



VOLUNTEER RESOURCE KIT

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INTRODUCTION TO THE KIT

This Volunteer Kit has been designed to establish consistency, fairness and equality for all BVO volunteers. In this kit, we will clarify our values and our philosophy. We will communicate responsibilities and expectations. Some critical standards and policies will be outlined to assist you in understanding BVO as an organization. This kit will also provide you with an overview of Beaver Valley Outreach. We have included specifics about our organization, our philosophy, our programs, and our community service. We hope this kit will help you make the most of your volunteer experience with us.

WHAT IS BEAVER VALLEY OUTREACH?

MISSION STATEMENT

Beaver Valley Outreach is a charitable, not-for-profit, community-based organization of staff and volunteers that provides quality programs and services to enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of people in The Blue Mountains.

VISION STATEMENT

Beaver Valley Outreach is instrumental in creating a healthy, vibrant community in The Blue Mountains. We fill gaps in community and social services by providing programs, services and events. We foster close partnerships with community leaders and organizations. We advocate on behalf of the community for improvements to the well-being of its members. We provide new programs and services as required.

VALUE STATEMENT

BVO strives to be inclusive and welcoming to all members of the community; accountable to its supporters and to those who use its services; proactive, serving the community with integrity and respect.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board members are volunteers of the community at large. They are however, a different type of volunteer. The board assumes both legal and fiduciary responsibilities for BVO and performs the role of trustees. It is the board that establishes mission, values and governing policies for BVO.

PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND EVENTS

A copy of our Programs, Services and Events is attached for your review. Do any of these programs or services call out to you? Consider your skills and interests. Consider the amount of time you are willing to give. Do you enjoy visiting and talking with people? Do you like to drive? Are you interested in fashion? Are you a creative, crafts person? Do you enjoy working with children?

Whatever your interests or skills, we can find a place for you at BVO and we will benefit from all you have to offer.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

WHO ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS?

Volunteers are “very important people” and the heart of the BVO community. **You** enrich the BVO family by bringing your own unique experiences. **You** are a valuable source of new ideas, interests and knowledge. **You** are an essential component of our organization. **You** are the team members that support and enrich all the programs and services we offer.

Volunteering with BVO will also help you become more aware of our community. **You** will develop a sense for what the community needs and you will share this information within BVO so that we might respond to those needs.

The successful involvement of volunteers in any organization is the responsibility of all members. The partnership between volunteers, staff and board members must be one of mutual respect, honesty and commitment. Teamwork is what will ultimately enable us to creatively solve the issues and challenges we face in our community. Together we can go forward, “making good things happen in our community!”

VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

1. All volunteers will –
 - Complete a Volunteer Registration Form and Interest Inventory
 - Read and sign the Oath of Confidentiality, Harassment Policy, and the Code of Conduct
 - Complete Criminal Records Checks. If you are under the age of 18, you will provide two letters of reference from appropriate persons
 - Review the policies and procedures for information applicable to volunteers including the Privacy Policy
2. Prospective volunteers are interviewed to determine the best possible placement within the organization. Placement depends on your skills, talents and interests as well as the opportunities available. No volunteers will be placed in a position for which they are not comfortable. Volunteers will be able to decline a suggested assignment or request a change at any point during their involvement with BVO.
3. All volunteers under the age of 18 will be given assignments with adult support.
4. An orientation session will be offered to all new volunteers annually.
5. All personal information obtained during the provision of your service will be treated as confidential.
6. Volunteers who do not comply with these procedures may be released from their duties.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

YOUR RIGHTS AS A BVO VOLUNTEER

- to be interviewed and given assignments which take into consideration your personal preferences and skills prior to taking on any volunteer tasks
- to receive appropriate orientation to the organization
- to be treated as a co-worker and informed of changes in conditions surrounding your assignments
- to have the opportunity to voice your opinions
- to have a variety of experiences within our organization
- to be recognized and supported for your input

THE RIGHTS OF BVO AS AN ORGANIZATION

- to expect cooperation and commitment from volunteers
- to determine, in consultation with you, which assignments are appropriate for you within the framework of the organization
- to decline to place a prospective volunteer if the person is unsuitable for an assignment
- to release a volunteer who does not operate within the policies established by BVO

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A BVO VOLUNTEER

- to work cooperatively as part of our team to implement the objectives and policies of BVO
- to maintain the strictest confidentiality of all information obtained at BVO
- to attend orientation and training sessions
- to be open and honest with each other and to accept guidance from each other
- to maintain a smooth working relationship with the staff and stay within the agreed bounds of volunteer responsibility
- to be willing to learn and seek honest feedback
- to record all hours of service
- to bring the priceless gifts of enthusiasm, ideas and energy to your time at BVO

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF BVO AS AN ORGANIZATION

- to enhance your experience by providing learning opportunities conducive to your growth and to give you support and recognition
- to ensure proper training/orientation opportunities for you in order to support and enhance good relations with staff, other volunteers and our clients
- to provide an overview of your accountabilities and responsibilities
- to inform you of any significant changes which directly affect your relationship with BVO
- to provide procedures for conflict resolution
- to provide volunteers with a safe, clean, organized and structured environment

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Everyone involved with BVO [Staff, Board Members and Volunteers] is expected to commit and adhere to the following:

- No one will engage in discussion of situations or cases within or outside of BVO except on a need to know basis as is required for the appropriate conduct of BVO.
- Everyone will undertake, as part of the condition of their volunteer placement, to keep in strict confidence any information concerning participants of BVO programs and services or any persons who donate to BVO.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Everyone involved with BVO [Staff, Board Members and Volunteers] is expected to meet and follow these standards of conduct:

- Everyone will fulfill his/her obligations and responsibilities with integrity.
- Everyone will protect the privacy of those who use the services of BVO and hold in confidence all acquired information concerning clients, staff, board members, donors and volunteers.
- Everyone will serve clients in a friendly, respectful, conscientious and efficient manner.
- Volunteers, staff and board members will treat each other and our clients with respect and cooperate with each other to facilitate the good of BVO.
- Everyone shall treat BVO, its services and programs with dignity and respect and conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the well-being of the organization.

HARASSMENT POLICY

The full details of BVO's Harassment policy is available on our website. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with this policy

BVO is committed to providing a harassment free environment. Mutual respect must be the basis of interaction, cooperation and understanding. Behaviour that is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of an individual or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all volunteers and staff as well as our clients.

Harassment can be defined as any unwelcome action by any person, whether verbal or physical, on a single or repeated basis, which humiliates, insults or degrades. "Unwelcome" or "unwanted" in this context means any actions, which the harasser knows or ought to reasonably know are not desired by the victim of the harassment. Prohibited grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code include – race, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation and disability.

Harassment is not a joke. It creates feelings of uneasiness, humiliation and discomfort. It is an expression of perceived superiority by the harasser over another person, usually for reasons over which the victim has little or no control – sex, race, age, creed, colour, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, political or religious affiliation or place of national origin.

PRIVACY POLICY

PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS ACT

[PIPEDA] – The full details of BVO’s Privacy Policy may be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with this policy.

The underlying philosophy is that BVO is accountable for the protection of personal information collected from clients, donors, members, employees and volunteers AND the fair handling of that information at all times.

PIPEDA requires:

- That the clear consent of an individual must be obtained before we collect, use or disclose personal information about that individual, except when it is unreasonable to obtain consent or when the information is public knowledge
- That we use the acquired information only for the purposes for which we have secured consent
- That the information is protected from unauthorized access or use
- That we keep the information up to date and correct so as not to make decisions based on wrong information
- That the information is destroyed when it is no longer needed for the original purpose
- That BVO implement accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance with all points

This policy will be applied to all personal information collected, used or disclosed, whether factual or subjective, about an identifiable individual during the course of commercial activities. It is the responsibility of the BVO Board to ensure that those individuals, groups/organizations and/or businesses that have been approved, designated or contracted to act for or on its behalf are aware of and in compliance with the principles set forth in the Privacy Policy of BVO.

CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECK PROCESS

As part of due diligence and our responsibility to our volunteers and community, volunteers must provide a Criminal Reference Check.

- The Criminal Reference check shall consist of a check through the Canadian Police Information Computer [CPIC] system to secure information regarding outstanding Criminal convictions for which a pardon has not been granted.
- Volunteers working with minors and seniors in BVO programs must provide a current Vulnerable Sectors Criminal Reference Check.
- You will obtain the form directly from the Executive Director or designate before going to the police department. This form can be delivered to the OPP station in Thornbury.
- For Volunteers, there are no charges for either of these reference checks.
- You will pick up your police check when it is completed and provide it to the Executive Director.
- All information obtained through this reference check will be held in the strictest of confidence and the results will be filed in a locked cabinet under the control of the Executive Director.
- If a candidate is not suitable for volunteering with BVO, all information regarding the Criminal Reference Check will be returned to the individual.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Your safety and that of our clients and program participants is very important to BVO. Every effort will be made to provide a safe and healthy place to work. A safe environment requires the cooperation of everyone. We all have a responsibility to ensure that we are exercising safe work practices and procedures. You are expected to follow safe operating procedures, to call attention to any unsafe conditions and to maintain good housekeeping practices.

FIRE PROCEDURES

The Staff at BVO and the Treasure Shop Team Leaders are familiar with safety fire procedures and you are expected to follow their lead in the event of fire within the building. Your responsibility is to leave the building as calmly and quickly as possible when you become aware of a fire. Please try to remember to close doors behind you. Once safely outside, move away from the building as quickly as possible and await further instruction.

VOLUNTEER CONCERNS

In the interest of good working relationships, it is extremely important that you feel free to discuss any concerns, problems, complaints, or matter of dissatisfaction that may arise. You are urged to bring your concerns forward for discussion. It is the commitment of the Board of Directors that a formal complaint by a volunteer be resolved as promptly as possible. Where appropriate, volunteers are expected to first discuss their complaint with the appropriate program coordinator, team leader or Executive Director to allow her/him the opportunity to settle the complaint. If the volunteer is not satisfied with the action taken by these individuals, then the volunteer may initiate an appeal as follows:

- Contact the Executive Board Member[s] responsible for conflict resolution as promptly as possible to discuss the situation. [The Board Member[s] responsible for conflict resolution will be members of the Executive and there will always be a minimum of two members assigned this accountability]
- It is expected the complaint will be presented in writing.

The complaint will then be discussed with all concerned parties and the Board Chair will be advised. All complaints will be dealt with as efficiently and effectively as the specific situation permits. The appropriate Executive Board Member[s] will advise the volunteer who lodged the complaint of the outcome. It is our objective to resolve all concerns in a spirit of friendliness, cooperation and fairness.

CONCLUDING INFORMATION

REPORTING OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

All volunteers, including Board Members are asked to report the hours they volunteer. This enables BVO to recognize you for your contribution. Additionally, the number of hours contributed to BVO helps if and when we need to request grant monies.

Please complete your hours on the available timesheets on a daily basis. The timesheets will be collected by the Volunteer Coordinator or her/his delegate, totalled and delivered to the Administrative Assistant.

If you are scheduled for an assignment and you are ill or otherwise absent, please make every effort to find a replacement and advise the program coordinator or team leader.

SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION

Volunteers enrich the BVO family through your involvement and participation. BVO is committed to make every effort to support your work and your initiatives.

Staff and Board Members, Team Leaders and Program Coordinators will provide feedback to you on an ongoing basis. We will make our best effort to demonstrate appreciation in many forms. Traditionally we hold a biennial volunteer appreciation event and acknowledge our volunteers annually during National Volunteer Week.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Board of Directors and the Executive Director will offer volunteers the opportunity to participate in personal and professional development courses as funding permits. Such courses can enrich your volunteer commitment. Again, we thank you for your interest in this wonderful organization and wish you every success within our team!

EXIT MEETING

When your time of volunteering with BVO comes to an end, you will be given an opportunity to participate in our exit procedure. We have an exit form for you to fill out if you choose to and then, if you are interested, the Volunteer Coordinator will meet with you to discuss your experience with BVO. Your insights into and experience with BVO are valuable and important to us and we would appreciate the opportunity to hear your feedback and celebrate your accomplishments with us.

FINAL COMMENTS

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. If you have more questions about BVO or comments about how to improve this kit, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, her/his delegate or the Executive Director. We look forward to working together, "making good things happen in our community!"