

# What to Include in a Volunteer Handbook

by the *Nonprofit Risk Management Center*

A volunteer handbook is different from an employee handbook. A nonprofit is much more likely to have written personnel policies than a written volunteer handbook. However, the same management reasons for having employee policies in writing also supports having written policies that provide guidance to keep volunteers safe and manage various risks in programs staffed by volunteers. The following is a sample table of contents to get you started:

- Mission and history of the organization
- Organizational chart and list of board committees and their authority/responsibility
- Description of principle programs and outcomes
- Description of topics and operational policies that will be covered in Volunteer Orientation, such as access to the building, emergency evacuation procedures and safety rules
- Overview of the volunteer matching/selection procedure for assignments; qualifications for specific volunteer positions, and disclaimer that the nonprofit has the right to reassign or terminate volunteers from their service at the nonprofit's discretion
- Expectations for conduct and behavior
- Prohibited conduct, such as violence and harassment
- Conflict of interest policy
- Policy on reimbursement of expenses, if applicable
- Description of the nonprofit's "Open Door Policy" and guidance on where a volunteer should report concerns
- Operational guidance such as who to contact if a volunteer is going to be late or has to reschedule or miss an appointment; important phone numbers and websites
- Acknowledgement of receipt of the Volunteer Handbook



*This article was written by the **Nonprofit Risk Management Center** (NRMC). NRMC provides training, technical assistance, and informational resources for controlling risks that threaten a nonprofit's ability to accomplish its mission.*