



Pandemic 2020 Volunteer Management Resources

Volunteer Management Resources

Managing volunteers during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic has proven to be challenging to both ad hoc community efforts and established nonprofit organizations. In an attempt to provide some support, the [London and Area Association for Volunteer Administration](#) (LAVA) and the [Pillar Nonprofit Network](#) (Pillar) have curated the following list of resources which are in alignment with volunteer engagement best practices. *(Please note that some of the resources are from outside the city, province or country. In these instances, the general information can be viewed as helpful but references to specific program or legislation may not be relevant).*

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement is our framework and reference for best practices in volunteer engagement. We will focus on areas 5 through 10 as they represent the practical steps and most pressing steps for engaging volunteers.

[Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement](#)

1. Mission-Based Approach
2. Human Resources
3. Infrastructure for Volunteer Involvement
4. Evaluation, Tracking, Measuring and Reporting
5. Volunteer Roles and Recruitment
6. Risk Management
7. Screening
8. Orientation and Training
9. Support and Supervision
10. Recognition: Valuing Volunteer Involvement

Informal Volunteering

These resources may be helpful to those who are acting either individually or within small informal community hubs to assist their neighbours or those they become aware of who are in need of assistance.

Health and Safety Considerations for Volunteering	Volunteer Canada
Informal Volunteering Guide	Volunteer Ireland
Volunteering Safely (Informally)	Volunteer Ireland



Volunteer Roles and Recruitment

Volunteer Role Descriptions help in managing expectations of the organization, volunteers and those served. It helps to clarify the role, tasks, and responsibilities for volunteers. The type of information to include in a role description includes:

- What type of volunteering? - remote, contactless, temporary/ad hoc, short-term, long-term.
- What are the tasks involved?
- What does the volunteer bring to the role? – specific skills, previous training, PPE, Driver’s license and access to vehicle, food, and water.
- What training is required/available? What standards, if any, must be met?
- What support is available for the volunteer during and after their volunteer service?

Volunteer Role Templates <i>(Do not contact Volunteer MBC for support. Contact president.londonava@gmail.com for support in the London area)</i>	Volunteer Milton Brampton Caledon
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Samples of volunteer role descriptions developed for the pandemic can be found [here](#). For assistance in London and area contact president.londonava@gmail.com.

Risk Management

It is important to review the list of tasks that a volunteer needs to complete in a role to identify what risks there may be to the person served, the volunteer, and your organization and what can be done to manage or mitigate those risks.

- COVID-19: VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES: RISK AND LIABILITY	Volunteer Canada
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Protecting Vulnerable People in the Community

A vulnerable person is defined as a person who, because of their age, a disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent are (a) in a position of dependence on others or (b) are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust relative to them. (London Police Service).

Risks may be mitigated or managed through investigating the background and character of potential volunteers (screening). This can include Vulnerable Sector Checks, Police Checks, reference checks, professional certifications and/or memberships, previous work or volunteer experience, ongoing observation and evaluation, and stepped access to vulnerable individuals, finances and property. (See the Screening section below for more suggestions.)

Advising volunteers not to enter households and not to take on additional tasks at the request of benefactors is also a way to reduced risk to both populations.

Protecting Volunteers



Training is an excellent tool to reduce risk. This includes health and safety training. In current circumstances this means ensuring volunteers have all relevant training to keep themselves, and the people they are assisting safe from the transmission of COVID-19. What this looks like may be site or task specific. Guidelines are best sourced from reliable sources like public health. Task specific training is also available for activities like driving and food handling. (See the Orientation and Training section below.)

Screening

This can include Police Checks, Vulnerable Sector Checks, reference checks, professional certification and/or memberships, previous work or volunteer experience, ongoing observation and evaluation, stepped access to vulnerable individuals, finances and property and representation of the organization. Access to Police Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks is currently suspended. Consider what screening tools are available against the access you can reasonably allow to vulnerable individuals and adjust volunteer tasks and roles accordingly.

In lieu of current Police Checks or Vulnerable Sectors Checks you may also consider:

- Engaging volunteers that currently volunteer for an organization and who has already been screened
- asking potential volunteers if they have done a Police Check or Vulnerable Sector Check done for another agency within the last three years and if they retained a copy of it
- ask potential volunteers if they have a criminal record for which they have not received a pardon

Volunteer Screening	Volunteer Toronto
Screening (Garda Vetting and references to legislation are specific to Ireland. General Guidelines are relevant).	Volunteer Ireland

Orientation and Training

In current circumstances this means ensuring volunteers have all relevant training to keep themselves, and the people they are assisting safe from the transmission of COVID-19.

Covid-19 protocol resources site and activity specific guidelines from Middlesex-London Health Unit	Middlesex-London Health Unit
Vehicle Wipe Down Instructions	Volunteer Toronto
Food Handling Guidelines	Ontario Ministry of Health

Support and Supervision

It is vital that volunteers feel they are not alone in their work and that they always have someone they can turn to for information and support. One of the predominant concerns during these times is the mental health of volunteers. They may experience contact with individuals and circumstances that are



heart-breaking, complex, and desperate. This may impact volunteers in ways they are not expecting and has the potential to seriously impact their mental health. Ensure that volunteers always have a point of contact for support that ranges from the practical execution of their tasks to the emotional and mental processing of what they are experiencing during the pandemic. Remember some volunteers may require help beyond what you may be trained or qualified. That is O.K. Make the referral.

Volunteer Well Being Canadian Mental Health Association – Covid-19 Resources	Canadian Mental Health Association
Centre for Mental Health and Addiction – Covid-19 Resources	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (Toronto)
Kids Helpphone	Canada
Self-Care Tool	Lighthouse Storytelling Self-reflection Tool

Recognition

Formal volunteer programs typically have formal volunteer recognition activities. While ad hoc volunteering will not have this those, who manage volunteers in this type of setting can rest assured they can still meet the recognition needs of volunteers. The primary reward that volunteers seek is seeing the impact their time and effort has on those they serve. The second most important aspect of recognition for the vast majority of volunteers is the day-to-day offering of acknowledging their involvement and saying thank you to them. It can be as simple as saying ‘thank you for volunteering today and helping the community.’

Volunteer Recognition Study	Volunteer Canada
How to Deepen Connections Through Purposeful Volunteer Recognition and Rewards	Volunteer Pro – American based

For a broader range of volunteerism and volunteer management resources which are updated and added to on an ongoing basis visit:

London

[London and Area Association for Volunteer Administration](#)

[Pillar Nonprofit Network](#)

Ontario

[Professional Association of Volunteer Leaders – Ontario](#)

<https://www.volunteertoronto.ca/page/CommunityGroupSupport>



Canada

[Charity Village Covid-19 resources](#)

[Volunteer Canada](#) volunteering and Covid-19