

Building Better Clubs Workshop

# Recruiting and Retaining Officials and Coaches



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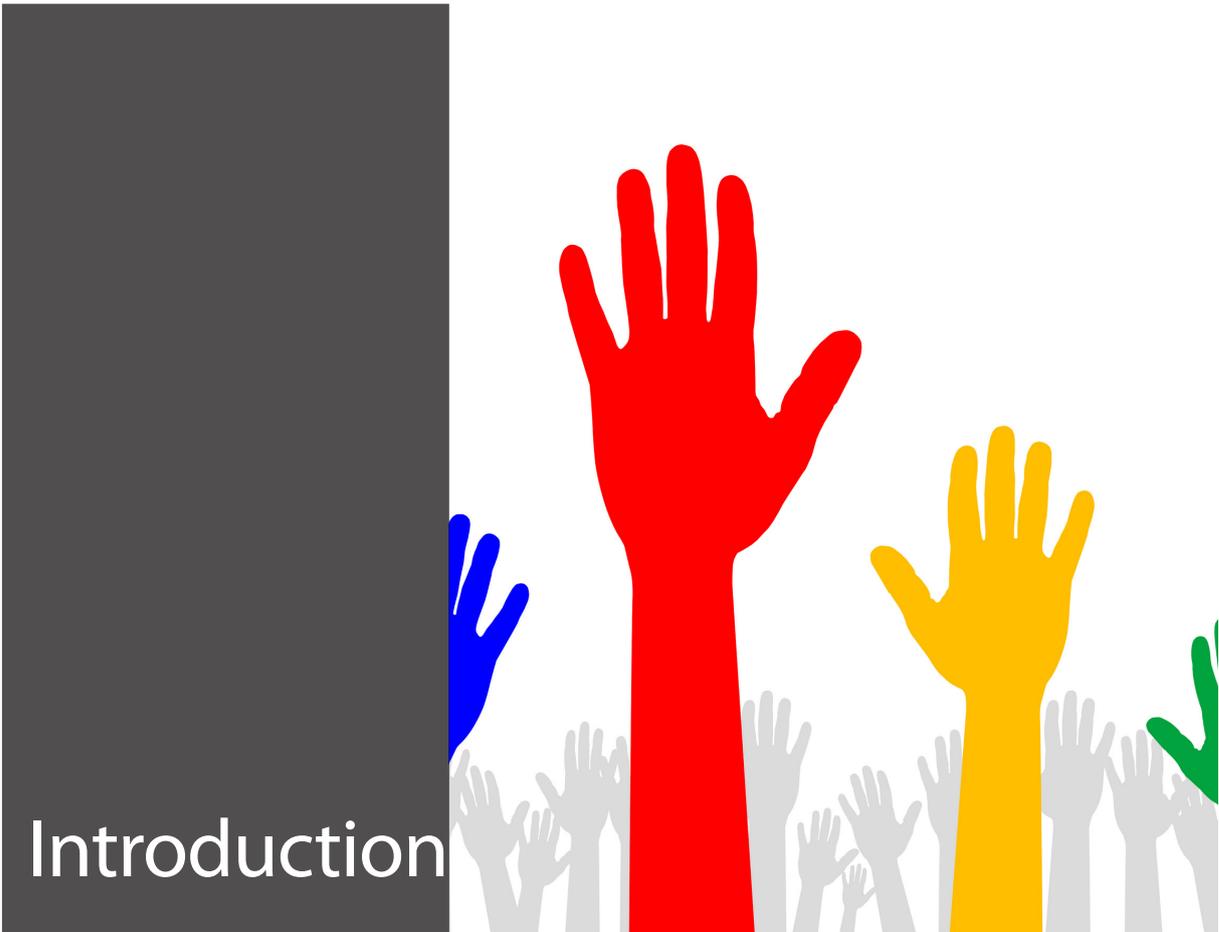




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# Introduction

Volunteering is a challenging and rewarding element of being involved with a not-for-profit organisation. Becoming a volunteer gives people the opportunity to make friends, to learn new skills and to be involved in the planning and management of clubs and associations.

Sports club officials and coaches are mostly volunteers. So to learn how to recruit new helpers and retain the officials and coaches you already have, it helps to have a good understanding of general volunteer principals, as well as the specific requirements for your club's more technical voluntary positions.

Volunteering Australia has proposed the following definition and principles<sup>1</sup>:

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“Formal volunteering is an activity which takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects and is undertaken to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer, of the volunteer’s own free will and without coercion, for no financial payment and in designated volunteer positions only.”

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Principles of volunteering:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer
- Volunteer work is unpaid
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not-for-profit sector only
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality

<sup>1</sup> Volunteering Australia, Definitions and Principles of Volunteering, Information Sheet, June 2005

Good volunteer management involves the following steps:

- Recruitment
- Selection and Screening
- Induction and Training
- Volunteer Management
- Retention

People give a wide variety of reasons for their desire to become a volunteer. In a study conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2006, the most common motivations people gave for choosing to volunteer were<sup>2</sup>:

- To help others or the community
- Personal satisfaction
- Personal/family involvement
- To do something worthwhile
- Social contact
- Use skills/experience
- To be active
- Religious beliefs
- To learn new skills/gain work experience

The same study returned the following responses from people asked to list the benefits they derived from volunteering:

- Personal satisfaction
- Did something worthwhile
- Social contact
- To be active
- To use skills/experience
- Learning new skills/gaining work experience
- Personal/family involvement

It is clear from these survey results that people who volunteer are motivated by the benefits associated with volunteering.

According to the survey, in 2006 34% of Australia's adult population were volunteers, with slightly more women than men volunteering. 44% of those aged between 35-44 years volunteered, which was the highest participation level of any age group.

Queensland and the ACT have the highest proportions of volunteers, with around 38% of Queensland's population being active volunteers.

The four most common types of organisations for which people volunteered were sport and physical recreation, education and training, community and welfare organisations and religious groups. Fundraising, preparing and serving food, teaching or providing information and administration were the most common activities conducted by volunteers.

The total annual time volunteered across Australia in 2006 was 713 million hours. The median weekly number of hours volunteered was 1.1 hours per person and the median annual number of hours volunteered was 56 hours per person.

The purpose of this workshop is to help you identify your organisation's coach and official volunteer support requirements and methods for effective management of these volunteers.

The workshop will help you to identify strategies for:

- Recruiting officials and coaches
- Appropriately selecting and screening volunteers for these jobs
- Providing training, orientation and induction for volunteer coaches and officials
- Effectively managing your volunteers
- Retaining your officials and coaches by recognising and rewarding the efforts of those who support your organisation
- Resolving disputes and conflict

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Voluntary Work Survey, Cat. 4441.0, July 2006

# 1

## Volunteering Gaps

The first step in recognising the coaching and official needs of an organisation is to look for gaps in the range of positions which are currently filled. Firstly, list the current coaching and official positions in your organisation. For example, do you have coaches and assistant coaches for every team? Do you have a Head Coach or Director of Coaching? Is there an Umpires' Coordinator or a Referees' Coordinator? What about age group or year level coordinators?

### ACTIVITY 1

Note down your organisation's current volunteer coach and official positions.

<i>E.g. Under 9s coaches (x 4)</i>	<i>E.g. Under 10s coaches (x 2)</i>



# 2

## Volunteering Issues



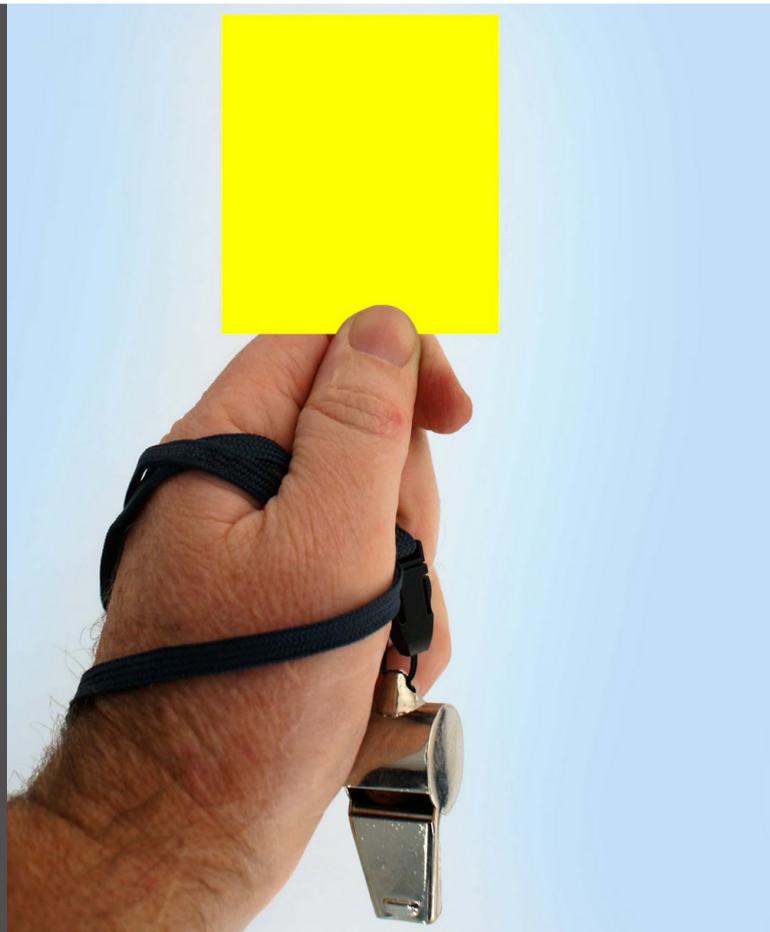
### ACTIVITY 3

List the issues which currently face your organisation surrounding your officials and coaches, as well as some possible solutions.

Volunteering issues	Possible solutions
<i>E.g. Insufficient numbers of coaches to have a coach and assistant coach for every junior team</i>	<i>Recruit new volunteers to work with existing coaches and the club's Head Coach and to gain experience as assistant coaches before becoming team coaches</i>

# 3

## Steps to Volunteer Management



### Step 1: Recruiting Volunteers

Volunteer officials and coaches will come from many different places. They may be members themselves, parents of members, children of members, past members, devotees, friends or relatives.

It is important to consider the human resources within an organisation as potential volunteers, while also recognising opportunities to recruit people from outside the organisation.

When recruiting people externally, your organisation is selling itself to potential helpers. Talking about the benefits of being associated with the organisation is very important when communicating with potential volunteers. Again, it is important to consider why people volunteer in the first place to create a clear marketing message which could be used to recruit volunteers.

Whether recruiting from within or marketing to people who are external to the organisation, the personal approach is always the most effective means of communicating volunteer needs.

Finding volunteers takes an investment of time and effort from existing volunteers. In identifying the methods most suitable for finding volunteers, consider the following points:

- Personal contact (i.e. asking potential volunteers for assistance, face-to-face) is always most successful

- It is necessary to create an awareness of your organisation's volunteer opportunities by effectively communicating the volunteer requirements of the organisation through publicity, promotion and personal interaction

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' Voluntary Work Survey of 2006 found that, on average, volunteers provided just over an hour of service per week. Some of your organisation's officials and coaches are probably committing well in excess of this average. This could indicate that the organisation requires more volunteers to better share the workload.

It is inevitable that some voluntary positions will require a commitment of more time, such as your Head Coach or Referees' Coordinator and those who set up on game days.

Volunteers in key positions should seek to reduce their overall voluntary time commitment wherever possible by using some of their time to recruit new volunteers and separating duties which could be performed by other helpers, such as assistant coaches and team managers.

Increasing the number of volunteers who are active within an organisation requires the organisation to have a well-developed approach to managing its volunteers.

## ACTIVITY 4

List some ideas for recruiting volunteers.

*E.g. Spent time talking to parents face-to-face during training and on home game days. Provide clear job descriptions and an honest estimate of the time commitment required. Offer induction, training and ongoing support to new and existing volunteers*


### Step 2: Selection and Screening

Once found, volunteers must be screened to ensure their fit with the organisation and with the positions needing to be filled. For example, the roles of Head Coach and Team Manager require different skill sets and should be filled by the right people.

In screening volunteers, assess the skills, experience and availability of potential volunteers to match them to the volunteer needs of your organisation.

**NOTE:** There are legal requirements and issues in screening volunteers, such as child protection legislation (the Blue Card), privacy and certification/qualifications which all must be taken into account when determining the best fit for volunteers.

## ACTIVITY 5

How will you screen volunteers in your organisation?

*E.g. Apply for Blue Cards where exemptions do not apply. Discuss previous coaching or officiating experience with potential volunteers.*


### Step 3: Induction and Training

It is important to make new recruits feel welcome and comfortable within an organisation. A sound induction program can achieve this by addressing some organisation-specific subjects which new recruits should understand. These may include:

- Job descriptions
- Volunteer Agreements
- Codes of Conduct
- Support and resources available to coaches and officials
- Names of helpers
- The organisation's annual budget
- Future plans of the organisation

Your club should ensure that the volunteers recruited have the skills, experience and availability to match the needs of the organisation. This is important to both the organisation and to the individual being recruited.

Training should not only be conducted when a volunteer begins service. Rather, continuous improvement grows from continuous learning, meaning that regular training opportunities should be made available to volunteers.

Training that is properly planned and well-executed will increase volunteer confidence, will improve the competency of those people the organisation relies upon and will motivate volunteers to achieve organisational objectives.

Training volunteers not only helps to get the job done well, it also provides opportunities for individuals to develop new skills. Your organisation may be able to access funding to pay

for (or to subsidise) the costs of training for volunteer coaches and officials. For more information, contact the Department of Communities, Sport and Recreation Services regarding their funding programs. Visit [www.sportrec.qld.gov.au](http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au).

Training and induction programs should be delivered in ways which make the volunteer feel valued and appreciated. Training and induction can be either formal or informal. Formal training is that which is provided in a structured manner, such as the training required for accreditation or certification (for example, coaching accreditation courses, first aid certificates, TAFE courses).

Informal training is non-structured education that is focused on conveying important information that will assist officials and coaches to do their jobs and to understand their roles and responsibilities. 'Learning by doing' is well recognised for its effectiveness and can be successfully implemented in the volunteer environment. It is important that adequate supervision is provided by experienced people where 'learning by doing' is being conducted.

An example of informal training would be on-the-job training for assistant coaches. Although the training is not certified, it is just as important for providing the skills needed to make them comfortable in their job and to encourage them to continue to help out into the future.

Work with your committee to determine the training needs of your organisation and include them in the following Training and Education Plan. This plan should detail the training required, who should receive the training, training timeframes, potential providers of training, estimated costs and possible sources of funding.

## ACTIVITY 6

Prepare a Training and Education Plan for your volunteer officials and coaches.

Training	Who	Timeframe	Provider	Estimated cost	Possible funding
E.g. Level 1 Coach Accreditation	All junior coaches	October 2011	Our regional body	\$250 per person	Sport and Recreation Active Inclusion Program (refer <a href="http://www.sportrec.qld.gov.au">www.sportrec.qld.gov.au</a> )

## Step 4: Volunteer Management

The following strategies can help your organisation effectively manage its volunteers. Successful volunteer management ensures that voluntary tasks are equitably distributed among volunteers and that volunteers feel comfortable and welcome in your organisation, thereby increasing the chances of them providing ongoing service.

Volunteer management strategies can include:

- Codes of practice and volunteer rights
- Volunteer position descriptions
- Volunteer agreements

### Code of Practice for Organisations Involving Volunteers

Volunteering Australia's Model Code of Practice for Organisations Involving Volunteer Staff<sup>3</sup>, below, should form the basis of the way in which an organisation engages and supports its volunteers.

To enhance the volunteers' experience and comply with legislation and duty of care, your organisation should:

- Interview and employ volunteer staff in accordance with anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation
- Provide volunteer staff with orientation and training
- Provide volunteer staff with a healthy and safe workplace
- Provide appropriate and adequate insurance coverage for volunteer staff
- Not place volunteer staff in roles that were previously held by paid staff or have been identified as paid jobs
- Differentiate between paid and unpaid roles
- Define volunteer roles and develop clear job descriptions
- Provide appropriate levels of support and management for volunteer staff
- Provide volunteers with a copy of policies pertaining to volunteer staff
- Ensure volunteers are not required to take up additional work during industrial disputes or paid staff shortage
- Provide all staff with information on grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures
- Acknowledge the rights of volunteer staff
- Ensure that the work of volunteer staff complements but does not undermine the work of paid staff
- Offer volunteer staff the opportunity for professional development
- Reimburse volunteer staff for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation
- Treat volunteer staff as valuable team members and advise them of the opportunities to participate in club decisions
- Acknowledge the contributions of volunteer staff

## Volunteer Rights

The following sample list of rights of volunteers is an extract from Volunteering Australia's Volunteer Rights and Volunteer Checklist<sup>4</sup>. It provides examples of the manner in which volunteers should expect to be treated and details their rights. This sample should form the basis of the rights of volunteers in your organisation.

Unlike paid staff, volunteers are not covered by award conditions or work place agreements. Volunteers, however, do have rights, some of which are enshrined in legislation and some of which are the moral obligations of an organisation involving volunteers. The following list is the basis of your rights as a volunteer.

As a volunteer, you have the right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment (refer to individual state Occupational Health and Safety Act[s])
- Be interviewed and employed in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- Be adequately covered by insurance
- Be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working
- Be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation for which you are working
- Be given a copy of the organisation's volunteer policy and any other policy that affects your work
- Not fill a position previously held by a paid worker
- Not do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes
- Have a job description and agreed working hours
- Have access to a grievance procedure
- Be provided with orientation to the organisation
- Have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988
- Be provided with sufficient training for you to do your job

### Volunteer Position Descriptions

To protect the rights of volunteers, it is vital that they know where they fit within an organisation. Volunteer Position Descriptions can help facilitate good volunteer management.

Volunteer Position Descriptions should clearly detail the parameters of the volunteer's job. Sample Position Descriptions for coaches and officials are provided as part of this program.

Sample Position Descriptions for other voluntary roles in clubs are available for download from [www.cprgroup.com.au/volunteers](http://www.cprgroup.com.au/volunteers). These provide a basis for developing detailed position descriptions for all of the volunteer positions within your organisation.

<sup>3</sup> Volunteering Australia, Volunteer Rights and Volunteer Checklist, Information Sheet, 2003

<sup>4</sup> Volunteering Australia, Recognising Volunteers, Information Sheet, 2003

## Volunteer Agreements

Your organisation and its volunteers may benefit from written volunteer agreements. A Volunteer Agreement may outline important details of the volunteer, the role they will be filling, their limits of authority and responsibility and the timing of the engagement. A comments section can be included to be completed by the volunteer at the conclusion of the engagement, to provide information to improve the position in the future.

A sample volunteer agreement is provided as part of this program and at [www.cprgroup.com.au/volunteers](http://www.cprgroup.com.au/volunteers).

**Note:** It is recommended that organisations seek legal advice regarding the implementation of Volunteer Agreements to ensure that they protect the rights of both parties (the prospective volunteer and the organisation), are not discriminatory in any way and will meet the needs and expectations of both parties for the duration of the agreement.

### Step 5: Retention

Retention of officials and coaches stems largely from how well your volunteers are recognised for the work they do. There are many ways for an organisation to recognise and reward its volunteers. Thanking a volunteer benefits the individual and can result in continuous improvement in performance. Importantly, it can also increase the chances of the volunteer remaining helpful within the organisation.

Recognising and rewarding volunteers requires an ongoing commitment from your organisation. It should not be left exclusively to the end of the year. It also doesn't need to cost a lot of money.

Rewarding volunteers should stem from genuinely valuing their efforts and commitment. Volunteer recognition should therefore be determined with consideration given to its timing, consistency, sincerity and enthusiasm.

Some ways that volunteer organisations commonly recognise their volunteers are<sup>5</sup>:

- Ensure that volunteer coordinators are readily accessible to provide assistance
- Encourage volunteer participation in planning
- Provide training, support and professional development opportunities
- Give additional responsibility
- Enable volunteers to 'grow' on the job
- Include volunteers in special events
- Recommend volunteers to prospective employers
- Maintain Workplace Health and Safety standards
- Take the time to explain and listen to volunteers' ideas and concerns
- Recognise and accommodate personal needs and problems
- Celebrate achievements and efforts
- Keep volunteers informed via newsletters, web and email communication and other suitable means
- Provide letters of reference
- Send birthday and Christmas cards
- Allocate notice board space to applaud volunteer achievements
- Organise awards with certificates, plaques or medals
- Honour volunteers on International Volunteers Day (on 5 December) each year with a planned activity such as afternoon tea or lunch
- Celebrate National Volunteer Week

<sup>5</sup> Volunteering Australia, Recognising Volunteers, Information Sheet, 2003

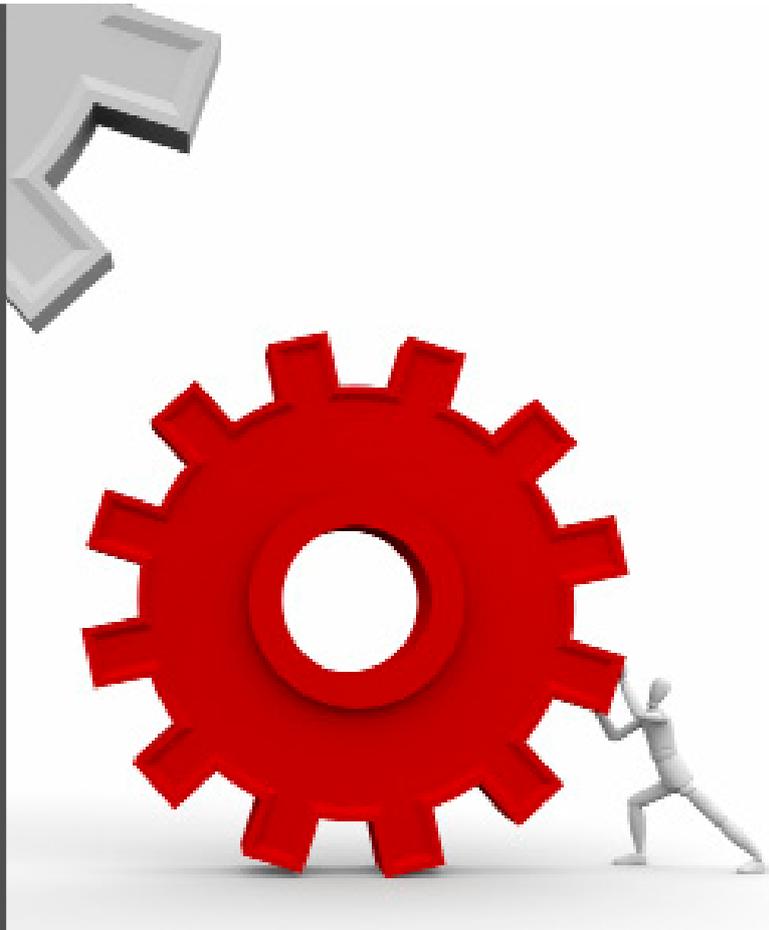
## ACTIVITY 7

List some ideas for rewarding and recognising the efforts of your volunteers.

*E.g. Host an end-of-season Coaches and Officials Dinner. Recognise the efforts of the Official of the Month on the club's website*

# 4

## Dispute Resolution



If disputes arise, it is important for an organisation that they can be swiftly addressed and quickly resolved. Effective dispute resolution procedures can simplify and even enhance volunteers' experiences.

The volunteer and the organisation should maintain a commitment to resolving issues in a constructive manner, seeking a resolution rather than assigning blame. Issues and disputes should be handled in a customer-focused manner, where these issues are seen as an opportunity to improve service delivery and maximise co-operation.

Issues should be resolved promptly, objectively, consistently and with regard for the people involved.

All allegations of a serious or criminal nature must be reported immediately to the police or relevant agency or authority. Under no circumstances should your organisation conduct its own investigations into any serious allegations or allegations of a criminal nature.

For complaints which are not of a serious or criminal nature, an issue notification, escalation and resolution process should be established which may cover the following topics:

- Formal notification of issues between the organisation and its volunteers, as well as requests for a response or action, which should be in writing, signed and dated
- A response should be received which resolves the issue satisfactorily in the required timeframe
- The issue can be escalated if necessary
- The organisation and/or the volunteer may need to engage an independent facilitator/mediator to resolve the issue
- The issue should be reviewed with a view to preventing it in future and enhancing service
- Some issues, such as alleged criminal activity, must be immediately referred to the appropriate authorities

Resolution of issues should be finalised as soon as practical, usually within ten working days.

If a dispute is escalated to mediation, the mediation process may involve the following:

- The parties listening to each other's point of view without interruption
- Identifying issues which need to be resolved
- Sharing of relevant information
- Exploring ideas and options
- Testing possible solutions
- Putting decisions and agreements in writing

Mediation is a voluntary settlement negotiation facilitated by a neutral third party who has no decision-making power. The hallmark of mediation is its focus on the interests (or needs) of the parties, as opposed to their positions. Interests can be:

- Substantive – needs such as money, control or resources
- Procedural – needs relating to the process or the way in which a dispute is resolved
- Psychological – needs relating to feelings or emotions about the issue

Interests are the driving force behind every dispute. A position is only a way of meeting those interests. Mediators try to get the parties to consider interests rather than positions. By looking for these underlying interests, parties can open up positions and create new options for settlement.

The mediator will typically guide the process through four stages:

- Mediator's opening statement
  - The mediator describes the process, establishes ground rules for conduct, reviews the agreement to mediate and confirms commitment to proceed
- Story development
  - Each party gives a synopsis of the facts of the dispute. The mediator then clarifies and frames the issues in terms acceptable to the parties
- Identifying the interests
  - Using questions, the mediator shifts the focus from positions to underlying interests, and ultimately formulates a goal statement incorporating all of the interests identified
- Generating options
  - The parties list and evaluate options for satisfying as many interests as possible and thereby for reaching a settlement

If a settlement is reached, the parties then discuss how to formalise the terms of settlement, usually either by written agreement or a consent order.

A key step in mediation is the selection of a mediator. Selection must be based on each individual's particular training, experience and references. The mediator must be impartial. He or she must have no connection with the parties to the dispute and must not have any interest in the outcome of the case. A good place to start would be the Dispute Resolution Branch of the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

The mediator will usually assist in developing ideas for resolution but refrain from controlling the process, because the parties involved in the dispute are more capable of recognising the essential elements of a workable, long-lasting agreement. A mediator will not usually arm-twist, lean on one party or suggest that a party is being unreasonable and should compromise. He or she will, however, encourage settlement and see that the merits of any proposal are tested. The mediator will push the parties to consider the alternatives to a negotiated agreement, so they know the full consequences of walking away from a possible settlement.

The time required to mediate a dispute varies according to the complexity of the dispute. It can take less time if the parties are well prepared. In other words, they are knowledgeable about the facts and understand their underlying interests. Mediation can take longer if the parties are highly emotional, or simply need to discuss the issues at a slower pace to understand them more clearly.