VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

By

CHENNAI VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

Chennai Volunteers is a social initiative that aims to foster civic engagement and ensure that non-profits can engage with volunteers in a sustainable and meaningful way. We aim to promote the values of volunteering, while building and reinforcing volunteer networks across the city. Through our dynamic portal, www.chennaivolunteers.org volunteers find various opportunities to give back, members can find local/international partners and NGOs can share resources and exchange best practices, 24x7.

The Volunteer Handbook

The handbook outlines CV's protocol governing the relationship between CV and the volunteers. It sets out what CV and volunteers can expect from each other and explains how we work together in a three-way partnership, with our partner NGOs. The handbook is designed to guide you through your volunteering journey from the time you step into an NGO as a volunteer until after your return home, and to act as a reference. Each section provides information on CV procedures along with your rights and responsibilities. The pages are intended for use by long-term and short-term volunteers.

This volunteer handbook is based on the following principles:

- The signing-up process for volunteers does not discriminate on the basis of gender, caste, religion, etc. and is equally welcoming to all prospective volunteers
- All volunteers must follow these guidelines & best practices and ensure that we conduct ourselves in a professional manner.
- Volunteers are provided with a clear explanation of what is expected of them in a session, usually by means of a structured module.

- Volunteers are provided with all the necessary training / orientation and support to carry out their assigned role and responsibilities.

Volunteering

Volunteering is an activity, which takes place in a not-for-profit organization or as a project and is undertaken:

- To be of benefit to the community, non-profit and the volunteer
- Of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- For no financial payment
- In designated volunteer positions and part time only

How do you decide on Volunteering?

Some people know exactly what cause they wish to engage with, while for others, the choice or cause can be very daunting. Here are some tips that could help your thoughts and decision making. Asking yourself a number of questions can help narrow down the cause you would like to support. For example:

- How much time do I have or how much time can I give for volunteering?
- When or which days will I be available?
- How far am I prepared to travel and what are the possible expenses?
- What interests and experiences can I bring to my volunteering?
- Do I like working one-to-one or with groups of people?
- Do I have what it takes to work with troubled young people, the disabled or the elderly, and if not, would I like the challenge of finding out?
- Are there particular issues or causes that I would like to volunteer for?

There are literally hundreds of ways in which you can get involved. There will be a non - profit organization in every sphere of social development. You spend some time understanding the various causes, the impact of contributing to the cause and the skills required to do require volunteering activities. It will be a good idea to list

the various reasons why you would like to volunteer. This will help you in your decision-making.

Role of Chennai Volunteers:

- CV supports, facilitates and makes volunteering easy for you by:
    - Matching your skill with the volunteering requirements
    - Matching your interest with the Volunteering Opportunities
    - Adapting volunteer opportunities with time suitability
    - Creating an online platform for connecting with fellow volunteers
    - Creating opportunities for remote, skilled volunteering
- Recognizes that successful volunteer engagement incorporates the individual's motivations, aspirations and choices
- Ensures that volunteers receive appropriate orientation and support to help them deliver
- Celebrates the success and achievement of volunteers and volunteering
- Listens to the volunteers and encourages a two-way communication
- Fosters a supportive atmosphere with an aim to make volunteering fulfilling
- Encourages new areas of volunteering, based on the needs of our volunteers as well as our partnership with new nonprofits.
- Provides references, where requested, and supports them with job search skills where appropriate
- CV is not involved in monetary donations to NGOs. Such activities would be direct between the volunteer and nonprofit. CV will not be responsible for any actions beyond the mandate of the organization.

Volunteering Opportunities

Our range of volunteering opportunities caters to one-time, short term, long term and online volunteers.

1. One-time volunteering is essentially an event-based opportunity that lasts for a day. This means devoting anywhere between 2 to 8 hours of your time most often on weekends or on public holidays. It could be a medical camp in

a village, a fund-raising charity event, a day-long trek or manning a one-day stall at your office to promote a non-profit's merchandise.

2. Short-term volunteering lasts between one week to 3 months and is mostly project-based involving activities like helping an NGO with its accounts or in fund raising, designing a website, developing software for accounts for maintaining records of patients in health camps, or helping in project documentation, etc.

3. Long-term volunteering involves commitment of over 3 months, for people willing to volunteer on a regular basis. This involves, for example, working with SHG ladies, working on a heath-based community outreach program, teaching underprivileged children, yoga classes at schools, counselling and mentoring slum children.

4. Online and remote volunteering offers you the chance to volunteer from home or from your workplace. You could help in managing a website, social media, drafting proposals, writing content for an NGO's brochure or designing communication material, etc.

Volunteer Protocol

- To work within the ethos and guidelines of the NGO you visit
- To maintain and uphold the good name and reputation of your institution/ organization
- To co-operate with volunteer coordinators, NGO staff, to learn from them
- To aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in volunteering
- To be committed and punctual for all sessions
- To encourage two-way communication with fellow volunteers/ NGO staff, fostering a positive ambience
- To provide reasonable notice if you are unable to part of a scheduled session
- To adhere to confidentiality, equality and diversity, general behavior and health & safety policies of our organization, in accordance with our volunteer policy.
- Attend essential training and support sessions where necessary

- Maintain cordial relations with the members of the NGO or members you come in contact through CV. Any interaction with the members, beyond the volunteering hours or voluntary purpose would be personal and can create a breach of conduct with the NGO.
- Avoid arguments or disagreement during the volunteering session.
- Attend essential induction sessions where necessary
- Maintain a balanced relation with the members of the organization
- Avoid arguments on disagreement during the session
- Understand who you are volunteering for, their background and respect their space
- Get to know the beneficiaries and empathize with them
- Do not judge or categorize them
- Do not compare or be harsh with them, however, be firm, cordial & formal. You can be friendly but you are not a friend. There is a line of formality we all adhere to
- Do not share your mobile number, lend money or vehicles to the beneficiaries
- Do not make any promises of gifts or donations
- Do not touch, hold hands or get too close to the beneficiaries, unless the group exercise demands it
- Do not stay at the place after the session/event is over
- Do not use mobile phones during the session
- Do not take photographs of the beneficiaries unless CV asks you to

We wish you an impactful and meaningful volunteering journey