

Volunteer Alberta

Volunteer Recruitment and Screening

Are You Ready?

Make sure you know exactly what you want volunteers to do. Nothing is more frustrating than volunteering for an activity and having nothing to do. Develop a position description that includes:

- Position title
- Time requirements
- Purpose of the job
- Specific duties and responsibilities
- Basic skills or qualifications needed for the position
- Orientation and training the volunteer might receive
- Benefits to the volunteer

Are your group's volunteer opportunities suitable for:

- Families
- Employee volunteers
- Volunteers with disabilities
- Youth
- Seniors/mature volunteers
- Baby boomers

How can your group's volunteer opportunities be made appealing to these target groups?

What Prevents People from Volunteering?

- Nobody asked them
- No extra time, or do not want to make a long term commitment
- Don't know how to get involved
- Feel they have already contributed as a volunteer, or gave money instead of time.

Why Do People Volunteer?

- They believe in the cause or are personally affected by it
- To use their skills and experience, or to explore their own strengths
- Religious beliefs
- Because their friends volunteer
- To improve job skills

How to Reach Potential Volunteers

- **Word of mouth.** Make sure people in your organization know that more volunteers are needed. Staff and volunteers who enjoy their work can be a group's most effective recruiters.
- **Printed materials.** Keep the message simple and remember your target audience.
- **Presentations** to schools, business groups, and service clubs.
- **The Internet.** The Volunteer Opportunities Exchange, hosted by Volunteer Canada and Human Resources Development can be found at www.vee-reb.org.
- **Volunteer centres.** Your local volunteer centre or similar organization, listed below, can help you to plan for and recruit volunteers for your organization.

Should You Screen Volunteers?

YES. Although most volunteers are committed individuals who care about their community, it is the responsibility of every organization that uses volunteers to protect the people they serve. Any organization that provides programs or services to people who are vulnerable because of their age (children or seniors), disability, or emotional state needs to screen their volunteers. Screening is really just finding the right person for the right job. **SCREENING IS NOT JUST A CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK.** Screening can include:

- Volunteer application form,
- Interviewing potential volunteers and checking their references,
- Orientation and training,
- Following up with participants and volunteers about their experiences.