

Induction and Onboarding for New Volunteers

Induction and onboarding give new volunteers information to help them understand their rights and responsibilities.

This is an important part of risk management for volunteer programs. During induction and onboarding, volunteers can ask questions about their role.

Welcoming new volunteers

Well-planned volunteer onboarding will save time and resources. It sets the expectations for everyone.

Volunteers must have the necessary information to perform their role. Information about organisational policies and procedures is important. It can help people do their job by providing clear expectations.

Make a plan

- » You need a clear plan for what you want volunteers to learn during induction. Make a checklist to make sure you cover all the important topics.
- » Induction can be formal. For example, a training session for a group of volunteers. It can also be an informal, for example a talk with staff members.
- » Make sure you have enough time to cover all important topics. Some items will be about the volunteer role. Other items will be about the organisation.
- » At the end, check if everything is clear. Ask volunteers to sign the policies for your records.

Small steps make a big difference

During induction, talk about the cause, mission and impact of your organisation. A volunteer knowing how they make a difference can be a big motivator.

Role orientation

- » Tell the volunteer about the organisation's services.
- » Make it clear what role volunteers, staff and management play.
- » Give the volunteer information about training or orientation activities.
- » Be clear about the role. This is important for roles that have legislative or regulatory requirements, such as committee or board members.
- » Give the volunteer a position description and tell them who they will be reporting to.
- » Show the volunteer the work site, equipment and facilities.

Rights and responsibilities

Make sure volunteers are told about their rights and responsibilities in the organisation. This can reduce conflict and provide a more supportive environment.

Provide volunteers with policies and procedures. Explain these to them to make sure they are clear.

Onboarding package

An onboarding package can make new volunteers feel welcome. It can provide them with the information and documents they need to do their job.

The package could have:

- » A letter of welcome and position description.
- » Organisation's history, philosophy, mission, clients, structure and funding.
- » A statement of rights and responsibilities.
- » Volunteer policy and training schedule.
- » A list of procedures and policies and where to find them.
- » Forms, for example for reimbursement of expenses, attendance records, etc.
- » Emergency procedures.
- » A map of the work site and evacuation locations.
- » An organisational chart and a list of key staff, names and contact details.
- » The annual report.
- » Instructions for reporting critical incidents, injuries or near misses.
- » Information about insurances.
- » Operating hours and public holidays.
- » Information about important events.

List regulatory or legislative requirements, such as privacy or health and safety. Make sure volunteers receive and understand such information. Otherwise this could create risk. Provide information on how the volunteer may raise concerns.

Policy must-haves

Your induction needs to have an overview of your policies and regulatory requirements. It can cover things like :

- » Sexual harassment.
- » Privacy, confidentiality and records management.
- » Occupational Health and Safety.
- » Discrimination.
- » Code of conduct.
- » Complaints and grievance.

If the induction is for board members and your organisation is incorporated, you will need to review the requirements that cover you: [Incorporated association rules - Consumer Affairs Victoria](#)

More information

As Victoria's peak body for volunteering, you can always come to us for information and advice. Below are some helpful links and resources to learn more about *Essential Volunteer Policies and Procedures*.

- » The [Volunteering Victoria website](#) has timely and reliable support, training, resources and advice.



Volunteering Victoria website

 <p>Guides for Leading Volunteers</p>	 <p>National Standards for Volunteer Involvement</p>	 <p>Training & Workshops <i>(Some offered free of charge)</i></p>
 <p>National Knowledge Base for Volunteer Managers</p>	 <p>Guide: Essential Volunteer Policies and Procedures</p>	 <p>Volunteer Management Toolkit</p>
 <p>Justice Connect: Not-for-Profit Law</p>	 <p>National Knowledge Base: Induction and Onboarding</p>	

© Volunteering Victoria 2024. Reviewed MAR 2024 (Version 2). Volunteering Victoria is the state peak body for volunteering. ABN 79 378 017 212. This article is general information only, not legal advice. If you are unsure, always consult with a legal professional regarding your needs. For guidance on obtaining legal advice, visit Justice Connect - nfplaw.org.au.

This resource has been translated by Polaron Language Service. You can share your feedback at <https://feedbacknow.services/>