



# What is Volunteering?

## TIP SHEETS

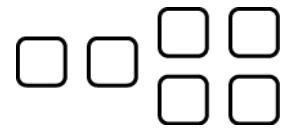
CODE	TITLE
V - 1	What is Volunteering?

**Navigate this document in several ways:**

- use bookmarks
- use page icons
- use the scroll bars
- use buttons:  
the Table of Contents has buttons to each chapter (mouse over heading and click),  
and the bottom right of each page has a button that will get you back to the Table of Contents

WHAT IS

# Volunteering



Volunteering can improve your life and help in your job search. It is also one of the best ways to expand your network of contacts and explore new career opportunities. This is a great way to try out an occupation before you spend time and money on training.

In Canada, there are over 161,000 volunteer organizations and almost 12 million volunteers. People choose to volunteer for many different reasons. On the website [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca) it says:

“By caring and contributing to change, volunteers decrease suffering and disparity while they gain skills, self-esteem and change their own lives.”

## Why Should You Volunteer?

- Volunteer experience shows employers the skills you bring to their business
- Helps you to make new contacts
- May lead to paid employment
- Can help you to determine what types of work match your interests and abilities
- You will learn new skills and update the ones that you already have
- Keep your skills current and gain new skills that are in demand
- Get experience and accomplishments that you can add to your resume
- Develop self-esteem and confidence
- Get references and reference letters
- You feel good by helping others

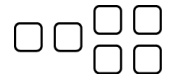
## What to Expect

Charities and non-profit organizations try to match volunteers to the right positions. When you approach an organization, you may go through several steps:

- Fill out an application form
- Interview with the employer
- Have your references checked
- Provide a police check
- Orientation and training

## What Types of Places Need Volunteers?

- Social services such as non-profit and charitable organizations
- Schools, daycares and after school programs
- Arts and cultural settings, such as museums and art galleries
- Hospitals and long term care facilities
- Recreational sports such as coaching children’s sports teams
- Justice and Correctional Services, including assisting in group homes
- Committees and associations where you can become an active member or sit on a Board of Directors



## Do You Have Time to Volunteer?

Make sure that you only agree to volunteer the number of hours that you are available. You want this to be a positive experience for you and the organization. People will look at you as a person who is reliable and keeps their commitments.

Volunteer for organizations that are important to you and act like it is your job. This will help you get references for possible future employers.

## What Skills Do You Want To Develop or Enhance?

- Office/clerical skills - try reception and/or helping in an office setting
- Marketing & event planning - lead a fundraising event
- Leadership skills - Join a community organization/club and lead an event
- Teaching skills - be a mentor, literacy tutor or working in a school
- Computer skills - help a non-profit organization with their IT concerns
- Managerial or financial skills - join a Board of Directors of a non-profit organization

## Volunteering in Halton Region:

Volunteer Halton serves Burlington, Oakville, Milton, Georgetown, Halton Hills areas

- [www.volunteerhalton.ca](http://www.volunteerhalton.ca)
- 905-878-0955

## Volunteering in Peel Region:

Volunteer MBC serves Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon

- <http://www.volunteermbc.org/>
- 905-238-2622

## Volunteering in Hamilton Region:

Volunteer Hamilton serves Hamilton, Dundas Flamborough, Stoney Creek and Ancaster areas

- [www.volunteerhamilton.on.ca](http://www.volunteerhamilton.on.ca)
- 905-523-4444 (Hamilton)
- 905 689 4445 (Flamborough/Waterdown)

## Finding Local Volunteer Opportunities:

- Contact organizations you already know about and interest you
- Check out your local volunteer centre
- Other websites include:
- [www.boardmatch.org/](http://www.boardmatch.org/)
- [www.myvolunteerpage.com/on](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com/on)
- [www.charityvillage.com/applicant/volunteer.asp](http://www.charityvillage.com/applicant/volunteer.asp)
- [www.canadian-universities.net/Volunteer/Ontario.html](http://www.canadian-universities.net/Volunteer/Ontario.html)