



TIPS FOR RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

§ Respond quickly to inquiries from prospective volunteers

When someone decides to do volunteer work, they want to do it **now**, so prompt positive contact on an agency's part can capitalise on the volunteer's enthusiasm and make them feel wanted and involved. The volunteer receives a great initial impression, which fuels their later commitment.

Delays can give volunteers time to have second thoughts ... and change their minds! Don't waste a good volunteer by delaying that crucial first contact.

§ Screening volunteers

A good screening process helps your organisation to decide whether potential volunteers are suitable for the roles and tasks they are expected to carry out.

Screening also assists in risk management. It minimises the risk of financial loss through criminal or civil legal action and/or damage to your reputation.

The great majority of volunteers perform their roles without incident and with commitment to the wellbeing of their client groups. However, volunteer roles that require a degree of trust call for vigilant screening:

- ☐ Create clear job descriptions that reflect the position's tasks, responsibility and level of trust.
- ☐ Conduct face-to-face interviews with volunteer applicants.
- ☐ Organisations have the right to request character references; prepare questions to ask referees.
- ☐ Police checks are recommended for volunteers who work unsupervised with clients and/or with the following client groups ...
 - Children under the age of sixteen
 - Elderly people
 - People with disabilities

§ The first interview with prospective volunteers

- ☐ Provide a brief background of your service and show where volunteers can become involved.
- ☐ Explain the process by which volunteers are selected, supervised and supported.

- U Enable people to decide for themselves whether they would be suitable for volunteer work in your service.
- U Volunteers should have the right to choose how much time and to what level they contribute to a volunteer role.

§ Volunteer Orientation

Volunteers will need to be familiarised with the organisation and its procedures, and the responsibilities and duties of their volunteer work with the organisation.

- U Develop a volunteer orientation kit. Suggested topics include:
 - History of organisation
 - Aims and objectives
 - Overview of staff & volunteers
 - Overview of services and service users
 - Decision-making structures
 - How volunteers can give and receive feedback
 - Key policies and procedures: Code of Conduct, OHS, Confidentiality, Grievance, Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities.
- U Go through the volunteer's job description and clarify where needed.
- U Ask the volunteer to sign a volunteer work agreement. This provides an opportunity to talk through rights and responsibilities of both parties.
- U Provide information about upcoming meetings and training opportunities.

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