

Volunteer Management



Voluntary work contributes to the growth and development of social networks and creates greater social cohesion within our communities. It also plays a vital role in providing physical activity opportunities for all Tasmanians. Without volunteers, many sport and recreation clubs would not survive.

It is therefore important to understand what volunteers need and want from the organisations they work for and to develop appropriate systems and processes to attract, train, reward and retain volunteers.

Recruiting volunteers

Most volunteers become volunteers through being invited by somebody they know. However, others seek out voluntary work and are recruited through advertising or publicity.

Organisations should approach the recruitment and initiation of volunteers in much the same way as paid employees. That is, the organisation should provide a realistic idea of what the volunteer work entails, perhaps through the development of job descriptions for each volunteer role that details:

- The type of tasks to be undertaken
- The skills and experience needed
- The time required to fulfil the role.

This way, the prospective volunteer is able to make an informed choice about whether or not they are capable and willing to perform a particular volunteer role.

Most volunteers are elected to a position by a committee, but for some roles, selection and screening helps to ensure that the right person is appointed to the role. Reference checks are advisable, especially when appointing volunteers to a position that involves working with children.

New volunteers need to be welcomed, introduced to key people and given information about the organisation's rules and procedures. This orientation helps volunteers feel welcome and a part of the organisation. Making volunteers feel valued is important in retaining volunteer services.

Retaining volunteers

The key to retaining volunteers is making them feel valued and well-supported. Ways of doing this include:

- Welcoming the volunteer and introducing them to key club members
- Providing information about the organisation
- Clearly outlining the activities of volunteer roles
- Providing training and development opportunities
- Implementing meaningful rewards and recognitions
- Enlisting a volunteer coordinator to oversee the induction and activities of volunteers
- Advocating the rights and responsibilities of volunteers.

Volunteer rights and responsibilities

The table on the following page outlines some general rights and responsibilities of volunteers. Perhaps you could include this in the induction package for volunteers.

Volunteer management policies

Every sporting organisation requires overall guidance to ensure that its day-to-day activities are coordinated and conducted in ways that are fair, impartial and consistent. Policies assist in this process by setting out the rules, boundaries and expectations of behavioural standards to members, volunteers and other stakeholders.

Policies that might be required to assist in the impartial and consistent management of volunteers include:

- Volunteer eligibility
- Volunteer rights and responsibilities
- Volunteer management philosophy
- Training and accreditation
- Conflicts of interest
- Out-of-pocket expenses and record keeping
- Complaints and disputes
- Health and safety
- Insurance coverage and member protection
- Media contact.

Where can I get more information?

Volunteering Tasmania can assist organisations with volunteer management. As Tasmania's peak body on volunteering, they provide information and resources, offer workshops and coordinate a volunteer database to assist organisations recruit volunteers.

For more information contact Volunteering Tasmania on 1 800 677 895 or visit www.volunteeringtas.org.au/

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

| Rights | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| Orientation and training | Attend orientation and training sessions |
| Clearly written role description and chain of command | Work within the policies and rules of the organisation |
| Adequate guidance and supervision | Follow direction given by supervisors |
| A role that suits personal preferences, motivation, skills, experience and qualifications; a satisfying role | Ensure you have the time required to be reliable and dependable and complete agreed hours and tasks |
| Involvement in decisions related to their role | Identify limitations and expectations |
| A suitable place to work and equipment to work with | Notify the organisation if training is required and use equipment safely |
| Constructive feedback | Speak up about important issues or concerns |
| Protection via risk management and insurance | Follow all OH&S and risk management procedures |
| Confidential retention of personal information | Respect the privacy of other volunteers and members |
| Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses | Support club members and other volunteers |
| Respect from other volunteers and club members | Be respectful to volunteers and club members |
| The right to say 'no', take time off for personal reasons or to resign | Inform the club when they will not be able to volunteer |



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