN: 0-940576-17-1

Investing in Volunteer: A Guide to Effective Volunteer Management, 1995, Esther Hall, National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Booklet

Sample Materials

Do You Want to Make a Difference in the Neighborhood?

Do you want to participate in Federal Hill Main Street and support the neighborhood but don't have time to attend monthly committee meetings? There are many ways to get involved. Take on a task and follow it to the end, help out with day-to-day needs, or jump in during big events. In the coming year, Federal Hill Main Street will be looking for volunteers for a variety of tasks, such as:

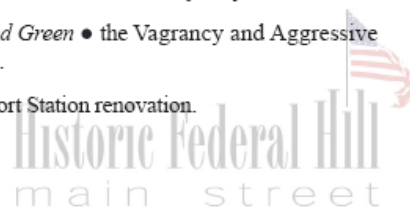
- ➔ Updating the Building Availability List each month.
- ➔ Updating the New Businesses and Closed Businesses lists each month.
- ➔ Updating the building Hot List each month.
- ➔ Taking photos to update Before & After posters.
- ➔ Collecting signatures of business owners with recessed doorways and trespassing/vagrancy problems.
- ➔ Writing business-related articles for the newsletter.
- ➔ Selling advertisements for the newsletter.



- ➔ Acting as trash monitor for a specified area of the business district.
- ➔ Handing out brooms to business owners and getting signed *Clean and Green* pledges during the clean sweep this Spring.
- ➔ Conducting Intercept Surveys of visitors to the district on a Friday or Saturday night this Spring.
- ➔ Going door-to-door to the businesses in the district to • hang posters • hand out contest boxes • take surveys • sell program ads • hand out newsletters • etc.
- ➔ Organizing Moonlight Madness in December, and planning a new retail promotion for the Spring.
- ➔ Planting flowers in the large flower pots on corners in the business district twice each year.



- ➔ Planting flowers in the park in front of the South Baltimore Rec. Center for May Day.
- ➔ Joining a task force to organize • *Keep Federal Hill Clean and Green* • the Vagrancy and Aggressive Panhandling Response • and other quality-of-life initiatives.
- ➔ Developing a Sell-a-Brick campaign to support the Public Comfort Station renovation.
- ➔ Decorating the Main Street office for the holidays.
- ➔ Volunteering for the festivals.



Main Street volunteers are effective. They make a real difference in the neighborhood. For more information about how you can volunteer, contact Bonnie Crockett or Anna Farr at volunteers@historicfederalhill.org or 410-727-4500.