

GLOSSARY OF VOLUNTEERING TERMS

Accountability

Responsibility to report on administrative impact of donated time, resources and effort upon consumers, organizations, programs, donors, sponsors, volunteers and general public. Lines of usually run from volunteer to volunteer, and from paid staff to paid executive with partnerships as the horizontal relationships involved. If a person is performing more than one function, there may be more than one line to those persons administratively responsible, but ideally not more than one line of accountability for each function.

ACTION

Federal agency with volunteer programs designed to assist efforts of state and local governments, communities and institutions in helping the poor overcome the handicaps of poverty. Established by Public Law 93-113, Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

Foster Grand Parent

An older American Volunteer Program with stipends to individuals for 20 hours of work per week, usually in children's institutions or homes.

National Student Volunteer Program

Technical Assistance for high school and college volunteer program.
Publishes Synergist.

Peace Corps

Provides trained manpower to developing countries to help meet their needs and to help promote mutual understanding, serving for 2 years. Provides a monthly allowance for living expenses, medical, educational needs and incidentals plus a reentry payment on completion of service.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program

An Older American Volunteer Program in which money is supplied for expense reimbursement but no stipend. A paid program director relates to various volunteer stations.

Senior Companion Program

Provides meaningful opportunities to low-income persons over 60 to offer supportive person-to person services to adults with special needs in health, education, welfare in their own homes, nursing homes and other institutions. Provides the volunteers with meals, transportation and related expenses.

University Year for ACTION

A one year full time student community assignment with college credit and a stipend granted.

VISTA: Volunteers in Service to America

Enables persons from all walks of life and all age groups to participate full time, for 1 to 2 years, in solving local social

and economic problems particularly related to poverty. Provides living and travel expenses to the "volunteer" plus a stipend of \$50 per month payable upon completion of the period of service.

Advocacy

Defending the interests and interpreting the point of view of persons in need.

Class Advocacy

Speaking on behalf of a kind of person or victim of needs to express their viewpoint and insure provision to meet their need, and protect their rights.

Assignment

Preferred term for placement of volunteers established by contract with agency staff and persons being served. Often to a person in need, rather than special duties or times, when volunteer is experienced enough.

Association

A membership organization of people having common interests, purposes, etc. Voluntary associations usually formed around a human need may be sources for volunteers. Such group identity has proved a factor in retention.

Auxiliary

Term particularly in health field for the group of administrative volunteers responsible for interpretation and fund raising for the hospital or facility. Many do not regard themselves as "volunteers" although they are giving their time.

Bridging

A volunteer assigned to a person before and during transition between services or agencies. May mean the only continuity the individual has during a difficult period. Sometimes involves interpretation or ombudsmanship.

Caretaking

Favorite assignments for volunteers include escort services, feeding, excursions, child care.

Citizen

A resident in or member of a community or institution, one that is entitled to the civil rights and privileges of a free man.

Citizen Participation

Derived from OEO legislation which mandated 1/3 consumer constituency in anti-poverty agencies to guarantee program accuracy for target populations. Consumers of services or parents are often volunteers when involved in service delivery or program development and policy decision-making. Originally, "maximum feasible participation of the poor."

Client

A person who engages or utilizes the professional advice or services of another person, social agency or public institution, usually under a formal or informal contract.

Consumer

One that consumes; one that utilizes economic goods or services. Since the Equal Opportunity Act, consumer has come to mean recipient of services or beneficiary (as relative, etc.) labeled according to the service as client, patient, pupil, inmate, resident, etc. Since labels are often offensive, "consumer" is a more neutral way of identifying a person as a member of the planned target group for services, but the best identity is the person's name.

Community Representative

A citizen participating as a layman in decision-making groups, sometimes as an active or potential consumer, sometimes with a constituency to whom reports are made. Brings customs, traditions, culture and local history perspective to community leadership groups. Especially important in New Federalism programs as General Revenue Sharing or Title XX but danger of tokenism.

Corpsman

A volunteer role in Massachusetts and Maryland which is stipended, limited to persons below poverty level working in group projects or the state's Service Corps under Community Services Administration.

Corrections

Popular field of volunteer activity, heavily supported by LEAA especially under Juvenile Justice Act 1974, ranging from prevention and diversion, probation, prison, parole, through rehabilitation. HEW primarily responsible for first and last stages.

Direct Services

Work involving direct contact with the consumer, usually a one to one relationship, or triads of consumer, provider and volunteer assistant.

Donor Groups

Organizations who contribute financial support to voluntary agency services or volunteer expenses in governmental services. United Way raises 11% of philanthropic \$. Foundations have a council - each speaks for its constituent members.

Education

As a field of human services attracting volunteers ranges from Head Start, K-12 to adult programs. Volunteering for field experience is growing among high school and college students in community organization placements. Public education in fields such as health, citizenship, consumer affairs, leadership development is a popular volunteer activity.

Evaluation

Assessing in terms of program goals the effect of volunteering on the persons being helped, doing the helping, agency capacities and community. Regularity assures plan adjustments, mobility for volunteers and staff, updating training needs, planning recognition appropriate to individuals, reporting to publics.

Freedom

The quality or state of not being coerced or constrained by fate, necessity or circumstances in one's choices or actions; freedom of choice is a basic principle of volunteering, for all persons involved, with appropriate responsibilities.

Gratuitous

Given freely or without recompense; not involving a return benefit compensation or consideration. Voluntary service is "gratuitous service" in an Attorney General's opinion because the donors receive intangible benefits, not payment for services rendered.

Health

As field of human services attracting volunteers, assignments range from prevention, crisis intervention and treatment through rehabilitation, in caretaking, special services, advocacy, fund raising, community health maintenance planning etc.

Indian Tribal Council

The official Native American organization administering the government of an Indian reservation.

Indian Tribe

Any Indian tribe, band nation or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native region, village or group as defined in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat 688), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the U.S. to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Matching

The purpose of counseling volunteers is to match their skills and interests to priority assignments; ideal to match needs of volunteer to needs of consumer. Also used in context of local contribution to costs of programs, sometimes with estimated value of volunteer hours as in-kind "soft match" as contrasted with "hard match": cold cash. Head Start requires a soft match, Title XX forbids one.

Myth

A belief which determines behavior whether or not it is true.

Ombudsman

Spokesman on behalf of a person(client) needing services.

Organization

A body of persons identified as a group for some specific purpose as a club, union, society, or governmental unit.

Orientation

Introduction to an unfamiliar situation; guidance into experience or activity of a new kind. For volunteers often given with new staff by experienced volunteers and paid staff.

Pay

Compensation in return for goods or services. Volunteers are not paid, but may have out of pocket expenses reimbursed, meals furnished when on duty, uniforms, day care for dependents etc. as needed. The Harris amendments (1967) to Social Security Act name for volunteers being reimbursed by such provisions is "partially paid volunteers". Title XX deleted that phrase from all except Title V and XIX, and programs on Puerto Rico, Guam and Virgin Islands.

Per diem -Flat daily allowance or fee for out of pocket expenses.

Profession

A calling requiring specialized knowledge, skills and methods, high standards of achievement and conduct, commitment to continued study and to a kind of work which has for its prime purpose the rendering of a special service to individuals or groups.

Professional

One who belongs to one of the learned professions or is in an occupation requiring a high level of training and proficiency.

Professional Work

Work which requires expertise and unique decision-making, high levels of understanding and skills.

Professional Volunteer

To Ellen Straus, national expert, this designates any responsible, accountable, reliable volunteer.

For HEW purposes, this should designate a credentialed member of one of the helping professions giving time and high level skills as a volunteer.

Program

An established plan of procedure and activities, sometimes used to encompass all organizational activities, sometimes a particular activity with special constituents.

Project

An organized activity to carry out program goals.

Providers of Services

The helping persons who are usually paid for full time availability to give direct services of a particular nature or skill. Trend is toward increasing reliance on qualified volunteers as part of a service team on a part time basis.

Records

Volunteers need individual records for documenting their experience for educational and paid work opportunities. Can keep their own and have verified by volunteer office records periodically. Should include skill bank and opportunity bank for matching; for proving cost effectiveness, stewardship of donations etc. Some programs can use volunteer services as local in-kind matching component for federal or other outside funding sources who require accurate records.

Reports

Volunteer activities are significant to executives, volunteers themselves, membership groups which supply volunteers, sponsors, public relations efforts, staff evaluation etc., and reports should be tailored to each special audience.

Social Sustenance

Supportive relationship of a volunteer to a person in need, as friendly visitor, telephone companion, Big Brother, adopt-a-patient, widow to widow, etc.

Special Education

Education now required for all children, means extra help, or varied pace and level for those with learning or mobility disabilities. One to one volunteers facilitate the teaching/learning.

Special Services

Volunteers with special resources or skills who serve many persons doing their thing as, transportation, music art, athletics, crafts, library services, teaching skills etc. May not be assigned long term 1 to 1.

Staff Assistant

A volunteer assignment as teacher aide, case aide, office helper, etc. with straight staff accountability lines to paid personnel.

Stipend

A fixed sum of money, typically modest in amount, that is paid periodically in compensation or to enable persons to give services.

Supervision

For volunteers in line-staff assignments, accountability and guidance handled by an experienced volunteer or paid staff member in groups, or individually; means a person to turn to, ultimately a partner, rather than directive authority.

Trainer

One who educates or teaches in habits of thought or action or skills: developer of knowledge, skill and constructive attitudes in learners.

Training

Person centered teaching, or discipline which develops skills, knowledge and understanding focused on work requirements. Volunteer training involves learners in curriculum development and active learning experiences, and doubles the choice element: for work, plus for learning to do it better.

Transitional Volunteer

Term used in mental health for recovered patients to become work oriented through volunteer assignments.

Volunteer

Person who freely contracts for responsibility without compensation for service or administrative responsibilities with enabling reimbursement of expenses involved as needed. In agriculture, a volunteer "grows" spontaneously without direct human control or supervision.

Welfare

From 1967-1974 the 1967 (Harris Amendments to the Social Security Act) mandated "use and training of subprofessionals and in paid or partially paid volunteers" in public assistance and child welfare. Amended 1974 to make optional in these fields, but still mandated in Title V Child Welfare and Services to Crippled Children and Title XIX Medical Assistance. (And for all Titles in Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands.) In some states the emphasis is on welfare as used in preamble to Constitution. Title XX requires only a "structure through which public and private agencies and volunteers will be utilized in the provision of services," as part of the state plan.