

## **Our Harbour Volunteer Policy**

Our Harbour believes in the Canadian Code of Volunteer Involvement and bases this policy on the principles of the Code

We believe that

- involvement is fundamental to a healthy and democratic society
- It is vital for a strong, inclusive and resilient community
- Volunteer involvement is personal. It provides a sense of belonging and allows people to develop their personal strengths and interests
- It is about building personal relationships and allows people to connect to causes they believe in and in doing so both personal goals and community goals can be met.

Volunteers are essential for the work of Our Harbour because

- They provide friendship and support to our residents
- They help in the essential task of fundraising
- They can explain and support Our Harbour with their friends, family and colleagues
- They create a family atmosphere in Our Harbour that is enriching to both residents and their families; staff and Board members

Therefore we are committed to

- Ensuring the safety of volunteers
- Respecting the rights of volunteers
- to supporting our volunteers in the work they do for us
- consulting them in the development of goals for the organization and goals concerning the care and health of the residents

The responsibilities of volunteers include

- acting with respect for the cause, the stakeholders, the organization and the community and not bringing into disrepute the good name of Our Harbour
- Acting responsibly and with integrity; any information concerning the residents including names, addresses and telephone numbers is confidential.

## Organizational procedure

1. Volunteer recruitment is the responsibility of the Board. Efforts will be made to diversify the sources, backgrounds and ages of our volunteers. We believe that people who can offer only a few months can still be useful to Our Harbour. Contact with the volunteer bureau, Champlain College, the local churches and community groups are important.
2. The coordinators are responsible for selection, training, evaluation, support and record keeping of volunteers working in the apartments directly with the residents. The Board is responsible for support, supervision and record keeping of volunteers doing fundraising and other administrative tasks.
3. The coordinators and Board are clear about the risks posed by volunteers and make every effort to minimize these risks.
4. Potential volunteers should be contacted within 3 days of receiving their name and coordinates. Application and reference forms will be available on-line. When the paperwork is complete the first meeting with the volunteer should be within a few days.
5. When welcoming volunteers, the requirements of the position are explained, the abilities needed to do the job are clearly defined and every effort is made to assure there is a good match between the job and the expectations and goals of the volunteer.
6. Apartment volunteers will receive an introduction to the apartment and a mentor (an experienced volunteer or a stagiaire) will be appointed. Help will be provided with suggestions of conversation topics, activities and skills support specific to the resident assigned to the new volunteer. Weekly telephone follow-ups will be done by the coordinator for the first month.
7. Occasional sessions on mental health problems, treatment and latest research will be organized by the coordinators.
8. Meetings will be held for apartment volunteers every two months at times convenient to the volunteers. Agendas will be provided and notes will be made by the coordinators. These notes will be marked confidential, not for distribution and will be sent out to the volunteers concerned within 5 days of the meetings.
9. An on-going system of record keeping will be maintained by the coordinators and updated at least monthly.
10. Documents pertaining to mental illness, training opportunities and activities will be maintained on the web-site.
11. Recognition is very important. An activity will be held, preferably during Volunteer Week to recognize our volunteers.
12. An evaluation questionnaire will be given to volunteers on an annual basis or when they cease active participation in Our Harbour that will be intended to measure volunteer satisfaction with the goal of improving our practices.
13. Our Harbour volunteers will not be remunerated.

For more information go to [www.volunteer.ca/ccvi](http://www.volunteer.ca/ccvi)

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