

OAVA

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

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POSITION STATEMENT AND STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEER/UNION RELATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

In 1987, the Ontario Association for Volunteer Administration (O.A.V.A.) became the coordinating body for a Task Force on Union and Volunteer issues and concerns. Members of this Task Force were representative of the Ontario Association of Volunteer Bureaux/Centres (O.A.V.B./C.), The Ontario Association of Directors of Healthcare Volunteer Services (O.A.D.H.V.S.), the Hospital Auxiliaries Association of Ontario (H.A.A.O.), and the Ontario Association for Volunteer Administration (O.A.V.A.).

Such concerns as the rights of volunteers, the role of volunteers in the workplace and the desire for an effective, clear understanding between unions and volunteer services were discussed. The underlying agreement in all discussions was that volunteer participation, in any role, should be one of enhancement.

As the result of many meetings, the attached position statement and standards was developed and ratified by all four participating organizations. Also included is a bibliography which we would encourage you to explore because of the complexity of these issues.

We are pleased to offer this package to you with the hope that it will prove to be a useful tool for facilitating communication between management, union and volunteers.

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TASK FORCE ON VOLUNTEER/UNION RELATIONS

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION
ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEER BUREAUX/CENTRES
HOSPITAL AUXILIARIES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO
ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF DIRECTORS IN HEALTH CARE VOLUNTEER SERVICES

POSITION STATEMENT

- WHEREAS Citizens have the right to volunteer and thereby to contribute to society and to receive the rewards from voluntary action;
- WHEREAS Volunteerism has always been an integral part of this society and continues to be critical to the quality of life of every Canadian;
- WHEREAS The fundamental intent of volunteerism has been to provide services which would otherwise not be provided;
- WHEREAS Volunteerism has pioneered the way over many decades for paid positions;
- WHEREAS Volunteers on occasion have been positioned so as to replace paid staff and/or limit expansion in paid employment;
- WHEREAS There are many and varied appropriate placements for volunteers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Agencies/institutions must insure that policies are in place regarding appropriate roles for volunteers:

- There should be consultation and open communication between administration, managers of volunteer services, union representatives and volunteers regarding volunteer resources;
- Volunteers should not replace or displace paid staff;
- The role of volunteers during a strike should be mutually agreed on by administration, unions and managers of volunteer services. However, volunteers must retain the right to make a personal decision regarding their service during a strike.

Leaders in the volunteer movement should initiate communication with labour and management;

Leaders in the labour and volunteer movements should explore avenues for joint lobbying for adequate support to the human service system.

The Ontario Association for Volunteer Administration (OAVA), Ontario Association for Volunteer Bureaux/Centres (OAVB/C), Hospital Auxiliaries Association of Ontario (HAAO) and Ontario Association of Directors in Health Care Volunteer Services (OADHVS) should take every opportunity to educate managers of volunteer services, management, labour and funders regarding the appropriate use of volunteer resources.

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STANDARDS

Volunteers should be informed during orientation of the policy regarding volunteers and paid staff relationships.

It is recommended that the volunteer department be represented at staff orientation to interpret the role of volunteers.

Clear volunteer service (job) descriptions should be developed and shared with staff.

Changes in volunteer services should be preceded by full consultation with representatives of management, labour and volunteer services.

Volunteers should not fill paid staff positions or in any way threaten the livelihood of paid staff.

Volunteers should not be paid. However, out of pocket expenses for items such as meals, transportation and child care should be reimbursed wherever possible.

A policy regarding the role of volunteers during industrial conflict must be in place and this policy should be acceptable and fully explained to paid staff and their bargaining agent. If the policy allows for volunteers to be active during a strike, volunteers should do no more than they would in a normal situation; volunteers must have the right to choose not to work; and they should have full labour approval if they are required to cross a picket line in order to complete their duties.

While formal procedures for resolution of volunteer/staff problems must be in place, it is recommended that informal and/or cooperative negotiations be tried before formal grievances are filed.

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