



St Vincent and the Grenadines Red Cross Society

VOLUNTEER POLICY

MOTTO

Protecting Human Dignity

Revised Final Draft

Table of Contents

ARTICLE 1
Section 1: Introduction..... 3

ARTICLE 2 3
Section 2: Policy Statement on Volunteerism 3

ARTICLE 3 3
Section 3: Aims and Objectives of this Policy..... 3

ARTICLE 4 4
Section 4: Policy Application and Scope..... 4

ARTICLE 5 4
Section 5: Role of the SVGRCS Volunteer Management Committee 4
Section 6: Rights and responsibilities of volunteers 5
Section 7: Duties, Rights and responsibilities of the SVGRC 5

ARTICLE 6 6
Section 8: Volunteer recruitment 6
Section 9: Training and Development 7
Section 10: Volunteer Recognition, Motivation and Retention..... 7
Section 11: Inappropriate Behavior and Volunteer Dismissal..... 7
Section 12: Reimbursements..... 7

ARTICLE 7 7
Section 13: Policy review 7

SVGRCS-Volunteer Policy-2018

ARTICLE 1

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism is considered to be the backbone of the St Vincent and the Grenadines Red Crescent Society. Part 3 Article 6, Article 7, Article 8, Article 9 and Article 10 of the Constitution of St Vincent and the Grenadines Red Cross Society guided the development of instructions for youth and volunteers. The voluntary organizations formed under this code of conduct, would be the apex bodies of Youth and volunteer in the Society. Keeping this mandate in view, it was thought prudent to develop a comprehensive Volunteer Policy which would also address issues relating to volunteer management and retention. This volunteer policy will provide direction to all members of the National Society allowing for the growth and sustainability of the SVGRCS Volunteer Programme. It will be supported by the Code of Conduct and Procedural Manual.

ARTICLE 2

SECTION 2: POLICY STATEMENT ON VOLUNTEERISM

"Volunteerism is a wonderful state of mind. It urges us to step outside the routine of our daily lives. It propels us to act when we perceive a need. It reminds us that even though our actions are not always selfless, there is great reward in accomplishing a worthwhile task" (R.W. Emerson)

Spirit of selfless voluntary service is the strength of any community. A 'volunteer' is anyone who offers himself/herself by his/her own free will to perform a task on behalf of the St Vincent and the Grenadines Red Cross Society without monetary compensation or expectation of compensation. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement provides the right channel for those who want to make a difference in someone's life. We strive to improve the lives of the deprived and vulnerable people by building on the strengths of our culture and Fundamental Principles. Our aim is not to make a resource that serves a particular organization or segment of society but to formulate a motivated and committed human capital that can eventually play its part in nation building. We believe that volunteering should not be about self sacrifice but a multidimensional investment into the society and one's own personal development.

The Volunteer Policy, Strategies, Code of Conduct, Standard Operating Procedures and Manual of Instructions is an effort to integrate policies at the national, regional and community level to handle and develop the enormous potential of volunteers. It is our humble attempt to provide a productive volunteering experience that benefits the individual as well as the society.

ARTICLE 3

SECTION 3: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The aims and objectives of this policy document are to involve volunteers in overall management and related activities at all levels effectively. The following are the main objectives:

- To bring Volunteers in the mainstream of the SVGRCS as valuable human resource.

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- To raise awareness amongst general masses and stakeholders, promote volunteerism, and inculcate in them the sense of responsibility, mutual respect and self-help.
- To introduce good governance and implement the principles of good governance at all levels (i.e. authority, responsibility and accountability).
- To formulate and define rights, roles and responsibilities of volunteers and the SVGRCS.
- To create and maintain database of volunteers and related activities for future interventions, planning and research based activities.
- To provide guidance, develop manuals, procedures, rules regulations and model by-laws for volunteers.
- To develop SVGRCS volunteer networks at all levels ensuring effective management, implementation/execution of programmes and its sustainability.
- To provide guidelines for establishment and strengthening of cooperation and coordination amongst volunteers of SVGRCS with other National Societies.

ARTICLE 4

SECTION 4: POLICY APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all volunteers in all programmes and projects undertaken or to be undertaken by or on behalf of the SVGRCS and all functions and operations coherent with the Federation General Assembly 1999. This Policy is intended for internal management guidance of SVGRCS only, and does not apply, either implicitly or explicitly, to other organizations working with volunteers. It could be a model for others to develop and improve it according to their needs. The SVGRCS reserves the rights to change or amend any of this Policy at any time and to expect adherence to the policy. Changes to or exceptions in this Policy may only be authorized by Executive Committee or Managing Body. This policy will come into force with immediate effect.

ARTICLE 5

SECTION 5: ROLE OF THE SVGRCS VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Planned and organized efforts are required for effective utilization of volunteers. For the SVGRCS the development of organizational networks of volunteers at all levels, retention of volunteers through sustainable programme activities has become a crucial/mandatory need. This department is responsible for the effective management of volunteers within the SVGRCS in order for the Society to better achieve its goals. Among its tasks are the identification of productive and creative volunteer roles, recruiting suitable volunteers, training and development of volunteers and addressing issues which will prevent volunteer retention. This will be achieved by the maintenance of a database, provision of support, assistance and supervision and the recognition for voluntary activities.

SVGRCS-Volunteer Policy-2018

SECTION 6: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS

The conduct of volunteers shall be: -

- 6.1 Reflect the Movement's Fundamental Principles in volunteering
- 6.2 Support and act in accordance with the policies, practices, procedures and management decisions of the SVGRCS.
- 6.3 Welcome and maintain good relations with staff, other volunteers, service users, partners and the general public.
- 6.4 No volunteer should gain or lose financially as a result of his voluntary service for the Society. His/her actions should not cause personal, friends or family to profit as a result of his voluntary service for the Society.
- 6.5 Safeguard the image, reputation and Fundamental Principle of the Red Cross. As ambassadors of the organization, volunteers should act and dress appropriately when involved in voluntary activity so as not to bring the RC into disrepute.
- 6.6 Volunteers shall not bring the SVGRCS into disrepute through the misuse of assets/material and equipment. This includes buildings, emblem, telephones, computers (including software and hardware), equipment, supplies and vehicles when authorized by SVGRCS official.
- 6.7 Maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which she/he is exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, or other person or involves overall functioning of the Society.
- 6.8 Comply with all health and safety regulation during the discharge of their duties, reporting damaged equipment to manager in a timely fashion.
- 6.9 Volunteer must be gender sensitive and shall not indulge in any direct or indirect act which falls in harassment policy, if found guilty will be terminated immediately.
- 6.10 A willingness to learn about the organization and the role he/she plays in it.
- 6.11 Inform supervisor if he/she is unable to meet a commitment with as much notice as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- 6.12 Inform the Society if personal circumstances change such as health or address.
- 6.13 Inform supervisor in the event of any complaint or problem in order for a positive and amicable solution can be sought.
- 6.14 Agree to a criminal record check should he/she be involved in direct contact with vulnerable adults and/or children.

SECTION 7: DUTIES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SVGRCS

- 7.1 To treat all volunteers with value and respect regardless of background, race, sex, age, nationality, etc.
- 7.2 To treat personal information with care and discretion. Such information will be secured and only shared within the organization on a 'need-to-know' basis.

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- 7.3 To give adequate information and a clear job description to volunteers on what is expected, why they are doing a task and how it fits into the programme activities.
- 7.4 Provide support to the volunteer in developing the skills relevant to their training or activity.
- 7.5 Recognition of the right of the volunteer to decline or change mind regarding a voluntary activity without fear of reprisals or guilt.
- 7.6 Assign a manager to each volunteer. The manager will be responsible for providing guidance, supervision and support.
- 7.7 Recognize the relevant skills and experience which each volunteer brings to the organization.
- 7.8 Provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations regarding their job or the wider programme of SVGRCS.
- 7.9 Provide access to dispute resolution procedures and to be supported through such a process.
- 7.10 Recognize voluntary services through awards, forums, events and development opportunities.
- 7.11 Provide safe, secure and healthy working conditions in accordance with the nature of the voluntary activity.
- 7.12 Reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses incurred when providing service, subject to prior approval from supervisor.
- 7.13 Advise volunteers of any disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- 7.14 Ensure that appropriate insurance policy is in place of volunteers, covering risks, accidents or illnesses directly related to volunteer activity.
- 7.15 Inform and give the each volunteer the opportunity to play an active part in the organization as a whole.
- 7.16 To ensure that each volunteer is provided with a suitable reference from their supervisor when needed.

ARTICLE 6

SECTION 8: VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

The National Society shall recruit volunteers proactively with the aim of expanding volunteer involvement in the community. Most volunteers come to the SVGRCS because they want to help people in need or because they are committed to a particular campaign. While assigning duties to a volunteer, it is important to recognize and manage these expectations. As such recruitment should

- Be an active process of individuals of all colour, class, creed, race, age and disabilities in keeping with the Fundamental Principle of universality.
- Employ multiple and diverse means of communication so as to reach a broader cross section of the populace.
- Be for specific, explicitly described roles.

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- Be based on potential

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed by subject to a criminal background check, an interview by the Volunteer Manager or a Senior Volunteer prior to placement. The area of work and level of involvement are to be arranged on an individual basis at time of interview. Prospective volunteers to be matched for their suitability to existing position descriptions. The selection criteria for each position depends upon the particular skills needed to fulfil the duties of that position.

SECTION 9: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The level of competency of volunteers can have a significant impact on the success of SVGRCS. The Society will develop appropriate training programs for volunteers and give volunteers access to training opportunities locally and regionally with a view to enabling them to meet their responsibilities towards the Society and for the specific task or role they were recruited to carry out. The training should be practical, experience based and tailored to the individual needs of the society or volunteers.

SECTION 10: VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION, MOTIVATION AND RETENTION

The National Society shall endeavour to recognize and motivate volunteers with a view to retaining them. Recognition is the process of rewarding and motivating those youth and volunteers who have contributed effectively to SVGRCS. The most effective recognition is to make volunteers feel they are important part of the Society and are making very useful.

SECTION 11: INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR AND VOLUNTEER DISMISSAL

All staff and volunteers are expected to act in a suitable manner at all times. SVGRCS provides a positive and safe working environment and expect all staff and volunteers to uphold these values. If any volunteer behaves in a manner that is dangerous, harmful, contrary to SVGRCS's ethical policies or otherwise inappropriate, dismissal may take place immediately.

Section 12: Reimbursements

The SVGRC will ensure that a volunteer shall neither lose nor gain financially as a result of his/her voluntary service to the Society. The Society shall reimburse an actual expense incurred by a volunteer.

- a) Reasonably incurred in the course of the performance of the National Society's activities
- b) Adequately supported by valid documentation
- c) Activity is pre-authorized and there is a formal agreement between the Society and the volunteer to undertake the task.

ARTICLE 7

SECTION 13: POLICY REVIEW

The National Society may review this Policy at any time as may be deemed necessary.