

Volunteer Policy

Purpose

This policy and procedure outline the benefits of volunteers to municipal programs, and how volunteers are to be recruited, trained and supervised during their time with Middlesex Centre.

Policy Statement

The Municipality of Middlesex Centre takes pride in delivering the highest standard of municipal services to our community. We value and encourage the involvement of volunteers within all appropriate services, programs and activities, and recognize that volunteers can augment the services we provide to the community.

Volunteering offers residents an opportunity to participate in social, recreational, sporting, cultural, environmental, community support, civic activities and programs. Among other benefits, volunteering with Middlesex Centre offers:

- volunteers an opportunity to impart their wisdom, skills and life experiences;
- volunteers a chance to develop new skills and networks;
- volunteers a chance to share their civic pride by giving of their time and expertise;
- the municipality and volunteers the opportunity to collaborate in developing and providing programs and services to the community; and
- the community as a whole to benefit from the value that volunteers bring.

This policy supports our vision to deliver the highest standard in municipal services in a sustainable, professional and innovative manner. This policy also supports our Strategic Plan Priority of an Engaged Community.

Scope

This policy applies to anyone who volunteers in any capacity for the Municipality of Middlesex Centre and all employees who recruit and/or work with volunteers.

Exclusions: This policy does not apply to unpaid co-op students (university, college, or secondary school students, or other work-placement programs). Further, this policy is not applicable to members of Local Boards as defined under the *Municipal Act, 2001* or public members appointed to Committees of Council.

Definitions

“Criminal Record Check” is a background search of criminal history by police.

“Volunteer” is a person who, while under the general supervision of the Municipality of Middlesex Centre, voluntarily and without compensation provides services to the municipal corporation and/or the community.

“Vulnerable Person” is a person who, because of their age, a disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent are (a) in a position of dependence on others or (b) are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust.

“Vulnerable Sector Screening” is the police-screening and background check of individuals who intend to work or volunteer with, or in proximity to, vulnerable people. This may also be referred to as a **“Vulnerable Sector Check.”**

Roles & Responsibilities

Council:

- Support volunteer program within the Municipality

Staff:

It is expected that the department responsible for the recruitment of the volunteers shall:

- Manage, promote, support and coordinate volunteers and their activities related to the service or program being provided
- Match potential volunteers with volunteer opportunities
- Provide adequate orientation and training and any other necessary tools, (including the relevant safety and accessibility training) to prepare volunteers for a successful experience
- Verify the understanding of the scope of the position with the volunteer
- Treat volunteers as respected members of the work team in accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct
- Inform volunteers of any changes in policies and procedures
- Provide recognition and show appreciation for the contributions of volunteers on an ongoing basis
- Accommodate accessibility needs as required

Volunteers:

- Approach volunteer responsibilities in keeping with Middlesex Centre’s values of respect, cooperation, innovation and integrity
- Work within the scope of the position
- Be prompt and reliable in reporting for duty, notifying their immediate supervisor as early as possible if unable to report as scheduled
- Contribute a specific number of hours according to a mutually agreed upon schedule

- Attend orientation and training sessions as provided
- Treat the public and fellow workers in accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct, Accessibility Policy, Customer Service Policy, and other related policy and procedures
- Consult with the supervisor before undertaking any new responsibilities
- Wear attire appropriate for the safety and public perception while volunteering

Manager of Human Resources or their designate:

- Work with departments to identify volunteer opportunities
- Support the department designate(s) in coordinating the volunteer intake process
- Work with departments on retention strategies
- Maintain and enhance the volunteer process

Procedure

The success of the municipality's volunteers depends on coordination of services, and the provision of training and support. Volunteers are to be supported through a comprehensive and consistent management approach.

1. Promoting Volunteer Opportunities

Staff will determine which positions are appropriate for volunteer support and prepare volunteer role descriptions.

The municipality will provide notice of active volunteer opportunities through a combination of the following: posting on the municipality's website, through the municipality's various social media channels, local newspapers, etc.

Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in a specific role or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific role.

2. Application

Volunteer applicants will be required to complete and submit a volunteer application form, which may be completed online or in hardcopy. There will be one generic volunteer application form for the municipality, although some areas may require completion and submission of a specialized application form due to the nature of the position.

Applications will be reviewed by appropriate staff person(s) and shall be kept on file in accordance with the municipality's Records Retention Schedule and applicable legislation. Applications shall be used strictly for candidate selection.

3. Selection Process and Screening

Volunteers selected for an interview shall be interviewed and screened to ascertain their suitability for and interest in any position. Note that the screening process may require that a volunteer have a reference check and, in some cases, a Criminal Record Check and/or Vulnerable Sector

Screening. Currently there is no charge for these checks and screenings, however, should this change the cost of obtaining these documents is the responsibility of the volunteer.

Volunteers are responsible for providing references as required by the municipality.

A parent or guardian's written consent is required for volunteers who have not reached the age of majority (18 years) prior to volunteering.

4. Acceptance and Placement

Volunteers will be placed in positions in which they are best suited for the mutual benefit of the municipality and the volunteer. Notification of acceptance as a volunteer will be issued by the immediate supervisor or their designate. Service as a volunteer with the municipality will begin upon receipt of a signed Volunteer Waiver Form, a Criminal Record Check and/or Vulnerable Sector Screening (if required), and the completion of any required training.

Note that volunteering does not convey any entitlement to future employment with the Municipality of Middlesex Centre. The municipality has no obligation to interview or hire a volunteer for any paid position.

5. Orientation and Training

Appropriate and service-specific orientation and/or training will be provided and completed by the volunteer prior to starting the placement. The orientation and training will review applicable corporate policies and procedures, including but not limited to Respectful in the Workplace, Employee Code of Conduct, RZone, and AODA Customer Service Standards. It will also detail the specific role and responsibilities as well as limits of that volunteer position. Training will be provided by the appropriate staff person.

Volunteers may be required to undertake additional or refresher training from time-to-time.

6. Insurance

While performing tasks as specified and within the scope of duties determined by Middlesex Centre, volunteers are considered as insured under the municipality's liability insurance coverage.

7. Supervision and Evaluation

Regular supervision of a volunteer's work performance provides for appropriate direction and support. Volunteers will be advised of the name and contact number of their supervisor or their designate.

Volunteer assessment may result in training, recognition, added supervision and if necessary, termination. Volunteers shall be provided with an opportunity to provide feedback on the volunteer experience.

8. Recognition

Volunteers should receive regular thanks and appreciation for their contributions to the municipality and the community. A formal volunteer recognition program will be established at the corporate level and will be reviewed with volunteer supervisors annually. Informal volunteer recognition at the department level is permitted.

9. Resignation and Termination

Volunteer positions vary in length of time depending on the volunteer position. Volunteers or their supervisors may terminate the arrangement for any reason.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed once every four (4) years, or as necessary.