

Ramara Township Volunteer Policy – 2014

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to develop a process that supports municipal volunteers, whether appointed by Council or an ad hoc committee and encourages volunteerism by establishing best practices and minimizing risk to the Township.

The Township of Ramara recognizes the essential role played by volunteers in building strong communities and this policy will assist volunteers in understanding their roles, responsibilities and commitments to Ramara while providing a valuable volunteer experience.

This policy will guide volunteers with respect to the following:

- Declaring Conflicts of Interest
- Not using appointments for personal gain
- Benefiting the community at large
- Fairness and respect for differences
- Maintaining privileges of the board/committee
- Protecting Personal Information

DEFINITION

Volunteer: A person who provides service to the community while under the general supervision of the Township, or as a member of a board, or any advisory, ad hoc, or special purpose committee appointed by Council, generally without compensation or other consideration.

ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY:

This policy will be implemented by the Clerk's Department, Committee/Board Chairperson and will be overseen by the CAO.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Participation: The Township of Ramara encourages citizens to volunteer and contribute their expertise to improve their community

Qualified and Dedicated People: The Township invites citizens with skills and qualifications to share both their time and talent freely for the benefit of their community.

Recognized Contributions: The Township and the community appreciate the commitment and time given by their volunteers and recognize the spirit in which it is given.

Balance: Volunteer policies balance the interests of the community, the volunteers and the Township by ensuring that these interests are clearly defined and agreed upon.

Orientation/Training: The Township will provide any orientation, training and /or materials necessary for the volunteer to fulfill his/her duties (i.e. Accessibility, Health & Safety, Automatic External Defibrillator, etc.).

GENERAL

A volunteer is obligated to maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct, conduct themselves with integrity, competency and impartiality, and preserve the trust and confidence placed in them by Council and the community.

INSURANCE COVERAGE AND IMMUNITY

During the term of volunteering and in the performance of the volunteer activities, volunteers will have access to the insurance and immunity outlined below:

General Liability Insurance: The Township's liability insurance protects both the Township and the volunteer against claims from third parties while the volunteer is performing volunteer activities. This does not cover loss of, or damage to, the volunteer's property. There is no cost to the volunteer for this liability insurance coverage.

Auto Liability insurance: Volunteers are not authorized to use Township-owned or Township-leased vehicles. The Township does not provide auto liability coverage to any volunteer's personal vehicle driven on behalf of the Township during their volunteering duties.

Workers' Compensation: Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) does not provide coverage for volunteers. Any person incurring injury or illness while volunteering will not be covered by the Township's WSIB policy.

Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance: The Township provides volunteers with insurance for accidental death or dismemberment, paralysis, accident

disability and for medical and dental expenses. There is no group life insurance provided to volunteers.

Immunity: In addition, Section 448 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, provides volunteers with certain immunities from liability. If the volunteer is participating in the delivery of municipal services under the supervision of a municipal employee, the section establishes a statutory bar to claims against the volunteer unless the volunteer is guilty of dishonesty, gross negligence or malicious or willful misconduct, or has libeled or slandered another party.

VOLUNTEERS

Selection Screening: Council will evaluate volunteer applicants based on their expertise and experience in the Township of Ramara. Residency, either permanent or seasonal, within the Township is preferred. Those suitable will be selected as members of the board or committee for which they have applied.

Appointment: Council will appoint the suitable applicant as a member of the appropriate board or committee for a specified period.

Performance: Volunteers will be encouraged to complete their duties and/or attend meetings on a regular basis, for which the volunteer freely gives his/her time and expertise to the community, generally without financial compensation. If a volunteer is going to miss three (3) consecutive meetings, the committee shall be advised. If more than three consecutive meetings are missed without proper notice to the committee, the Township reserves the right to relieve the volunteer from their duties.

Safety and Security: Volunteers are responsible for their own safety and the safety and security of all their personal property and possessions.

Expenditures: Any expenditure on behalf of any committee must be made in accordance with the Township's Procurement Bylaw, with the committee's concurrence and within the Township's approved budget for that year.

Criminal Record Checks: Criminal Record Checks will be required for all board and committee members.

Vulnerable Sector Checks: Vulnerable Sector Checks will be required for all board and committee members working with children or vulnerable people (i.e. Youth Committee and groups who engage youth or other vulnerable people in their activities).

Conflict of Interest: Volunteers have a broad range of interests that may from time to time lead to conflicts of interest. Volunteers will be considered to have a conflict of interest when their private objectives conflict with municipal objectives. As such volunteers shall not:

- Benefit financially from their membership other than an honorarium that may be paid in certain circumstances;
- Place themselves in a position where they are under obligation to any person who may benefit from the circumstances;
- Deal with any application, agreement or contract in which they, any family member, partner or company has an interest;
- Gain personal benefit from any knowledge about a municipally related matter;
- Give preferential treatment to any person, partner, organization or company where the member has a financial interest.

Where conflict of interest exists, the volunteer shall declare the conflict, or possible conflict, and withdraw from direct involvement in the matter and refrain from any discussion or comment that might influence a decision.

Volunteers shall ensure the conflict or possible conflict of interest is recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Volunteers who are, or become involved in legal proceedings with the municipality, will be asked to step down from the appointed committee.

Deliberative Privilege: Boards and committees speak with one voice, that being through a recommendation to Council. Discussion on how a member reaches a decision is a matter of privilege of that member. Whether a volunteer is in favour of, or opposed to a decision, they shall support the position of the board or committee once a consensus is reached.

Privacy: A volunteer shall not disclose any personal information they may become aware of in the conduct of their responsibility as a member of a board or committee.

Social Media: Social Media is a growing means of communication without limitations and includes many forms such as blogging, social networking, tweeting, photo sharing, video sharing, webcasting or other similar websites and services.

Volunteers may not use the Township's information system for social media, unless authorized to do so. Volunteers should refrain from communicating about Township related business through their personal social media. If a volunteer chooses to do so, he/she must also clearly disclose his or her affiliation with the Township and that the

views expressed in the posting are their own personal views and do not reflect the views of the Township.

Derogatory or disrespectful language directed toward the Township, Township staff or any Member of Council by a volunteer on his or her personal social media regarding Township business is likely to cause deep or widespread offense and will not be tolerated. The Township reserves the right to relieve a volunteer of their duties if such postings are made.

Code of Ethics: Volunteers are required to adhere to the Township of Ramara Municipal Code of Conduct for Members of Council, Local Boards and Committees.

Confidentiality Agreement – Volunteers are required to agree to the following:

1. That any written or oral information disclosed to them as “confidential” during their term will remain in the strictest confidence.
2. That all “confidential” material given to them as a result of their volunteering on a board or committee will be maintained, and when necessary, disposed of in a secure and confidential manner.
3. Not to publicize any of the confidential aspects of their work orally or by written word or any other medium of communication.
4. To exercise due care to ensure that any information they may give to others in the course of their term will be given only to persons they believe are entitled to receive such information.