

Volunteer Program Planning

Phase 1: Planning

- **Assess needs** – how are you currently using volunteers? What is and is not working within the volunteer program? Is there additional work that could be done or aided with the help of volunteers?
- **Develop goals and objectives** – What do you hope to achieve – a certain number of volunteer events, better engagement of your members and community, a target number of volunteers?
- **Set policies** – What rules will you expect volunteers to follow? Written policies ensure that everyone is on the same page with expectations of confidentiality, safety issues, volunteer procedures, etc.
- **Secure board/administrative support** – Make sure your board understands and will support you in the goals you have set for your volunteer program
- **Develop budget** – plan for costs associated with your volunteer program – refreshments for projects, recognition items, t-shirts

Phase 2: Organize

- **Designate formal volunteer coordinator** – this will be the volunteer, staff or board member who be the main contact for volunteers
- **Provide for good volunteer-staff relations** – make sure that any staff or volunteers who will be working with volunteers understand their role
- **Prepare record keeping materials** – How and where will you track volunteer contact information and project involvement?
- **Design position description** – Clearly define what the volunteer will do, who they report to, and what time commitment is expected of them.

Phase 3: Staff

- **Recruit** – Reach out to your own membership, current volunteers, schools, and community groups to help put the word out about your volunteer needs
- **Screen, select, and assign volunteers** – not every volunteer is right for every position – take the time to find out what skills/interests the volunteer has to place them in something they will enjoy
- **Provide for orientation and training** – whether as a group training or individual on-the-job training, give your volunteers background on your organization's mission and programs and show them how to do the volunteer job

Phase 4: Direct

- **Arrange for on-going supervision** – make sure there is someone volunteers can go to with questions, whether the person is on-site or available by phone/email
- **Provide for recognition** – thank your volunteers for their contributions

Phase 5: Assess

- **Evaluate volunteers and volunteer program** – set up periodic meetings with your volunteers to get their feedback on the volunteer program and give the volunteer any suggestions you have for their performance
- **Make necessary changes in volunteer program**