

APPENDIX 6

Sample Template for Volunteer Opportunity Description

Developing a volunteer opportunity/position description is the first step in recruitment. It forces you to be clear and specific about the role a volunteer will take on. It helps the volunteer to know exactly what you are looking for, what you expect and whether they fit that need. Use the following template to develop new positions or to revise the ones you currently have. This template lists all the possible categories to include; some of your roles may not need to be as specific or complete. Adapt where necessary.

Title	<i>Find a title that reflects the role to be done. Make it realistic and aligned with the titles used in the organization. Make the title exciting not just the 'work' to be done.</i>
Brief description/Purpose	<i>Create a short statement that shows the volunteer how this position contributes to accomplishing goals and mission of the organization. What impact will occur? What outcomes are possible because they are taking this on? Use the outcomes you developed in the Philosophy of Involvement Statement to show volunteers the impact of their support.</i>
Primary responsibilities or tasks	<i>List the key areas and tasks of the position.</i>
Qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience • Skills • Qualities or attitudes 	<i>List the criteria for selection. Think about who this position might appeal to. What skills you absolutely need or will provide training for, helps to separate candidates. Personality traits (qualities and attitudes) can be very important in the client-volunteer relationship.</i>
Time commitment	<i>Day of week; number of hours; how long six months or year commitment. Make this clear.</i>

Benefits	<i>Think about soft and hard benefits – are transportation costs covered; an honorarium, out-of-pocket expenses; training; what skills might the volunteer develop; add to a resume; is a reference letter supplied for successful volunteer experience.</i>
Orientation/Training	<i>What is provided and expectations for attendance. What support can they expect from the organization? Is there a handbook for volunteers?</i>
Challenges of the position	<i>This could be any work place concerns like standing or lifting or working late in evenings; or, related to the client group.</i>
Boundaries of the position	<i>If possible list both do's and don'ts of the position. These will be specific to each position. Example: a volunteer driver is not allowed to take the client to lunch. This is beyond their position.</i>
Supervision	<i>Who will provide support to the volunteer? What type of supervision can be expected?</i>
Feedback/Evaluation	<i>How often and what type? Is there a probationary period? Will you expect the volunteer to provide their own feedback? What areas are you looking for?</i>
Special resources or policies Contracts	<i>Is the volunteer expected to sign a contract or understand key policies? List the policies they will review as part of this role.</i>
Success Measures	<i>Help the volunteer to understand what success for this position means. What can they expect? What outcomes? If you can list these, they will help you target market for recruitment. You will be appealing to certain people.</i>

Screening measures	<i>What steps must the candidate complete? Application, interview, police check, reference checks, probation, training completion etc.</i>
Risk assessment	<i>As staff, you have assessed this position and assigned a risk value to it. This also helps you assign the appropriate screening measures (use Volunteer Canada resource).</i>

Date position developed: _____
Date approved: _____
Reviewed and revised date: _____
By whom: _____

This template has been adapted and revised using the best from several sources.

- a) The Volunteer Toolkit, Mackenzie and Moore
- b) Volunteer Canada web site resource Position Description Form
- c) The Family Resource Centre, Volunteer Manual developed by Donna Lockhart, The RETHINK Group.
- d) Edited in 2016: from Charity Village “Building a Great Volunteer Program” Designed by Donna Lockhart, The RETHINK Group in 2006.
- e) Course Materials: Certificate in Volunteer Management, designed and instructed by Donna Lockhart, Sir Sandford Fleming College 1996-present.