



ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

## **Statement of Professional Ethics in Volunteer Administration**

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## USING THE AVA STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The AVA Statement of Professional Ethics is a powerful tool for volunteer administrators committed to making ethical decisions. The Statement is designed to assist the user in working through issues in a systematic and value-based manner. The flow chart and worksheets support your decision making process and prompt you to record your thoughts along the way.

In using this tool, consider the following:

- If you are facing an ethical decision or dilemma, scan the Statement for clues that may fit your particular situation. You can work from the "Program Components" column to the "Core Ethical Value" column or vice versa.
- You may find that more than one core ethical value emerges during your decision making process. Start working through one of the core ethical values and when you have arrived at your decision, go back and see if the decision fits with the remaining core ethical values. Frequently a decision based on one core ethical value will be valid when you consider another core ethical value.
- Change the sequence of the steps to meet your learning style. Be sure, though that you do consider each of the steps at some point.
- For really difficult situations, consider working with a colleague.
- Realize that when you begin this process, you will find it difficult and complex. You are learning a new skill and it may take a while for you to be comfortable with the whole decision making process.
- Readers should understand that all statements under the headings, "Possible Actions," and "Program Components" are suggestions only. The suggestions come from professionals throughout the United States and Canada and serve as guides for readers seeking to resolve an ethical dilemma.

**Note:** Readers interested in walking through the Statement of Professional Ethics can refer to *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, Volume XIV, Number 2, Winter 1996.

**Professionals using this statement are encouraged to provide feedback for the next edition.  
Please forward comments, ideas, ethical dilemmas or experiences to  
Ethics Committee, c/o AVA , P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294.**

## INTRODUCTION

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Managers of volunteers are leaders who mobilize human resources to:

- create a social climate which makes the meeting of human needs possible;
- enable the meeting of human needs;
- provide for the involvement of persons in the decision making process;
- contribute to creative and responsible social development and change; and,
- enhance and extend the work of employed persons in certain service fields.

Managers of volunteers must be committed to the following core ethical values:

1. Citizenship and Philanthropy
2. Respect
3. Responsibility
4. Caring
5. Justice and Fairness
6. Trustworthiness.<sup>1</sup>

Administrators of volunteer programs must base their decision making on these six core ethical values if they are to maintain a program which:

- |                                            |                                               |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| ◆ is accessible to diverse groups          | ◆ maintains the public trust                  |
| ◆ operates ethically with all stakeholders | ◆ sustains a helping environment              |
| ◆ strives for excellence                   | ◆ is at low risk for legal actions against it |

Members of the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) share a commitment to the effective leadership of voluntary efforts. The mission of AVA is to promote professionalism and to strengthen leadership in volunteerism.

This document is provided to assist administrators of volunteer programs to develop as strong and principled leaders who make decisions that are founded on core ethical values.

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<sup>1</sup> These core ethical values are from Josephson, M. (1993). *Making Ethical Decisions*. Marina del Rey, CA: The Josephson Institute of Ethics

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<p><b>CITIZENSHIP &amp; PHILANTHROPY</b></p>	<p><b>1. Philanthropy</b></p> <p><b>Philosophy of Volunteerism:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility for the perpetual development of a personal, coherent philosophy of volunteerism as a foundation for working with others in developing volunteer programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the history, the goals, the ethical implications and the basic philosophical and practical principles of volunteerism</li> <li>• communicate that philosophy with others involved in volunteer programs</li> <li>• develop credible volunteer programs and accept responsibility for the appropriate integration of volunteers</li> <li>• provide a rationale for volunteerism to the community, staff, recipients of service, and volunteers</li> <li>• understand the role of volunteerism in relation to social, political and economic conditions in the community</li> <li>• be aware of the relationship of volunteer initiatives to the social issues in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have developed a philosophical perspective on volunteerism that reflects sound practice, history, diversity, and human needs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I am aware of how volunteerism is understood by people coming from other cultures.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I know that I can answer difficult questions about the role of volunteerism in my agency, community and culture.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I regularly discuss my beliefs about philanthropy and volunteerism with my colleagues.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My volunteer program is viewed positively by others internal and external to my organization.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
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2. Citizenship

**Social Responsibility:** The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to help create a social climate through which human needs can be met and human values enhanced.

- demonstrate a sensitivity to the influence that the organization has upon the social conditions of the community
- contribute to creative and responsible social development and change

- I am aware of the trends and issues, emergent and existing, in my community, my service area, and my profession.
- I work with a range of diversity including genders, abilities, ages, cultures, sexual orientations, family types, religions.
- I write letters or talk to persons developing legislation, policy, or plans that affect volunteerism.
- I campaign for people with a proactive social agenda.
- I would be willing to stand up as an advocate for volunteerism and positive social change.

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<b>RESPECT</b>			
<b>1. Autonomy</b>	<b>Self Determination:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to promote the involvement of persons in decisions which directly affect them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide opportunities for volunteers to express concerns, ask questions, make recommendations, and be involved in planning and policy making</li> <li>• provide opportunities for paid staff in volunteer programs to contribute to and be involved in decision affecting them directly</li> <li>• provide support systems which ensure volunteers a meaningful and appropriate assignment, and which also ensure appropriate recognition, reassignment, promotion or termination</li> <li>• develop a volunteer program which promotes self-determination and self-help</li> <li>• promote the welfare and interests of the recipients, the organization members, the volunteers and the organization and its staff</li> <li>• examine with care any proposed research to ensure that the integrity of individuals is not violated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have a safe communication vehicle for volunteers to express their concerns and questions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I involve volunteers in program design and evaluation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I involve program staff in program design and evaluation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I work with the staff of the organization to ensure that the working relationship between staff and volunteers is positive.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I provide learning opportunities that are sensitive to adult learning principles and styles.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have written guidelines for surveys, questionnaires and focus group sessions.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide supervision for volunteers in such a way as to respect their personal integrity and to build on their strengths, offer advice, or assistance where indicated</li> <li>• take all proper precautions for the welfare of volunteers including informing them of possible physical or emotional hazards</li> <li>• provide written statements of policies and procedures to ensure fair treatment of all volunteers associated with the organization</li> <li>• provide volunteers with the information necessary for them to carry out their responsibilities and keep them informed of changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I am aware of and share information on the changing needs of recipients, volunteers and staff.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I know how to help people help themselves and resist taking control in those situations for reasons of expediency.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have created and distribute volunteer policy guidelines to volunteers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I update volunteer policies with volunteer and staff input.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
	<p><b>Mutuality:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to promote understanding and the actualization of mutual benefits inherent in any act of volunteer service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop volunteer placements which will promote opportunities for mutual benefit</li> <li>• help volunteers and recipients recognize the mutual benefits of the shared experience</li> <li>• encourage volunteer/recipient relationships which recognize the contribution of each to the other</li> <li>• assist the volunteer to define personal goals of volunteering and to understand the role of the recipient in the achievement of those goals</li> <li>• assist all paid staff and other persons related to the volunteer program to recognize that mutuality enhances the dignity of all participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have considered and developed volunteer opportunities that are flexible and allow for the volunteers to meet their personal needs while providing service.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have developed ways in which all stakeholders in my organization can share perspectives and insights on volunteerism, service delivery, and community issues.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I provide opportunities for the volunteers to achieve their personal goals while also meeting the needs of the organization.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I provide opportunities for skill sharing between volunteers in either a buddy system or mentor relationships.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I work with staff and volunteers to discuss opportunities of mutual interest and benefit.</li> </ul>
<p>2. <b>Courtesy, Civility, Decency</b></p>	<p><b>Human Dignity:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility for development of volunteer programs and initiatives that respect and enhance the human dignity of all persons related to it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• negotiate an agreement with each volunteer that encompasses the goals and policies of the organization and the goals of the volunteer, and which clearly defines the expectations of the volunteer and the organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I am clear about what is public and what is private information.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have created processes that protect the confidentiality of volunteers and clients.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involve recipients of the volunteer service in determining what that service will be, and in developing guidelines for its operation and evaluation of its accomplishments</li> <li>• establish methods by which experience and learnings can be incorporated into plans and decisions of the organization</li> <li>• administer a volunteer program that promotes individual integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have established guidelines for surveys and questionnaires.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Information on volunteers is stored in a secure place and where appropriate, stamped as "confidential".</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have outlined all workplace hazards to volunteers and they understand how to respond in a crisis situation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have trained volunteers in all areas of the tasks they do and respond to their needs as they emerge.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have given copies of our organizations' policies to each volunteer and have reviewed them in person with each volunteer.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I strive diligently to provide the perfect match between the volunteer and the task that needs to be done.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Privacy:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to respect the privacy of individuals and safeguard information received as confidential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make it clear what information must be kept confidential</li> <li>• keep records which are accurate, contain only necessary information, and which respect the privacy of the volunteer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have clearly indicated what information is to be kept confidential by volunteers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have developed and circulated a confidentiality policy.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<p><b>3. Understanding and Acceptance</b></p>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> The Volunteer Administrator will work to understand and treat with respect individuals from a diversity of backgrounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide appropriate and accurate information to the appropriate persons and protect records and information from unauthorized access</li> <li>• develop a volunteer program which respects the right of the recipients of service and volunteers to privacy</li> <li>• make certain of the anonymity of any anecdotes, case histories or illustrations used in speeches or in print if so requested by the person in question</li> <li>• refrain from discussion of volunteers or their problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have stamped "confidential" on all sensitive material.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I ensure that confidential records are stored securely.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I get written permission from people whenever I want to quote them, print their picture, or use their name in public communications.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I review records regularly to ensure that all information is up to date and accurate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I know the limits to which I can keep information confidential before I must tell an immediate supervisor.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have received and offer diversity training to volunteers and staff.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruit individuals from diverse backgrounds including, but not limited to: race, culture, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, social status, education, ability, marital status, family type</li> <li>• adhere to all local, state/ provincial, and federal legislation regarding inclusion and reasonable accommodations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I know how to communicate appropriately with people from diverse backgrounds.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed my volunteer program for potential forms of systemic discrimination.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I place recruitment ads in minority newspapers or newsletters.</li> </ul>

**CORE ETHICAL VALUE**

**ETHICAL PRINCIPLE**

**POSSIBLE ACTIONS**

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

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- I meet with consumers from diverse communities to talk about improving accessibility of my volunteer program.
- My volunteer program is representative of the diversity in the community.
- I am knowledgeable of and familiar with all local, state/provincial, and federal legislation regarding personnel practices and cultural diversity.

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
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**RESPONSIBILITY**

**1. Accountability**

**Staff Relationships:** The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to develop a volunteer program that will enhance and extend the work of the organization's paid staff.

- play a positive role in a paid staff support system, keeping in mind the interests of the volunteers, the recipients of the services, and the agency or the organization
- develop advancement opportunities for volunteers which do not conflict with or eliminate paid staff roles
- ensure that paid staff understand the value of volunteer participation as it affects them and that their responsibilities with respect to volunteers are clearly defined
- provide staff members with a fair interpretation of the community perspective regarding the concerns of the organization

- I have included volunteers in the development of organizational and departmental goals and objectives.
- I have developed guidelines for determining the requirements of a volunteer position.
- I have identified and distributed a list of all volunteer positions.
- I have a process for creating new volunteer positions.
- I have developed a "volunteer development program" that clearly illustrates all opportunities for volunteer growth, development and advancement, and shared it with staff and volunteers.
- I provide training to all paid staff supervisors in "volunteer-staff working relations" and provide one-on-one volunteer management support to paid staff as necessary.

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
2. Pursuit of Excellence	<p><b>Professional Responsibility:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to contribute to the credibility of the profession in the eyes of those it serves.</p> <p><b>Diligence:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to be reliable, careful, prepared and well informed.</p> <p><b>Doing One's Best:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts responsibility to pursue excellence even when resources are limited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain high standards of professional competence</li> <li>• act with integrity and objectivity in the professional role</li> <li>• work within the accepted structure and procedures of the organization, or work in open and constructive ways to bring about change</li> <li>• provide professional consultation with integrity and request or accept consultation appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I demonstrate pride and integrity when representing the organization and strive to instill the same in other staff.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I work through appropriate organizational channels when introducing, promoting or soliciting support for volunteer involvement or issues.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I consistently solicit feedback from volunteers and paid staff regarding the level of satisfaction with volunteer placements.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I participate in organizational customer satisfaction surveys.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I participate professional development activities such as attending the ICVA each year, maintain personal performance standards in my current position and take every opportunity to grow as an individual and as a professional.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I view Volunteer Administration as a profession and act as a professional in working with other managers/administrators of volunteers.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
	<p><b>Perseverance:</b> The Volunteer Administrator will seek to overcome obstacles to excellence.</p> <p><b>Continuous Improvement:</b> The Volunteer Administrator commits to improving their knowledge, skills, and judgments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conduct continuous and realistic evaluation of programs, involving recipients of service, volunteers, paid staff, organization administration and/or representatives of the community</li> <li>• work diligently to enhance personal professional growth</li> <li>• contribute to the expanding body of knowledge on volunteerism</li> <li>• refrain from making personal statements which are contrary to those of the organization, the interests of volunteers, or the professional association</li> <li>• make a clear distinction between statements and actions which are personal and those which are representative of the organization, the volunteers, or the professional association</li> <li>• assure the validity of information used in publication, news releases or other information devices before becoming responsible for its release</li> <li>• share responsibility for the effective functioning and development of the professional association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I develop and maintain standard operating procedures for the recruitment and retention of volunteers within the organization that are supportive of the organizational mission, goals, and objectives.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I continue to supplement both my educational and experiential growth at every opportunity.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I participate as a trainer/facilitator in the area of volunteer administration when opportunities arise.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I submit articles to newsletters, magazines, etc. regarding volunteer management practices and experiences.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<p><b>3. Self-Restraint</b></p>	<p><b>Self-disclosure &amp; self-restraint:</b>                      The Volunteer Administrator commits to reflective decision making with the intent of advancing the long term greater good.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop responsible and effective roles for administrative and service volunteers while promoting understanding of the partnership and respect of the distinct roles of paid staff and volunteers</li> <li>• refrain from any action which takes advantage of information or situations arising from professional contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I work in collaboration with volunteers and paid staff in determining the appropriateness of volunteer placements and positions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I work in collaboration with volunteers and paid staff in developing position descriptions and writing personnel performance standards to assure the distinction between paid jobs and volunteer positions/roles.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I communicate clearly and specifically with all involved parties and verify the accuracy of information before it is distributed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I am active in the professional association, taking on a leadership role when appropriate.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<b>CARING</b>	<p><b>Compassion and Generosity:</b> A Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility to be kind, compassionate and generous in all actions so as to minimize the harm done to others in the performance of one's duties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maximize the benefits and minimize the harm to others</li> <li>• to the extent that it is compatible with one's duties, extend compassion to staff, volunteers, and recipients of service</li> <li>• encourage innovation and creativity in working with staff, volunteers and recipients of service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ I work diligently to assure that all volunteer recruitment and placements are respectful of each individual's skills and readiness for his/her volunteer role in order to maintain the highest level of integrity.</li> <li>☐ I show genuine warmth and caring towards staff and volunteers.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
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**JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS**

**1. Procedural Fairness**

**Procedural Fairness:** The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility to have an open and impartial process for collecting and evaluating information critical for making decisions.

- exercise authenticity with open mindedness and express a willingness to seek out and consider relevant information from a range of perspectives
- review and ensure the fairness and impartiality of recruitment, supervision and recognition processes

- I involve paid staff and volunteers in gathering information pertinent to the issues at hand.
- I continually review and update all recruitment plans, recognition plans, and guidelines for the supervision of volunteers to assure fairness and impartiality. I know how to listen to the concerns and suggestions of staff and volunteers.

**2. Impartiality**

**Impartiality:** The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility for having impartial and objective standards that avoid discriminatory or prejudicial behaviors.

- review and establish impartial standards for the recruitment, supervision, and recognition of volunteers
- evaluate and set performance standards for volunteers within the organization

- I have developed and utilize standards of performance that are directly related to the tasks to be done.
- I have reviewed performance standards and related policies to ensure that they are in no way discriminatory or prejudicial.
- I have developed a culturally diverse recruitment plan that targets particular markets for particular volunteer positions or tasks and that is free of barriers to participation.

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
3. Equity	<p><b>Equity:</b> The Volunteer Administrator assumes the responsibility to treat all individuals with whom s/he works equitably.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate for and correct inequities in personnel practices, or the practices of the organization</li> <li>• do not take advantage of the ignorance or mistakes of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ I have developed consistent standards for the recognition of volunteers in my organization.</li> <li>☐ I have developed and distributed standard operating procedures for the utilization of volunteers that consistently indicate supervision responsibilities and expectations.</li> <li>☐ I continually work with staff to ensure the consistent application of standard operating procedures for utilizing volunteers.</li> <li>☐ I regularly review and revise as necessary: volunteer personnel policies, standard operating procedures and the grievance process to assure consistency and appropriateness for the organization and continually monitor for adherence by staff.</li> <li>☐ I support and promote, throughout the organization, the positive nondiscriminatory role staff have in helping volunteers grow in competency and experience.</li> <li>☐ I look for opportunities to provide constructive feedback for the betterment of the organization.</li> </ul>

**CORE ETHICAL VALUE**

**ETHICAL PRINCIPLE**

**POSSIBLE ACTIONS**

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

**TRUSTWORTHINESS**

**1. Honesty**

**Truthfulness:** The Volunteer Administrator is committed to the truth and assuring that all interactions with volunteers and other paid staff are founded on the premise of open and honest interaction.

**Sincerity/Non-deception:** The Volunteer Administrator will treat all volunteers with sincerity and never operates in a deceptive manner, and will continually promote that principle throughout their organization.

**Candor:** The Volunteer Administrator is committed to fairness and forthrightness.

- present only substantiated factual information when discussing an issue unless otherwise distinguished as a personal opinion
- interact sincerely with all paid staff and volunteers, sharing genuine information and feelings
- demonstrate a sensitivity to circumstances and situations and at the same time behave in an open and honest manner

- I support and promote an atmosphere of teamwork in the pursuit of common goals, emphasizing the use of positive performance results from constructive feedback.
- In dealing with issues, I clearly differentiate between my own personal opinion/philosophy and established fact.
- I present to new and potential volunteers specific information regarding their responsibilities, expectations, and the skills needed, and openly discuss their individual skills to determine suitability for the volunteer position.
- At no time do I knowingly place a volunteer in an inappropriate setting or position.
- I work with volunteers and paid staff in such a manner as to assure that all interaction is sincere and honest.

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<p><b>2. Integrity</b></p>	<p><b>Principled:</b> The Volunteer Administrator understands and works to promote the core ethical values.</p> <p><b>Moral Courage:</b> The Volunteer Administrator will base his/her actions on core ethical values and will not compromise those values for convenience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one's behavior in the world derives from an embodiment of the core ethical values</li> <li>• make sure that all staff and volunteers understand the need for and the expectation that each individual exhibit a high degree of integrity in his/her work</li> <li>• provide a rationale to staff and volunteers for acting with integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I support and promote fairness in all situations with paid staff and volunteers and emulate appropriate behavior.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I assure that I have all the necessary and available information and include input from staff and volunteers before making decisions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I stand firm on the values and principles related to sound volunteer management.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have established an understanding of the core ethical values and share them with others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I model integrity and support its growth in those around me.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I regularly have conversations about integrity and values with volunteers and staff.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> My volunteer program is viewed positively by others internal and external to my organization.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
<p><b>3. Promise-Keeping</b></p>	<p><b>Fair Interpretation of Contracts:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to assure that all mutual contracts or agreements are clearly understood and agreed upon.</p> <p><b>Reasonability of Commitments:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to be reasonable, realistic and professional in determining the appropriateness of expectations or requests.</p> <p><b>Clarity of Commitments:</b> The Volunteer Administrator accepts the responsibility to assure clear communication regarding commitments made on behalf of the organization, staff, or volunteers.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding Confidential Information:</b> The Volunteer Administrator understands the importance of confidentiality and works to protect confidential information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarify all expectations of the parties involved in contracts or agreements</li> <li>• assess and determine the ability to meet expectations and commitments related to the organization's volunteer program</li> <li>• employ a system to ensure that all involved parties are clear about the commitments they are making</li> <li>• staff and volunteers have signed confidentiality statements aimed at protecting the organization, its staff, volunteers, and clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I provide draft documentation prior to discussions or meetings regarding mutual agreements and follow up with written documentation afterwards to ensure clear and mutual understanding.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I develop guidelines and standards for allowing sufficient time to assess volunteer requirements and commitments.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I make certain that I clearly communicate the recruitment process and procedures to staff to keep expectations and commitments reasonable and appropriate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have developed a process for receiving requests for volunteers and tracking recruitment to ensure that staff and volunteer commitments and expectations are reasonable and appropriate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I have signed confidentiality statements from all staff and volunteers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal and private information is stored in a secure place in my office.</li> </ul>

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
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- ☐ I have a process for maintaining the anonymity of people responding to surveys.
- ☐ I know how to protect vulnerable individuals who disclose information that could negatively impact them if disclosed.
- ☐ The information I collect and have in my files is necessary to the volunteer program.
- ☐ I have a safe and confidential process for supporting persons with hidden disabilities including persons with HIV/AIDS, who may not want to make such information public, while still providing a safe workplace for staff and volunteers.

CORE ETHICAL VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
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**4. Loyalty**

**Limitations to Loyalty:**  
 The Volunteer Administrator understands the limits to his/her loyalty to his/her volunteers, clients and organization.

**Prioritizing Loyalties:** The Volunteer Administrator recognizes that they have loyalties to the organization, its staff, volunteers, and to personal relationships and understands how to prioritize those loyalties.

- clarify limits and boundaries to personal, professional, and community relationships
- clear statements of expectations and possible conflicts of loyalty exist and are reviewed periodically

- I know when I need to make hers aware of conflicting loyalties.
- I have determined clear boundaries for working with staff, board, volunteers, and any personal relationships that could evolve.
- I know how to determine which loyalties take precedence by considering the greater long-term good.

**5. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest**

**Avoiding Conflicts of Interest:**  
 The Volunteer Administrator is responsible for understanding what a conflict of interest is and knows how to address them appropriately.

- write and distribute a conflict of interest guideline or policy to help staff and volunteers understand what conflicts of interest are and how to avoid them
- declare all possible conflicts of interest before accepting a staff member or volunteer in any position
- be clear and forthright about relationships, personal and professional, which may affect you, your volunteers, staff, and the organization

- Volunteers serving on my Board of Directors clearly understand and have declared possible conflicts of interest.
- I am aware of my fiduciary responsibilities to the organization and proactively avoid possible conflicts of interest.
- I have a policy or procedure for dealing with gifts (monetary or material) which may be given to me, my volunteers, and fellow staff.

## ETHICAL DECISION MAKING FLOW CHART

1. State the problem or dilemma.
  - who are the stakeholders?
  - what core ethical values from the AVA Professional Ethics document are involved?
  - what ethical principles for the AVA Professional Ethics document are involved?
2. Restate the problem in terms of what must be decided.
  - will the decision conflict with any core ethical value or ethical principle?
    - which ethical value or principle is in conflict?
    - what is the conflict?
3. What other kinds of solutions might exist to the problem or dilemma?
4. Decide which action to take - take the action which yields the greater long term benefit.
  - state your decision using a core ethical value or principle for the AVA Professional Ethics document.
5. Evaluate your decision from these three perspectives:
  - "Golden Rule" - is the decision treating others as you would wish to be treated?
  - Publicity- would you be comfortable with your reasoning and decision if it were to appear on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper?
  - Children in the room - would you be comfortable answering children's questions about your action? Are you practicing what you preach?<sup>2</sup>
6. Implement your decision.
7. Monitor and modify the decision as necessary.

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2 These questions are from Josephson, M. (1993). *Making Ethical Decisions*. Marina del Rey, CA: The Josephson Institute of Ethics



### STEP 3

- Using the restated problem in Step 2, work through the following table. Work from left to right, beginning with the core ethical values, and explore possible actions that you could take to solve the problem. Document any changes to your program that may be needed.

CORE ETHICAL VALUES INVOLVED	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE INVOLVED	POSSIBLE ACTIONS YOU COULD TAKE	LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES OF ACTION (both positive and negative)	LIST PROGRAM CHANGES THAT MIGHT BE NEEDED

### STEP 4

- Considering the work in Step 3, write the ethical decision you will make which will yield the greatest long term benefit: