

Guidelines for appropriate volunteer positions

Organisations face significant challenges in determining what positions are appropriate for volunteers. Outlined below are factors that Volunteer Wellington considers when listing a voluntary position.

Factors which tend to make the involvement of volunteers appropriate

- Where the work is for the benefit of voluntary, not-for-profit charitable organisations
- Where the role will not require more than 15 hours per week
- Where new areas of work are being explored and volunteers may pave the way for the creation of new roles
- Where there is an agreement within the member organisation about the nature and purpose of the volunteer involvement, including the principle of entitling volunteer staff to the same employment practices and benefits as paid staff
- Where paid staff acknowledge the value of volunteers' contributions and adequate resources are made available to support, supervise and train the volunteers
- Where there is an opportunity for the volunteer to benefit from the work by achieving personal goals
- Where a task can be carried out better by a volunteer than by a paid staff person. This might include one-to-one befriending, advocacy, visiting, etc.
- Where a distinct area of work can be identified for which the volunteer can take responsibility and which complements or extends the work of paid staff

Factors which tend to make the involvement of volunteers inappropriate

- Where the work is for the benefit of a profit-making organisation
- Where the volunteer receives remuneration implying low-wage status rather than voluntary work
- Where the work will typically require more than 15 hours per week
- Where the work is normally considered to be the responsibility of a statutory service, e.g. nursing care, teaching, etc
- Where the volunteer would be undertaking work which is the subject of an industrial dispute
- Where the volunteer would displace a paid worker
- Where the involvement of volunteers would jeopardise the wage or employment conditions of paid staff