Rights and Responsibilities

Both volunteers and paid staff have certain rights and responsibilities to make the relationship work. The volunteer administrator should cover these during the volunteer orientation. Communicating these rights and responsibilities with the paid staff will contribute to an overall positive climate within the agency.

**Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Volunteer has the Right to:</th>
<th>The Volunteer has the Responsibility to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A job that is worthwhile and challenging.</td>
<td>• Know his/her limits.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be trusted with necessary confidential information.</td>
<td>• Respect confidences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Expect that his/her tasks have been planned for.</td>
<td>• Follow organizational guidelines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An assignment that will promote learning and growth.</td>
<td>• Prepare for each work assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Orientation and training.</td>
<td>• Use time wisely; not interfere with other’s performance.</td>
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<td>• Receive advice and support from a designated supervisor.</td>
<td>• Acknowledge the need for training and participate fully.</td>
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<td>• Appropriate recognition, even on a day-to-day basis.</td>
<td>• Consult with supervisor when unclear on policy or action.</td>
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<td>• Out-of-pocket reimbursements, whenever possible.</td>
<td>• Give constructive feedback that will improve effectiveness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be treated as a non-paid staff member.</td>
<td>• Refuse gifts or tips from recipients of service.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Module 3, Lesson 1
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Staff Rights and Responsibilities

The Paid Staff has the Right to:

• Decline any volunteer thought unsuitable.
• Expect that the volunteer will complete the assignments accepted.
• Give instructions as to how the work is to be done.
• Demand quality performance.
• Report problems and progress to person who coordinates volunteers.
• Schedule volunteers when work space is available.
• Their personal opinion on the merit of volunteer involvement.
• Be respected as a colleague.

The Paid Staff has the Responsibility to:

• Make all necessary qualifications known ahead of time.
• Provide for adequate time and training for each assignment.
• Help the volunteer grasp the task.
• Set and maintain standards.
• Provide constructive feedback.
• Allocate supporting resources; give recognition for work done.
• Keep good communications with the volunteer program office.
• Provide adequate, pleasant work space.
• Not over-generalize about volunteers.
• Respect and trust volunteers in return.

Volunteers learn a great deal about the agency during the orientation, as well as the specifics of what they will be doing. It is important to get volunteers started out on the right foot. The key to a successful orientation is that the volunteer begins developing a connection with the agency and that they are given the information necessary to do the tasks for which they were selected. Organizations must provide a transition time for volunteers to become knowledgeable about the organization and comfortable with their role. Orientations are essential to accomplish these things.