Essential Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Guide

Written policies and procedures are good practice for volunteer-involving organisations. They provide clarity about rights, responsibilities and expectations for volunteers and organisations.

Make policies work for you

Volunteer groups and organisations of any size can benefit from writing down their policies and procedures. Such documents do not need to be long or cover every aspect of what you do. Rather, for key issues, think about:

- your overall approach to the issue

- who the issue affects

- who is responsible for dealing with it

- what processes should be followed

- write it down in simple language, make sure everyone involved understands that you have it.

Walk the talk

Beware of leaving policies and procedures to languish in your files – if they are not being used, they are probably not useful. Conduct regular reviews with input from the people they most affect to ensure your policies and procedures hit the mark. Put reminders in your calendar. You should also make policies and procedures generally available to stakeholders – volunteers, staff and even clients where appropriate.

By highlighting your policies you not only remind stakeholders of their contents, but reassure people that the organisation has thought through its response to issues that affect them and the work they do. If things go wrong you will have a commonly agreed starting point and approach to resolve issues in everyone's best

Be the best

Australian best practice in volunteer management has developed over time and is exemplified in the National Standards for Involving Volunteers. For an outline of how these Standards can work for you, see Best Practice for Volunteer Programs.

Which policies

The list on the following page identifies important issues common to most volunteer-involving organisations and links to relevant resources. You may also require other policies for issues specific to your operations.

Volunteer policy (rationale, rights and responsibilities)	Involving Volunteers: the Principles
Recruitment (including PDs, selection process and approach to diversity/discrimination)	Recruiting Volunteers
Volunteer checks	Police Checks and Working with Children Checks
Orientation and induction	Orientation for New Volunteers
Support and supervision (including recognition, training and development)	Managing Volunteers for Retention
Grievance procedures and disciplinary policy	Dealing with Conflict
Leaving the organisation (including dismissal)	Dealing with Conflict
Sexual harassment	Sexual Harassment
Privacy	Protecting the Privacy of Volunteers
Confidentiality and Intellectual Property	Confidentiality and Intellectual Property
Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses	Money and Volunteers
Volunteer insurance	Insurance and Liability
Health and safety	Health and Safety for Volunteers

More information

To help you manage your volunteers, Volunteering Victoria has developed a range of simple tools and templates. Visit our website for more information.

National Standards for Volunteer Involvement assist you to benchmark against eight areas of volunteer program management.

https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Standards-Document-FINAL_Web.pdf