
INFORMATION HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEERS



CENTRE DE SANTÉ COMMUNAUTAIRE DE NIPISSING OUEST
WEST NIPISSING COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE



Ontario's Community
Health Centres
Les centres de santé
communautaire en Ontario

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1.0 Who are the volunteers?

A volunteer is someone who gives a commitment of time and energy for the benefit of the community, which is undertaken freely without financial gain. It is a vital resource for most community organizations. According to a 2007 Canadian survey on giving, volunteering and participating, nearly 12.5 million Canadians; or 46% of the population aged 15 years and older have volunteered. With an astounding 2.1 million hours of volunteering, this is equivalent to 1.1 million full time employments. The most common reasons to volunteer are the desire to contribute to the community, building friendship, support and recognition for their work, and the feeling of being connected to the community.

2.0 What we can expect from volunteer

Although our volunteers don't get paid, the center expects them to behave like a paid staff, and to excel in their role here at the center.

It is understood that:

- 2.1 The health promotion coordinator recruits volunteers who have the right skills and knowledge for the job.
- 2.2 The volunteers receive a general orientation to the WNCHC
- 2.3 The volunteers are reliable, mature and punctual
- 2.4 The volunteers participate in meetings, sessions or training as needed
- 2.5 The volunteers ARE part of the team
- 2.6 The volunteers will accomplish their skills and role to the best of their abilities

3.0 What our volunteers can expect from the WNCHC

Our volunteers have the right to be treated the same way as the staff. The volunteers can expect that:

- 3.1 Their tasks are important and interesting
- 3.2 Their tasks add to the services offered through the WNCHC
- 3.3 That we will provide them with the proper training needed to accomplish their tasks
- 3.4 That they will be supervised and supported in their efforts
- 3.5 That they will be consulted for the planning and evaluation of the programs and services in which they participate.
- 3.6 They will work in a safe environment
- 3.7 Their confidentiality is respected

4.0 What are the staff's responsibilities towards the volunteer?

The staff at the WNCHC has the responsibility to:

- 4.1 Identify themselves to the volunteers as the individual responsible for the program
- 4.2 To support, encourage and praise the work being done by the volunteers
- 4.3 To develop job descriptions for the volunteer position
- 4.4 To thoroughly explain the Centre's expectations of the volunteers
- 4.4 To guide, supervise and evaluate the volunteers
- 4.5 To treat the volunteers as a team member
- 4.6 To remain attentive to the volunteer all the time
- 4.7 To encourage RESPECT for everyone

5.0 What are the volunteer's responsibilities?

The volunteers at the WNCHC commit to:

- 5.1 Be open and honest towards their motivation and goals
- 5.2 Fully understand their tasks before accepting to volunteer
- 5.3 Complete their tasks efficiently and honestly
- 5.4 Accept to be guided and supervised by the volunteer supervisor
- 5.5 Participate in the training offered by the Centre
- 5.6 Respect the confidentiality of all participants
- 5.7 Advise the clients if they feel the need to further discuss information regarding the client with a staff from the WNCHC, and to respect the choice of the client if they do not want this information to be shared with anyone else.
- 5.8 Be aware of the obligations regarding child protection, self harm or harm to anyone else. This must be discussed with a staff member and dealt with right away.
- 5.9 Respect the values and needs of the clients, without judging or influencing them
- 5.10 Communicate their ideas, suggestions or opinions to improve or to change our programs.
- 5.11 Advise as soon as possible if they are not able to attend an information session, training or if they cannot present themselves to the activity/program.
- 5.12 Not accept gifts or money from other clients.
- 5.13 Not sign documents or personal forms based on the demand of a client
- 5.14 Respect the policies and procedures of the WNCHC as well as the decisions from the staff at the WNCHC
- 5.15 Not speak about or represent themselves for WNCHC outside their role as a volunteer.

6.0 What the volunteers need to know

Here is practical information needed to accomplish your role as a WNCHC volunteer

6.1 Different sites

The WNCHC offers services in the community of Field, Verner, Cache Bay, and River Valley as well as the main office which is located in Sturgeon Falls.

The addresses and opening hours for each site vary : ask The Community Health Team

- 6.2 All WNCHC buildings are protected with a safety alarm outside regular working hours. Therefore when volunteering outside regular working hours you must be accompanied by a staff member to ensure the safety alarm is correctly turned on.

7.0 Identification

Volunteers, who will be working with clients, are asked to wear a form of identification. A name tag will be given to you, and we ask that you wear this name tag when you are doing your tasks as a volunteer. We also ask that you return the name tag if you decide to stop being a volunteer here at the WNCHC.

8.0 Compilation of volunteer hours

In order for us to collect data on volunteer contribution, we ask that every volunteer keep track of the amount of hours they volunteer and to give a copy of the hours to the volunteer coordinator twice a year: November 30 and March 31. You will find a copy of this form in the appendix.

9.0 Health and Safety

For your health and safety, as well as those participating in the programming, we invite you to:

- 9.1 Familiarize yourself with the evacuation plan of the site you are volunteering at
- 9.2 Familiarize yourself with the best emergency measures relative to your position and tasks
- 9.3 Wear comfortable clothing and shoes
- 9.4 Not touch any medical material or any equipment unless otherwise advised
- 9.5 Have your flu shot every year. This will be offered at the Centre by the Primary Health Care team.

10.0 Insurance

All volunteers are covered under the WNCHC liability insurance during the time you are volunteering in our centers.

However, if you are driving, you are responsible for your personal car insurance.

11.0 Training

All volunteers will receive an orientation on the WNCHC as well as information regarding what your tasks and responsibilities are as a volunteer

It may be possible that the WNCHC offers some educational sessions or training in regards to your volunteer position.

12.0 Communication

The Community Health Coordinator will keep you up to date about things that are happening at the WNCHC and will let you know of any other available volunteer position. Don't hesitate to contact the center if you have any questions regarding your position as a volunteer.

Please contact the volunteer or community health coordinator if:

- 12.1 If you know you will be absent from your volunteer position, so we can find a replacement
- 12.2 If you have other obligations that interfere with your volunteer position
- 12.3 If you change your address or your phone number
- 12.4 You face a conflict while doing your volunteer tasks
- 12.5 You can no longer work as a volunteer with the WNCHC

13.0 WNCHC Procedures for volunteers

In order for the volunteers to work to the best of their ability and to participate as volunteers at the WNCHC, the following regulations have been established for your safety and the safety of others. Please do not hesitate to ask us questions in order to have a full understanding of these regulations.

14.0 Criminal record check

We ask that you have a criminal record check before you start your role as a volunteer with the WNCHC. You will be reimbursed.

We also ask that you inform us of any criminal activity that might have happened after you started your volunteer position.

If the volunteer doesn't inform us of a criminal activity that was done after starting their volunteer position, we will have to ask the volunteer to stop volunteering with us.

The WNCHC can ask the volunteer to give us a new copy of their criminal record check at any time.

15.0 Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible to and required to respect the confidentiality of all staff, client and employee of the WNCHC. This includes anything written, or spoken by anyone you come in contact with during your time as a volunteer. Failure to respect the confidentiality agreement can result in termination of your role as a volunteer at the WNCHC. All volunteers will be asked to sign a confidentiality oath when you begin volunteering at the center.

16.0 Expense reimbursement

Volunteering at WNCHC should not cause you any expenses. We will cover the cost of your travel expense according to the policy of the WNCHC. You will find a Travel Reimbursement form at the end of this manual. Before incurring expenses other than routine mileage, please obtain approval from the volunteer coordinator.

17.0 Conflict of interest

A volunteer would be in a conflict of interest if they receive money or other favors for accomplishing their tasks as a volunteer. This conflict of interest policy applies whether this situation is real, apparent or has the potential to become reality.

Any conflict of interest should be immediately brought to the volunteer coordinator's attention. Failure to do so could terminate your role as a volunteer here at the WNCHC.

18.0 Representing the WNCHC

Only the president of the Board of administration and the director of the WNCHC can speak on behalf of the WNCHC. Volunteers are authorized to their tasks only.

19.0 Discrimination and harassment

The WNCHC wants to offer a work place where the staff, volunteers and clients are all treated with respect without any discrimination or harassment. We respect everyone's race, culture, beliefs, age and sexual preference.

Discrimination means to treat a person differently based solely on class or category, while refusing to treat them equally with respect as everyone else deserves. The Ontario human rights code is a provincial law that gives all citizens of the province equal rights and opportunities without discrimination.

Harassment is saying remarks or gestures that are inappropriate.

If a volunteer or client feels that they were victim or discrimination or harassment, they must immediately notify the volunteer coordinator to take immediate measures to address the situation.

20.0 Volunteer evaluation

The volunteer coordinator will meet with you after your first three months to evaluate the following:

- 20.1 Your level of satisfaction
- 20.2 The efficiency of your sessions and training
- 20.3 The amount of direction that you received
- 20.4 The interaction between you and the center as well as with the clients

Following this first meeting, an evaluation will be done once a year to ensure quality of service and your satisfaction of volunteering with the Center. As well we would like to ensure that the needs of the clients are still being met.

Volunteers, who participate in small events or special events, will be asked to evaluate their participation in the event. We want to offer a positive experience for our volunteers. Your ideas, thoughts, suggestions are always welcomed.

21.0 Volunteer recognition

Your contribution as a volunteer here at the WNCHC will be formally recognized. You are equally invited to attend any public meeting (annual general meeting) as well as any information sessions. The center considers you to be a great asset to our team and is very happy to have you part of the team.

21.0 Bill of Rights for Volunteers

1. **THE RIGHT TO BE TREATED AS A CO-WORKER** with talents, skills and responsibilities
2. **THE RIGHT TO A SUITABLE ASSIGNMENT** with a clear job description and consideration for suitability, qualifications, life experience and available time
3. **THE RIGHT TO PREPARATION FOR THE JOB** with orientation and training that is thoughtfully planned and effectively presented
4. **THE RIGHT TO CONTINUING TRAINING ON THE JOB** with a follow-up to initial training information about new developments and training for greater responsibility
5. **THE RIGHT TO SOUND GUIDANCE, DIRECTION AND RECOGNITION** by someone who is experienced, patient, well-informed, thoughtful and who has the time to invest in giving guidance
6. **THE RIGHT TO PROMOTION AND VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE** through advancement to assignments of more responsibility and through transfer from one activity to another, through special assignments
7. **THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD**, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, to have respect shown for an honest opinion