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# Volunteer Policy

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The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation (RVCF) relies heavily on the unpaid work of volunteers and significantly values their contribution. As such, volunteers are extended the right to meaningful duties and fair treatment and in exchange agree to perform their assigned duties to the best of their ability and remain loyal to the mission, goals, policies, and procedures of the Foundation.

## Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that volunteers supporting the RVCF have work that is safe significant, fulfilling and appreciated and be treated with respect and gratitude for their contribution.

## Scope

This policy applies to all RVCF Board members. The RVCF Board of Directors should be aware that they are subject to additional policies included in by-laws, Board of Directors terms of reference and other support documents.

## Recruitment

Volunteers are recruited through referrals by board members or staff as well as public facing recruitment initiatives.

## Applications and Screening

All volunteers will be screened to match skills and experience to the needs and opportunities of the RVCF.

The obligation to thoroughly screen volunteers is greater when they are working with vulnerable people, including children. Any volunteer who works with children must provide a clear Vulnerable Sector Check.

## Equal Opportunities

Although Ontario has no specific legislation addressing the rights and obligations of volunteers or volunteer activities, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code we have a duty not to discriminate when selecting volunteers and participants, protecting them from discrimination once they have been selected and taking reasonable steps to prevent or stop discrimination when it occurs. We also have a legal duty to reasonably accommodate individuals. Activities that prevent disabled people from participating must be adjusted to accommodate their needs, with the onus on the RVCF to make reasonable attempts to accommodate, up to the point of undue hardship.

## Confidentiality

RVCF respects the volunteer's right to privacy and confidentiality. In turn, consideration must be given to sensitive or confidential information and records to which a volunteer may be exposed. Volunteers have a duty of confidentiality, and this obligation to keep information confidential increases with the kind of service a volunteer provides.

## Dismissal

Volunteers who do not adhere to RVCF rules, who fail to perform their volunteer assignments satisfactorily, or who harass or threaten another volunteer, a member of staff or the public will be immediately dismissed from their duties and their volunteer role may be subject to dismissal.

## Training and Orientation

All volunteers receive a general introduction to RVCF as well as a specific orientation regarding the purpose and requirements of their volunteering role. If the nature of the task they are doing is the same, similar or alongside a task that we would have a staff person doing, RVCF will treat them as staff — with the same orientation, training, supervision and will provide them with appropriate personal protective equipment.

Volunteers will receive initial and ongoing on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their tasks well.

## Health and Safety

Preferred health and safety training for a new volunteer includes WHMIS, Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention, AODA, Health and Safety Awareness. This training should be completed before the volunteer takes on certain assignments. RVCF can provide training where appropriate.

## Expenses

Volunteers give their time and skills free of charge, so it is essential that RVCF offers to reimburse any out-of-pocket expenses that are incurred while undertaking voluntary work. Volunteers will be reimbursed for all pre-approved expenditures incurred in the exercise of their function. Such expenses may include; materials for events, reasonable lodging or travel if required or, items requested by Foundation staff. In all cases, receipts or credit card slips must be submitted. Any reimbursements will reflect provincial and federal policies pertaining to charities.

## Insurance

Every volunteer is covered by the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation's insurance policy.

## Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every three years and is updated as required.