

## **Human Resources: Staff and Volunteer Policy and Procedures**

Museum staff and volunteers are valuable assets to all museums and establishing policies regarding the management of these human resources will ensure positive and communicative relationships. Through clear and concise policies and procedures staff and volunteers will understand their role within the museum as well as the mutual responsibilities between themselves and the museum. Further, the practice of planning for your staff and volunteers allows the museum to insure that their activities are consistent with the museum's mission statement. All terms and conditions for employment, as well as volunteer service should be recorded in a written contract that is signed by management representatives of the museum and the new staff or volunteer. This contract will be useful if there is a dispute between management and staff regarding the terms of an individuals employment.

As an employer, the museum has a number of responsibilities regarding staff and volunteers. They must ensure that staff and volunteers:

- have a harmonious and productive environment that fosters a cooperative and communicative working relationship between management, staff and volunteers.
- understand their role and duties with in the context the museum's operations and have appropriate orientation, skills, training and resources to perform their jobs safely.
- are covered by public liability and personal accident insurance.
- specifically for paid staff, the museum must also ensure that appropriate payroll systems are in place and that staff leave such as vacation and sick days are addressed and communicated to the staff.

In return museum staff and volunteers should:

- ensure that they conduct themselves in a professional manor that up holds the policies and procedures of the museum and ensures the safety of themselves, other staff, the museum and its collections.
- ensure that they communicate and take part in opportunities of information exchange and decision making processes with the museum management.
- ensure that they participate in any training required for the performance of their job.

**Human Resource policy and procedures should address the following topics:**

- recruitment
- orientation and job descriptions
- salary and benefits
- training and professional development
- management and staff structures
- supervision and evaluations
- information exchange and decision making
- health, safety and liability

## Policies and Procedures Regarding Volunteers

In museums, a significant part of the work force may be volunteer. In many ways, the policies and procedures for museum volunteers are shared with paid staff - but there are some special considerations. Specifically, volunteer policies should address:

- the place of volunteers within the organization of the museum and their distinction from paid staff. Volunteers should not be used to replace paid staff and staff should be aware that volunteers are not a threat to their employment.
- that staff should be aware of the valuable contribution of volunteers to the museum. Management should therefore foster a good working relationship between the two groups.
- costs related to volunteers such as reimbursements for volunteer related expenses, training and any insurance requirement for coverage of volunteers.
- measures to recognize the efforts of volunteers such as volunteer appreciation days.

### **For more information on this topic see:**

*Guidelines for the Operations of Community Museums in Newfoundland and Labrador*  
[Paid and Volunteer Staff Management – Page 27](#)

## **Resources for Developing Museum Human Resources Policy and Procedures**

### The Learning Coalition – HR Planning Tool

[http://www.saskmuseums.org/assets/File/HR%20Planning%20Tool-Final%202006%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.saskmuseums.org/assets/File/HR%20Planning%20Tool-Final%202006%20(1).pdf)

### British Columbia Museum Association

#### Best Practices Modules:

#### Human Resource Management

<http://www.museumsassn.bc.ca/Images/Best%20Practices%20Modules%202/Human%20Resource%20Management%20FINAL.pdf>

### Work Place and In Service Learning

<http://www.museumsassn.bc.ca/Images/Best%20Practices%20Modules%202/Workplace%20and%20In-Service%20Learning%20FINAL.pdf>

### Government of Ontario's Ministry of Culture

#### Ontario Museum Notes #10

#### – Developing a Staff Training Policy

<http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/heritage/museums/munote10.htm>

### reCollections – Managing Volunteers

<http://archive.amol.org.au/reollections/5/pdf/volunteers.pdf>

### reCollections – Assessing Skills

[http://archive.amol.org.au/reollections/5/pdf/assessing\\_skills.pdf](http://archive.amol.org.au/reollections/5/pdf/assessing_skills.pdf)

Western Australian Museum – Staff and Volunteers

<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/services/map/musmanage.asp>

## **Examples of Museum Human Resources Policy and Procedures**

Kansas State Historical Society – Volunteer Policy Statement

<http://www.kshs.org/involved/volunteer/volpolicy.htm>

## **Examples Available Offline**

Museum of Health Care at Kingston Human Resource Policy

<http://www.museumofhealthcare.ca/about.html>

Museum of Ontario Archaeology Human Resource Policy for Volunteers

<http://www.uwo.ca/museum/volunteerInfo.html>

Ayer House Museum Volunteer Policy

<http://www.ayershousemuseum.org.au/get-involved/>

Greater Sudbury Museum Human Resource Policy

[http://www.sudburymuseums.ca/index.cfm?app=w\\_vmuseum&lang=en&secid=2425&type=doc](http://www.sudburymuseums.ca/index.cfm?app=w_vmuseum&lang=en&secid=2425&type=doc)

City of Ottawa Best Practices in Volunteer Programs

The ABC's of Heritage Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteering Terms and Conditions

Insurance Protocols