

# The NVRC Volunteer Policy Handbook

North Vancouver recCentres

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## Table of Contents

- Volunteers
  - i. Definitions
  - ii. Procedures
- Conflict of Interest
  
- Child Abuse
  - i. Definitions
  - ii. Prevention of Child Abuse
    - 1. Staff Recruitment, Training and Supervision
    - 2. Staff Relationships with Children
    - 3. Responsibilities to Parents
    - 4. Commission Response to Staff and Volunteers
  - iii. Procedures
    - 1. Definitions
    - 2. Reporting Procedures
- Workplace Harassment
  - i. Introduction
  - ii. Procedures and Regulations
  - iii. Code of Conduct
  - iv. Definitions
  - v. Confidentiality

# Volunteers

## DEFINITIONS

There are two types of volunteer positions involved in Recreation programs and services:

### **Registered Facility Volunteers**

Includes those Volunteers, who have registered with the Commission by way of a Volunteer registration form, followed by an interview with Staff and attendance at a Commission Orientation.

### **Community Leisure Volunteers**

Includes those Volunteers active in Community Group directed programs and services.

The Commission shall make provision for the recruitment and skills development of Volunteers.

### **Registered Facility Volunteers:**

- Registered Facility Volunteers shall be expected to wear Volunteer nametags and/or Volunteer identification T-Shirts each day of volunteer work, where appropriate.
- These Volunteers shall be allowed free entry into public swimming and skating with the use of a valid volunteer identification tag.
- Registered Facility Volunteers, who are assisting in a Commission recreation program, may access that program free of charge.
- The Commission shall give recognition to these Volunteers annually.

### **Community Leisure Volunteers:**

- The Commission shall give recognition to or assist in the recognition of these Volunteers when appropriate.

## PROCEDURES

### **A. Registered Facility Volunteers:**

1. Volunteer identification nametags will be issued upon confirmation of volunteer placement. Volunteer identification shirts will be issued, where appropriate.
2. Annual recognition will be provided during one of the following periods, as appropriate:
  - a. **Late summer socials**  
For Summer/Daycamp Volunteers

**b. Volunteer Appreciation Week**

Volunteer pins and Thank you's to be sent or presented to Volunteers during this week.

**c. Recognition T-shirt**

For outstanding service, to be handed out at Programmer's discretion.

**B. Community Leisure Volunteers:**

1. Annual recognition will be provided during one of the following periods, as appropriate:

**a. Volunteer Appreciation Week**

Volunteer pins and Thank you's to be sent or presented to Volunteers during this week.

## Conflict of Interest

Commissioners, Volunteers and Employees shall not allow themselves to be subject to the criticism of having a "conflict of interest". A "conflict of interest" may be defined as:

- a. Using the confidential information gained through association or employment with the North Vancouver Recreation Commission to one's personal advantage.
- b. Using one's position with the North Vancouver Recreation Commission to gain an advantage for oneself or an organization or person with whom one may be associated.
- c. Allowing information, which one possesses on a personal basis, or a prejudice or grudge, which one may hold, to bias the thinking or decision-making process on behalf of the Recreation Commission.
- d. Accepting a gratuity, a gift or a reward in anticipation of, or in appreciation of, a service provided in the normal course of one's duties.

## Child Abuse

### DEFINITIONS

**Child Abuse**

For the definition of Child Abuse, please see the procedures at the end of this Policy.

**Staff**

"Staff" shall mean all those individuals on the payroll, who are either full time or part time employees with the exception of referees.

## **PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE**

This Policy attempts to address management practices related to the prevention of child abuse, including the following:

### **1. Staff Recruitment, Training and Supervision**

- a. Whenever possible, a minimum of three reference checks on all prospective employees will be conducted, preferably with previous employers, and these references will be documented and filed prior to employment. Supervisors will send the references to the Payroll/Personnel Clerk on the day of hiring.
- b. A photograph will be provided, at the Orientation Interview, by the new Employee as well as by any Volunteer with direct leadership in children's and teens' programming or it will be taken by the Payroll/Personnel Clerk at the time of the interview. Staff/Volunteers will have an Orientation Interview before the first hour worked for the Commission. The only persons excepted from this Orientation, photograph and R.C.M.P. screening (see item (d), below) are those hired for a one day or less period, e.g. workshop instructors.
- c. Staff identification will be worn during all hours worked.
- d. All new Staff and, where possible, Volunteers will be screened by the R.C.M.P. for records or information of criminal convictions for sexual abuse. Staff/Volunteers will be asked to sign a waiver agreeing to this screening at the time of the Orientation Interview by the Personnel/Payroll Clerk. It should be noted that the R.C.M.P. will forward a printout of all criminal records of an individual upon receiving the waiver. This printout will be treated as confidential and viewed by the Manager of Administrative Services and the Director of Recreation only.
- e. All new Staff/Volunteers must participate in an orientation program including written materials explaining Commission policies, procedures and regulations on Child Abuse prevention. Staff and Volunteers (where appropriate, as outlined above) should be aware of legal requirements and, by their signature, acknowledge having received this Child Abuse Policy and the Orientation Manual and other material outlining emergency procedures, appropriate policies, standards and codes of conduct.
- f. Administrative Staff supervising programs involving the care of children will make periodic visits to each program site to assure that standards, policies, program quality and performance of Staff are being maintained.

### **2. Staff Relationships with Children**

- a. Young children should be supervised by regular patrols by Staff in washrooms, locker rooms or showers.

- b. The Commission Staff or Volunteer should avoid any situation that may be interpreted as leading to potential abuse. The Commission will provide material with respect to inappropriate behaviour.
- c. Adult Commission Staff and Volunteers are discouraged from socializing with program participants under the age of 18 outside of Commission program activities.
- d. Commission Staff and Volunteers shall not discipline children by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care, such as food and shelter. If uncertain as to the correct action, reference should be made to the appropriate supervisor.
- e. Commission Staff or Volunteers shall not abuse or punish children verbally or emotionally.
- f. Staff and Volunteers providing direct care for young children will be identified by a badge/name tag or uniform that is familiar to children with whom they work.
- g. Staff and Volunteers should be alert to the physical and emotional state of all children each time they attend a program and report immediately any signs of injury or suspected child abuse (See II. [REPORTING PROCEDURES](#), below).

### 3. **Responsibilities to Parents**

- a. Parents will be invited and encouraged to visit program sites at any time and need not ask permission to do so.
- b. Parents should be advised by the program supervisors if the program leader has a concern about their child's program participation or general health, EXCEPT in those situations of suspected abuse, in which case the Reporting Procedures must be followed (See I. [REPORTING PROCEDURES](#) below, paragraph (b) [Obtaining information from a Child](#)).
- c. During advertised program times, Commission Staff shall NOT, under any circumstances, release a child to anyone other than the parent(s)/guardian(s) having legal custody of that child, or to an individual authorized by parents, including relatives of children. However, at the completion of a program, once the child has left the Commission's premises, the responsibility for that child reverts back to the parent.

### 4. **Commission Response to Staff and Volunteers**

- a. Any allegation of child abuse against a Commission Staff/Volunteer even at a time when this person is not working will be considered as "work related".
- b. If there is an allegation of Child Abuse against a Commission Staff/Volunteer, the responsible Commission supervisor will, wherever possible, remove the Staff/Volunteer from all activities involving

supervision of children until such time as any allegation is proved to be false or shall ensure that a second Staff person is in attendance throughout the program activities.

- c. All Staff and Volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of information in this area and are instructed to discuss matters pertaining to alleged abuse only with the appropriate Commission supervisor.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

The following are working definitions as quoted from the Province of British Columbia Inter-Ministry Child Abuse. They are to be used to determine whether child abuse or neglect has occurred.

#### **Abuse**

Means physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

#### **Physical Abuse**

Means any physical force or action, which results in or may potentially result in a non-accidental injury to a child and which exceeds that which could be considered reasonable discipline.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Means any sexual exploitation of a child whether consensual or not. It includes touching of a sexual nature and sexual intercourse, and may include any behaviour of a sexual nature toward a child. In determining whether behaviour is of a sexual nature, one should ask whether a reasonable observer, looking at the behaviour in its context, would conclude that it is. This would exclude normal affectionate behaviour towards children and normal health or hygiene care.

Sexual activity between children may constitute sexual abuse if the difference in age or power between the children is so significant that the older or more powerful child is clearly taking sexual advantage of the younger or less powerful child. This would exclude consensual, developmentally appropriate sexual activity between children where there is no significant difference in age or power between the children.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Means acts or omissions of those responsible for the care of a child which are likely to produce long term and serious emotional disorder. This might include effects such as non-organic failure to thrive; developmental retardation; serious anxiety, depression or withdrawal; or serious behavioural disturbance.

## **Neglect**

Means the failure of those responsible for the care of the child to meet the physical, emotional or medical needs of a child to an extent that the child's health, development or safety is endangered.

## **II. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

### **a. Obligation to Report**

When there is any suspicion of child abuse, the Staff or Volunteer, who becomes aware of the situation, is required legally by Section 7 of the Family and Child Service Act to report directly such suspicions to the Superintendent of Family and Child Service or her delegate (the appropriate local office of the Ministry of Social Services and Housing, OR use the Help Line for Children: Zenith 1234). The Staff Member is required to inform his/her supervisor of this action and may wish to have the supervisor's support at the time of contacting the Ministry.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to inform the Director of Recreation immediately that such a report has been made.

It must be noted that if a report has been made to the Police, this does not discharge the duty of the Staff person/Volunteer to report the matter to the Ministry of Social Services and Housing.

### **b. Obtaining Information from a Child**

When a Staff Member/Volunteer suspects child abuse, or when a child discloses information concerning abuse or neglect, the person having the suspicion or receiving the disclosure should bear in mind that the child will be formally interviewed for investigative purposes once a report is made to the Superintendent of Family and Child Service. Thus, the Staff or Volunteers, who receive a disclosure, should refrain from interviewing the child after receiving the child's initial disclosure.

Statements made by a child should be recorded in the child's own words. A report must be made to a Ministry of Social Services and Housing Social Worker immediately following any suspicion of abuse or following any disclosure by a child.

The Staff Member/Volunteer MUST NOT notify the child's parents; the Social Worker will assume responsibility for this. If the child appears to be in danger, the Social Worker will decide what immediate steps are to be taken.

### **c. Liability and Protection of Person Making the Report (the "Complainant"):**

Staff and Volunteers should be aware that in British Columbia, persons making a report to the Ministry are protected from liability and no action lies against a person making a report unless such report is made maliciously or

without reasonable grounds for belief. However, the protection of the child must be everyone's paramount concern and, if in doubt, it is better to err on the side of protecting the child. The identify of the Complainant is privileged and is not disclosed to anyone except the Police without the Complainant's consent. It may be disclosed to the Police if it is relevant to a criminal investigation.

**d. Confidentiality**

If a Staff Member/Volunteer has cause to report suspected child abuse, all information relevant to the matter must be held in the strictest confidence other than the making of a report to the Ministry of Social Services and Housing and to his/her immediate supervisor.

## **WORKPLACE HARASSMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The North Vancouver Recreation Commission (NVRC) is committed to providing and maintaining a collegial working environment that is free from harassment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Every employee has the fundamental right to work in an environment free of harassment, therefore, it is expected that all contact between co-workers, the public, and others be respectful, professional and courteous at all times. Any form of harassment as defined below is considered a serious offense. Members of the public and individuals conducting business with the NVRC are expected to refrain from harassment of employees and persons acting on behalf of the NVRC.

Managers and supervisors (exempt or unionized) will be responsible to ensure that harassment is not allowed, condoned or ignored and may be held responsible if harassment is not dealt with in an expeditious manner. This policy in no way limits the individual's ability to file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission.

This policy does not limit or constrain the right of the Recreation Commission to manage the workplace. Performance appraisals, work performance discussions, counselling sessions, and disciplinary measures taken by the Recreation Commission for any valid reason do not constitute harassment in the workplace.

### **PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

Any form of harassment as defined below is considered a serious offense which may result in disciplinary action or cancellation of client privileges. No employee shall discharge, suspend, intimidate or impose any reprisal on a person who has made a bona fide complaint or given evidence or assisted in any way in the investigation and resolution of a complaint of harassment.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Staff and visitors of the NVRC facilities shall conduct themselves at all times in a fair and responsible manner and shall refrain from comments or behaviours which are disrespectful, offensive, abusive, violent, racist, sexist and amount to harassment.

Behaviour which constitutes harassment or abuse will not be tolerated, ignored or condoned by the NVRC. Staff and visitors shall not engage in any activity or behaviour which interferes with another person's enjoyment of the Recreation facilities or which endangers the safety of others.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Workplace**

The workplace, during or after working hours, shall include any location where Commission business is carried out, work related functions, and includes any other location where such behavior may have an impact on the work relationship, environment or performance.

### **Workplace Harassment**

Workplace harassment is any unwelcome or inappropriate conduct including that based on the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the B.C. Human Rights Act, that is known or ought reasonably to be known, to detrimentally affect the work environment or involves threats or promises of job-related consequences for the victim. In its most extreme forms, harassment can also be an offence under Canada's Criminal Code.

The prohibited grounds of discrimination as set out in various parts of the B.C. Human Rights Act are:

- sex
- sexual orientation
- age (19 - 64)
- race
- colour
- ancestry
- place of origin

- political belief
- religion
- family status
- marital status
- physical disability
- mental disability
- criminal/summary conviction that is unrelated to employment

Workplace harassment examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- written or verbal insults, abuse, or threats
- racial or ethnic slurs
- unwelcome comments, jokes, innuendoes, or taunts about a person's body, attire, sexual orientation or preferences, age, religion, political belief, gender or marital status
- displaying of materials or graffiti which is sexually explicit, treats race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities in a degrading or derogatory manner
- practical jokes which cause embarrassment, endanger safety, or negatively affect work performance
- physical assault
- misuse of authority
- vandalism
- patronizing or condescending behaviour, language or terminology which has the effect of creating a discriminating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- unwelcome sexual invitations or requests whether explicit or indirect
- leering or other offensive gestures
- unwanted and inappropriate physical contact such as touching, kissing, patting, pinching, or brushing against
- displays of pornographic, sexist, or suggestive material that creates an offensive work environment
- abuse of authority that undermines, influences or endangers the employment or career of another individual, such as using submission to, or rejection of, sexual invitations or requests as the basis for a decision
- sexual assault

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In order to encourage persons who have been harassed to come forward and to protect the rights and the reputations of the complainant and the



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respondent throughout the investigation process, the North Vancouver Recreation Commission will:

- handle all information in a confidential manner
- disclose only to those involved in the investigation, or resolution process
- notify the alleged harasser of the complaint and the details surrounding it.

While confidentiality does not mean anonymity, this information will be collected in confidence for the purposes of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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