



Volunteer Policy

Commitment to Volunteerism

Black Creek Community Health Centre (BCCHC) strongly encourages and supports the right and ability of its community to be involved in relevant facets of the agency's administration and service delivery. We acknowledge that volunteers support the agency in meeting the needs of its clients and in fulfilling its mandate. BCCHC is committed to recruiting volunteers who will bring perspectives based on their experience in our community. As such, we are committed to recruiting volunteers whose skills will add to the quality of service we provide. A dedicated staff member (health promotion manager) is assigned to coordinate BCCHCs volunteer program.

Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer at BCCHC is "anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation, beyond reimbursement for expenses incurred, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the organization". At BCCHC, a volunteer must complete a screening and orientation process and be officially accepted by the organization prior to performing their tasks.

Clients as Volunteers

Clients of BCCHC may become volunteers provided that their volunteer service does not constitute a conflict in services provided to them as a user of the Health Centre.

BCCHC Responsibility

The Community Health Centre is responsible for the actions of all of its volunteers acting in the scope of their volunteer duties. BCCHC aims to create an environment for volunteers that are supportive, educational and inclusive. BCCHC will provide orientation, training and supervision to volunteers as well as provide support to staff members who work with volunteers.

Role of a Volunteer

Volunteers are considered an integral part of BCCHC. Volunteers have the opportunity to effect change in the organization by providing feedback to their designated staff supervisor. Volunteers are treated equal to paid staff in terms of respect and dignity and will be consulted on decisions that would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

Recruitment/Screening of Volunteers

It is important that volunteers be non-judgmental and committed to anti-oppression work, as it is essential that all clients coming to BCCHC are treated without prejudice. They must be willing to develop an understanding of our commitment to holistic health care that is attentive to the social determinants of health.

Each potential volunteer must complete an application including name, current address, relevant experience, educational and/or employment background, and any other skills or interests that may be relevant. Applicants will be required to supply the names of references/emergency contacts.

Volunteers will be required to go through an interview to determine their appropriateness for placement as a volunteer at BCCHC, and to gain a fuller idea of their interests, goals, and skills. Volunteers may be asked to sign a Volunteers Service Contract with BCCHC (see attachment).

Since BCCHC is committed to providing its clients with the highest standard of care, all volunteers working at the Centre must provide reference checks and a negative criminal reference check. All information obtained through the Criminal Reference Check will be treated as confidential.

Training

Depending on the volunteer's role at BCCHC, it is expected that the volunteer will undergo some training to ensure that clients receive the highest possible level of service.

The training will be provided by the designated staff supervisor, both through discussion of the tasks to be performed and through hands on supervised work. It will be the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that relevant reading material or other preparation is carried out. General orientation to BCCHC will be provided by the designated staff supervisor or other staff members.

Supervision

Each volunteer will be supervised by a designated staff member. This staff supervisor will be responsible for creating a job description for the volunteer as well as to familiarize the volunteer with BCCHC procedures and policies.

Volunteer Assignments

Volunteer assignments are designed to make the best use of the skills of volunteers, to provide them with fulfilling work, to meet the needs of BCCHC and to protect the interests of our clients. The role of the volunteer will be spelled out clearly in a job description and the volunteer has the opportunity to review it with their designated staff supervisor to ensure that they are comfortable with the expectations.

Expectations of the Volunteer

◆ *Length of Service*

Depending on the interest and availability of the volunteers, the nature of the tasks assigned to them and the requirements of the Centre, the length of service of volunteers could range from someone dropping by occasionally to help with groups or on a regular basis to perform specific tasks. Together, the volunteer and their designated staff supervisor will discuss the length and nature of the volunteer service based on the degree of commitment the volunteers is willing to make at this time. This can range from half a day a week to once a month.

- ◆ ***Anti-discrimination***
Volunteers must adhere to BCCHC's anti-discrimination policy at all times.
- ◆ ***Liability Insurance***
BCCHC will provide liability insurance coverage for volunteers acting within the scope of their duties. Individuals who volunteer in a professional capacity must supply their own insurance.
- ◆ ***Confidentiality***
All volunteers shall consider as confidential all information received directly or indirectly about clients, staff or other volunteers, and shall sign a statement to this effect. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in the termination of the volunteer's placement at BCCHC.
- ◆ ***Adherence to BCCHC Policies and Procedures***
All volunteers, whether short term or long term, must follow BCCHC's policies and procedures. If volunteers witness ANY conduct by other volunteers or full-time staff that they believe is unethical or in contravention of BCCHC protocols, they should immediately inform their staff supervisor or the Executive Director.
- ◆ ***Remuneration***
Volunteers acknowledge that they are providing the service on a volunteer basis with no remuneration from BCCHC in the form of payment or tax receipts provided.
- ◆ ***Research***
Volunteers shall not conduct research on clients of BCCHC, or use data collected from client charts for the purposes of research without written consent from the Executive Director.
- ◆ ***Childcare***
For safety and liability reasons BCCHC is not able to provide childcare or accommodate the children of volunteers at the centre during their volunteer time. Volunteers who are unable to come in for their regular time due to childcare constraints should call and notify their staff supervisor as soon as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made for coverage at the Centre.
- ◆ ***Use of Organizational Affiliation***
Volunteers may not use their organizational affiliation in connection with partisan politics, religious matters or community issues contrary to positions taken by BCCHC.
- ◆ ***Speaking on behalf of BCCHC***
Volunteers may act as representatives of the agency as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent specified. While on assignment for BCCHC volunteers shall not represent themselves as other than a volunteer with the organization.

- ◆ *Right of Refusal*
A volunteer has the right to refuse any task which they feel is demeaning, not within their skill level or not safe. However, any volunteer who refuses to perform a task or work with an individual and in doing so violates the Centre's non discrimination policy may be dismissed as a BCCHC volunteer.
- ◆ *Absences*
Volunteers are expected to be reliable in the performance of their volunteer duties. The designated staff supervisor must be notified prior to any planned absence.
- ◆ *Access to Information*
Volunteers have the right to have access to information that is relevant to and necessary for the satisfactory performance of their duties and that ensures their safety while performing their assignment. No direct or indirect access to patient chart information is permitted.
- ◆ *Signing In Procedures*
All volunteers must sign in at the start of their volunteer time and keep a record of hours completed.

Evaluation

- ◆ *Performance Review*
BCCHC has the right to regularly monitor and review the performance of all volunteers. Volunteers have the right to receive regular and timely feedback on the performance of their duties. Performance reviews will be based on the tasks identified in the job description. The designated staff supervisor of the volunteer will schedule and conduct the review.
- ◆ *Volunteer Dismissal*
Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules, procedure or policies of the organization or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignments may be dismissed.

Volunteers may be dismissed without warning for just cause. The agency has the right to request a volunteer to leave immediately, bypassing the sequence of progressive discipline. Grounds for immediate dismissal may include but are not limited to:

- o gross misconduct or insubordination
- o being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing volunteer assignment
- o theft of property or misuse of agency funds, equipment or materials
- o lies or falsification of records
- o illegal, violent or unsafe acts
- o abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers
- o unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of the organization and/or objectives of the program.

- ◆ ***Complaints Procedure***
BCCHC is committed to ensuring that all volunteer experiences are rewarding but recognizes that problems may arise. A volunteer should speak to their designated staff supervisor, who will determine the appropriate action. If the complaint is against the staff supervisor, the volunteer may speak with the Executive Director, who will determine the appropriate action after an investigation. All complaints will be treated as confidential.
- ◆ ***Volunteer Program Evaluation***
As with any program or service of BCCHC the volunteer program needs to be monitored and evaluated regularly. An appropriate staff person will be designed to supervise the volunteer. The supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the evaluation takes place.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Rights

- ◆ To be treated in a respectful, just manner.
- ◆ To be free from any type of discrimination.
- ◆ To be given a suitable assignment with clear definition of our expectations.
- ◆ To receive orientation to BCCHC and on the job training.
- ◆ To be given guidance and direction.
- ◆ To have regular feedback of your performance.
- ◆ To meet with a designated staff supervisor to ensure the program is meeting their needs and any problems are resolved.
- ◆ To know that any complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and respectfully.
- ◆ To become a member of the Health Centre, subject to BCCHC by-laws.

Responsibilities

- ◆ To be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the job.
- ◆ To maintain the confidentiality concerning users and all personal information regarding the Health Centre and its staff.
- ◆ To maintain the dignity and integrity of the Health Centre with the public.
- ◆ To carry out duties promptly and reliably.
- ◆ To be responsive to staff direction in their work.
- ◆ To accept guidance and decisions of their designated supervisor or Executive Director.
- ◆ To be respectful of staff and other volunteers and not criticize anyone in the presence of Health Centre users but share those concerns with their designated supervisor.
- ◆ To communicate regularly with their designated staff supervisor.
- ◆ To discuss any concerns about their assignment or desire to change such assignment with their staff supervisor.
- ◆ To be willing to learn and participate in orientations, training and continue to learn on the job.
- ◆ To understand the function of paid staff, maintain smooth working relationships with them, and stay within the boundaries of volunteer responsibilities.

Volunteer Conflict Resolution

In the event of conflicts between volunteer & supervisor or other individuals at the Centre, every attempt will be made to provide conflict mediation towards a resolution to the problem.

The Organization has a strong belief in and commitment to a participatory and team approach. Each employee, student and/or volunteer is valued for his/her contribution. They are encouraged to make suggestions/comment on policy and procedures and be involved in planning wherever possible.

If there is conflict between any employees, students and/or volunteers, they should first try to resolve the problem with the person directly by setting up a time to meet with them to review the issue and come to some resolution.

If the problem is not resolved the person will discuss the problem with his/her immediate supervisor.

The supervisor will work with the employees, students, and/or volunteers involved in the conflict to try to come to some resolution.

If the problem is not resolved, the supervisor will discuss the problem with the Executive Director. The Executive Director will meet with the employees, students, or volunteers involved, facilitating a resolution to the problem.

Volunteer Recognition

Volunteers will be formally acknowledged and recognized annually for their contribution to BCCHC. This may be through a formal or informal volunteer appreciation event.

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