

Code of Ethics for Volunteer Managers

The Association of Volunteer Administration designed this Code of Ethics for the benefit of its members. It is designed for administrators of volunteer programs to help professionals become strong and principled leaders who make decisions that are founded on core ethical values.

INTRODUCTION

Volunteer administration is the profession concerned with the study and practice of integrating volunteers effectively into an organization to enhance performance and results. It includes people who direct volunteer involvement as a full-time job, those who carry this responsibility in addition to other job duties, and those who serve in this role as volunteers themselves. Volunteer administration embraces both paid and unpaid leaders.

Managers of volunteer resources are leaders who mobilize citizens to:

- create a social climate which makes the meeting of human needs possible
- provide for the involvement of persons in the decision making process
- contribute to creative and responsible social development and change
- enhance and extend the work of employed persons in many fields and settings

Those who mobilize, direct, and motivate volunteers must be committed to the following core ethical values:

1. Citizenship and Philanthropy
2. Respect
3. Responsibility
4. Compassion and Generosity
5. Justice and Fairness
6. Trustworthiness

Administrators of volunteer programs should base their decision making on these six core ethical values if they are to maintain a program that:

- is accessible to diverse groups
- operates ethically with all stakeholders
- strives for excellence
- maintains the public trust
- sustains a helping environment
- is at low risk for legal actions against it

USING THIS PUBLICATION

Adapted from the Code of Ethics developed by the Association for Volunteer Management.

If you are facing an ethical decision or dilemma, scan the various categories for clues that may fit your particular situation. You may find that more than one core ethical value emerges during your decision making process. Frequently, a decision based on one core value will also be valid when you consider another core ethical value.

Core Ethical Value 1. CITIZENSHIP and PHILANTHROPY

Ethical Principle 1A: Philosophy of Volunteerism

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility for the ongoing development of a personal, coherent philosophy of volunteerism as a foundation for working with others in developing volunteer programs.

Ethical Principle 1B: Social Responsibility:

The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to help create a social climate through which human needs can be met and human values enhanced.

Core Ethical Value 2. RESPECT

Ethical Principle 2A: Self-Determination

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to involve people in decisions that directly affect them.

Ethical Principle 2B: Mutuality

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to promote understanding and the actualization of mutual benefits inherent in any act of volunteer service.

Ethical Principle 2C: Human Dignity

The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility for the development of volunteer programs and initiatives that respect and enhance the human dignity of all persons involved.

Ethical Principle 2D: Privacy

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to respect the privacy of individuals and safeguard information including written, electronic, audio-visual and verbal formats identified as confidential.

Ethical Principle 2E: Safeguarding Confidential Information

The Volunteer Administrator understands the importance of confidentiality and works to protect confidential information.

Ethical Principle 2F: Accessibility

The Volunteer Administrator works to understand and treat with respect individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Core Ethical Value 3. RESPONSIBILITY

Ethical Principle 3A: Staff Relationships

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to develop a volunteer program that will enhance and extend the work of the organization's paid staff

Ethical Principle 3B: Professional Responsibility

The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to contribute to the credibility of the profession in the eyes of those it serves.

Ethical Principle 3C: Diligence

The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to be reliable, careful, prepared, and well informed.

Ethical Principle 3D: Doing One's Best

The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to pursue excellence even when resources are limited.

Ethical Principle 3E: Perseverance

The Volunteer Administrator will seek to overcome obstacles to excellence.

Ethical Principle 3F: Continuous Improvement

The Volunteer Administrator commits to improving his/her knowledge, skills, and ability to make judgments.

Ethical Principle 3G: Self-Disclosure And Self-Restraint

The Volunteer Administrator commits to reflective decision making with the intent of advancing the long-term greater good.

Core Ethical Value 4. COMPASSION and GENEROSITY

The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility to be kind, compassionate, and generous in all actions so as to minimize the harm done to others in the performance of one's duties.

Core Ethical Value 5. JUSTICE and FAIRNESS**Ethical Principle 5A: Procedural Fairness**

The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility to have an open and impartial process for collecting and evaluating information critical for making decisions.

Ethical Principle 5B: Impartiality

The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility for having impartial and objective standards that avoid discriminatory or prejudicial behaviors.

Ethical Principle 5C: Equity

The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility to treat all individuals with whom he/she works equitably.

Core Ethical Value 6. TRUSTWORTHINESS**Ethical Principle 6A: Truthfulness**

The Volunteer Administrator is committed to the truth and assuring that all verbal and written agreements and contracts for volunteers and staff are founded on the premise of open and honest interaction.

Ethical Principle 6B: Candor

The Volunteer Administrator is committed to fairness and forthrightness.

Ethical Principle 6C: Sincerity/Non-Deception

The Volunteer Administrator will interact with all volunteers in a forthright manner with the utmost sincerity and good intent, never conducting business in a deceptive manner and continually promoting that principle throughout the organization.

Ethical Principle 6D: Principled

The Volunteer Administrator understands and works to promote the core ethical values.

Ethical Principle 6E: Moral Courage

The Volunteer Administrator will base his/her actions on core ethical values and will not compromise those values for convenience.

Ethical Principle 6F: Reasonability Of Commitments

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to be reasonable, realistic, and professional in determining the appropriateness of expectations or requests.

Ethical Principle 6G: Clarity Of Commitments On Behalf of the Organization, Staff and/or Volunteers

The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to assure clear communication regarding commitments made on behalf of the organization, staff, or volunteers. In order to maximize success of everyone involved, the Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to establish contracts and agreements that are understood and practiced

Ethical Principle 6H: Limitations To Loyalty

The Volunteer Administrator understands personal and professional limits of his/her loyalty to his/her volunteers, clients and organization, and prioritizes them clearly and appropriately to minimize liability and risk to everyone involved

Ethical Principle 6I: Addressing Conflicts Of Interest

The Volunteer Administrator is responsible for identifying policies, procedures and circumstances that might result in a conflict of interest by appropriately and professionally addressing the issue at hand and eliminating it as a conflict.