

Planning & Prepping to Welcome Volunteers Back

June 2021

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Planning

Identify how you'll re-open to volunteers

Determine how you will re-open:

- all roles all at once or
- a staged approach?

Survey your volunteers

Ask your volunteers about their comfort levels to return to their former role(s). What concerns do they raise? How will you address them?

Resourcing

What budget do you have to properly resource your volunteers and volunteer programs? Did your organization downsize the volunteer department during the pandemic? Are there monies for PPE, training, increased and improved communications?

Right-size your volunteer programs

Ask staff partners "how has COVID-19 changed your need for volunteers?" Revise position descriptions accordingly. Have conversations with current volunteers about new requirements, boundaries, and expectations.

Health & safety

Have discussions with senior leadership and staff partners to determine health and safety requirements to keep clients, volunteers, and staff safe.

Conversations might include: vaccination requirements, mandatory use of PPE, virtual vs. in-person programs, and ensuring compliance.

Develop a re-opening plan & communicate same

With information gathered, develop a re-opening plan for your volunteer program(s).

Once approved, share with staff partners, volunteers, and clients. Ensure all key stakeholders understand the plan and how it impacts them.



FOR MORE DETAILS

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Prepping

Updating key documentation

Review and revise position descriptions, policies, and procedures. Update volunteer handbooks and program playbooks. Ensure on-line and hard copy information align.

Design & implement trainings

Update training materials to reflect new health and safety requirements. Prepare to deliver training ahead of expected start date(s). Adopt a screening process to be used by everyone.

Communicate

Communicate regularly with staff, volunteers, and key stakeholders. Solicit their feedback and refine your plans accordingly. Use multiple methods to communicate: telephone calls, emails, print newsletters, text messages - to keep people up-to-date and to manage expectations. Be clear and concise to reduce confusion.

Keeping up with current guidelines

Keep up-to-date with current public health and provincial government guidelines as well as directives specific to your sector i.e. child care, healthcare. You may need to have a contingency plan for your contingency plan!

Manage relationships

Welcoming volunteers back will be a 'high-touch' exercise with lots of conversations to answer questions, explain new processes, address concerns, and establish expectations and boundaries. Adjust your workload accordingly and/or enlist assistance to properly manage volunteer relationships.

Welcome back volunteers

Open the doors and welcome volunteers to engage in your mission work. Share in their excitement to be back. Schedule time to review and revise procedures based on feedback and/or public health directives.



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