



VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The Volunteer Coordinator is an extremely important member of any festival/event committee. This person ensures there is enough manpower on all levels to ensure the festival/event's success. In addition, they're responsible for recruiting, caring for and organizing all the volunteers for the weeks and month leading up to, as well as the day(s) of the festival/event.

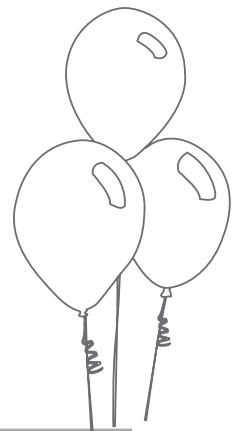
The Volunteer Coordinator ideally should:

- have experience working in the volunteer sector
- possess good communication skills
- be aware of all the components of a good volunteer program
- have the ability and knowledge to recruit and maintain volunteers
- be able to effectively schedule volunteers for all aspects of the process
- be able to efficiently direct and lead volunteers
- be able to communicate with committee coordinators to assess needs

Alberta is recognized as one of Canada's leading provinces for volunteer involvement. People volunteer for a variety of reasons including enjoying the type of programming offered, gaining new skills, meeting new people and being a good citizen. Volunteers are the backbone of any festival/event so it is important they're provided with every reason to continue to volunteer year after year.

If your festival/event seems too small to worry about placing someone in charge of volunteers, think again. There are numerous details to attend to concerning the use of volunteers. If the goal is to have the festival/event continue for years to come, relying on friends and family members to help out will not be enough.

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for the development of volunteer information, recruitment, screening, placement, orientation and recognition of volunteers as well as developing tools for the coordinators to help them organize and inform their individual area volunteers.





MAKING A PLAN

The first step in developing a volunteer program is to acquire the following information:

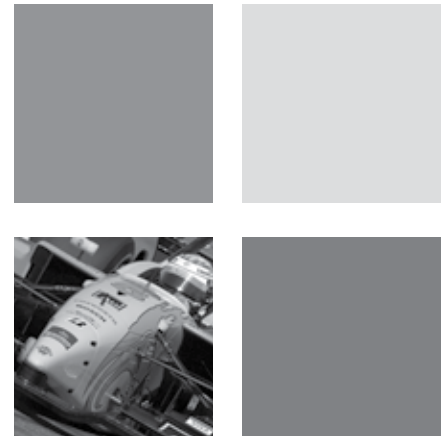
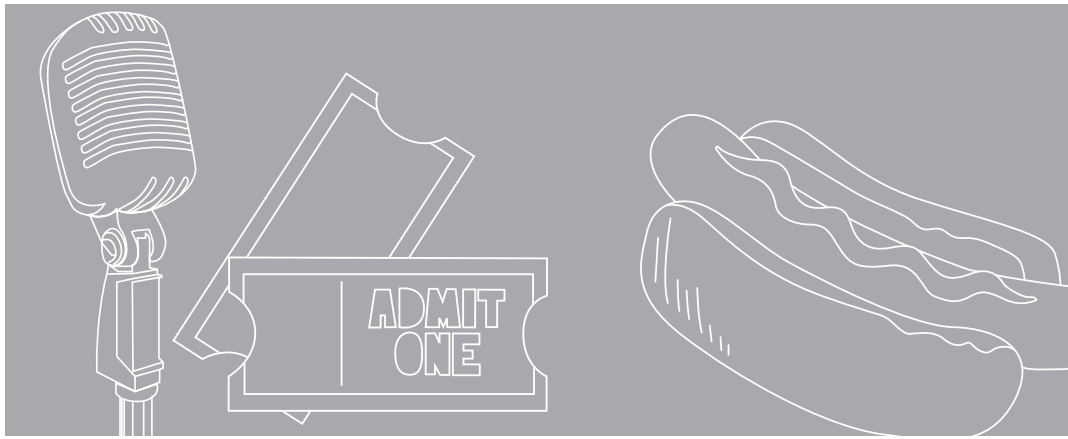
1. Venues and programs, list every area that may require help including Information Centre, Lost and Found, First Aid, the main stage, venue set up and tear down, etc.

2. Who is in charge? Who are the Coordinators' and Assistant Coordinators'? What is their contact information? What are their job descriptions?

3. What are the volunteers required to do? E.g., What are their job descriptions? How will expectations be communicated? Is there more than one task at a venue? For example, at a major performance stage, volunteers will be needed for front-of-house, crowd control and backstage help with performers, etc.

4. Where is the venue? Inside or outside?

5. What are the opening and closing times of venues? When does the festival/event start and finish? Do times change depending on the day? Are there any extraordinary time schedules for example, pre-event set up and post-event take down, manufacturing of materials pre-event?



CREATING A VOLUNTEER MANUAL

Develop a Festival/Event Volunteer Manual that includes:

- A Welcome to the volunteers from the Volunteer Coordinator and the festival/event organization.
- Contact Information for the Volunteer Coordinator and the festival/event.
- Festival/Event Information regarding parking, check-in and out procedures, access to shows.
- Volunteer Code of Ethics including what is expected of the volunteers in terms of their commitment, behavior with each other, guests and the public.
- Rules & Regulations regarding drugs & alcohol, no show and late policies and procedures.
- Identification on-site that may include a badge and/or an article of clothing (i.e., hat or t-shirt).
- Volunteer Rights consisting of their placement, training and orientation for their area, accurate information regarding their role and responsibilities and work schedule.
- Festival Policies regarding the Freedom of Information Act, background checks, child protection, disciplinary procedures and any other legal issues.
- Volunteer Time Commitment containing a schedule for each area while trying to be consistent across the event (For example, 20 hour commitment per volunteer, 4 shifts @ 5 hours each over 3 days).
- Volunteer Benefits may take the form of a post-festival/event party, on-site privileges such as hospitality, pins, hats, t-shirts or any combination of the above (all volunteers should receive a program and identification as a volunteer).
- Job Descriptions outlining each job and its role and responsibilities.
- Orientation Dates, Times & Locations should be communicated with enough notice.

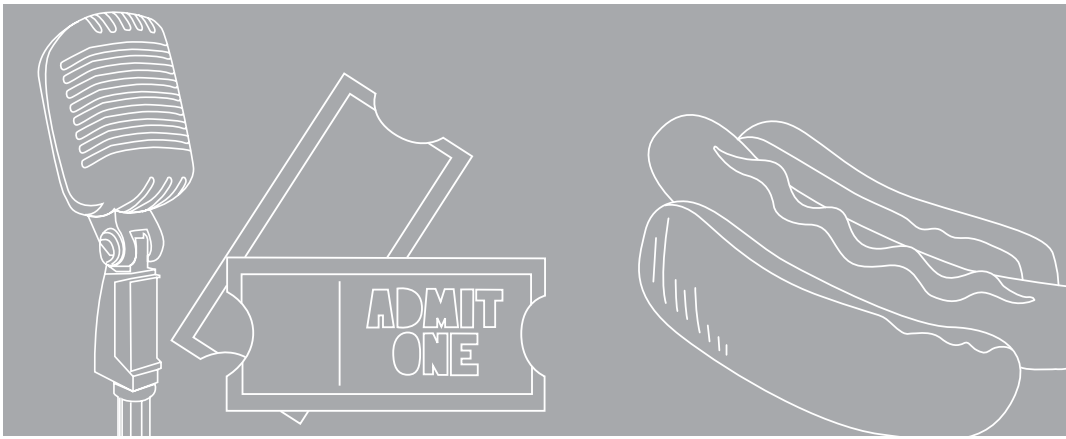




Individual Area Volunteer Packages should contain:

- Name and location of venue or area.
- Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator contact information.
- Work schedule.
- Information pertinent to the specific area (for example, the volunteer working front-of-house for the on-stage portion of the festival should know this job entails handling seating, line control, ticketing, maintenance of the venue and exiting procedures.) The volunteer for this job should enjoy working with people, have some experience dealing with crowds, young people and handling ticketing procedures.
- A sample of "Frequently Asked Questions" with the appropriate response (For instance, where is the bathroom? Can I leave and come back in?).
- Information about what to bring and where personal items may be safely stored.
- Program or a copy of the master schedule for the festival/event.





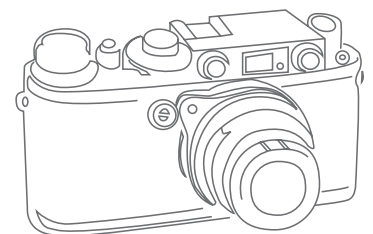
RECRUITING

Once you have compiled information regarding the human resource needs for the festival/event, the next step is recruiting volunteers. No doubt family, friends, associates will help fill the gaps, but they may not cover all areas and a long-term festival/event needs to consider future requirements.

1. **Who can be approached as potential volunteers?** Are there opportunities for families to volunteer together, youth, retired people or groups?

2. **Where can volunteers be located?** Think about all the organizations, clubs, churches, schools and various societies that may have people who want to be involved. Put up volunteer opportunity information in all public places where it is allowable and place ads in your local newspaper/ newsletter, school newsletters, church bulletins, on your website and anywhere else that people will read and see information about the festival/event.

3. **How will I screen volunteers and place them?** Using your application form refer to Volunteer application template (found in this section) to assess a volunteer's skills, knowledge and motivation and review in relation to the overall goals and expectations of the festival or event. Set up an interview to discuss the event, the volunteer's expectations and the volunteering options available.

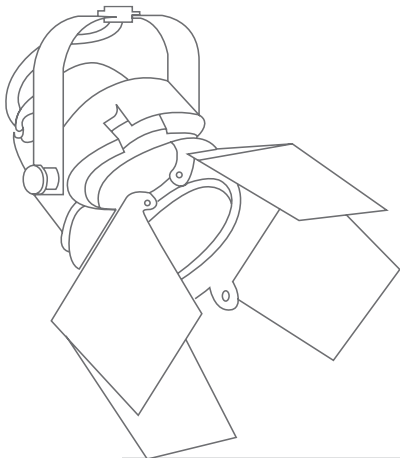


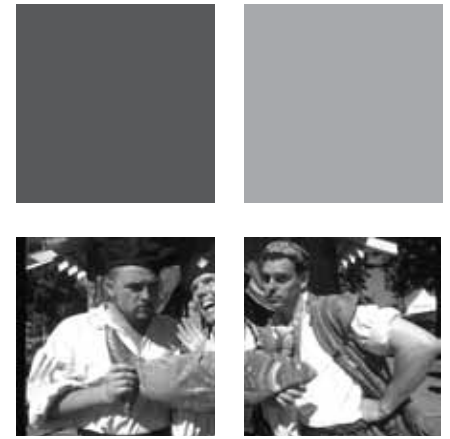
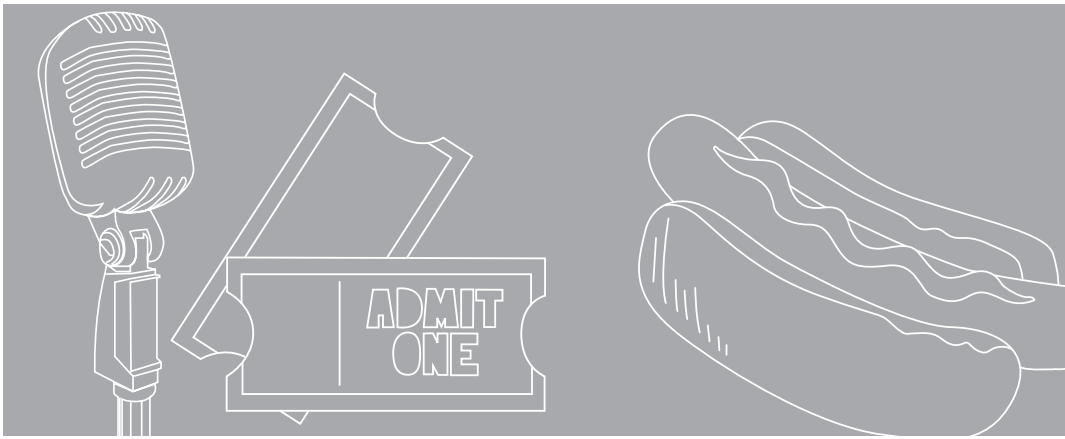


4. What will the orientation consist of? Volunteers need to know the overall reason for the festival/event's existence, as well as the vision and mission, the structure of the festival/event, the chain of command and what is expected of them leading up to and the day(s) of the festival/event.

5. What information do the coordinators need to know? As the Volunteer Coordinator it is your responsibility to provide the other coordinators with all the information about volunteers recruited for the venue(s) or area(s) they will be organizing and all pertinent details. Coordinators are in charge of providing you with the number of volunteers needed, preparing an information sheet, developing a work schedule, holding an orientation meeting and managing their area.

6. How will the festival/event recognize volunteer endeavors? There are many ways a festival/event can show their appreciation to the volunteers - treating them with respect, allowing them to help in the planning process and providing an opportunity for feedback about their experience. Holding a post festival party to honor all volunteers and distributing certificates of appreciation, for example, is another option.





SAMPLE APPLICATION TEMPLATE

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Name of Festival/Event
 Date of Festival/Event
 Mailing Address

Phone, Fax & Email Address
 Website Address

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Mobile: _____

Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

T-Shirt Size: sm med lg xlg xxlg

First Aid Certificate held: _____ Number: _____

Driver's License Number (For Transportation Crew only): _____

Do you have any special needs we should know about? Yes: _____ No: _____

(e.g.: diabetes, serious allergies or other dietary considerations, mobility restrictions)

If "yes" please explain (This information will help us place you more effectively.)

ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST BE PREPARED TO GIVE A (X) HOUR COMMITMENT

Which shifts do you prefer? (Based on 4 hour shifts)

Mornings _____ Afternoons _____ Evenings _____ Anytime _____

PRE-FESTIVAL/EVENT VOLUNTEERING

___ Office (2 weeks before festival/event) ___ Craft Prep ___ Pick Ups ___ Site Set Up ___ Site Load Out

Where have you volunteered before?

Why do you want to volunteer for this festival/event?

FESTIVAL/EVENT CREWS

Which area(s) would you be most interested in volunteering in?

Site ___ Security ___ Food Services ___ Bar & Bar Service ___ Stage(s) ___ Marketing & Media ___
 Environment (garbage & recycling) ___ Children's Activities ___ Special Projects ___

This sample application template is a composite of several applications used by festivals in Edmonton, Alberta. You'll want to include your particular information.



VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

_____ (name of festival/event) agrees to provide adequate information and assistance for the volunteer to be able to meet his/her designated requirements.

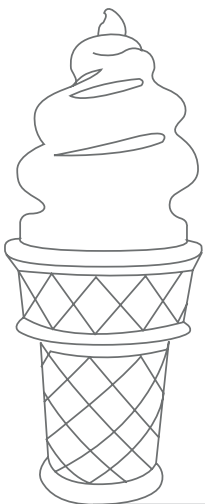
As a volunteer, I agree:

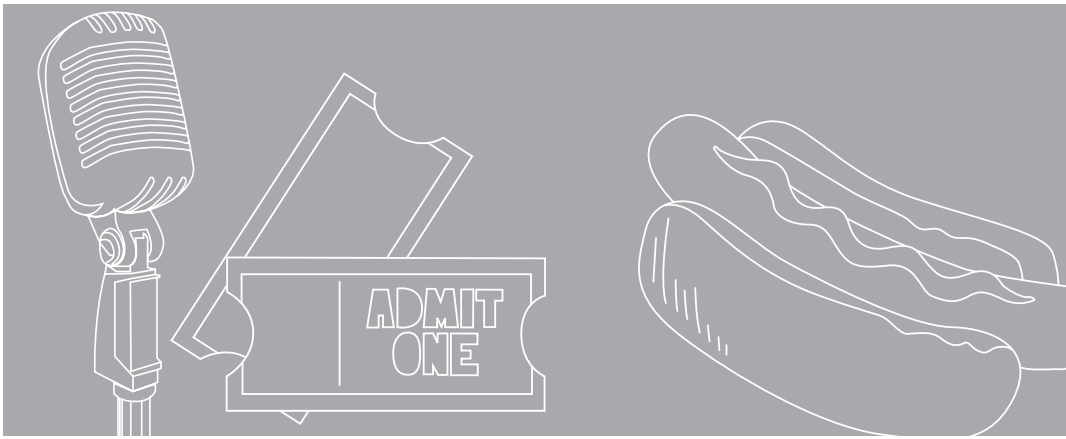
- to adhere to the festival rules and procedures
- to meet the time and duty commitments scheduled by the coordinator or to provide adequate notice of my absence to my coordinator so that alternate arrangements can be made
- to report to coordinator for assigned shifts
- to wear my festival/event name tag and T-shirt/vest, hat while on shift, representing the festival/event
- to behave in a friendly and courteous manner when dealing with the public and other volunteers
- not to hold the festival/event or any of its representatives liable for any loss or damage to my person or injury to my property that may occur during festival/event activities
- to be aware that any violation of rules, written or oral may result in termination of my volunteer duties

This application will be processed and the Volunteer Coordinator will contact you to arrange for you to come in for a personal interview.

{NOTE: Many volunteer applications have a request for volunteers dealing with cash or children, to agree to a criminal record check and/or sexual offender registry check. If you do not know the volunteers who will be working in these areas, you should have this request on the application and follow it up. As a rule it is best to err on the side of caution.}

Signature: _____ Date: _____





VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

Volunteers are entitled:

- to be treated with respect
- to be properly informed about the festival/event, its expectations, procedures and rewards
- to know what is expected of them and feel comfortable
- to be recognized for their contribution
- to be treated fairly

VOLUNTEER BENEFITS COULD INCLUDE

- commemorative T-shirt/hat
- volunteer hospitality room
- volunteer appreciation event
- complimentary event program





VOLUNTEER POSITIONS COULD INCLUDE:

Security: Maintain a safe, comfortable environment for everyone participating in the festival/event, as well as securing all venues.

Environment: Help ensure that the site is kept looking beautiful for visitors to the festival/event. Equipment and materials are provided to help dispose of waste/garbage and sort recyclables.

Front-of-House: Handle line-ups and answer questions about the festival/event for indoor and outdoor seated venues, take tickets and assist with seating. Good organization skills are required and you should enjoy working with the public.

Food Services: Help with the set up, service and dismantling of the temporary restaurant serving food and beverages.

Beer Garden: Jobs include bar, table service, set up and dismantling.

Information: Their business is to know everything there is to know about the festival/event – who, what, when, where, why and how is. They also sell merchandise and provide programs to visitors to the festival/event.

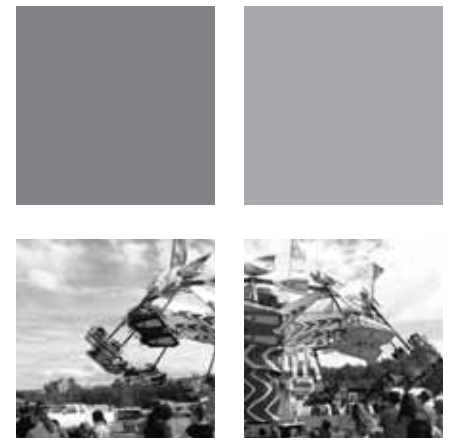
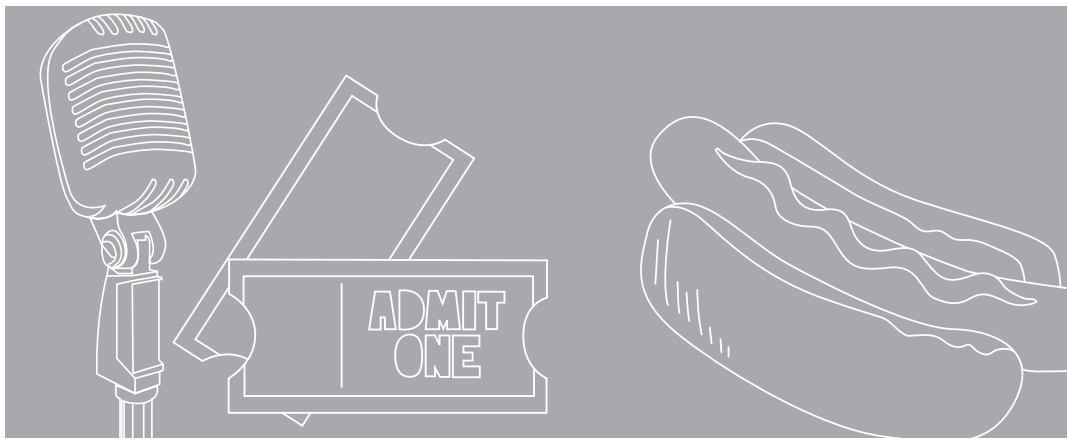
Children's Activities: Enjoy some time entertaining children and their parents. Activities and games will be provided for everyone coming to this area. Help make this place an enjoyable experience.

Office: Duties will include answering telephone inquiries about the festival/event, selling seats to the ticketed events and general office duties. Good communication and verbal skills are required.

Production/Site: Help the Production/Logistics Coordinator ensure the physical site is up and operating smoothly. From erecting tents to securing banners and putting up fencing, it is important that you are physically fit and ready for any emergency.

Stage: All volunteers who are helping with any theatrical/musical productions must have some previous training and/or understanding of stage/backstage procedures.

Marketing & Media: Working with the coordinator, volunteers will be administrative assistant(s) for pre, during and post festival/event. This position will require the volunteers(s) to provide media guests with information, directions and help with any media-related jobs.



SAMPLE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR SCHEDULE - ONE WEEK OUT

DATE	VENUE	COORDINATORS/ VOLUNTEERS	REQUIREMENTS	NOTES
Sept 26th - 7:00 pm	Arena Event Security	Coordinator X & 20 Volunteers	20 volunteer info packages	Make sure coordinators cover procedure for lost children and emergency procedures and phone numbers
Sept 27th - 6:30 pm	Library Meeting Rm # 1 Information Booth volunteer orientation meeting	Coordinator X & 16 Volunteers	16 volunteer information packages	Reminder to pick up brochures at office
Sept. 28th - 7:30 pm	Library Meeting Rm # 1 At coordinator meeting, go over schedule – any gaps? Needs?	24 Coordinators	Take site map, left over volunteer packages, program schedule	Distribute staff IDs, T-shirts, and contact name tags; Reminder of volunteer rally
Sept. 29th - 7:00 pm	Arena Volunteer Rally; Talk with Sponsor Coordinator about reception on Oct. 2nd	100 volunteers + coordinators	All materials for coordinators; last meeting before event; Materials about festival/event to library	Who hasn't shown up to any meetings?
Sept. 30th - 10:00 am	Office Call volunteers on waiting list to fill gaps			Call coordinators with new volunteer information
Oct. 1st - 9:00 am	Conduct a site walk with Production/ Logistics Coordinator			Charge cell phone Load in begins 7 am
Oct 2nd - 11:00 am	Show time			Turn cell phone on



EVALUATION

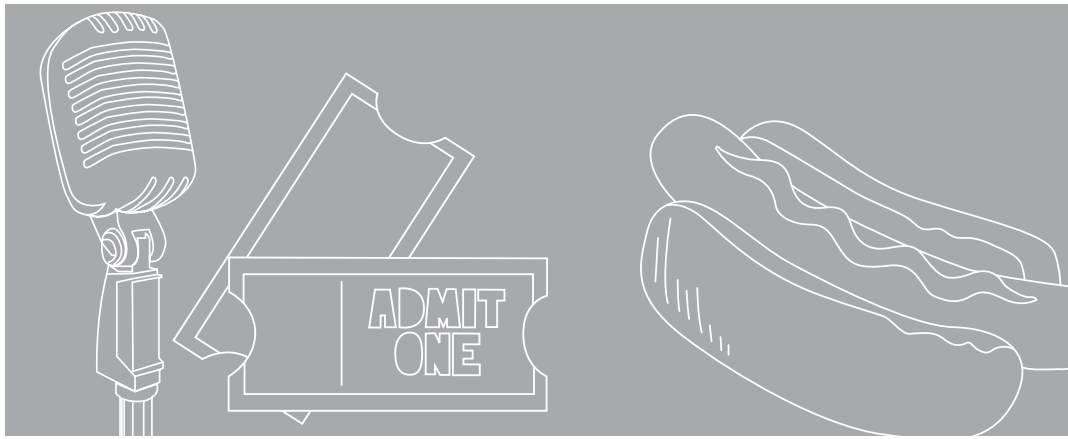
There are a number of options for assessing the success of the volunteer program:

- Tracking the number of volunteers participating in every venue will determine if you reached the number of volunteers you wanted for the festival/event.
- Monitoring to see how well the venue is running.
- Ask volunteers who attend the recognition event, or through an email request, to provide you with feedback about their experiences.
- Ask volunteers if they would be interested in volunteering in future years.
- Have final report forms for your coordinators to fill out and share at a wrap meeting.
- Review Area Needs Assessments with coordinators for changes in volunteers needed.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S PRE-EVENT CHECKLIST

- Have you reviewed the number of volunteers needed with each area coordinator?
- Are all coordinators clear on their roles, the chain of command, job descriptions for volunteers and the rules and regulations governing volunteers at the festival/event?
- Have all the volunteers filled out applications and the release of private information document? Have you completed background checks on volunteers working in with cash or children?
- Are all coordinators providing a training and orientation for their volunteers prior to the festival/event?
- Have volunteer packages been put together including their schedule, ID, program and other pertinent information?
- Have you developed a volunteer appreciation event?

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM TAKES TIME, SKILLS AND A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR COMMUNITY. BEGIN DEVELOPING A VOLUNTEER DATABASE IMMEDIATELY. RECORD ALL POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERING, START A TIMELINE FOR CRITICAL DATES AND DEADLINES. REMEMBER IT IS JUST AS IMPORTANT TO MANAGE VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS AS IT IS YOUR PARTICIPANTS- BE SURE TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE POSITIONS ARE ASSIGNED.



USEFUL RESOURCES

- I. The Volunteer Alberta website is a good place to acquire information on all aspects of volunteer management http://www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/resources_and_links/volunteer_management.asp
- II. For information regarding legal obligations and volunteers see, Volunteer Alberta, <http://www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/vollow/>
- III. If there are not enough volunteers applying from inside the community, you may want to consider other volunteer websites in the province such as <http://www.volunteer.ca/alberta-volunteer-centres>

