



---

# VOLUNTEER POLICIES SECTION IV

June 2015

## Volunteer Policies & Guidelines

**VOLUNTEER DEFINITION** - Volunteers are defined as individuals who give freely of their time without any expectation for remuneration. They shall be considered ACTIVE if they have volunteered at any time throughout the course of the year. Volunteers may give of their time to work on the board, fundraise or through the thrift store or community kitchen.

**SPECIAL CASE VOLUNTEERS** – Are those individuals who have been selected as a practicum student, or through an agency that provides supports to individuals with disabilities or to meet work experience requirements.

**These volunteer policies are used as guidelines for the Volunteer Program. The guidelines are part of the Volunteer Handbook and all volunteers shall be made aware of these policies.**

Volunteer Recruitment & Placement Process:

1. Volunteer Recruitment Practices – Volunteers will be recruited based on the needs of the organization. Volunteers will be selected based on qualifications, experience, character, attitude, level of interest and desire to serve.
  - a. Screening Requirements – Volunteers will be required to meet with the Centre Coordinator, and complete an application form. A criminal records search and references may also be required if working in a position of trust whereby a higher level of scrutiny may be required. E.g. working with cash or having access to the building after hours (being a key holder).
  - b. Confidentiality – Volunteers will be expected to complete an oath of confidentiality and to maintain the privacy of guests and other volunteers and staff.
  - c. Volunteers will be asked to sign a Media Consent Release form – They may choose NOT to sign it and appropriate measures will be taken by the agency to ensure that no photos, videos or pictures will be taken
  - d. Volunteers shall be given a tour of the facility, orientation to the centre and training specific to their role
  - e. Volunteers will be required to sign off on a checklist to ensure that complete instruction has been provided to the volunteer as to eliminate and reduce risks (to themselves & others) and also to ensure compliancy to the policies & guidelines.
2. Emergency requirements – Volunteers will be expected to provide the name of someone they know that could be used in case of an emergency.
3. Health concerns – Volunteers are expected to refrain from coming into the workplace if they are ill as this could jeopardize the health and well-being of others.
4. Reporting – Volunteers shall be provided instruction about whom they will be reporting to while performing duties.
5. Fragrance Free environment – In respect for others in the workplace Whispers requests that staff and volunteers refrain from using scented products.

6. Tracking Hours – Volunteer hours will be tracked for the purpose of substantiating the existence of the organization; to increase potential for obtaining greater funding; for recognition purposes; and/or for schooling or workplace volunteer experience.
7. Dependability & reliability – Volunteers are requested to show up on time for their scheduled shift and to work the shift as determined. As a volunteer there is a certain level of responsibility that is required. Because the organization relies heavily on its volunteers, it would be difficult to operate or function if volunteers do not show-up on time or at all.
8. Interaction with guests – Volunteers will be expected to interact with the population of people that we serve, in a respectful way – to treat them with respect and dignity.
9. Concerns & disagreements – Volunteers are requested to try and work out any conflict directly with the person where there may be a disagreement by using appropriate language and communication skills outlined in this handbook. If attempts to resolve the conflict have been unsuccessful, then the person may take it to their supervisor or the Centre Coordinator.
10. Dress code, Hygiene and Personal Appearance – Volunteers are required to dress appropriately and have a clean personal appearance in the work environment.
11. Identification – Volunteers will be given a nametag and are expected to wear it while working. Wearing identification helps to differentiate between the customer and the volunteer.
12. Behavior / Code of Conduct – the following is an outline of unacceptable behavior. Volunteers who do not adhere to these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action or termination as a last result.
  - a. Theft
  - b. Intentional destruction of organization property
  - c. Profanity or use of inappropriate language, slurs, racial, sexual comments
  - d. Threats , insults, assaults or abuse of any customer, volunteer/employee or guest
  - e. Failure to follow policies and procedures of the organization
  - f. Insubordination including refusal to follow directions
  - g. Intoxication / Drug use
  - h. Excessive absences or breaks
  - i. Failure to adhere to the scheduled work schedule
  - j. Sleeping during work hours
  - k. Neglecting duties
  - l. Proselytizing or pushing ones religious beliefs onto others
13. Leave of Absence – Volunteers are required to let the Centre Coordinator know when you are going to be away on vacation, or when you need to take time off. This is to ensure that appropriate back-up can be found and placed in your absence. Volunteers may at times expect that their position will be held until such time that they return. This may not always be possible, and shall be left to the discretion of the Centre Coordinator. This will depend on a number of factors including the amount of time that the volunteer will be away.
14. Expenses – Volunteers will not be required to spend their own personal funds on behalf of the organization. If however, a volunteer intends to purchase product on behalf of the organization, they must first receive prior authorization before doing so. I.e. You run out of garbage bags etc.
15. Responsibility & Commitment – All volunteers are expected to act responsibly and to commit to whatever it is that they say they will do.
16. Meals / breaks – Volunteers who work a 5 hour shift shall be given a 30-minute lunch break. Coffee breaks may be provided as determined when time allows. All personal business, including smoking and cell phone use should be done during break periods.

17. Cell Phones – The use of cell phones including playing games and texting will not be allowed during work time. Cell phones may be used for emergency calls only.
18. Smoking - Smoking is prohibited inside the building at all times. Smoking is only allowed in designated areas outside the building and at least 3 meters away from any entry/exit doorway.
19. Incident Reporting – Volunteers who witness abuse, discrimination or harassment of any kind is required to report it immediately to the Centre Coordinator (or designate in the absence of this person.) This may include emotional, physical or verbal abuse. Abuse of any kind shall not be tolerated.
20. Injury – Volunteers are required to report any injury of self or witness of injury toward others. An injury may require the completion of an incident report.
21. Safety - Whispers shall provide a safe working environment that is free from risk and potential harm and will provide an orientation & tour indicating the appropriate procedures required (i.e. nearest exit doors; fire extinguishers, security etc.)

**Any volunteer who does not abide by the policies & guidelines set out by the organization may be disciplined (as per the Personnel Policy) or if necessary, terminated from their duties.**