

## **CANADIAN CODE FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT**

### **THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT**

Volunteer involvement has a powerful impact on Canadian society, communities, organizations, and individuals.

#### **Volunteer involvement is fundamental to a healthy and democratic society in Canada**

- It promotes civic engagement and active participation in shaping the society we want
- It gives everyone a voice and the space to contribute to the quality of life in communities

#### **Volunteer involvement is vital for strong, inclusive, and resilient communities**

- It promotes change and development through the collective efforts of those who know the community best
- It identifies and supports local strengths and assets to respond to community challenges while strengthening the social fabric

#### **Volunteer involvement builds the capacity of organizations**

- It provides organizations with the skills, talents, and perspectives that are essential to their relevance, vitality, and sustainability
- It increases the capacity of organizations to accomplish their goals through programs and services that respond to and are reflective of the unique characteristics of their communities

#### **Volunteer involvement is personal**

- It promotes a sense of belonging and general wellbeing
- It provides the opportunity for individuals to engage according to their personal preferences and motivations

#### **Volunteering is about building relationships**

- It connects people to the causes they care about, and allows community outcomes and personal goals to be met within a spectrum of engagement
- It creates opportunities for non-profit organizations to accomplish their goals by engaging and involving volunteers, and it allows volunteers an opportunity to engage with and contribute to building community

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

**Volunteers have rights. Non-profit organizations recognize that volunteers are a vital human resource and will commit to the appropriate infrastructure to support volunteer engagement.**

- The organization's practices ensure effective volunteer involvement.
- The organization commits to providing a safe and supportive environment for volunteers.

**Volunteers have responsibilities. Volunteers make a commitment and are accountable to the organization.**

- Volunteers will act with respect for the cause, the stakeholders, the organization, and the community.
- Volunteers will act responsibly and with integrity.

## ORGANIZATION STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

### *Mission-based Approach*

The organization's Board of Directors and senior staff acknowledge, articulate, and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose or mission. Volunteer roles are clearly linked to the organization's mission.

### *Human Resources*

Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of the organization's human resources team. The organization has a planned and integrated approach for volunteer involvement that includes providing appropriate resources to support volunteer involvement.

### *Policies and Procedures*

A policy framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers is adopted by the organization.

### *Volunteer Administration*

The organization has a clearly designated individual(s) with appropriate qualifications responsible for supporting volunteer involvement.

### *Risk Management and Quality Assurance*

Risk management procedures are in place to assess, manage, or mitigate potential risks to the volunteers, the organization and its clients, members and participants that may result from the delivery of a volunteer-led program or service. Each volunteer role is assessed for level of risk as part of the screening process.

### *Volunteer Roles*

Volunteer roles contribute to the mission or purpose of the organization and clearly identify the abilities needed. Volunteer roles involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect their skills, needs, interests, and backgrounds.

### *Recruitment*

Volunteer recruitment incorporates a broad range of internal and external strategies to reach out to diverse sources of volunteers.

### *Screening*

A clearly communicated and transparent screening process, which is aligned with the risk management approach, is adopted and consistently applied across the organization.

### *Orientation and Training*

Volunteers receive an orientation to the organization, its policies, and practices, appropriate to each role. Each volunteer receives training specific to the volunteer role and the needs of the individual volunteer.

### *Support and Supervision*

Volunteers receive the level of support and supervision required for the role and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.

### *Records Management*

Standardized documentation and records management practices and procedures are followed and are in line with current relevant legislation.

### *Technology*

Volunteers are engaged and supported within the organization through the integration and intentional use of current technology. New opportunities to strengthen volunteer engagement and capacity through the use of technology are evaluated continually.

### *Recognition*

The contributions of volunteers are acknowledged by the organization with ongoing formal and informal methods of recognition, applicable to the volunteer role. The value and impact of volunteer contributions are understood and acknowledged within the organization and communicated to the volunteer.

### *Evaluation*

An evaluation framework is in place to assess the performance of volunteers and gauge volunteer satisfaction. The effectiveness of the volunteer engagement strategy in meeting the organization's mandate is also evaluated.