

GUIDE TO VOLUNTEER SELECTION POLICY TEMPLATE

ABOUT THIS POLICY AREA

This policy guides how the organisation selects volunteers.

A written volunteer selection policy is required as part of meeting Standard 7 (Recruitment and selection processes for people working in services).

Standard 7 — recruitment and selection processes for people working in services

The organisation develops, implements and reviews procedures for how it recruits volunteers.

Policy checklist

The following checklist will help you check that an existing policy covers this area adequately.

The policy should:

- explain how prospective volunteers may apply to become a volunteer
- describe how an application is assessed and endorsed, including whether referee and/or police checks (and other appropriate checks) are undertaken, how the outcomes of checks are managed and kept confidential, and whether probationary periods apply
- outline how job descriptions or expectations necessary for the volunteer role are developed
- contain clear procedures and actions
- indicate the timing of any actions
- show when it was approved
- show when it was last reviewed.

COMPLETING YOUR VOLUNTEER SELECTION POLICY

Using the policy template

The template provides some example statements. You can adapt these statements and include them in your policy or write your own statements to better suit the operations and services of your organisation.

To customise the policy template, click on the shaded sections **<<Insert text>>** and insert the information that is specific to your organisation.

When you have completed the policy template, delete the shaded instruction sections such as: [Refer to the volunteer selection policy template guide for questions and/or examples to consider when customising this section.](#)

For further information on using the policy guides, refer to the information in *Using the policy templates and guides*.

Guidelines for each section of your policy

1. Purpose

When identifying the purpose of the policy, consider how it might apply to your volunteers, volunteer coordinators and the board or management committee as the employer. Consider why you have a volunteer program and what benefits your organisation, your clients and your volunteers gain from the relationship. Do you need to make specific statements to ensure you are inclusive of particular groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australian South Sea Islanders, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability?

2. Scope

To determine the scope of the policy, consider the following questions:

- Does this policy apply to all your organisation's services and to all volunteers?
- Are there any job roles, activities or services where volunteers are not used?
- Are there any special selection criteria or procedures required for any particular job roles, activities or services?
- Are there any circumstances when exceptions to the policy might apply?

3. Policy statement

If you are adopting the policy statement in the template, consider whether there are any additional commitments your organisation wants to make.

In identifying the actions your organisation will take to implement this policy, you should include the following:

- reviewing the job role and preparing (or updating) a job description that accurately reflects the tasks and responsibilities involved in undertaking this role
- making sure you are up to date on relevant legislation and your contractual obligations to volunteers so that all relevant laws and contracts are properly taken into account in your selection process
- establishing appropriate selection criteria that accurately reflect the skills, experience and qualities you are seeking in volunteers
- planning the selection process to ensure you involve appropriate people, follow effective procedures, set achievable timeframes and make fair and consistent decisions
- publicly advertising for volunteers or using volunteer agencies to maximise the opportunity to find the right people for the positions
- undertaking an applicant assessment and/or selection process that treats all applicants fairly and clearly identifies who meets the selection criteria
- undertaking appropriate referee, qualification, police or other checks on prospective volunteers
- clearly documenting the process followed, and both the outcome and the reasons for decisions you make.

4. Procedures

The procedures describe how your organisation achieves the aims and goals you have outlined in your purpose, scope and policy statement.

4.1 Recruiting volunteers

Indicate the areas and types of roles in which volunteers work in your organisation and where more detailed information about volunteer positions within your service can be found.

Describe where any role description, selection criteria or volunteer expectations, and other documents that outline the roles and responsibilities of volunteers, can be found in hardcopy and electronically. If available, attach a diagram of where volunteer positions fit into the organisational structure.

Explain how and when you advertise for volunteers. List any standing or occasional advertisements your organisation has in newspapers, agencies, websites etc. and describe where hardcopies and electronic copies can be found. Consider the following questions:

- Can volunteers approach you at other times and in other ways?
- Who is the first point of contact with potential volunteers?
- What information (written and verbal) are prospective volunteers given?

Describe your volunteer selection process. Fully explain what is done at each step, who is responsible, and how records are kept. Make sure you cover the following questions:

- How do you define the volunteer role, and what skills and experience are essential for this role?
- How do you assess the skills and experience of a prospective volunteer and match them with the skills and experience needed in your service?
- How do you undertake police checks and other appropriate checks? Do you always check references? How do you manage the outcome of these checks, particularly when the response indicates that the volunteer may be unsuitable for the role?

The records of volunteer recruitment should include copies of external and internal advertisements, job descriptions, selection criteria and selection processes.

5. Other related policies and documents

List the other policies related to the volunteer selection policy. The policy should be linked to:

- employee and volunteer induction policy
- employee and volunteer training and development policy
- volunteer support policy.

6. Review processes

Consider how often the policy should be reviewed and the process for doing this:

- **frequency of review:** Most policies benefit from an annual review. The experience of implementing the policy is used to decide which changes are necessary. Consider reviewing your volunteer selection policy as part of an annual review of your employment and volunteer management policies or, if your organisation is small, perhaps over a three-year period. Critical incidents may prompt you to review the policy ahead of schedule.
- **responsibility for the review:** In most organisations, the person accountable for human resource management would be responsible for reviewing this policy. In small organisations, this may be the coordinator or manager. In larger organisations, this may be a human resource or personnel manager.

- **process for the review:** Decide which particular staff, volunteers, external people and organisations will provide input to the policy review, and whether clients will be involved.
- **decision-making process:** Who will review draft changes to the policy and approve changes? What will be the timeframe for the review process?
- **documentation and communication:** What records of the policy review process are needed? How will changes to the policy be communicated to staff implementing the policy? In a small organisation, this may be as simple as noting the changes at a staff meeting. In a larger organisation, an email memo may be needed.
- **key questions for the review:** Is the policy being implemented? Are procedures being followed? Is the policy clear? What has changed that may prompt a change to the policy (for example, new volunteer roles, changes to the client group or service)? Have particular stakeholders had difficulty with any aspect of the policy? Can their concerns be resolved? How does the policy compare with that of similar organisations?