



**Seaway Valley
Community Health Centre**

Working with you for a Healthier Community

Volunteer Position Descriptions

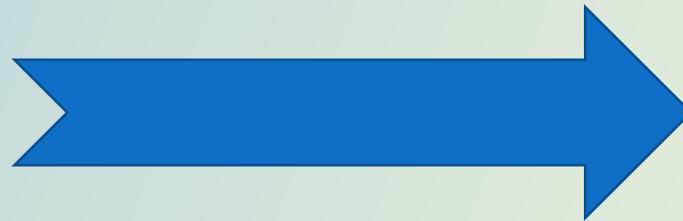
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Evolution Towards Volunteer Engagement

Non-profit organizations have evolved from thinking of volunteers as “helpers” who are tasked with activities such as making calls, answering phones, filing and stuffing envelopes to a culture of **engagement** where volunteers and staff work **collaboratively**.

Volunteers are engaged and motivated when they have clearly defined roles that align with their interests, skills and availability and understand how their work contributes to the organization in impactful and meaningful ways.





Don't recruit before you plan, prepare and research!

- **Plan ahead** and map out where volunteers are needed! What roles need to be filled? For what projects? How will this support the organization's mission and goals?
- Ensure that you **clearly understand the scope of the position** you want to recruit for. What will the volunteer be doing and why? How much time will they need to commit? What do you need them to accomplish? How will you attract skilled volunteers and inspire them to apply (motivations)? How and who will train and support them?
- Conduct a **risk assessment** and determine what tools, trainings and support the volunteer will need in order to empower them to succeed and to be safe.

**This is the foundation for successful volunteer recruitment and where
volunteer engagement best practices begin.**



The Purpose of a Volunteer Position Description (PD)

A PD is of equal importance to the organization and the volunteer.

- It is a tool that is used to recruit, screen and select volunteer candidates that would best match the requirements and skills needed to be successful.
- It outlines role expectations and instills accountabilities for both parties.
- It can help staff partners monitor performance and evaluate progress that enables them to step in to provide support or, better yet, celebrate and acknowledge success.
- Volunteer applicants review PDs before applying to self-screen in order to ensure that the role is a good fit for their interests, skills, motivations and availability.



Impact

Describes how the position aligns with and impacts the organizations' mission, values and goals.
Reinforce how this role is meaningful to the organization and those served.
(This is where understanding volunteer motivations come into play)

Example: “Volunteering with Diabetes Canada gives you the chance to contribute to the lives of people affected by diabetes—perhaps those close to you, in your community, or even across the country.
You'll join a team of committed, generous people who are making a difference.”

Example: At SVCHC we have focused on the reason we engage volunteers – achieving the mission of the centre of supporting the health and wellbeing of local people through a team and partnership approach while giving the volunteer the best possible experience to make an impact”

Highlighting how the position impacts the organization helps to motivate skilled, committed and results-driven volunteers to apply.



CIBC Run for the Cure – An example of volunteer impact and engagement

Many non-profit organizations enjoy tremendous success thanks to a strong contingent of engaged and empowered volunteers. Take for example the CIBC Run for the Cure which is organized and executed with very minimal staff involvement.

In 1992, a small group of volunteers began a movement in Toronto's High Park. That day they brought together 1,500 people to raise awareness and \$85,000 for breast cancer. This marked the beginning of what was to become Canada's largest single day, **volunteer-led** event in support of the breast cancer cause, the CIBC Run for the Cure. Today, the event has over 85,000 participants and raises \$17 million annually in communities across Canada.





Incorporating Risk Assessment into the Position Description

2 Examples from SVCHC



Example PD – Low Risk Position



Volunteer Opportunity Description – Social Drop-in

Purpose: To assist the program facilitator in the following tasks as required

Responsibilities:

- Able to arrive between 10:00 am and 10:30
- Participate in Team Drop-in huddle at 10:30
- Prepare handout print materials for participants (as required)
- Help set-up room including preparing coffee and other beverages
- Meet and greet clients as they arrive (please make sure to keep an eye on the door for newly arriving clients)
- Help clients sign-in and take a name tag
- Distribute and/or set up materials for activities (as needed)
- Assist clients when needed (e.g. a client might need sugar, utensils or water)
- Be friendly and sociable
- Assist in clean-up of kitchen, community room
- Support the activities in the kitchen such as cooking (as needed – this must be pre-arranged with staff lead due to limited space in the kitchen)

Requirements:

The volunteer should have a positive outlook, enjoy working and socializing with older adults, and have an interest in helping people stay well.

Location: SVCHC Community Room

Benefits: Social interaction, speaking skills, helping others improve their wellbeing

Time Commitment: Social Drop-in is the first Thursday of every month from 11:00 am until 2:30 pm (approximately 4 hours when set-up and clean up is included)

Report to: Jessica McLeod - Dietitian or Corrie D'Alessio – Community Health Worker

Volunteer Signature: _____

Staff Signature: _____



Example PD – Hi Risk Position



Volunteer Position Description - Certified Senior Fitness Instructor

Purpose: To offer a safe, community-based fall prevention/exercise program for older adults supported by trained (certified) volunteers and/or staff leaders.

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Become certified by the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging (CCAA) with the Seniors Fitness Instructors Course (SFIC) and receive and maintain a current CPR/AED;
- Help SVCHC staff and/or admin. volunteers with registration of clients at the beginning of each session;
- Help with room set-up and re-assembly;
- Lead fall prevention/exercise classes for older adults of various mobility levels. The volunteer lead instructor will prepare for the classes and facilitate the exercises with clients;
- Support and/or facilitate "Start Up!", "Stay Up!" or "Step Up!" classes depending on the need;
- Keep track of volunteers and clients on attendance sheets and submit them to staff lead or designate;
- As required, mentor SFIC volunteer candidates who have been assigned to their class as they move towards certification;
- Attend "Team Balance for Life" training meetings (as scheduled);
- Follow the safety plan, including filling out incident reports and if needed calling EMS and report back to SVCHC as soon as possible;
- Maintain confidentiality of client information;
- Coordinate/communicate with staff lead before taking on extra responsibilities.

Volunteer Requirements:

- An interest in physical activity and healthy living for older adults and those with chronic conditions;
- CCAA certification with SFIC course and CPR/AED training (provided by SVCHC after pre-approval);
- Additional training/certification as necessary (e.g. Heart Wise Training by UOHI, after pre-approval);
- Ideally volunteers will work in teams (there is no guarantee a certified SFIC instructor will be assigned their own class). Schedules will be developed as needed.

Time Commitment:

- As a certified SFIC instructor, attend 2 classes a week for a designated session either as a lead instructor or support to staff or another volunteer instructor depending on the need (approximately 4 hours a week);
- Attend "Team Balance for Life" meetings (as scheduled) for approximately 1.5 hours per meeting;
- SVCHC asks that a volunteer who has recently received their SFIC certification, paid for by SVCHC, can commit a minimum of 1 year from the time of certification, to facilitate and/or support agreed upon classes for the BFL program.



Location: Classes will be at various locations in Cornwall and SDG. SFIC leaders will lead classes at their agreed upon site. On occasion, a leader may go to another site to cover classes as needed.

Benefits: Physical activity, social connection, satisfaction of helping improve clients' wellbeing.

Report to Staff Lead: (Balance for Life Coordinator)

Signature of Volunteer: _____

Signature of Staff: _____

Date: _____

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- It's helpful to create a Volunteer PD Template for consistency
- It's advisable to at least annually review PDs and update them when needed
- You can include more information such as project location (if off-site) and who their staff partner will be (i.e. you will be working in collaboration with the fundraising specialist)
- Respect the PD = respect the volunteer! Don't assign tasks and responsibilities outside of the scope of the agreed upon role or change the role altogether unless mutually agreed.



**“Unattractive positions will make every other part of
volunteer management more difficult”** (Linda Graff, Best of All, pg. 61)

Questions?

