

VOLUNTEER Policies and Procedures

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for volunteering your time to
Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre

Volunteers throughout the handbook also refer to
Ontario Works and Community Service clients.

1999 (unless otherwise indicated)
(revision dates included on individual policies)

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All policies contained herein have been formulated in response to the program needs which may be centre-related, issue-oriented, or in response to governmental or legislative requirements. Where applicable to volunteers, these policies are consistent with the Human Resources Policies and Procedures of the organization and have been adapted to reflect the role of volunteers.

New policies or revisions to existing policies may be proposed by an individual or group of volunteers. These must be reviewed by the Coordinator of Volunteers who may seek input from relevant staff. The Executive Director has final approval of all volunteer policy development and revisions. Volunteer policies that have financial or legal implications will be approved by the Board of Directors through the Executive Director.

Current policies are reviewed every three years unless a policy requires a review prior to the established cycle based on legislative or organizational requirements.

Approval and revision dates are indicated on individual policies.

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Approval Date:	August 2008
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Volunteers at Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre (PQCHC) are an important resource we have in achieving our goals.

This set of policies and procedures was developed to set the standards for best practices in good volunteer management and provide volunteers and staff resources with the policies and practices that guide volunteer placements at PQCHC.

These policies set out the terms and conditions of volunteering that are binding of all parties and are presented in a way that is in keeping with PQCHC's philosophy of full participation and open communication. Volunteers must accept that they are responsible for reading, understanding and complying with them.

Staff of the volunteer program are responsible for ensuring that all new volunteers have access to and are oriented to these policies and procedures.

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Volunteers are an important part of the Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre team. The assistance, support and enthusiasm of volunteers allow the Centre to offer a variety of programs and services. Working together, staff and volunteers can reach out to a larger number of residents in the Pinecrest-Queensway community.

Fundamental Values of the Volunteer Program

Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre believes that:

- its goals can best be achieved by active community participation by community members.
- volunteers contribute unique talents, skills, experiences and knowledge of the community.
- it is unethical and unacceptable to displace paid staff with volunteers. The availability of volunteer resources will never be a factor in Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre consideration of staff layoffs or termination.
- Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre must respect the time and talents of volunteers and will do so by taking the time to identify specific ways in which volunteers can assist in the accomplishment of its goals.
- prospective volunteers have a right to be informed in advance that the intake and screening process is designed so that each party can screen the other and that acceptance of an application to volunteer is not automatic.
- volunteers offer a valuable resource to PQCHC and they deserve serious, ongoing support from PQCHC, including meaningful, interesting, and challenging placements, appropriate orientation and training, supervision, recognition, evaluation and encouragement.
- volunteers should be made aware of the risks and boundaries associated with the placement for which they are being considered.
- if accepted, they should receive a position description based on the required skills and responsibilities of each position.

Philosophy of Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable human resource to Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre (PQCHC) community, staff and clientele. The achievement of PQCHC's goals is best met by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, PQCHC encourages the collaboration and teamwork of salaried staff and volunteers, with volunteer involvement at all levels of PQCHC and within all appropriate programs and services.

Definition of a Volunteer

A 'volunteer' is anyone who without compensation, or expectation of compensation performs a task at the direction of, and on behalf of PQCHC.

Volunteers may be eligible for reimbursement of pre-approved bus tickets, parking costs, fees for workshops, or out-of-pocket expenses (receipts required) that may occur while performing their duties.

A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by PQCHC before starting a placement.

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Role of the Volunteer Program Staff

The Coordinator of Volunteers is responsible for the overall management of the Volunteer Program. In collaboration with the Program Assistant, s/he carries out the recruitment, screening, initial orientation, selection and placement of volunteers by providing advice, training, workshops and support to volunteers regarding their placement.

The Coordinator of Volunteers also provides advice, support, and workshops to staff supervising volunteers.

Role of the Staff Resource Person

The paid staff member who is responsible for the program, service or community initiative in which the volunteer is placed is responsible for the on site orientation, training, supervision, support, evaluation, and recognition of the volunteer.

Complementary Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteers and employees are considered partners in upholding the principles, values and the mission of PQCHC. Each has a different complementary role. It is important to the operation of PQCHC that volunteers and paid staff understand and respect one another's roles and responsibilities. PQCHC will encourage and foster this understanding and respect.

Benefits of Volunteering

A study by Dr. Neena Cappell, Director of the Centre on Aging, University of Victoria found that:

“People who give their time to a volunteer activity, especially if it involves helping others are happier, healthier, and live longer.”

Volunteering with Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre can provide opportunities to:

- Provide support and encouragement to members of the Pinecrest-Queensway community.
- Gain experience in the health and/or social services fields.
- Develop new skills while using their existing skills.
- Share your talents and expertise.
- Gain personal growth and satisfaction from helping others
- Meet new people.
- Learn more about the services and resources available in the Pinecrest-Queensway community.
- Gain experience working in a community-based multicultural environment.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

- To embrace and adhere to the philosophy, mission, and values of PQCHC.
- To abide by the policies and procedures of PQCHC.
- To perform volunteer activities to the best of their ability.
- To keep in confidence all information learned as a volunteer.
- To act within the boundaries and parameters of the volunteer assignment.

- To keep commitments of time and participation.
- To learn about the assignment given and to diligently undertake and complete it.
- To be willing to participate in relevant meetings, orientation or training sessions.
- To do his or her part to maintain and enhance the dignity, integrity, and professionalism of the work of volunteers.
- To evaluate and give feedback about the placement by participating in self-assessments, surveys and an exit interview.

Volunteer Opportunities

The following are examples of some of the volunteer opportunities that are available through PQCHC:

- Greeting clients
- Working with youth
- Reading to children
- Researching projects
- Planning special events
- Coaching computer skills
- Tutoring and mentoring youth
- Providing administrative support
- Providing income tax clinic support
- Supporting children's programs and academic skills

Putting Volunteer Experience on a Resumé

One way to capture the interest of an employer is to demonstrate that you are an involved citizen – someone who works to make the community a better place to live. One approach used by many people is to add a section to their resumé called 'Community Service' or 'Volunteer Experience'.

An alternative approach is to integrate volunteer work into the section of a resumé called 'Work Experience'. Even if it was not paid work or consider to be 'employment', it certainly was productive work and should be counted as experience. The key is to translate what was gained from the volunteer activity into the language of the paid work world.

For a student seeking their first job, being able to show volunteer work on a resumé demonstrates interests beyond the classroom and developed skills useful in the workplace. If returning to work after some time away, volunteer activities prove that the student kept up their skills and remained involved. If looking to change careers, volunteer work in the new field may tell a prospective employer they are worth the risk, even if paid employment history is in some other field.

Helpful hints:

- Do not use the word 'volunteer' as though it were a job title. Use it as an adjective.
- Describe the volunteer work in terms of accomplishments, highlighting the skills demonstrated.
- Be honest. Don't overstate what was done, but also be sure to give credit rightfully deserved.

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POLICY STATEMENT

The Centre is guided by the following statements, which reflect the fundamental rights of volunteers. These rights are consistent with the mission and values of the organization and are in keeping with existing volunteer policies, position descriptions or other documents related to volunteer responsibilities.

Volunteers have the right to:

1. A positive volunteer environment that is free from unwelcome remarks, materials or behaviour.
2. Relationships based upon fairness, dignity, consideration and respect.
3. Reasonable accommodations to meet their needs related to disability, illness or injury, pregnancy, religion or other identified needs.
4. A level of supervision appropriate to the task and regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.
5. Orientation and training customized to the volunteer assignment and to the individual needs of the volunteer.
6. Recognition of their contributions.
7. Open and timely communications.
8. Meaningful involvement in decisions that directly affect them.
9. Access to, knowledge and understanding of, the volunteer program processes, procedures and protocols.
10. Appropriate information, equipment and other resources to enable them to do their work.
11. Continuous on the job training.
12. Timely and just resolution to conflicts.
13. A safe and clean volunteer environment.

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Board Approval:	June 1999
Revision Dates:	October 2005 June 2008

THE CANADIAN CODE FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

The PQCHC volunteer program and infrastructure was developed and based on the following principles from the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement.

1. Standard 1: Mission-based Approach

The board of directors, leadership volunteers and staff acknowledge and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose and mission.

2. Standard 2: Human Resources

Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of the organization's human resources team. The organization has a planned approach for volunteer involvement that includes linking volunteers to the achievement of the mission, providing the appropriate human and financial resources to support the volunteer program, and establishing policies for effective management.

3. Standard 3: Program Planning and Policies

Policies and procedures are adopted by the organization to provide a framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers.

4. Standard 4: Program Administration

The organization has a clearly designated individual with appropriate qualifications responsible for the volunteer program.

5. Standard 5: Volunteer Assignments

Volunteer assignments address the mission or purpose of the organization and involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect the abilities, needs and backgrounds of the volunteer and the organization.

6. Standard 6: Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment incorporates internal and external strategies to reach out and involve a diverse volunteer base.

7. Standard 7: Screening

A clearly communicated screening process is adopted and consistently applied by the organization.

8. Standard 8: Orientation and Training

Each volunteer is provided with an orientation to the organization, its policies and practices, including the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. Each volunteer receives training customized to the volunteer assignment and the individual needs of the volunteer.

9. Standard 9: Supervision

Volunteers receive a level of supervision appropriate to the task and are provided with regular opportunities to give and receive feedback.

10. Standard 10: Recognition

The contributions of volunteers are consistently acknowledged with formal and informal methods of recognition.

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11. Standard 11: Record Management

Standardized documentation and records management practices are followed and in line with relevant legislation.

12. Standard 12: Evaluation

The impact and contribution of volunteers and the volunteer program are continually evaluated to ensure the needs of the organization are being met in fulfilling its mandate.

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VR-101: VOLUNTEER EQUITY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Board, management, staff and volunteers of PQCHC are committed to provide services that respond to the diverse needs of the community and ensure equality of treatment and opportunity for all volunteers regardless of race, age, national origin, colour, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, physical disability or other factor unrelated to the volunteer placement.

Procedures

1. Recruitment efforts will reach out to a broad and diverse pool of possible candidates to strive to ensure that volunteer demographics reflect the community.
2. Reasonable accommodation will be made by PQCHC, providing there is no undue hardship to the organization, for the following:
 - a. the possibility of redesigning volunteer duties
 - b. adjusted volunteer schedules
 - c. providing technical or human support services whenever possible
3. Programs and services will be designed to maximize accessibility for participants and will be evaluated periodically to identify and remove any barriers, which may limit participation.

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POLICY STATEMENT

Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre recognizes that diversity among residents of our catchment area has brought cultural, social and economic enrichment to the community. It also recognizes that members of diverse groups often encounter barriers to their full participation in society.

PQCHC defines diversity as the unique differences and similarities that our employees, clients, volunteers, students and communities bring to our environment. It is a variety of characteristics, visible or not, that include, but are not limited to age, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, race, marital status, family status, and disability.¹

In acknowledging that discrimination² exists systemically, PQCHC, as an organization, takes an anti-discrimination approach to its governance, hiring and service delivery policies and practices. This approach is reflected in PQCHC's commitment to ensure that its mission and operations embrace the entire community by eliminating barriers that prevent equitable participation.

To this end, PQCHC strives to achieve cultural competency³ as an organization by:

- monitoring and ensuring consistency with the Ontario Human Rights Code across all organizational policies and procedures,
- embracing the diversity of our workforce, our clients, volunteers and students and the communities we serve by developing and maintaining an inclusive, equity-based organizational culture in which respect for diversity is a practiced value,
- encouraging anti-discrimination values, attitudes, knowledge and practices to build an environment free from discrimination in which Board, staff, volunteers, students and community can participate in and benefit from programs and services which are responsive and sensitive to the needs of diverse groups,
- striving to have a board, volunteer and staff base which is reflective of the community it serves,
- ensuring that this commitment to diversity is integrated into all policies and practices, training, service delivery and partnerships, and,
- assuming a pro-active role in identifying barriers to service and advocating for change both internally and externally.

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¹ **Ontario Human Rights Code** R.S.O. 2005, c. 5., s. 32(1) Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability.

² **Discrimination** is behaviour based on prejudiced feelings and attitudes that lead to differential and unfavourable treatment of persons based on factors such as sex, race, culture, class, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identification and disability. Discrimination can be systemic referring to the pervasive structures and practices that exclude groups on the basis of race, ethnicity and/or other forms of oppression. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional, verbal or nonverbal, subtle, passive or overt in nature.

³ **Cultural Competency** is a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies enabling an organization and/or individuals to work effectively in a cross-cultural environment. It is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period. An organization's capacity to be culturally competent is based on the degree of awareness, sensitivity and knowledge among staff, board, volunteers and students. In order to support cultural competency, organizations need to have a defined set of values and policies which reflect a commitment to diversity and practices which demonstrate the intent of this policy.

Procedures, tools, activities to monitor compliance

- annual Diversity Policy: Implementation Report to the Board including but not limited to race relations and others as reflected in this policy. *Responsibility: Executive Director*
- regular review (every three years) of policies and procedures to ensure consistency with diversity policy. *Responsibility: Board of Directors, Executive Director, Managers*
- annual review of staff composition assessing degree of diversity among staff. *Responsibility: Executive Director*
- Board recruitment process. *Responsibility: Board of Directors*
- inclusion of diversity in Human Resource practices. *Responsibility: Managers*
- program activities recognizing and celebrating diversity. *Responsibility: Barriers Free Committee*
- monitoring of community demographics as a component of strategic planning. *Responsibility: Board of Directors*
- regular meetings of the Barriers Free Committee to support the implementation of the Diversity policy and to monitor and identify barriers. *Responsibility: Committee Chair*

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Board Approval:	June 19, 2007
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POLICY STATEMENT

All volunteers are interviewed before being accepted and placed in a volunteer position with PQCHC. The Coordinator of Volunteers conducts the screening and interview with interested volunteers.

Procedures

1. Interested volunteers are asked to
 - complete an application form
 - submit a resume
 - provide the names of two personal/work references
 - attend a screening and selection interview
 - undergo a Police Record Check (PRC)
 - provide other documentation as it relates to the specific position, such as First Aid Certificate

2. Volunteer suitability is based upon the volunteer’s:
 - interests, skills and experiences
 - goals and objectives
 - skills, interest and goals compatible to the position
 - availability and commitment
 - willingness and ability to adhere to the mission, philosophy of service, values and goals of PQCHC
 - willingness and ability to adhere to the policies and procedures of PQCHC
 - the volunteer’s personal references and Police Record Check (PRC)

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteers are placed into available PQCHC volunteer positions based upon the best match of their skills, interests, experiences, needs and availability.

Procedures

1. Selection and placement is based on:
 - skills and experiences of the volunteer
 - how the interview and situational questions are answered
 - observable behaviours and communication skills during the interview process
 - availability for requested position
2. If the requested position is not available the volunteer will be placed on a waiting list.
3. Volunteers Services will contact the Staff Resource Person when all screening processes (interview, Police Record Check, etc.) are completed.
4. The Staff Resource Person will contact the volunteer within two days after receiving the Volunteer Notification Form, to set up a time to meet with the volunteer. They will provide specific orientation and training for the volunteer.
5. A volunteer candidate may be identified as unsuitable if the volunteer’s:
 - interests cannot be adequately met by the available opportunities at PQCHC
 - availability does not correspond to the time requirements of a suitable volunteer position
 - appears unable or unwilling to adhere to the mission, philosophy of service, values and goals of PQCHC
 - personal references or the Police Record Check indicate that placement of the individual could have a harmful or negative effect on the organization, staff, volunteers, or clients of PQCHC
6. Volunteers who are identified as unsuitable are refused placement with PQCHC. The Coordinator of Volunteers may choose to give information about other agencies or services in the community that will better meet the needs of the individual.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

All volunteers are required to provide references as part of the screening process.

Procedures

1. Volunteers during the interview process will be asked to submit two personal/work references.
2. As part of the screening process, a staff member may contact one or both of these references.
3. Volunteers will be asked to sign the “Reference Form” authorizing Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre to contact, for reference purposes, the individuals whose names and contact information area provided.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteers who have been selected for placement must undergo a Police Record Check (PRC) before starting placement.

Procedures

1. Volunteer Services will provide volunteers with a letter stating that they are seeking a Police Record Check (PRC) for the purpose of volunteering. With this letter, their PRC is free of charge. A Police Record Check can take a number of weeks to obtain.
2. Volunteers are responsible for covering the cost of obtaining a PRC if they choose to pay for their own PRC.
3. A volunteer placement will not commence until after Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre receives the Police Record Check.

Positive Police Record Check

1. A positive Police Record Check does not automatically prevent someone from becoming a volunteer. The nature of the charge, circumstances surrounding the charges and conviction will be taken into consideration, along with other references and the impact on the volunteer position will be discussed with the Executive Director.
2. The Executive Director is responsible for decisions regarding positive Police Record Checks.
3. The following is the process to be followed when there is a positive record check:
 - a. The Coordinator of Volunteers presents the results of the Police Record Check to the Executive Director.
 - b. The Coordinator of Volunteers consults with the Executive Director. The following may influence the decision:
 - Type of offence
 - Volunteer placement requested
 - Results of the screening process. (e.g. interview and reference check)
 - c. The Coordinator of Volunteers informs the volunteer about the decision.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

Position descriptions are provided for each volunteer position.

Procedures

1. The Staff Resource Person reviews the position description with the volunteer during the orientation process to ensure a clear understanding of the responsibilities, skills and duties of each position.
2. The position description will be used as an evaluation tool during the volunteer’s performance review.
3. Volunteers who feel that their position description does not accurately reflect their responsibilities may raise the issue with the Coordinator of Volunteers.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

All new volunteers are required to attend an orientation session to the organization as well as to specific training for their position.

Procedures

1. During the orientation process, the Coordinator of Volunteers ensures the following information is conveyed to all volunteers before they begin their placement:
 - The vision, mission and organizational values of PQCHC
 - The volunteer’s role and responsibility
 - Statement of Volunteer Rights
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Programs and services of PQCHC
 - Policies and procedures relevant to their volunteer position

2. Each volunteer receives further orientation and training specific to their volunteer position from the Staff Resource Person.

3. Additional skill development and training opportunities provided by Volunteer Services may be available to volunteers .

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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VR-109: ROLE OF THE STAFF RESOURCE PERSON

POLICY STATEMENT

Each volunteer accepted to a position at PQCHC is assigned a Staff Resource Person who is responsible to provide an orientation, training and ongoing supervision during placement.

Procedures

1. The Staff Resource Person is responsible for the following:
 - a. Initial orientation to the specific program and clients
 - b. Training for the specific position
 - c. Resources required to perform the duties
 - d. Onsite supervision, support and guidance
 - e. Ongoing verbal feedback
 - f. Providing informal and formal evaluations based on skills and responsibilities from the position description
 - g. Opportunities to develop skills and abilities as it relates to the position
 - h. Opportunities to participate in workshops and training sessions, specific to volunteers

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of the performance review is to evaluate the goals and objectives of the volunteer in the assigned placement. It also assists the volunteer to develop new goals and objectives.

Procedures

Long-Term Volunteers

1. After 500 hours of volunteering, the volunteer meets with their Staff Resource Person to review the volunteer placement based on the position description and observable behaviour.
2. A 'performance review form' containing a volunteer anecdotal section and staff resource person checklist section will be used. The checklist is based on the responsibility and skill section of the position description and observable behaviours.
3. Affected staff should be involved in all evaluation and work assignments of volunteers with whom they are connected.
4. The following are reviewed:
 - a. The volunteer's satisfaction with the volunteer placement and activities
 - b. The effectiveness of the orientation and training
 - c. The Staff Resource Person's satisfaction with the volunteer's work
 - d. The volunteer's satisfaction with the amount and type of supervision
 - e. The need for more information, resources and training
 - f. Goals and objectives of the volunteer
 - g. New objectives and goals for the placement
 - h. New placement opportunities
5. Following the initial evaluation, the volunteer's placement and performance are reviewed approximately every 500 hours to ensure that the volunteer and program needs are still being met.
6. Evaluations are kept in the volunteer files with Volunteer Services.

Short Term-Episodic Volunteers

Episodic, short-term or seasonal volunteers, such as homework club volunteers (October to June) or income tax volunteers (January to April) will have the opportunity to meet with their Staff Resource Person at the end of the volunteer session to review the volunteer placement.

1. A performance review checklist will be used based on the responsibility and skill section of the position description and observable behaviours.
2. Evaluations are kept in the volunteer files with Volunteer Services.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
Revision Dates:	October 2005 September 2007

POLICY STATEMENT

PQCHC values the involvement of volunteers and seeks to recognize their efforts continuously both informally and formally.

Procedures

Formal Recognition Events

1. All PQCHC volunteers will be invited to recognition events organized by the Coordinator of Volunteers and staff. Examples include:
 - National Volunteer Week in April
 - National Volunteer Day in December
 - Breakfast and pizza lunches
 - Summer BBQ

Informal Recognition Events

2. Staff Resource Persons are encouraged to offer appreciation and recognition of volunteers on an ongoing basis. Examples include:
 - Thank you cards
 - Special coffee day
 - Special lunch
 - Success stories celebrations
 - Special gifts, such as PQCHC coffee mugs, etc.
 - Volunteer success stories, profiles, and photographs posted on the volunteer recognition board in the centre

Specific and Particular Recognition

3. Volunteers whose work has a special impact or influence will receive special recognition in a public forum, staff meetings or in the PQCHC newsletter.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

All volunteers upon the completion of their placement, regardless of the reason, may be offered an exit survey and an interview with the Coordinator of Volunteers.

Procedures

1. The exit interview is designed to:
 - a. Provide the Coordinator of Volunteers with an opportunity to discuss the volunteer’s experience with PQCHC.
 - b. Provide PQCHC with valuable information regarding its operations.
2. The information is collated and evaluated for patterns of what was successful during the placement for volunteers and identify areas to which we need to pay closer attention.
3. The exit interview and all other feedback is documented and placed in the volunteer files.
4. All information will be kept confidential.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
Revision Dates:	October 2005 July 2008

VR-113: REFERENCES/WRITTEN LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

PQCHC provides volunteers with a letter or verbal acknowledgment to support them in other volunteer, educational, and vocational opportunities.

Procedures

Written Letter of Acknowledgment

The Coordinator of Volunteers will issue a Letter of Acknowledgment confirming your hours, activities, and describing the position in consultation with the Staff Resource Person if volunteers:

1. Have completed three months of service
2. Meet the requirements of your position
3. Provide a minimum of five working days notice when requesting a Letter of Acknowledgment

Verbal Acknowledgment

The Coordinator of Volunteers or Staff Resource Person can give a verbal confirmation of your hours, activities, and description of your position. The Staff Resource Person must check with the Coordinator of Volunteers to ensure they meet the criteria for receiving a verbal acknowledgment. To receive a Verbal Acknowledgment, volunteers must:

1. Have completed three months of service
2. Meet the requirements of your position
3. Provide a minimum of five working days notice when requesting a verbal acknowledgement

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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VR-301: SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION

POLICY STATEMENT

Unless PQCHC has designated, trained, and approved media work, advocacy, or fundraising efforts as part of a task description, committee or Board responsibilities, any media work, advocacy or fundraising efforts are outside duties and responsibilities of the volunteer.

Procedures

1. Volunteers who are approached by media or agencies to answer any questions, or to advocate as it relates to the work PQCHC, are required to direct them to the agency’s media representative, the Executive Director.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteers must act in the best interests of PQCHC. Volunteers must perform their volunteer duties and arrange their personal and private affairs in such a manner that the public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of PQCHC are conserved and enhanced.

Procedures

1. Volunteers must arrange their personal and private affairs in such a manner to prevent real or potential conflicts of interest from arising.
2. Volunteers must not take advantage of, or benefit from, information that is not available to the public obtained in the course of their duties and responsibilities.
3. Volunteers must not solicit or accept any money for their volunteer services, other than incidental gifts, customary hospitality or other benefits of nominal value of no more than \$30.00.
4. Volunteers must disclose any possible conflict of interest to the Coordinator of Volunteers and the Staff Resource Person who will discuss the matter with the Executive Director to work out a solution.
5. Volunteers must not be supervised by relatives or persons living in a family type arrangement.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
Revision Dates:	October 2005 July 2008

POLICY STATEMENT

All PQCHC information concerning clients, staff, volunteers, students, and PQCHC business is confidential, including verbal information, data kept on clients’ files, and clients’ computerized records and should not be divulged to anyone other than those authorized to receive it.

Such information may be medical, social, physiological and developmental, or any other pertinent data, necessary or desirable for providing client care.

Confidential information may include information about the workings of the Centre, which are not public knowledge, for example, detail of the building security and alarm system.

Volunteers must treat all confidential all personal information obtained or available because of their involvement with PQCHC or with any program at PQCHC, and must abide by all Privacy and Confidentiality Policies and Procedures of PQCHC.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in appropriate disciplinary action or may result in the termination of the volunteer placement with the Centre.

Procedures

1. To participate in PQCHC programs and services, volunteers must read, understand and sign the organization’s confidentiality agreement sign before beginning the placement. Compliance with this is a condition of participation in programs and services of PQCHC.
2. Information may be shared on an ‘as needed basis’ for purposes of consultation between PQCHC staff and volunteers.
3. Volunteers must consult with the Staff Resource Person before seeking consent to release information to external agencies.

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ST-304: CONFIDENTIALITY OF VOLUNTEER RECORDS

POLICY STATEMENT

All written or computerized information about PQCHC volunteers is confidential.

Procedure

1. All Volunteer files are confidential.
2. Volunteer records and evaluation documents are kept in the Coordinator of Volunteers' office under lock and key.
3. Before information can be released about a volunteer, the volunteer must sign a release of information form giving PQCHC the authority to release their information.
4. Requests for information about volunteers must go through the Coordinator of Volunteers.

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VR-305: HOURS, ATTENDANCE and LEAVES OF ABSENCE

POLICY STATEMENT

The hours completed by volunteers vary depending on the position. Each position description identifies the approximate number of weekly hours needed to complete the assignment, as well as specific days or periods involved, if any. Volunteers are expected to be reliable in the performance of their duties. Attendance is expected to be dependable and punctual and once a volunteer has completed six months of volunteering, they can request a leave of absence.

Procedure

Hours and Shifts

1. Volunteers and the Staff Resource Person will negotiate the actual schedule of work for specific assignments during the orientation process.
2. Volunteers should raise any concerns or ongoing problems related to hours or shifts with their Staff Resource Person and/or the Coordinator of Volunteers.

Attendance

1. Volunteers who are going to be late, or unable to complete a shift, are required to telephone or email the Staff Resource Person before the beginning of their shift.
2. Volunteers who consistently do not complete the hours or shifts they have committed to, without reasonable explanations or notice to the Staff Resource Person, may be subject to progressive discipline.
3. Volunteers who are absent for two weeks without explanation or notice will be contacted by the Coordinator of Volunteers to determine the reasons for your absence.

Attendance Records

1. Volunteers must keep track of volunteer hours by using the ‘Volunteer Hours Reporting Form’, in order to accurately track the contribution of volunteers. Volunteers will submit this form monthly to the Staff Resource Person to sign off.

Leave of Absence

1. Volunteers may request a one-year leave of absence from their current volunteer placement. They must communicate their request to have a one-year leave of absence in writing to the Coordinator of Volunteers. If they wish to return and one year or more has gone by since their last volunteer assignment, they will need to reapply as a volunteer.

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POLICY STATEMENT

To resign from a volunteer position with a PQCHC program, volunteers are required to give reasonable advance written notice to the Staff Resource Person and the Coordinator of Volunteers.

Procedures

1. Without an explanation for the lack of attendance, volunteers will be considered to have resigned from the program.
2. Volunteers will be invited to attend an exit interview with the Coordinator of Volunteers.

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POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteer personal vehicles **should not** be used as part of or during their volunteer placement.

Procedures

1. Volunteers should not transport clients, volunteers or staff in their personal vehicles.
2. Volunteers should not transport materials, equipment or furniture in their personal vehicle.
3. PQCHC provides volunteers with parking. Volunteers park at their own risk.

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POLICY STATEMENT

As representatives of PQCHC, volunteers are expected to exhibit a neat well-groomed appearance and wear clothing appropriate for the location and task. Variations of this guideline may be acceptable for certain activities in keeping with the needs of a Program.

Procedures

1. Volunteers can negotiate this policy with their Staff Resource Person. The Staff Resource Person is responsible for discussing any concern with the volunteer regarding inappropriate appearance. The Coordinator of Volunteers or the Executive Director will settle any difference of opinion.

2. All volunteers are responsible to maintain standards of personal hygiene and cleanliness so as not to be offensive to clients and colleagues.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

When performing volunteer work for PQCHC, volunteers are prohibited from

- Being under the influence of, using, possessing, selling, or otherwise involved with illegal drugs
- Being under the influence of alcohol
- Abusive use of controlled substances

Procedure

If PQCHC staff suspect substance use by a volunteer, they are required to bring the concern to the immediate attention of the Coordinator of Volunteers. The Coordinator of Volunteers will consult with the Executive Director regarding any violations of this policy by a volunteer.

1. Volunteers will be made aware of this policy during the orientation process.
2. The Staff Resource Person/Coordinator of Volunteers, in consultation with the Executive Director will give the volunteer a verbal reprimand.
3. A note will be placed in the volunteer’s file.
4. If the action continues, the Coordinator of Volunteers will terminate volunteer involvement, in consultation with the Executive Director.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

In order to provide a safe and healthy work environment, PQCHC supports compliance with the provincial by-law governing smoking in public buildings and applies this policy to all PQCHC program sites.

Procedures

1. All employees, clients, volunteers, students and visitors must respect the smoke-free environment policy by not smoking in any PQCHC program site.
2. Employees, clients, volunteers, students and visitors must not smoke directly in front of the building out of respect for those entering/leaving the building. A distance of at least 9 metres is considered acceptable.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

PQCHC recognizes that some members of our staff and community are sensitive to scented products. Perfumes and strong odours can precipitate severe asthma attacks and other allergic reactions in some of our clients, staff and community members.

Procedures

1. The Centre asks that volunteers, staff, clients and community members limit the use of perfumes, scented hair spray, cologne, aftershave and any other scented products out of respect for these individuals.
2. PQCHC will make every effort to ensure the use of tolerated unscented cleaning and maintenance products. Preference will be given to products with refillable or recyclable containers.

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Approval Date:	June 1999
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POLICY STATEMENT

PQCHC strongly promotes an environment that is characterized by open and direct communication, where conflict is resolved with mutually satisfying outcomes. Every effort should be made to resolve issues as soon as they arise. Every effort must be made to find an equitable solution and subsequent steps should only be taken when the previous steps fail.

Retaliation against any person making an attempt to resolve a conflict under this policy is expressly prohibited. Actions, including disciplinary, will be taken against any person engaging in any form of retaliation.

Procedures

Step 1

1. Volunteers who are having a conflict/issue with another staff, volunteer or student should go directly to the person to resolve the conflict. Where they are not comfortable doing this, they would approach the Coordinator of Volunteers for assistance (and move to Step 2 below)
2. Find a private space and outline exactly what the issue is and how it can be resolved.
3. Speak in a respectful manner using ‘I’ statements language versus ‘You’ statements.

Manage the conflict:

- Define the Problem—What is the issue?
- Analyze the Problem—What are the causes?
- Determine the Goal—What do you want?
- Brainstorm Solutions—Brainstorm a number of options rather than debating 1 or 2 strategies
- Select the Best Solution—Agree upon the best solution for both parties
- Try It
- Evaluate—Periodically revisit the solution and see if it is appropriate

Step 2

1. Volunteers who feel they can’t resolve the issue with the person, will tell them that in their opinion the issue has not been resolved and will be requesting a meeting with the Coordinator of Volunteers.
2. The Coordinator of Volunteers will review the situation and arrange a meeting with the volunteer and the Staff Resource Person to mediate a resolution.

Step 3

1. If there is no resolution, the Coordinator of Volunteers will meet with the volunteer and recommend a different placement.
2. If there are any resulting concerns, the staff person involved would be consulted so that a debriefing process can be determined. This process would involve the staff’s supervisor.

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POLICY STATEMENT

PQCHC volunteers are entitled to be treated with dignity, free from harassment. Sexual, psychological, physical or mental harassment by any volunteer towards an employee, another volunteer, student or a client of PQCHC is prohibited conduct and affects the volunteer placement relationship. The scope of conduct includes any harassment that may be related to any of the discriminatory grounds contained in the Ontario Human Rights Code. Such behavior will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Harassment may be verbal, physical, deliberate, unsolicited or unwelcome. It may be one incident or a series of incidents.

In determining the boundary between harassment and mere bad taste, several factors must be taken into consideration. These include frequency, severity, and knowledge of the victim's reaction. However, a single incident could be deplorable enough to require an investigation.

While the following is not an exhaustive list, harassment is defined as, and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal abuse or threats
- Physical assault
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendos or taunting about a person's gender, body, sexual orientation, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or national origin, religion
- Repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions and derogatory or degrading remarks directed towards members of one sex or one sexual preference group
- Displaying pornographic, racist or other offensive/derogatory pictures
- Practical jokes that may cause awkwardness and/or embarrassment
- Unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit, or intimidation
- Leering or other gestures in a manner that may cause a person to feel uncomfortable
- Condescension or paternalism that undermines self-respect
- Unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching or punching
- Discrimination on the grounds of family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, disability, record of offenses and receipt of public assistance

Counseling a volunteer with respect to work performance does not constitute harassment.

Failure to follow the policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action or may result in the termination of the volunteer placement with the Centre.

While carrying out their duties at PQCHC, a volunteer may be subjected to harassment by clients, board members, employees, volunteers, students, community members or other professionals. Such incidents are not acceptable and should be reported to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will follow up with the parties involved.

Procedures

1. Harassment by volunteers to staff, students, clients and other volunteers is considered improper conduct and will be dealt with immediately by the Staff Resource Person, the Volunteer Coordinator and in consultation with the Executive Director.

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2. Complainants have the right to have their grievances reviewed without fear of embarrassment or reprisal.
3. Respondents have the right to be informed of allegations and have the opportunity to respond to them.
4. Allegations of harassment must be directed to the Executive Director and after discussion, the Executive Director should report in writing to the President of the Board of Directors.
5. Volunteers being accused of allegations of harassment by an employee, volunteer, or client may be dismissed immediately.
6. The volunteer will be told the nature of the allegations against her/him and will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. The name(s) of the victim(s) will be released to the parties concerned and a written report will be provided. Both the victim and the accused will be interviewed.
7. Should the investigation conclude that the volunteer is guilty of harassment, the consequences will be determined by the severity and frequency of the misconduct.
8. Depending on the severity of the offense, the penalty could include a reprimand, a request for a written apology to the victim(s), a suspension or a dismissal. The penalty will be determined in consultation with the Executive director.

Confidentiality and Access to Information

General

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to take the necessary action to ensure confidentiality of grievances regarding harassment, including disciplinary measures when confidentiality is not respected.

Sharing Information During the Process

Once a formal investigation has begun, opportunities must be given to both parties to be fully aware of all information being gathered which is relevant to the grievance, including the names of witnesses. The respondent must know the details of the case being made against him/her and be given an opportunity to respond.

Witnesses need to be advised that information they provide which is relevant to the case, will be shared with both parties.

The investigation report, that will provide the basis for reaching a decision on the grievance, must be communicated to the complainant and to the respondent. The decision on the disposition of the grievance must also be communicated to both parties.

Retention of Grievance Files

Grievance files and reports are kept separately and secured in the Corporate office (Volunteer Services) and are compiled and reported on to the Board annually as part of the Executive Limitations.

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This information will be kept confidential and will not be placed in the files of the complainant or the respondent.

Access to Grievance Files

Access to the file may only be obtained with the permission of the volunteer.

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VR-314: VOLUNTEER DISCIPLINARY ACTION and DISMISSAL

POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteers who do not adhere to the philosophy, mission, values, policies and procedures of PQCHC, or who fail to satisfactorily perform his/her volunteer assignment may result in appropriate disciplinary action or may result in the termination of the volunteer placement with the Centre. The primary objective of a disciplinary action is to encourage a volunteer to correct unacceptable behaviour and conduct.

Procedure

The Staff Resource Person will consult with the Coordinator of Volunteers before initiating the step of disciplinary action.

1. **Note:** Depending on the severity of the offense, PQCHC may initiate discipline at any of the steps. The Executive Director decides on the severity of the offense in consultation with the Coordinator of Volunteers.

Step 1: Verbal Reprimand

1. The Coordinator of Volunteers in consultation with the Staff Resource Person has the authority to issue a verbal reprimand in private to the volunteer.
2. The Co-ordinator of Volunteers will record the details of the reprimand, description of unacceptable and acceptable behaviour, a time frame for corrective actions and review to take place.
3. The record will be shown to and signed off by the volunteer before it is sent to her/his file.

Step 2: Letter of Reprimand

If the misconduct persists, the Coordinator of Volunteers in consultation with the Staff Resource Person and their supervisor, as appropriate, will issue a letter of reprimand to the volunteer.

1. The letter will be given to the volunteer to read and to sign off.
2. A copy of the letter will be placed in their file.

The letter must contain the following information:

- Date(s) of verbal reprimand
 - Nature of reprimand
 - Description of the unacceptable behaviour
 - Description of acceptable behaviour
 - Consequence of repetition
 - Time frame for corrective action and review to take place
3. The Coordinator of Volunteers will inform the Executive Director that a letter of reprimand has been issued to a volunteer.

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Step 3: Dismissal

1. Dismissal is the ultimate sanction for misconduct and should only be considered when all other disciplinary measures have failed or are considered inadequate.
2. The Coordinator of Volunteers will consult with the Executive Director when a volunteer is being dismissed.
3. Depending on the severity of the offense, PQCHC may initiate discipline at any of the above steps. The Executive Director decides on the severity of the offense in consultation with the Coordinator of Volunteers.

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POLICY STATEMENT

Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre promotes a working environment that is characterized by open and direct communication. PQCHC recognizes and supports the rights of all volunteers to have access to an orderly, just, and efficient procedure for settling of grievances.

A grievance is understood as a formal grievance by a volunteer regarding:

- Interpretation or administration of a policy or procedure;
- Behaviors of another volunteer or staff member of the organization that is perceived to be unjust, discriminatory or improper.

It is important to distinguish between the informal communication patterns that should be used in addressing the workplace conflicts and the formal staff grievance procedure. Healthy volunteer environments promote open and direct communication amongst fellow volunteers or staff members in which:

- The volunteer raising the issue provides the other party with clear and effective feedback on the decision, approach, or behavior that is the substance of the grievance; and
- If agreement is reached, the party is provided with an opportunity to modify the decision, approach, or behavior.

Procedure

The formal volunteer grievance procedure should normally be used only after this approach has proven unsuccessful or inappropriate in the particular circumstances. The conduct of the volunteer/staff grievance procedure must ensure that:

- a. The rights to just treatment for both the volunteer raising the grievance and the party that is the subject of the grievance are respected.
- b. If at any stage, the volunteer submitting the grievance attempts to deal with the conflict indirectly by involving other volunteers, staff, students, or community members, they should decline to become involved other than to encourage that it be dealt with through the approved procedure.
- c. No volunteer will suffer negative repercussions with respect to their volunteer role should they file a grievance.
- d. The grievance procedures are confidential.
- e. The grievance procedure observes any relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

An earnest effort shall be made to settle the grievance fairly and promptly in the following manner:

Step 1

1. The volunteer will submit the grievance in writing to the Coordinator of Volunteers.
2. If the grievance is against this individual, the volunteer will submit it to the next most senior manager or to the Executive Director.

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3. The Coordinator of Volunteers will provide the party that is subject to the grievance with a copy of the grievance as soon as it is received.

Step 2

1. The Coordinator of Volunteers will first advise the program manager of the grievance. All attempts will be made by the Coordinator of Volunteers and the program manager, in consultation with the volunteer and staff involved, to facilitate a resolution.
2. In latter case, the Coordinator of Volunteers will interview each party and convene a joint meeting to resolve the dispute. Both parties involved in the grievance have the right to be accompanied by another volunteer/staff to any interview or meeting.
3. The Coordinator of Volunteers and may invite any other volunteers, members of staff, or outside consultants (e.g. human rights specialist), to provide information in the interest of settling the dispute.

Step 3

1. In the event that the situation cannot be resolved, the Coordinator of Volunteers in consultation with the Program Manager will bring a recommended decision to the Executive Director. The expectation is that the volunteer/staff involved will be informed of a decision within 10 working days of meeting with the parties involved. The period of decision-making may extend by mutual agreement of all parties.

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