The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

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For further information on this subject or others relating to volunteering and volunteer management, please visit www.volunteer.ca/resource.

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1. Background

Volunteerism and the Voluntary Sector in Canada

Every day, thousands of people voluntarily give their time and talent to thousands of organizations across Canada. They give their time freely and with no expectation of monetary reward. Their hours of service ensure that many activities are accomplished and many people are helped. They build houses for the homeless, care for the elderly, and provide counseling and support services. They are youth group leaders, program coordinators, coaches and fundraisers. They represent every walk of life – professional, homemaker, student, retiree – as well as every age and cultural group.

Canadians volunteer for over 161,000 voluntary organizations in the areas as diverse as health care, social services, sport and recreation, faith communities, arts and culture, and education. Some of these voluntary organizations are large, structured organizations with staff and volunteers who work collaboratively. Some are smaller grassroots organizations or community groups that are run solely by volunteers or with very limited paid staff support.

Volunteer Canada

Volunteer Canada is a national organization engaged in the promotion of volunteerism across Canada. As a national leader, Volunteer Canada strives to ensure that volunteer efforts are promoted, recognized, supported and safeguarded. Volunteer Canada works in partnership with:

- a network of close to 100 Volunteer Centres in communities across Canada, as well as a federation of approximately 110 Volunteer Centres in Quebec;
- a network of National Volunteer Involving Organizations that brings together volunteer development professionals working at the national level of Canadian charities, public institutions and non-profit organizations;
- thirteen Local Networks and Host Organizations involved in the Canada Volunteerism Initiative and representing all provinces and territories across the country;
- a membership base that represents the full spectrum of the voluntary, public and private sectors, including managers of volunteers, Volunteer Centres, non-profit agencies, community groups, government departments, corporations and individuals who are interested in volunteerism.

By developing resources and national initiatives, Volunteer Canada actively engages in research, training and promotional campaigns to increase community participation and provide leadership on issues and trends in the Canadian volunteer movement.

Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources

Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources (CAVR) is a national organization that promotes the professional administration of volunteer resources through established standards of practice, a code of ethics and certification of membership. CAVR collaborates with provincial, national and international organizations to support and enhance volunteer resource management in Canada.

The Partnership

Volunteer Canada and CAVR provide leadership in promoting and enhancing volunteerism in Canada. They have collaborated on a number of projects and initiatives in the past. In January of 2005, Volunteer Canada and CAVR embarked on a new partnership to consolidate the Canadian Code for

Volunteer Involvement (Volunteer Canada, 2000) and the CAVR Standards of Practice (CAVR, 2002).

The result is a revised Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement that integrates elements of the original Code with the Standards of Practice of the CAVR. Volunteer Canada and CAVR are proud to present this revised edition of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement to the voluntary sector.

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement: History, Importance and Purpose

History of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

The original Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement was launched in December 2000 as a kickoff to the International Year of Volunteers (2001). The Code was targeted at boards of directors of voluntary organizations and intended to promote discussion about the role volunteers play in their organizations. Across Canada, many organizations worked to adopt and implement the Code into their work with volunteers, and in doing so, created a solid base for involving volunteers in their organizations. Building on this success, Volunteer Canada and CAVR recognize the importance of being at the forefront of information delivery and providing continual leadership to voluntary organizations. This revised Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement enables organizations to enhance their existing practices and continue to ensure that solid foundations are in place for involving volunteers in their organizations.

Importance of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers and the voluntary sector continue to play a vital role in Canadian society. Volunteers across Canada are engaged in delivering services and programs that improve and enhance the life of the community. The original Code assisted organizations in:

- communicating the values and benefits received from volunteer involvement;
- providing a framework for decision making, taking into account organizational values and guiding principles; and
- developing standards for involving volunteers in meaningful ways to ensure successful integration of volunteers for both the organization and its volunteers.

The revised Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement will continue to support organizations in the same ways.

Purpose of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement is a road map for voluntary organizations, large or small, that proposes strategies to effectively involve volunteers. In many organizations, support of volunteers through volunteer programs exists only at the periphery of the organization. Volunteers are viewed as a "nice to have" but not as critical components of the organization's work or success. The Code proposes ways to integrate volunteer involvement strategically into the organization, and helps leaders in the organization understand the value and role of volunteers.

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement is designed to set the stage for organizations to discuss how their volunteers are engaged and supported. It is structured to initiate thought and discussion about the role volunteers can play in helping the voluntary organization achieve its purpose or mission. This resource provides a starting point for this kind of thinking and discussion.

2. The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

Overview: Elements of the Code

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement consists of three important elements:

- **Values for Volunteer Involvement**
  Core statement on the importance and value of volunteer involvement in voluntary organizations and Canadian society

- **Guiding Principles for Volunteer Involvement**
  Principles that detail the exchange between voluntary organizations and volunteers.

- **Organizational Standards for Volunteer Involvement**
  Standards that organizations should consider in developing or reviewing how volunteers are involved in their organizations.[1]

Values for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteer involvement is vital to a just and democratic society.

- It fosters civic responsibility, participation and interaction.

Volunteer involvement strengthens communities.

- It promotes change and development by identifying and responding to community needs.

Volunteer involvement mutually benefits both the volunteer and the organization.

- It increases the capacity of organizations to accomplish their goals, and provides volunteers with opportunities to develop and contribute.

Volunteer involvement is based on relationships.

- It creates opportunities for voluntary organizations to accomplish its goals by engaging and involving volunteers, and it allows volunteers an opportunity to grow and give back to the community in meaningful ways through voluntary organizations.

Guiding Principles for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers have rights. Voluntary organizations recognize that volunteers are a vital human resource and will commit to the appropriate infrastructure to support volunteers.

- 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 beneficiaries and community.
- Volunteers will act responsibly and with integrity.

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[1] These standards have consolidated the standards published in the original Code (2000) and the standards adopted by CAVR (2002)

Organizational Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Standard 1: Mission-based Approach
The board of directors, leadership volunteers and staff acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose and mission.

Standard 2: Human Resources
Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of the organization's human resources team. The organization has a planned approach for volunteer involvement that includes linking volunteers to the achievement of the mission, providing the appropriate human and financial resources to support the volunteer program, and establishing policies for effective management.

Standard 3: Program Planning and Policies
Policies and procedures are adopted by the organization to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.

Standard 4: Program Administration
The organization has a clearly designated individual with appropriate qualifications responsible for the volunteer program.

Standard 5: Volunteer Assignments
Volunteer assignments address the mission or purpose of the organization and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and backgrounds of the volunteer and the organization.

Standard 6: Recruitment
Volunteer recruitment incorporates internal and external strategies to reach out and involve a diverse volunteer base.

Standard 7: Screening
A clearly communicated screening process is adopted and consistently applied by the organization.

Standard 8: Orientation and Training
Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices, including the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. Each volunteer receives training customized to the volunteer assignment and the individual needs of the volunteer.

Standard 9: Supervision
Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.

Standard 10: Recognition
The contributions of volunteers are consistently acknowledged with formal and informal methods of recognition.

Standard 11: Record Management
Standardized documentation and records management practices are followed and in line with relevant legislation.

Standard 12: Evaluation
The impact and contribution of volunteers and the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.

3. Involving Volunteers: Adopting and Implementing the Code

Step 1: Why Do Voluntary Organizations Exist?

Strong organizations deliver programs and services that influence and impact the community. In turn, the community also influences voluntary organizations through demographics, trends and needs. It is important to understand how trends in the community and the voluntary sector can impact voluntary organizations. By understanding the influence of trends in the voluntary sector, volunteers can be more effectively involved. Surveys such as the Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (www.givingandvolunteering.ca) and the National Survey of Non-Profit and Voluntary Organizations (www.nonprofitscan.ca) are useful resources for the identification and analysis of trends.

Whether formal or informal, voluntary organizations are made up of individuals who work together to achieve the purpose or mission of a cause that is important to them. The mission of an organization tells us why the organization exists and the nature of its overall mandate or goal. The mission should answer the question "Why are we here?" Further, it is important to ask:

- How does our organization achieve its mission?
- What are the programs and services that contribute to fulfilling the mission?

By adopting the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, voluntary organizations make a commitment to not only strengthen their volunteer programs, but to strengthen the capacity of the organization to meet both its mandate and the needs of the community.

The right track to involving volunteers…

- Trends that are happening in the voluntary sector at a local and a national level are understood by the organization.
- The demographic makeup of current volunteers within the organization can be articulated.
- A core client base has been defined by the organization and the demographics of the community are known.
- The organization understands and responds to the needs of the community.
- Organizational standards for volunteer involvement adopted by the voluntary organization have taken into consideration voluntary sector trends and trends occurring within the local community (including current legislations and best practices).
- Values and guiding principles from the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement are reviewed during the strategic and annual planning process.
- Values and guiding principles from the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement are incorporated within the governance policy of the organization.
- Values and guiding principles are incorporated into the organization's values, vision and mission statement.
- The organization has a philosophical statement or policy about volunteer involvement.

Step 2: Who Does What in Voluntary Organizations to Involve Volunteers

Voluntary organizations accomplish their goals through their human resources. Individuals come together to make positive change in their communities, and are a critical resource to the voluntary sector. They are engaged in organizations in a number of different ways. Each individual contributes to the organization to help achieve its purpose or mission and has a role to play in ensuring the successful involvement of volunteers. The following overview of the different roles that individuals assume in an organization can provide an understanding of how they can contribute to involving volunteers.

Manager of Volunteer Resources[2]

Volunteer programs do not exist in isolation within an organization. For volunteer involvement to be effective, there must be acceptance and support from people within the organization. Many voluntary organizations have a dedicated staff person responsible for managing the volunteer program. This person is often called the Manager of Volunteer Resources. In other smaller organizations, the Manager of Volunteer Resources may be a volunteer. Regardless of whether the managers of volunteer resources are paid staff or volunteers, their main responsibility is to ensure that volunteers are recruited and engaged effectively, and that volunteer involvement standards are consistently applied within the organization. Increasingly, management of volunteer resources is viewed as a function of human resource management.

What can Managers of Volunteer Resources do to assist the implementation of the Code?
1. Review and understand the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.
2. Discuss the role and expectations of volunteers in the organization.
3. Review the Organizational Standards Checklist

and identify strengths and gaps in your volunteer resources program.
4. Ensure that Organizational Standards for volunteer involvement are consistently applied within the organization.
5. Manage and lead volunteers within a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement excellence.
6. Identify potential strategies for increasing the effective involvement of volunteers.
7. Manage the volunteer resources to ensure effective integration into the organization.

Board of Directors

Voluntary organizations are governed or led by a voluntary board of directors. The role of a board can vary from organization to organization, but in general, boards are responsible for providing leadership and strategic direction to the organization based on its mission/mandate, and for governing the affairs of the organization on behalf of its members. Some boards provide input, helping out with the day-to-day operations of the organization, while other boards operate from a governance position with a focus on the direction and growth of an organization in partnership with staff. It is the board that establishes the purpose or mission, values and governing policies of your organization.

It is important to understand how a board operates when adopting and implementing the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement. Some boards may need to approve the policies associated with each organizational standard for volunteer involvement. Other boards may just approve the values and guiding principles associated with involving volunteers, while policy development and implementation is left to senior staff in the organization.

Board members are volunteers. As such, they have an essential role to play in demonstrating the value of volunteer involvement through their actions.

[2] It is recognized that titles vary from one organization or group to another. In this text, reference made to "managers of volunteer resources" should be considered to represent any individual who has been assigned the administration and management duties relating to volunteer involvement.

What can the Board of Directors do to assist in the implementation of the Code?
1. Review the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.
2. Discuss whether the values are consistent with the board's vision for volunteer involvement in your organization.
3. Review the Organizational Standards Checklist (provided in Step 3). Discuss whether the organization currently fulfills these standards and/or identify any gaps.
4. Make a commitment to adopt the Code.
5. Communicate to all staff and volunteers the organization's commitment to making effective volunteer involvement an integral part of achieving the organization's mission.

Executive Director or Leadership Volunteers

Executive Directors are present in many voluntary organizations. Their role is to support the governance of the board while ensuring that programs and operations of the organization are delivered. They also have a role to play in ensuring volunteers are integrated into the work of the organization and that volunteer involvement standards are supported and adopted.

In many grassroots or community based voluntary organizations, this may be a role that is also part of the board and performed by leadership volunteers within the organization.

What can Executive Directors or Leadership Volunteers do to assist in the implementation of the Code?
1. Review the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.
2. Discuss the role and expectations of volunteers in the organization.
3. Review the vision, mission and values of your organization and discuss how they align with the values and guiding principles of the Code.
4. Review the Organizational Standards Checklist (provided in Step 3). Discuss whether the

organization currently fulfills these standards and/or identify any gaps.
5. Create and lead a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement excellence.
6. Communicate to all staff and volunteers the organization's commitment to making effective volunteer involvement an integral part of achieving the organization's mission.
7. Identify potential strategies for increasing the effective involvement of volunteers. Strategies may be directed at either staff or volunteers.
8. Identify and obtain resources (financial and/or human) required to effectively involve and support volunteers.

Volunteers

Regardless of the size or structure of voluntary organizations, volunteers are individuals who give freely of their time to help the organization fulfill its mandate. Volunteers are an important human resource for any voluntary organization. They bring a passion for the cause and a commitment to the purpose, and are highly motivated by their choice of involvement. It is important that voluntary organizations understand what attracts volunteers to their organization and how they can best maximize this vital human resource.

What can Volunteers do to assist in the implementation of the Code?
1. Understand how volunteer work links to the organization's mission.
2. Recognize that volunteers have both rights and responsibilities as these relate to their involvement in the voluntary organization.
3. Operate within the Organizational Standards for volunteer involvement adopted by the organization.

Everyone in a voluntary organization has a role to play in ensuring successful volunteer involvement. Too often, the management or oversight of volunteers is left as the responsibility of a single individual or department within the organization. Effective volunteer involvement is everyone's responsibility.

The right track to involving volunteers…

- Volunteer involvement is included in the annual operating plans with allocated resources.
- The board is aware of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement and understands how the organization plans to use it.
- A dedicated individual works with volunteers and has the appropriate skills and knowledge to manage volunteer resources.
- A current organizational chart outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers in the organization.
- Staff and volunteers are empowered to take action on responsibilities and tasks.
- The board and senior management demonstrate a strong commitment and understanding of volunteer involvement and management.

Table 1 *Understanding Who Does What in the Organization* (see next page) shows the key roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within a voluntary organization. It can be adapted for any organization. For large, complex organizations, a column identifying the roles, responsibilities and accountability of staff working directly with volunteers might be incorporated. For grassroots organizations, some of the columns might merge, as individuals working for smaller organizations often play multiple roles. It is important to recognize that each organization is unique; this table provides a frame of reference for organizations to define who is responsible for what and who is accountable for ensuring that volunteers are effectively involved and able to contribute to the mission and programs of the organization.

Table 1: Understanding Who Does What in the Organization

	Board Members	Executive Directors or Leadership Volunteers	Managers of Volunteer Resources (paid or volunteers)	Volunteers
Specific Roles in Organization	Create, lead and ensure a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement *(Policy Focus)*	Create and lead a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement *(Policy and Delivery Focus)*	Manage and lead volunteers within a supportive environment and culture for volunteer involvement *(Policy and Delivery Focus)*	Individually contribute to support an environment and culture for volunteer involvement. *(Delivery Focus)*
Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Plan	• Define and review vision, mission and values around volunteer involvement • Develop a strategic plan that considers integrating volunteer involvement as a core function and resource to support achievement of the mission	• Review vision, mission and values • Assist with strategic plan development • Develop and manage operational strategies and goals and the annual plan	• Link operational work to vision, mission and values • Manage annual operating goals and strategies	• Understand how volunteer work links to vision, mission and values • Undertake volunteer work to achieve operational goals and strategies
Governance Policy	• Identify and develop governance policies	• Manage to support governance policies	• Manage to support governance policies	• Follow policies
Programs and Operations	• Develop policies for program and operations	• Identify and obtain the resources (human and financial) required for programs and operations to be delivered	• Manage the volunteer resources so that programs and operations are supported	• Provide volunteer service and leadership for effective program delivery
Human Resources Management (Volunteer Involvement)	• Develop a policy approach to human resource management and incorporate the volunteer involvement standards	• Ensure effective management of human resource strategies in the organization • Lead the involvement of volunteers and the integration of volunteer involvement standards and practices	• Transfer human resource management strategies to the volunteer program • Ensure that volunteer involvement standards are consistently applied within the organization	• Operate within and support the volunteer involvement standards for delivery of quality programs and/or services.

Step 3: Involving Volunteers in Voluntary Organizations - Organizational Standards Checklist

By adopting the standards outlined in this resource, the organization demonstrates a commitment to understanding and involving volunteers in the work it does to achieve its mandate. By adopting and implementing the detailed practices outlined for each standard, organizations send a strong message to volunteers, staff, funders and the community that involvement of volunteers is vital and an integral part of the strategic plan.

The organizational standards provide a basic set of standards to which all organizations should aspire.

Standard 1: Mission-based Approach

Volunteers help the organization achieve its mission and objectives. Volunteer involvement must be aligned with the organization's goals and resource allocation. The board and senior management should understand and approve of the direction of the volunteer program.

The board of directors, leadership volunteers and staff acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose and mission.

- The board of directors adopts a statement declaring the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's mission.
- The organization's planning process incorporates volunteer involvement.
- The board has approved the overall strategy for volunteer involvement.
- A budget is allocated for volunteer involvement.
- Adequate space and equipment are allocated for volunteers to perform their assignments.
- Appropriate insurance is acquired to minimize volunteer liability.
- Volunteer involvement goals are evaluated regularly by the board of directors.

Standard 2: Human Resources

A healthy organization encourages volunteers to grow. Volunteers are supported and encouraged to become involved and to contribute in new ways beyond initial assignments. Volunteers need to be included as equal members of the team. The definition of team should not be limited to those who are paid within the organization. Involved and informed volunteers who feel part of the team are far more likely to continue contributing their valuable time and skills.

Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of the organization's human resources team. The organization has a planned approach for volunteer involvement that includes linking volunteers to the achievement of the mission, providing the appropriate human and financial resources to support the volunteer program, and establishing policies for effective management.

- Staff is given training and recognition to work effectively with volunteers.
- Input from volunteers is welcomed and solicited for the organization's planning and evaluation.
- Volunteers are encouraged to grow within the organization.
- Volunteers are included as equal members of the team.

Standard 3: Program Planning and Policies

Policies and procedures help clarify responsibilities and ensure consistency. They should be developed and documented on a broad spectrum, from volunteer assignments and screening, to grounds for dismissal. The organization's board of directors needs to ensure volunteer policies are congruent with other policies within the organization. The manager of volunteer resources is responsible for identifying the specific policies and procedures required.

Policies and procedures are adopted by the organization to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.

- The organization's planning process incorporates volunteer involvement.
- The board has approved the overall goals for volunteer involvement.
- Governance and operational policies are in place, are reviewed regularly, and incorporate volunteer involvement practices.
- Policies and procedures are communicated to all staff and volunteers.
- Policies and procedures are followed consistently and equitably.
- Policies and procedures are consistent with national and provincial/territorial Human Rights Codes, The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and provincial/territorial employment standards legislation.

Standard 4: Program Administration

Managing volunteers is both an art and a science. The job demands a wide range of skills with a high level of complexity. Regardless of whether they are staff members or volunteers, managers of volunteers should have the necessary skills, experience and support to do the job well.

The organization has a clearly designated individual with appropriate qualifications responsible for the volunteer program.

- The designated person has an appropriate level of education and experience to manage the volunteer program.
- A written job description for the designated person is developed and reviewed regularly.
- The designated person is a member of the management or administrative team or key leadership volunteer.
- The designated person works collaboratively with staff, the local Volunteer Centre and other

organizations to encourage the effectiveness of the volunteer program.
- Professional development opportunities are provided on a regular basis.
- The performance of the designated person is reviewed regularly and includes feedback from both staff and volunteers.

Standard 5: Volunteer Assignments

Assignments should be developed to address the needs of the organization and the volunteer. Volunteer assignments should be linked to the organization's mission. Individual needs vary considerably, so successful volunteer programs adapt volunteer assignments to fit these needs when possible. It is necessary to periodically review volunteer assignments to ensure their relevance and value.

Volunteer assignments address the mission or purpose of the organization and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and backgrounds of the volunteer and the organization.

- Volunteers and staff (including bargaining units of unions where applicable) are consulted when developing new assignments.
- Volunteer assignments have written descriptions that include duties, responsibilities, skills needed, time required and benefits.
- Volunteer assignments are developed to reflect the needs of the organization and the needs of volunteers.
- Volunteer assignments are reviewed periodically with staff, volunteers (and bargaining units of unions where applicable) to ensure relevance and value.
- Volunteers with special requirements or challenges can become involved with the organization.
- The level of risk is assessed and minimized for all volunteer assignments.

Standard 6: Recruitment

Effective recruitment messages are realistic and clear. They leave an accurate impression of the organization and its needs. Genuine effort should be made to recruit and select volunteers from a broad range of backgrounds. A healthy organization has a mix of age, gender, ethnicity, and abilities in its volunteer group.

Volunteer recruitment incorporates internal and external strategies to reach out and involve a diverse volunteer base.

- Recruitment messages are realistic and clear about the volunteer assignments and expectations.
- Various techniques are used to recruit volunteers.
- Recruitment messages indicate that screening procedures are followed in the organization.
- Genuine effort is made to recruit and select volunteers from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences to represent the community served by the organization.
- Selection of volunteers is based on actual requirements and pre-determined screening measures.

Standard 7: Screening

Screening is an essential process that lasts for the duration of a volunteer's involvement with the organization. Screening procedures are delivered consistently with no exceptions made for certain individuals. Screening protocols are assigned to positions because of inherent risk; individuals do not determine screening. Screening should be viewed as evidence that the organization cares about its programs and its people.

A clearly communicated screening process is adopted and consistently applied by the organization.

- Screening is considered to be an essential process that continues throughout the volunteer's

involvement with the organization.
- Policies relating to screening practices are developed, adopted and clearly communicated to staff and volunteers.
- All volunteer assignments are assessed for level of risk.
- Appropriate screening tools are used according to the level of risk of the assignment.
- Once defined, screening practices are delivered consistently with no exceptions made for certain individuals.

Standard 8: Orientation and Training

An orientation clarifies the relationship between volunteers and the organization. It familiarizes volunteers with the organization by providing information on the policies and procedures that influence work and involvement with others. Volunteers need adequate training to perform tasks without putting themselves or others at risk. Training prepares volunteers to do the work required by the position and to meet the expectations of their volunteer assignments.

Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices (including the rights and responsibilities of volunteers) and receives training customized to the volunteer assignment and individual needs of the volunteer.

- Volunteers receive information on the history, mission and structure of the organization.
- Volunteers receive information on the policies and procedures specific to their volunteer assignment.
- Volunteers are given adequate training for performing their assignment without putting themselves or others at risk.
- Volunteers are informed of the boundaries and limits of their assignments.
- Volunteers have ongoing training opportunities to upgrade their skills and adapt to changes in the organization.

Standard 9: Supervision

Prior to the placement of volunteers, the supervision level of the assignment should be determined b a s e d on the complexity and risk of the assignment. Each volunteer should know who their supervisor is. Supervision increases the motivation of volunteers, helps ensure the organization's mandate is met and gives volunteers a sense of belonging within the organization.

Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are given regular opportunities to offer and receive feedback.

- The complexity and risk of each assignment determines the level of supervision.
- Volunteers are assigned and introduced to their supervisors at the start of their assignment.
- The performance of volunteers is evaluated on a regular basis.
- Random spot checks with volunteers (and clients) are used to verify volunteer performance.
- Volunteers are given and encouraged to use mechanisms for providing input to the organization.
- Situations requiring reprimand and dismissal follow policies and procedures fairly and consistently, while respecting the safety and dignity of all concerned.

Standard 10: Recognition

An effective volunteer program acknowledges volunteers throughout the year by knowing volunteers as individuals and providing recognition that is meaningful on an ongoing basis. In addition, it is essential that those responsible acknowledge internally and publicly (where appropriate) the importance of volunteer involvement to the organization.

The contributions of volunteers are consistently acknowledged with formal and informal methods of recognition.

- Senior management acknowledges the efforts of volunteers.
- Formal methods of recognition are delivered consistently.
- Informal methods of recognition are delivered in a timely and appropriate manner.

Standard 11: Records Management

Records should be maintained on every volunteer involved with the organization, using a confidential, secure system. Records should include application forms, records of interviews, assignment descriptions, letters of reference, performance appraisals and current contact information. Records are also useful in evaluating the impact of the volunteer program through the contribution and time donated by volunteers.

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

- Records are kept for each volunteer using a confidential, secure system respecting the privacy of personal information.
- Statistical information about the volunteer program is regularly shared with staff and volunteers in the organization.
- With appropriate agreement, testimonials about volunteer involvement are shared within the organization to promote volunteer involvement.
- The organization keeps informed of new legislation, Human Rights Codes and other relevant guidelines for record management, privacy and confidentiality practices.

Standard 12: Evaluation

Volunteer involvement should be evaluated regularly to ensure that involvement of volunteers is contributing to the organizations mandate. An evaluation of volunteer involvement should include: reviewing goals and objectives, identifying results achieved, obtaining feedback from current volunteers and clients, collecting and reviewing both quantitative and qualitative data about volunteer involvement.

The impact and contribution of involving volunteers and of the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.

- Performance goals are established annually for the volunteer program.
- Achievement of performance goals is assessed on an annual basis.
- Volunteer involvement goals are evaluated regularly by the board of directors.
- Opportunities exist for volunteers to give feedback to the organization about their involvement.

4. Glossary of Terms

Board

Those persons whose responsibility it is to provide leadership and direction to the organization and govern the affairs of the organization on behalf of its members. For the purposes of this document, the term "board" is used to refer to a board of directors, members of the executive, board of governors or a board of trustees, administrators, clergy, leaders, coaches, coordinators, officials, parents, participants or anyone else involved in the governance or decision making of the organization.

Capacity

The human and financial resources, technology, skills, knowledge and understanding required for organizations to do their work and fulfill what is expected of them by stakeholders.

Executive Director (ED)

The most senior staff position in the organization. The ED is responsible for the entire organization and reports directly to the board. The ED's role is to support the governance of the board while ensuring that programs and operations of the organization are delivered.

Leadership Volunteers

Individuals who are mainly responsible for supporting the governance of the board while ensuring that programs and operations of the organization are delivered (in the absence of paid staff).

Manager of Volunteers

An administrator of volunteer resources is a professional who applies the best practices in volunteer management in compliance with nationally accepted standards to identify, strengthen and effectively maximize voluntary involvement for the purpose of improving the quality of life of individuals and of communities. The term "administrator" is used in a generic way to represent all other titles used in the voluntary sector (director, coordinator, manager, leader, etc). In some organizations, the title of the person responsible for managing volunteers may not even reflect this role. Throughout the Code, the term "Manager of Volunteers" is used. (CAVR definition)

Mission

The mandate for why an organization exists. The overall goal of the organization, this is often referred to as the "raison d'être" of an organization.

Organizational Standards

Standards that organizations should consider in developing or reviewing how volunteers are involved in their organizations. This is a basic set of standards to which all organizations should aspire.

Policies

Specific statements of belief, principle or action that tell us what to do.

Procedures

A series of steps to assist in implementing policy. The steps indicate who will do the work and how it will be done.

Staff	Individuals who work on behalf of an organization and who receive financial compensation.
Voluntary Organizations	Organizations whose work depends on: serving a public benefit; on volunteers for at least its governance; on some financial support from individuals and on limited direct influence by governments, other than in relation to any tax benefits accruing the organization. A voluntary organization can be a large, structured organization or a small, community or grassroots organization.
Volunteerism	Refers to the contribution of time, resources, energy and/or without monetary compensation.
Volunteering	The most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. It is the offering of time, energy and skills of one's own free will.
Volunteer	Any person who gives freely of their time, energy and skills to contribute to the goals of a voluntary organization.
Volunteer Resources Management	The practice and profession of leading teams of individuals (volunteers) to support and enhance core programs and services of an organization. This practice is also a component of human resource management of the organization and should be closely aligned.

5. Additional Resources

Universal Declaration on Volunteering: International Association for Volunteer Effort
The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) adopted a *Universal Declaration on Volunteering* for all voluntary organizations. The declaration provides broad standards for volunteering that can be used by all organizations.

International Association for Volunteer Effort:
www.iave.org

Universal Declaration on Volunteering:
www.iave.org/resources_udecl.cfm

Federal and Provincial Human Rights Codes
Volunteer programs are governed by the Canadian Human Rights Code and provincial human rights codes. Voluntary organizations should be aware of the content of these codes and ensure that their programs comply with the regulations identified in them.

Volunteer Canada's Safe Steps to Screening
Volunteer Canada has developed a variety of resources designed to assist organizations in assessing and managing risk in their volunteer programs. These resources can be accessed at **www.volunteer.ca/screening** and can be ordered online.

Volunteer Canada's Volunteer Resource Centre
Volunteer Canada has a number of resources that can be accessed and ordered online through
www.volunteer.ca/resource

Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating
www.givingandvolunteering.ca

National Survey of Non-Profit and Voluntary Organizations
www.nonprofitscan.ca

Volunteer Canada
330 Gilmour Street
Ottawa, Ontario CANADA
K2P 2P6
www.volunteer.ca

Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources
www.cavr.org