



Welcoming Communities

*ToolKit for Non-profits to Support New Canadian
Volunteers*

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WelcomeBC

ToolKit for Non-profits to Support New Canadian Volunteers

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Questions to Ask when Building a Cultural Competent Non-profit

1. Does the mission statement explicitly recognize cultural diversity in the community and reflect the organization's commitment to serve culturally diverse people competently?
2. Does the organization involve culturally diverse community members, staff, volunteers and clients in the policy and program development processes? If so, how?
3. Does the organization consult regularly with culturally diverse communities to identify cultural diversity issues in the service area?
4. Does the organization collect and analyze culturally specific data?
5. Does the organization have a good understanding of cultural diversity in the community and among clients (i.e. number and size of each cultural group, languages spoken, employment and income levels, length of time in Canada, religion, etc.)?

Steps in Building a Cultural Competent Non-Profit

1. Form a Task group to serve as a primary governing body for planning implementing, and evaluating your organizations cultural competence.
2. Assessing the current level of cultural competence and where opportunities and barriers lie in creating change. Look at what training needs exist.
3. Engage the Board of Directors in ensuring expert and sufficient resources are dedicated to the planning and development of the policies and strategies
4. Create a diversity policy and mission statement that communicates widely to staff, volunteers and the public what the intentions are.
5. Implement a Diversity Action plan to fully incorporate the principles, policies and practices into all aspects of the organization. Communicate this plan throughout the organization.
6. Evaluate Cultural Competency Policy - How is your organization doing in meeting its diversity goals?

Assessing your Non-profit's Welcoming and Inclusive state

Quick program evaluation that reflects current practices.

- Our local demographic information is up-to-date.
- We network with settlement and multicultural organizations.
- We have recently completed a diversity self-assessment and we have identified areas for improvement.
- Our volunteer program goals and mission statement reflect our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

We have written volunteer program policies and procedures that reflect our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

- Our procedures and forms are as accessible as possible.
- Staff and volunteers have the training and support they need to work in a culturally diverse environment.
- Newcomers are included in the planning process for the volunteer program.

Who are our clients/potential clients?

1. Who are we supposed to serve? What are their needs?
2. Who are we actually serving? Do our clients reflect the broader community?
3. Has the client base and their needs changed since we started the volunteer program? What are those changes? How has the volunteer program changed in response?
4. What client needs remain unmet? How can our volunteer program help us serve our clients better?

Who are our current volunteers? Potential volunteers?

1. Do our current volunteers statistically reflect the demographic make-up of the community we serve? (i.e. newcomer, age, gender?)
2. What are the motives of our current volunteers for volunteering at our organization? What are their expectations? Are we meeting their expectations?
3. What groups not presently represented could be included in our volunteer program?
4. What are possible motives for underrepresented groups to volunteer at our organization?
5. How could volunteers from new groups help us in our work?

Do we have an inclusive vision for our volunteer program that is shared by all?

1. How does the vision of the volunteer program reflect a commitment to diversity?
2. Is the purpose of our volunteer program clear and understandable to potential volunteers in immigrant communities?
3. How do newcomer volunteers contribute to the planning process? If they do not, how could they contribute?
4. What are the supervisors' perceptions of working with newcomer volunteers?
5. What Board/organizational policies are in place to sustain our commitment to inclusion?

Do we have the infrastructure in place to maintain a culturally inclusive volunteer program?

1. Do we have clear written procedures to support newcomer volunteers? What do we do to ensure all supervisors and volunteers are familiar with them?
2. What skills do supervisors need to work effectively with newcomer volunteers? Do they have these skills?
3. Is there support and training available to enable supervisors to work more effectively and respectfully with newcomer volunteers?
4. Have we allocated adequate resources to support our volunteer program effectively? What extra resources are needed? Where can we get them?



Building a Diverse Board and Non-profit

Questions to ask to ensure a Diverse Board:

1. Does your organization have a recruitment strategy that provides outreach to, and seeks participation of, culturally diverse members; Are new members screened on the basis of their attitude, knowledge and skills related to cultural diversity?
2. Are new Board members provided an orientation on the mission statement, board policies and board functions/responsibilities that address cultural diversity? Are there Board development opportunities that address the cultural diversity in the community?
3. Does the Board evaluate its success and performance in relation to its culturally diverse mission and policies?

Steps for Boards of Directors to ensure the Diversity and Inclusiveness of their Non-profit:

1. Officially adopt a Diversity Policy for the Organization (see tool kit item: Example of Non-profit Diversity Policy).
2. Officially adopt the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement:

Organizations should ensure their volunteer pool is reflective of the diversity of their communities. This reflection will provide great advantage in maximizing their appeal and effectiveness within their communities. Prioritizing efforts to attract candidates from a diversity of communities will deepen organizational knowledge and skills for outreach, policy and program development.

Volunteering is seen as an important opportunity to particularly assist Newcomer communities from around the world in developing and enhancing their cultural and professional integration into Canadian society and workplace. This is an opportunity for the voluntary sector that can then benefit from the usually strong professional and technical skills that Newcomer volunteers bring to organizations. It is important that the Sector ensures opportunities for volunteer involvement are accessible and barrier free.

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement (the Code) is a tool that can be used to great advantage to achieving this meaningful end. <http://volunteer.ca/content/canadian-code-volunteer-involvement>

Volunteer Canada created the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement to support organizations that engage volunteers. The CCVI is a framework for involving volunteers in all levels of an organization. This includes volunteers working in leadership, direct service and virtual roles.

The Code supports organizations by:

- Stating the values and benefits of volunteer involvement
- Providing a framework for discussion and decision-making within organizations
- Promoting meaningful volunteer involvement that meets the needs of both the organization and its volunteers

Together, these components encourage organizations to consider how they work with volunteers. The Code aims to improve volunteer involvement from coast to coast.



Example of Non Profit Diversity Policy

ABC Social Agency affirms its commitment to building an equitable and inclusive organization. This means that in all aspects of its operations and at all levels of the organization, ABC Social Agency works to ensure that there is no discrimination on the basis of, but not limited to, ethnicity, language, race, age, ability, sex, sexual or gender identity, sexual orientation, family status, income, immigrant or refugee status, nationality, place of birth, generational status, political or religious affiliation.

ABC Social Agency further recognizes that the increasing diversity among residents has added cultural, social and economic benefits to our community. It is also sensitive to the fact that oppressed groups experience marginalization and encounter barriers to full access and participation in the community. ABC Social Agency seeks to increase access and participation, especially for those who are marginalized, disadvantaged or oppressed.

ABC Social Agency encourages individuals to participate fully and to have complete access to its services, employment, governance structures and volunteer opportunities. It shall make every effort to see that its structure, (governance structures include: the board of directors, committees of the board and any board working groups that may be convened), policies and systems reflect all aspects of the total community and to promote equal access to all.

To this end, ABC Social Agency strives to ensure that:

1. Discriminatory or oppressive behaviors are not tolerated;
2. Individuals who engage with ABC Social Agency for services are valued participants who have opportunities to shape and evaluate our programs;
3. Community programs and services are developed and delivered to give priority to individuals in marginalized communities and are sensitive to the needs of diverse groups;
4. Programs are delivered in such a way that systemic barriers to full participation and access are eliminated and so that positive relations and attitudinal change towards marginalized groups are promoted;
5. Services are provided with sensitivity to the influence of power and privilege in all relationships, including service relationships, and are delivered in keeping with anti-oppression principles; and
6. Communication materials present a positive and balanced portrayal of people's diverse experiences.

This policy is intended to act as a positive force for equity and the elimination of oppression.

Note 1: ABC Social Agency recognizes that barriers to employment and services may exist due to immigration or refugee status based on legislation and/or contractual funding obligations.

Note 2: Generational status is intended to protect individuals with Canadian citizenship who are first, second or third generation immigrants from discrimination.



Guide to Communicating with People learning to Speak English

When you are speaking

- Speak clearly and more slowly
- Repeat important ideas using different words to explain the same concept
- Use simple sentences
- Use active verbs and avoid passive verbs
- Avoid using colloquialisms and slang

Be aware of non-verbal tools

- Use Visuals. Use as many visual restatements as possible, such as pictures, graphs, tables and slides
- Gestures. Use appropriate facial and hand gestures to emphasize the meaning of words
- Demonstrate or act out what you want to say whenever possible
- Pause more often. Leave a slightly longer gap between sentences
- Summaries. Provide written summaries of your verbal presentation (orientations and trainings)

Take care to make accurate interpretations

- Silence. When the other person is silent, wait. Do not jump in to fill in the silence. The other person may just be thinking more slowly in their non-native language or translating
- Intelligence. Do not equate poor grammar and mispronunciation with lack of intelligence; it is usually a sign of non-native language use
- Differences. If you are not sure, assume difference, not similarity then explore and clarify

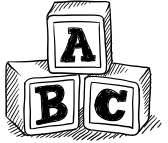
Checking Comprehension

- Understanding. Do not just assume they understand; assume they do not understand
- Have colleagues paraphrase their understanding of what you have said. Do not simply ask if they understand. Let them explain what they understood
- Paraphrase what you have heard and confirm understanding
- Broaden design, training, and orientation information
- Breaks. Take more frequent breaks. Second language comprehension is exhausting
- Small chunks. Divide the material you are presenting into smaller chunks
- More time. It takes more time so plan for it

Create a welcoming environment

- Verbally and non-verbally encourage speaking by participants
- Encourage marginal and passive speakers to contribute by considering alternative meeting formats
- Do not embarrass novice speaker

Sample Volunteer Position Description in simple English: Volunteer Child Care Helper



Purpose

Our Child Care Helper Volunteers assist paid staff to make our Centre a safe and warm place for young children to play and learn. All children in our Centre are 24 months to five years old.

Your Staff Contact

Your staff contact is _____. She will train you, and you can speak with her if you have questions or problems.

Schedule

Our Centre is open Monday to Friday 9-12:30 and 1-4:30. You are scheduled for one volunteer shift per week for three months. Your shift is: _____.

Your Child Care Responsibilities

- Help set up equipment and supplies for classes and put away when finished
- Greet the children and their parents when they arrive
- Play with children - let them lead at times
- Help children to choose suitable activities (craft table, reading area, housekeeping corner)
- Help gather children for story time
- Help children to put toys away when it is time
- Help with special events (parties, field trips)
- Use our Centre's language and behavior for child supervision
- Stop children from running in the Centre

Please do not:

- Give advice to parents about their child
- Be alone with any child - always have another adult in the room

These are the responsibilities of paid workers





Sample Volunteer Recruitment Poster in Simple English:

Do you like to grow flowers?

The garden at Mercy Hospital provides rest and beauty for people who are in the hospital.



We need volunteers in our garden to **water the flowers**, **pull out weeds**, **fertilize the flowers**, and **plant new flowers**.

We provide all tools.

To learn how you can help, phone the Volunteer Coordinator
(604)123-3455 between 9am - 1pm Monday – Friday
Mercy Hospital is at 1234 East 56th Avenue Fictiontown, BC





Sample Volunteer Program Registration Form in Simple English:

Date: _____

First Name/s: _____ Last Name/s: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

1. Why do you want to volunteer? _____

2. What volunteer work do you want to do?

____ Office Work (using computers) ____ Child Care ____ Bingo Game Helper

3. Please list your work and volunteer experience (from Canada and home country)

4. What other interests can you share with others?

5. What days and times you can volunteer?

6. How many times per week do you want to volunteer? _____

7. How long can you continue to volunteer? _____

8. Who can we phone for a reference?

Name: _____ Phone: _____

How do you know him/her? _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

How do you know him/her? _____

I allow _____(name of organization) to collect personal information related to my education and employment history, and to talk to the references I have given. I understand that the information obtained will be kept confidential. I understand the information I have given may only be shared with relevant people in order to place me as a volunteer and to manage my volunteer placement.

Applicant's Signature



Sample Volunteer Offer Letter Template:

(Date)

(Volunteer's name & address)

Dear (Volunteer's name):

I am pleased to offer you the volunteer position of Child Care Helper for Mercy Family Centre. Mercy Family Centre is a non-profit organization, which serves low-income families.

You will assist our staff to care for a group of ten children ages 2-5 while their mothers attend our parent's group. You will be volunteering every Friday from 9 am to 12 pm for six months.

I have included a copy of the volunteer position description.

This is a volunteer position; you will not be paid for this position and no staff will be laid off or lose pay as a result of your volunteering activities. You will receive _____benefits from this position.

Before you can begin, you will need to pass a medical examination. Please arrange this with your family doctor and complete it as soon as possible.

We look forward to having you join our volunteer team.

Sincerely,

Coordinator of Volunteers



The Buddy System for New Canadian Volunteers

The buddy system links an experienced volunteer with a newcomer volunteer for a limited period of time in order to help the new volunteer integrate successfully into the organization and develop the skills needed for their position.

The buddy system is an excellent way to support new volunteers in your organization while, at the same time, recognizing the skills of your experienced volunteers by placing them in a position of increased authority and responsibility.

More than likely your experienced volunteers believe in your cause and in the importance of volunteers and want to help ensure that the program continues well into the future. Many of them will remember what it was like to be a new volunteer in your organization and they will be glad to help someone over the first few “humps”.

Most newcomers want to practice their English, meet new friends, understand Canadian culture and learn about their work. For these things to happen, they need someone to talk to that they can trust, someone they feel understands and can take the time for them and that’s what you want the buddy to provide.

What do you need in place for a successful buddy system?

1. Experienced volunteers
 - a. Choose experienced volunteers in your organization who are committed, dependable and do their work well in the same area in which the newcomer will be working.
 - b. Look for volunteers who have shown openness to diversity, who enjoy being with people, are kind, smile a lot and don’t mind going out of their way to help someone else.
 - c. Look at your volunteer interview information to see which individuals may have indicated an interest in this kind of opportunity when they first came to you.
 - d. Invite specific individuals (don’t do a general recruitment for this one) to an orientation session to explain what you’d like to set up and how they could be involved. Ask for their input before beginning anything.
2. Create clear agreed-upon guidelines for the program, including how to resolve any problems that may arise.
3. Hold a short training session for the experienced volunteers.
4. Provide clear communication (both verbally and in writing) to the staff on how the buddy system will work and who will be the buddies in their department.
5. Hold an information session for the experienced and new volunteers to outline the guidelines and introduce the buddies to each other.
6. Conduct periodic check-ins either in person or by phone to see how things are going.
7. Plan a formal evaluation at the end of the buddy period. This information will be invaluable for training, recruitment, etc.
8. Recognize the experienced volunteers and the contribution they have made to your organization. This could be in the newsletter, at official events, in the annual report, etc.



Sample Volunteer Feedback Record Form:

Monitoring and feedback for:

Volunteer _____

Feedback given by _____ Date: _____

Overall performance:

___ Understands instructions

___ Performs tasks accurately

___ Punctual

___ Dependable

___ Follows directions

Area/s that need improvement: _____

Volunteer will put effort into: _____

Staff will: _____

Follow-up date: _____



Sample Volunteer Exit Feedback and Evaluation Form:

We are always trying to improve our volunteer program. As one of our volunteers, we welcome your help to identify areas in which we can do better. Please be as complete and honest as you can in answering the following questions. All of the information collected will be kept confidential, but it will be used to ensure that others who volunteer will receive the best possible treatment.

1. How long did you volunteer with us? _____

2. What program were you placed in? _____

3. What volunteer position did you do? _____

4. Why are you leaving? (Please check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Task was accomplished | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not feel welcome |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving to new location | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not feel what I did made a difference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Need a change | <input type="checkbox"/> Other time commitments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Did not like task I was given | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

5. What benefits do you think you have gained from volunteering here? (Please check all that are true.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Met new friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Gained better knowledge of Canadian community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidence with speaking English | <input type="checkbox"/> Gained better knowledge about different cultures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learned new skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Work experience to help get a job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Added to my resume | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Got a reference | |

6. What did you like best about volunteering with us?

7. What suggestions would you make for changes or improvements in our volunteer effort?

8. Overall, how would you rate your experience in volunteering with us?

- Very good Average Poor

9. Other Comments:

Thank you for your comments and for volunteering with us. We appreciate the help you have given us to assist our clients and our community.



Resources available on-line:

Information on New Canadians

Giving among Canada's Immigrants: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2012001/article/11669-eng.htm>

Diversity Guides and Tools

Diversity in Governance [A Toolkit for Non-profit Boards] The Greater Toronto Leadership project- <http://diversecitytoronto.ca/>

Volunteer Alberta: <http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/intersections>

VolunteerBC Textbook: Capturing the Talents of Newcomer Volunteers (Available at South Okanagan Similkameen Volunteer Centre)

Cultural Competence On-Line Assessment tools:

<http://www.selfcreation.com/self-awareness/free-online-self-awareness-tests.htm>

<http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/Cultural-Competence-Checklist-Personal-Reflection.pdf>

<http://www.nasponline.org/resources/culturalcompetence/checklist.aspx>

<http://static.diversityteam.org/files/414/cultural-competence-self-assessmentchecklist.pdf?1342126927>

VolunteerCanada.ca for:

Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement - Full Version –The full version gives in-depth explanations of the different parts of the Code. It includes a checklist to help organizations implement recommendations in the document.

Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement - Pamphlet –This bilingual booklet gives a summary of the information found in the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.

Volunteer Involvement Audit Tool – Organizations can use this tool to assess their volunteer programs. It's intended for organizations that have already adopted the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement as well as those that haven't.

A Guide to Cultural Competency Application of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement. The goal of this guide is to show organizations ways to be welcoming of new Canadians. Using the guide, organizations can build inclusive volunteer programs. <http://volunteer.ca/content/guide-cultural-competency-application-canadian-code>