

Volunteers

Guidance for Recruiting, Training, Managing, and Retaining Unpaid Workers



Effectively recruiting, training, managing, and retaining volunteers can play a crucial role in helping a nonprofit organization accomplish its goals.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of many nonprofits. Organizations may rely on dedicated volunteers to help with hands-on projects and programs as well as conventional office work. Many organizations are run entirely by volunteers.

This guide provides links to guides, articles, sample documents, and other resources to help nonprofit organizations of all types effectively recruit, train, manage, and retain volunteers.

Recruiting Volunteers

- [VolunteerMatch.org](#) (a website that matches nonprofits with volunteers based on skills and interests)
- [“3 Ways to Recruit Volunteers for Your Nonprofit”](#)
- [“Volunteer Recruitment Plan: 5 Components to Focus on Today”](#)
- [“5 Ways to Recruit More Volunteers for Your Nonprofit”](#)
- [“5 Creative \(and Free!\) Ways to Attract More Volunteers”](#)
- [“4 Unusual Ways to Attract Volunteers to Your Nonprofit”](#)

Training, Managing, and Retaining Volunteers

- [“The Basics of Volunteer Orientation and Training”](#)
- [“How to Train Your Nonprofit’s Volunteers”](#)
- [Volunteer management resource library](#)
- [Volunteer Management Practices and the Retention of Volunteers](#)
- [Successful Strategies for Recruiting, Training, and Utilizing Volunteers](#)
- [Pennsylvania Department of Aging volunteer engagement toolkit](#)
- [Sample volunteer management policy](#)

- [“Tracking Volunteer Time to Boost Your Bottom Line: A Complete Accounting Guide”](#)
- [“6 Tips to Retain Volunteers”](#)
- [“Top 10 Strategies for Retaining Volunteers That Actually Work”](#)
- [“How to Retain Volunteers in Nonprofits”](#)

Volunteer Handbooks

Many organizations create handbooks for volunteers that contain important information about the organization, volunteer roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, and more. Handbooks can play a crucial role in a nonprofit’s volunteer program, providing structure, helping volunteers feel appreciated, and protecting the organization.

The following web articles provide a good overview of the purpose of a volunteer handbook and what information handbooks should include:

- [“Volunteer Handbooks: Essential Tools for Volunteer Development”](#)
- [“How to Create a Volunteer Handbook for Your Nonprofit”](#)
- [“5 Essentials to Include in Your Volunteer Handbook”](#)

See the [Volunteer Handbooks and Manuals](#) topic at [ConservationTools.org](#) for a large collection of sample handbooks from land trusts and other nonprofits, as well as templates that organizations can adapt for their own use.

Managing Liability and Risk

- [Securing Waivers of Liability from Volunteers of Nonprofit Organizations](#)
- [“Nonprofit Volunteers – Minimizing the Risk”](#)
- [“Volunteers and General Liability Insurance”](#)

- [“Better Safe Than Sorry: Nonprofits’ Use of Waivers, Releases, and Disclaimers”](#)
- [“Nonprofit Interns: IRS Regulations and Liability”](#)
- [“Risky Business: There’s Liability for the Acts of Your Volunteers”](#)

See the [Volunteer Waivers and Release Forms](#) topic at ConservationTools.org for an extensive collection of sample volunteer waivers from land trusts and other nonprofits.

The most recent version of this guide and related resources can be found at <https://ConservationTools.org/guides/174>

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