



# Volunteer Handbook



Photo Credit: Anita Brown



## Welcome

Welcome to The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC). We thank you for joining us as we provide a beautiful place to visit in the heart of Mississauga.

Every garden needs water, sunlight, and nutrients to help make it grow. For TRC to grow requires something more: the support of its volunteers. TRC is successful as a result of the special support volunteers have provided for over 25 years.

The many contributions of our volunteers are highly valued and appreciated. Volunteers sustain TRC in the design and delivery of our many programs and services. These range from education, conservation, membership, gardening and horticulture to administration, special events, and communications. Volunteers include our Board of Directors and working committees.

Our volunteers volunteer for various reasons: to support TRC and our mission, to stay active and healthy, to mentor, to learn new skills, to socialize, and to contribute to the community, amongst others. Many of these reasons intermingle.

Whatever your reason for volunteering here at Riverwood, welcome. Feel free to contact me at any time as my door is always open to our volunteers.

Douglas Markoff  
Executive Director  
The Riverwood Conservancy



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## Introduction

On behalf of the Board of Directors, welcome to volunteering at The Riverwood Conservancy.

Volunteers form an integral part of TRC and the programs it provides. As people with a passion for horticulture, the environment and our natural heritage, our volunteers bring a wide variety of skills, talents and experience which enhance the depth and breadth of our important contributions to the civic health of our city, and to the beauty and natural balance of Riverwood. It is important to the on-going vitality of TRC that our volunteers feel valued, recognized and supported, as their contributions make a significant positive difference to our programs, services, events and administration. To ensure that the volunteers have the best possible foundation, TRC has adopted the Canadian Code of Volunteer Involvement.

The Volunteer Handbook outlines the framework for this essential support. It outlines our approach to a variety of matters that affect volunteers as contributing citizens and partners in the pursuit of organizational vision and goals and as participants on various tasks, projects and committees.

The Handbook reflects our commitment to respect and honour our volunteers and to provide them with meaningful opportunities to make a positive difference. At the same time it also outlines our expectations of the volunteers.

I greatly appreciate the work of the staff who work with volunteers, and the team of dedicated volunteers who developed this Handbook and I am confident that we will all benefit from its contents and directions.

In gratitude for the service and commitment of our volunteers,

Kevin Sherwin  
Chair, The Riverwood Conservancy

# About The Riverwood Conservancy

The Riverwood Conservancy is a volunteer- and member-based charity that provides programs and services to the community in nature and environmental education, conservation, and gardening and horticulture.

The organization was founded in 1985 under the name Mississauga Garden Council. In 2009, the name was changed to The Riverwood Conservancy to more accurately reflect our mission and activities.

## **Our Vision**

A community that lives in harmony with nature.

## **Our Mission**

The Riverwood Conservancy is the charity that provides programs and direction for Riverwood - the 150-acre, urban nature preserve situated on the shores of the Credit River in Mississauga. Working together with like-minded groups and individuals, our mission is to enable people of all cultures, ages, and abilities to respectfully connect with nature and learn about the importance of protecting, conserving and restoring natural spaces for the well-being of future generations – all while experiencing the beauty of the Riverwood gardens.

## **Our Core Values**

The Riverwood Conservancy has a set of core values identified by volunteers, members and staff. These define how we will fulfill our mission. They are:

### **Respect**

We are a kind and caring organization that respects nature, the environment and all people.

### **Welcoming**

We enjoy meeting new people, hearing new ideas and sharing the beauty of Riverwood.

### **Leadership**

We are passionate in building awareness and offering opportunities for learning and discovery.

### **Participation**

We provide opportunities for growth and a path for the future through community participation.

### **Integrity**

We take our responsibilities very seriously and are transparent in our communications, interactions and intentions.

## **TRC's Partners**

TRC partners with the City of Mississauga and Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC) to manage the property called Riverwood. The Riverwood Conservancy is the “boots on the ground” organization at Riverwood, managing the gardens, providing education programs and managing the natural areas in consultation with the City and CVC.

Many other corporations, organizations and foundations support TRC through in-kind and direct donations. The complete list can be found on our website.



*Photo credit: Dan Schulze*

## About Riverwood

Volunteers should note that Riverwood is the name of the property; The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC) is the name of the organization. Riverwood (the property) is owned by Credit Valley Conservation and the City of Mississauga. TRC works with these two partners to maintain Riverwood and provide educational programs.

What is Riverwood? Riverwood is a natural area in the heart of Mississauga. It is not a botanical garden, so you will not see a lot of signs identifying plants and trees.

**Hours:** Riverwood is open from 7:00 am until 11:00 pm.

**Buildings:** Riverwood has four buildings on site: Chappell House, MacEwan Barn, MacEwan Field Station and Visual Arts Mississauga (VAM). Public washrooms are in VAM. VAM is a separate organization that provides art shows and programming.

**Trails:** Visitors are welcome to walk Riverwood's trails, which link with the Culham Trail. The City maintains the trails in spring, summer and fall, but not winter. At times, trails can be icy or washed out.

**Activities Permitted:** While the public is welcome to wander the trails and the gardens, large gatherings, barbeques, educational programs not run by TRC are not allowed. Special permits are required for group photography. Visitors are held to City by-laws which include having dogs on leash at all times, refraining from picking any plants, and refraining from skateboarding in the gardens.



*Photo Credit: Dave Taylor*

## Volunteering at TRC

TRC is a charitable organization dedicated to the care and promotion of Riverwood. With few staff, TRC relies on the expertise, time and talents of dedicated volunteers to help meet the goals of our organization.

### Who are Our Volunteers?

TRC volunteers range in age from 6 to 98, have a variety of interests and represent many different cultures. Our volunteer base consists of people who are employed full or part time, those who work at home, retirees and students. Volunteers contribute to our administration operations, committee and board, education programs, gardens and conservation initiatives. Whether volunteers give three hours or three hundred, we value all contributions to TRC.

### What Do We Expect of Our Volunteers?

- Dependability
- Appropriate skills for the volunteer position
- Commitment to TRC and the position
- Passion for environment and education

### Youth Volunteer Program

Especially during the summer, visitors to Riverwood will see youth volunteers on the property. High school students completing their 40 hour community service requirement and college or university students doing research or working to gain additional knowledge in a chosen field all make contributions to TRC.



*TRC summer volunteer removing buckthorn.*

*Photo Credit: Libby Harmsworth*

# TRC Staff

## Management



Douglas Markoff  
Executive Director



Robin Haley-Gillin  
Manager, Organizational  
Development & Volunteers



Lorraine Crow  
Manager, Philanthropy

## In the Office



Brian Packham  
Office Manager



Rasheed Clarke  
Marketing  
Coordinator



Maria DeVuono-  
Wallace  
Volunteer Coordinator



Pam Kiez  
Community  
Events Officer

## Fund Development Team



Jane De Chevery  
Comptroller



Beth Jones  
Project Development



Joelle Berube-Cheng  
Development Coordinator

## Education Team



Marissa Chase  
Teacher, Education  
Naturally



Catherine  
Wassmansdorf  
Instructor, LEADS



Dave Taylor  
Education  
Consultant/Director

## Conservation



Derek Stone  
Conservation  
Specialist

## Enabling Garden



Jane New  
Enabling Garden  
Coordinator

## TRC Programs and Affiliated Volunteer Positions

TRC continually identifies positions appropriate for (and sometimes dependent upon) volunteers. Position descriptions are created and updated throughout the year, so check the website ([www.TheRiverwoodConservancy.org](http://www.TheRiverwoodConservancy.org)) for positions available. Below are general categories of volunteer positions.

### Education Programs

- *Education Naturally* and *LEADS (Leaders in Environmental Achievements through Diversity and Skills)*: school-based programs in outdoor science education
  - Volunteers: Education Assistants, College/University Placement Students, Secondary School Co-Op Students
- *Discovery@Riverwood*: public programs on topics in nature and gardening
  - Volunteers: Riverwood Tour Guides, Discovery Program Assistant, Discovery Helpers
- Other: Education Committee member

### Gardening Programs

- Gardening at Riverwood: plant and maintain the gardens of Riverwood, including the Chappell gardens, portions of the MacEwan Terrace Gardens and front entry gardens.
  - Volunteers: Garden Leaders, Gardeners, Waterers
- Garden Tours: tours of the gardens of Riverwood led by volunteers
  - Volunteers: Garden Tour Guides, Garden Tour Guide Coordinator
- Enabling Garden: Therapeutic horticulture programs for people with disabilities
  - Volunteers: Enabling Garden Assistant
- Other: Gardens Committee member

### Conservation Programs

- General conservation: Maintain the trails, deter slope erosion by planting trees and brush control management of invasive species
  - Volunteers: Conservation Workers, Conservation Leaders, Stewardship Committee member, College/University Placement Students, Secondary School Co-Op Students
- Native Plant Propagation Program: grow wildflowers from seeds collected at Riverwood and other areas in Mississauga to re-plant in areas where invasive plants once thrived
  - Volunteers: Native Plant Committee member, Riverwood Propagators, Lead Seed Forecasters/Collectors, Plant Foster Parents, Native Plant Researchers
- Birdfeeding: Feed the birds of Riverwood year round
  - Volunteers: Birdfeeder Coordinator, Birdfeeders

## Other Areas

- **Committee Participation:** TRC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Committees made up of volunteers support TRC staff by actively planning and participating in each program. Operational committees include Education, Events, Gardening, Health and Safety, Human Resources, Stewardship and Volunteer.
- **Office Help:** TRC often needs assistance with office administration tasks, including filing, mailing, research and data entry.
- **Special Events:** TRC participates in special events year-round, promoting membership and Riverwood. Volunteers assist at these events by providing information and selling memberships or other products. The *Riverwood Garden Soirée* and *High Teas* are our biggest fundraising events.



*Photo credit: Dan Schulze*

# Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a volunteer, you have the **right** to:

- Understand what is expected of you and be provided the materials to do the work
- Know to whom you report and receive feedback on your work
- Have access to information about TRC and your volunteer position
- Receive proper training for your volunteer position
- Have access to training and skills development, where available and when appropriate
- Work in a safe environment
- Work in an environment free of discrimination, harassment and violence
- Be assured that your personal information will remain confidential
- Be valued as a member of the TRC team
- Be treated with respect by staff and other volunteers
- Be an adjunct to, not a replacement of, paid staff
- Have access to policies which affect your role as a volunteer
- Have problems or difficulties addressed in a timely fashion
- Be given appropriate recognition for your volunteer work

As a volunteer, you have the **responsibility** to:

- Be reliable and arrive on time
- Be clear about how much commitment you can offer TRC
- Attend Orientation and Training sessions
- Accept the vision and objectives of TRC
- Follow the policies outlined in this handbook
- Respect the confidentiality of the staff, organization and other volunteers
- Declare any conflict of interest
- Offer good quality service to the organization
- Report any problems or difficulties promptly
- Treat staff, other volunteers and the public with fairness and respect
- Honour your commitment to TRC
- Ensure a safe environment and observe health and safety rules
- Complete and submit a monthly timesheet to the Volunteer Coordinator detailing hours worked and duties completed

These rights and responsibilities are reflected in the Volunteer Policies in Appendix A.

# Keeping Track of Your Volunteer Hours

## **Why do we need to keep track of your hours?**

TRC's funders and partners need and like to see the value that volunteers are adding to Mississauga and Riverwood. The City of Mississauga, in particular, sees that our volunteers often provide the equivalent of many City workers.

We also keep track of placement and co-op students' hours for the same reason.

## **What constitutes a volunteer hour?**

Anytime a volunteer does something on behalf of TRC, he or she is volunteering and should record that time. All hours contributed count!

## **How do you report your hours?**

All volunteers are required to record their hours each time they volunteer. TRC captures volunteer hours in a variety of ways:

- For those who come into the office, work in the gardens, feed the birds or assist in the classroom, each volunteer has a timesheet in a binder to record hours (see example in Appendix C).
- For those assisting with a Discovery@Riverwood event or in the Enabling Garden, you will be using Signup.com to sign up for a volunteer shift. The Coordinators then provide your volunteer hours to the Volunteer Department.
- For those on committees where minutes are taken, the Volunteer Department receives the attendance, so no need to do anything more!
- For those who do research or other work outside a minuted meeting or event, you will be asked to report those hours.
- For those who volunteer for a special event, the Volunteer office has already noted you were there, so will record those hours for you.
- For conservation events, you will be asked to sign in at the event.
- Not sure how to report your hours? Ask your supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator!

## **What happens to those hours?**

TRC staff track volunteer and placement student hours on a monthly basis. The hours are used to seek additional funding and to provide information for reference or recommendation letters for volunteers.

# Health and Safety for TRC Volunteers

Health and safety are paramount for TRC staff and volunteers. General safety guidelines are provided below. Health and safety training specific to each volunteer position are covered by your volunteer training.

## General Safety Guidelines

Certain health and safety guidelines are applicable to all program areas. For volunteers working outside, whether birdfeeding, gardening, assisting with the education programs or performing conservation work, the following overall guidelines apply:

- Carry a cell phone with emergency numbers, including Corporate Security and Animal Control
- Be aware of the trail colours, names (e.g., Culham Trail) and markers which mark every one hundred meters
- Be aware of others who use the paths as well, including cyclists
- Be aware of dogs off-leash and any wildlife
- Get inside the nearest shelter when bad weather (e.g., thunderstorms, high winds) strikes
- If you do not have a first aid kit, know where the nearest kit is located
- Know where the defibrillators are located
- Be aware that the trails are not maintained in the winter and can flood in the spring
- Carry a map of Riverwood with you and know the park boundaries

In the event of an injury, first aid kits are located in the kitchen and Parker Room in the Chappell House, at MacEwan Field Station and at Visual Arts Mississauga (VAM). Defibrillators are located in the Parker Room of the Chappell House, in the back room at the MacEwan Field Station, and at VAM.

## Off-Site Events

TRC participates in special events, many off-site. Please make yourself aware of first aid kit locations, AEDs and emergency exits at the site and carry a cell phone in case of emergency. If an emergency does occur, please call 9-1-1, then contact TRC's office as soon as possible.

If an emergency occurs after hours, please either leave a message on TRC's answering machine or send an email to [Info@TheRiverwoodConservancy.org](mailto:Info@TheRiverwoodConservancy.org), describing the emergency and leaving your name and contact information.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

For some work, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is recommended or required. For gardeners and conservation workers and leaders, close-toed (but not steel-toed) shoes are required. Long pants are recommended. For those working in conservation areas, eye and ear protection may be recommended. The Riverwood Conservancy will provide eye protection, ear protections, dust masks, gloves and any other PPE deemed necessary to be safe on the job.

Volunteers are expected to provide their own insect repellent and sunscreen. For a full list of PPE, see our website.

## **Calling 9-1-1**

There could be times when emergency assistance (9-1-1) must be called. If you are with a program (e.g., Education Naturally, Enabling Garden, LEADS, etc.), the staff person is the First Responder. Please assist the First Responder however needed.

Here are the steps to take when 9-1-1 is called:

- A person, usually a volunteer, is asked to go to the corner of Riverwood Park Lane and Burnhamthorpe Road West. Their job is to flag down the emergency response vehicle that arrives to confirm where they must go.
- Someone will be asked to contact TRC's office as soon as possible after the 9-1-1 call.
- Assist in completing an Accident/Incident Report Form

## **Completing an Accident/Incident Report Form**

For any health or safety incident, an incident report must be completed; blank forms are located in TRC's administration office as well as in first aid packs. These documents are for internal use only and need to be completed within 24 hours of any incident.

These forms are completed for any incidents or "near misses" in order to help TRC determine improvements to safety procedures or to document any injuries. Completed forms should be given to your supervisor or to TRC's office. In the event a form is not available, an email with details is welcome as well. (See example in Appendix C.)

## **In the Event of a Fire...**

Both Chappell House and MacEwan have smoke detectors and sprinkler systems. If a fire should break out, do not panic. Take the following steps:

- Exit the building at the nearest door and meet at the nearest parking lot (Chappell Parking lot for Chappell House; Main parking lot for MacEwan Barn or Field Station).
- Call 9-1-1. Be as specific as possible as to which building has a fire.
- Check with other volunteers or staff to see if everyone is accounted for. Under no circumstances is anyone to go back into the building.
- For the education programs, a class attendance list will be with the teacher and a roll call will take place once the parking lot is reached.

- Familiarize yourself with exit routes from each building.

If you discover a fire on the trails or in the woods:

- Get to a safe place as soon as possible.
- Call 9-1-1 and be as specific about the location as possible, using trail colours and markers.
- Follow the guidelines under “Calling 9-1-1” above.

### **In the Event of a Lockdown...**

Riverwood is public property and, unfortunately, criminal activity could occur. As a result, TRC has a lockdown procedure in place to ensure the safety of TRC volunteers, program participants or staff. A lockdown is the restriction of movement during the time of a potentially serious violent incident that could endanger lives.

A lockdown can occur when TRC has identified a dangerous situation or when the police are aware of a situation. In either case, TRC staff will make every effort to notify volunteers and staff in the office, classroom, gardens and on the trails and advise the course of action.

### **In the Event of Site Evacuation...**

In the VERY unlikely possibility of a site evacuation, take your belongings and exit the building. In order to ensure that everyone is accounted for, please meet at the transit shelter on the northeast side of Burnhamthorpe Road unless otherwise directed by emergency personnel.

### **Health and Safety: Vitrally Important!**

The information above is not meant to alarm, but to educate. Please be familiar with the safety procedures. If you notice something out of the ordinary, please do not hesitate to tell a staff person. We'd rather be safe than sorry!

## Emergency Contact Information

Type/Who	Type of Problem	Telephone
Life-Threatening Emergencies	In URGENT need of police, ambulance or fire department	9-1-1
Non-Life-Threatening	Reporting of fire pits, dogs off leash, etc.	3-1-1
TRC Main Office	Anything that needs attention, especially if 9-1-1 is called	905-279-5878
City/Corporate Security	Incidents such as blown fuses, building alarms sounding or safety issue in a building	905-896-5040
Animal Control	Dog off-leash, wildlife acting strangely	905-896-5858 (Mon-Fri) 3-1-1 (evenings & weekends)
Visual Arts Mississauga	Anything related to Riverwood that VAM participants need to know	905-277-4313

## Riverwood Addresses

Riverwood General Address	4100 Riverwood Park Lane
Chappell House	4300 Riverwood Park Lane
MacEwan House/Field Station	4190 Riverwood Park Lane
MacEwan Barn	4150 Riverwood Park Lane
Visual Arts Mississauga	4170 Riverwood Park Lane



*Photo Credit: Dave Taylor*

*Conservation volunteers planting a native tree*

# **Appendix A**

## **Volunteer Policies**



## Policies for Volunteers of The Riverwood Conservancy

Welcome to The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC). We are pleased to welcome you as a volunteer member of our team.

TRC is a volunteer-based charity which relies heavily upon volunteers and their many and varied contributions to achieve its mission and goals. Each volunteer contribution is unique and important to the success of TRC and the delivery of its services and programs. In order to ensure that the volunteer experience is a mutually beneficial, safe and satisfactory one, TRC has established policies, procedures and expectations to help guide volunteers and to provide clarity about the environment and context within which it expects volunteers in all aspects of its services and programs to operate.

### 1.1 Equal Opportunity

TRC welcomes volunteers from diverse backgrounds and does not discriminate against individuals because of or based on the perception of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability, or any other ground protected from discrimination by the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. All volunteers will be treated equally without regard to these characteristics. Consistent with this policy, TRC strives to ensure that:

- Volunteers are recruited, placed and trained for all positions in accordance with Ontario Human Rights Code.
- All of TRC's workers are treated by others in the work place with dignity and respect.

### 1.2 Volunteers with Disabilities

TRC welcomes volunteers with disabilities. In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), TRC will make reasonable accommodations to enable qualified persons with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the volunteer position, where doing so would not result in an undue hardship, and is consistent with TRC's legal obligations. TRC prohibits discrimination in volunteering against otherwise qualified applicants and volunteers because of a physical or mental disability, and also prohibits discrimination based on a perception of, or association with, people with such a disability.

If you feel that you need accommodation in order for you to perform the essential functions of your position, it is your responsibility to inform TRC by talking to your immediate supervisor and/or the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **1.3 About Volunteer Policies**

This document is a guide to the general policies of TRC, and applies to all TRC volunteers, unless specifically noted otherwise. Policies and procedures are subject to change, and any changes will supersede the contents of this document.

### **1.4 Volunteer Status**

Volunteers engaged by TRC provide service with no expectation of compensation; they are not employees, and are not considered to be employees for any purpose.

TRC values the contributions of volunteers and will recognize volunteers on a regular and on-going basis in ways that are appropriate and meaningful, which may include nominations for volunteer awards, discounts on program fees and volunteer celebrations.

## **2.0 Volunteer Policies**

### **2.1 Attendance**

TRC relies upon volunteers for the delivery of its services and programs to the public. It is important that volunteers honour their commitments to be in attendance to assist in the agreed upon program or activity. Volunteers unable to fulfill a work assignment should contact their supervisor as soon as possible.

Should a volunteer not present to work for three (3) consecutive assignments without providing any notice or explanation to his or her supervisor, volunteer work in this program may be deemed to have been abandoned at the discretion of the supervisor and Volunteer Coordinator.

### **2.2 Dress Code**

Volunteers are expected to dress for the position with the following general expectations:

- When representing TRC to the public, volunteers will wear an item identifying them as TRC volunteers
- Clothing shall not be suggestive, revealing or supportive of illegal activities and must be free of offensive wording or graphics, nor shall clothing with TRC's logo be altered in any permanent way
- Volunteers working outdoors must wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes
- Volunteers will abide by the Personal Protective Equipment list when working with tools or in areas close to roadways (see below)
- Perfumes, hairsprays or other products with scents are strongly discouraged

### **2.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

As a TRC volunteer, certain tasks you might be asked to do will require you to wear protective clothing or equipment, such as safety vests, safety boots, safety gloves or goggles. TRC will recommend PPE for other tasks. (For a complete list, please see page 29 or our website.)

TRC will supply the required equipment, such as safety goggles, vests and gloves, but not footwear.

If you are asked to perform a task where you have not been given the PPE, you can either request the required equipment or you must refuse the assignment.

### **2.4 Vulnerable Sector Checks**

TRC is committed to ensuring the safety of both volunteers and our program participants. Certain volunteer positions are identified as requiring a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC). It is the volunteer's responsibility to get the VSC at his or her own expense.

### **2.5 Health and Safety**

TRC is committed to the health and safety of all its staff and volunteers. TRC management will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe and healthy working environment. Management is responsible for ensuring that all equipment is safe and in good working order, that volunteers are trained in the use of any equipment and work in compliance with legislative requirements and established safe work practices. All volunteers are entitled to adequate training and supervision in their specific work assignments for the purpose of protecting their health and safety.

To review the full TRC Health and Safety policy, please see the bulletin board in the Chappell House or TRC's website.

### **2.6 Workplace Harassment**

All individuals have the right and opportunity to work and volunteer in an environment that is free from harassment. Harassment of employees, applicants for employment, volunteers, applicants for volunteer roles, vendors, maintenance workers, clients, or any other person on TRC premises is unacceptable conduct which will not be tolerated.

**“Workplace harassment”** means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. This definition includes unwelcome and offensive comments, conduct, gestures or contact based on or related to race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, and disability, and any other grounds prohibited by the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. This definition includes sexual

harassment.

To review the full TRC Workplace Harassment policy, please see the bulletin board in the Chappell House or TRC's website.

## **2.7 Workplace Violence**

TRC is committed to working with its employees and volunteers to maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, intimidation and other disruptive behaviour. TRC has a "zero" tolerance for workplace violence.

**"Workplace Violence"** means:

1. The exercise of physical force by a person against an employee, volunteer or visitor, in the workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury. This includes, but is not limited to, physical acts such as punching, hitting, kicking, pushing or throwing objects;
2. An attempt to exercise physical force against an employee, volunteer or visitor, in the workplace, that could cause physical injury; or
3. A statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for an employee, volunteer or visitor to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force, in the workplace, that could cause physical injury.

Any volunteer who engages in any violence in the workplace or threatens violence in the workplace will be subject to the immediate termination of his or her volunteer status.

To review the full TRC Workplace Violence policy, please see the bulletin board in the Chappell House or TRC's website.

## **2.8 Duty to Report**

Any TRC volunteer who has formed a belief on reasonable grounds that a child 15 years or younger is, or appears to be, suffering from abuse and/or neglect has a duty to report their belief to the Peel Children's Aid Society. Volunteers must complete an Accident/Incident Report form; if needed, a TRC staff person will support you in this process.

## **2.9 Substance Abuse**

TRC provides a drug-free, healthy and safe environment. Volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence, possessing, selling or otherwise being involved with illegal drugs, alcohol or any controlled substance during their volunteer duties.

As per the City of Mississauga by-law, the smoking of cannabis is prohibited in all parks.

A volunteer found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while volunteering is in violation of this policy and may be subject to immediate termination. TRC will assess each case on an individual basis.

In accordance with the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, TRC will encourage and reasonably accommodate leave for a volunteer to seek treatment for substance abuse without termination of volunteer status.

This policy does not apply to volunteers' consumption of alcohol at events hosted by TRC at which alcohol may be served, and at which TRC staff, employees, volunteers and clients may consume alcohol.

### *Prescription Drugs*

If a volunteer is undergoing a prescribed medical treatment with drugs that could impair their performance, including medical cannabis, this volunteer must report that treatment to TRC in confidence. The use of such drugs as part of a prescribed medical treatment is not grounds for disciplinary action. However, it is expected that the volunteer report such a situation and accept TRC's assessment of the volunteer's ability to safely perform their duties, which may necessitate modified duties or reassignment during the course of treatment.

## **2.10 Tobacco Use**

Volunteers are prohibited from using tobacco products in any buildings at Riverwood and during program delivery. Volunteers who wish to use tobacco products may do so only during their scheduled breaks, and only in accordance with Region of Peel by-law, which indicates that smoking may not occur within 9 meters (30 feet) of an entrance or exit to a building. It is strongly recommended that everyone at Riverwood refrain from smoking in wooded areas due to risk of fire.

## **2.11 Use of TRC Resources**

All TRC volunteers are asked to protect TRC property, equipment, tools, facilities, and information. No TRC property, including files, may be removed from TRC premises without prior authorization from management. TRC resources such as phones or electronic communication equipment should only be utilized for personal use in the case of an emergency or with the approval of a supervisor.

## **2.12 Confidentiality of Documents and Information**

Volunteers agree to respect the confidentiality of all information they may acquire as part of their engagement as a volunteer with TRC.

The documents and information to which volunteers may have access while with TRC are considered confidential. Confidential information refers to information not generally known by

the public, whether or not in written form, including, but not limited to: information about TRC finances, donors and donations, services, procedures, projects, members, volunteers and clients.

Under no circumstances is confidential information to be disseminated to third parties not contracted by TRC. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

### *Volunteer Records*

TRC is accountable for protecting volunteers' personal information, including monitoring the collection, use, retention, disclosure and safeguarding of such information.

Personal information includes any factual or subjective information, recorded or not, about a volunteer. This includes information such as an individual's age, gender, identification (ID) numbers, income, ethnic origin, home address, home telephone number, performance reviews, your files, corporate credit card records, driver extracts, automobile insurance information, benefits information and medical records, personal email address and cell phone number.

Personal information does not include anything that would appear on a business card, including name, title, business address, business e-mail address and business telephone number(s). TRC will make reasonable efforts to ensure adherence to applicable provincial privacy legislation when collecting, using or disclosing your personal information.

TRC will inform, and gain consent from a volunteer concerning the use, retention and disclosure of his or her personal information. The collection of such information will be limited to that which is necessary for business purposes or is related to the volunteer's status with TRC.

TRC will not allow third parties to access volunteers' personal files without volunteers' written consent, except if such documents are required to be disclosed by law. Disclosure of personal information is limited to those who require it for business reasons or whose duties reasonably require it, or to a third party in certain circumstances, where required by law, or with the volunteer's consent.

Volunteers may review their own personnel records upon request by scheduling a mutually convenient time with the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **2.13 Acceptable Use of Information Systems**

TRC maintains information systems including, but not limited to, computer equipment, software, operating systems, storage media, and stored information. These systems and information are the property of TRC and are to be used solely for purposes specified by TRC. TRC reserves the right, without notice, to access, read and disclose the contents of a volunteer's e-mail messages where the volunteer is using a TRC email address (1) upon reasonable

suspicion that unlawful conduct or conduct in violation of TRC policies, including this e-mail policy, is occurring; (2) where necessary for legitimate business reasons; and (3) where required to do so by law.

When using TRC's electronic and communication property, whether for business purposes or personal use, volunteers and others should have no expectation that any communication or information transmitted over TRC facilities or stored on TRC owned computers is or will remain private. Volunteers should be aware that while using TRC equipment, any right to privacy will be superseded by the legitimate business interests of TRC.

#### **2.14 Personal Mail and Telephone Calls**

TRC volunteers are expected to exercise discretion in using personal portable electronic and data storage devices. TRC volunteers are encouraged to make personal calls on non-work time when possible and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of TRC's policy. TRC will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones or other mobile devices brought into the workplace.

#### **2.15 Representing TRC to the Media**

The Executive Director will designate an appropriate spokesperson for TRC for media relations in general or for a special event or activity. Any volunteer contacted directly by the media in relation to TRC matters should refer them to the Executive Director or the designated spokesperson.

#### **2.16 Discovering Weapons, Traps or Snares**

In accordance with the by-laws of the City of Mississauga, Riverwood visitors may not be in possession of or use a firearm, air gun, cross bow, bow and arrow, axe, paint guns or any similar weapon of any kind unless authorized by Permit. In addition, City by-laws state that no person shall kill, attempt to kill, hunt, trap, fish, or otherwise pursue an animal in any manner so as to disturb its presence in the park; or feed any waterfowl except in designated area (see procedures on page 30).

#### **2.17 Discovering Illegal Plants**

Any volunteer who discovers an illegal plant, including, but not limited to cannabis, or sees anyone in the possession of an illegal plant on TRC premises is required to follow TRC procedures (see page 30).

### **3.0 Corrective Action and Termination of Volunteer Status**

#### **3.1 Following TRC Volunteer Policies**

Every volunteer at TRC is expected to conduct himself or herself in accordance with these policies. Periodically, issues arise which may require corrective action. Some examples of behaviour that may result in such action are listed in Section 2, "Volunteer Policies." The following list includes activities that will result in progressive corrective action, including termination of volunteer status, at TRC's discretion:

- Unauthorized possession or removal of property belonging to TRC or another TRC team member
- Damage, destruction or defacement of property on Riverwood grounds, or that belonging to another TRC team member

The foregoing list is not exhaustive. While we believe progressive corrective action is the most constructive way to proceed in most cases, under certain circumstances TRC may choose to skip, modify or add steps to the progression, depending upon the severity and nature of the behaviour in question.

#### **3.2 Progressive Corrective Action Process**

When an issue between a volunteer and TRC arises, TRC will investigate and, when appropriate, will institute a progressive correction action process. This process is designed to give you every opportunity to improve your performance. The specific course of corrective action TRC takes will be subject to management's appraisal of the severity of the issues involved.

Depending on the type of problem, disciplinary actions may follow the procedures below. However, severe violations of TRC's policies may result in immediate termination.

##### **Verbal Notice**

Your supervisor will bring to your attention any problem with respect to your volunteer work and coach you to correct it. A note will be placed in your file, confirming this record of discussion.

##### **Written Warning**

Your supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator will coach you about the problem and work with you to correct it. You will be given a written warning, a copy of which will be placed in your volunteer file.

If the problem is corrected, no further action will be taken.

### **Termination of Volunteer Status**

If the problem is not corrected and occurs again, termination of volunteer status may result.

### **3.3 Termination of Volunteer Status**

TRC may terminate a volunteer's status on one of the following grounds:

- If a volunteer informs TRC of his or her intent to resign as a volunteer;
- If a volunteer fails to:
  - 1) Respond to volunteer requests or participate as a volunteer for six months or more;
  - 2) Present to work for three (3) consecutive assignments without providing any notice to his or her supervisor;
  - 3) Perform his or her volunteer job satisfactorily or fails to follow TRC's policies or procedures; or
  - 4) Correct any problem identified and handled through the Progressive Correction Action process

### **4.0 Closing**

The contributions of all volunteers are extremely valued by TRC. We trust that this policies document helps you to understand the policies and procedures at TRC. Please remember that policies, procedures and benefits may change, and that any changes will supersede the contents of this document. The most recent Volunteer policies can be found on our website or at TRC's office in the Chappell House. If you have any questions or concerns about any policies, please contact either your supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. Thank you for joining our team!

Approved by Board, June 2015

Amended, January 2019

# Procedures

## Personal Protective Equipment List

Some of the work done at Riverwood requires volunteers and staff to work with tools. To do so safely, they are required to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Below is the chart of which piece of equipment is required for which tool.

### Definitions

- Foot: CSA approved Green Patch Footwear (Steel-toed safety boots or shoes), provided by the volunteer
- Eye: Safety glasses (which can go over glasses), provided by The Riverwood Conservancy
- Long Pants: Pants that extend all the way to the bottom of the ankle (no Capri pants), provided by the volunteer
- Gloves: Preferably sturdy work gloves, provided by the volunteer or The Riverwood Conservancy
- Dust Mask: Covering the nose and mouth, , provided by The Riverwood Conservancy

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	CSA Approved Green Patch Footwear	Eye	Long pants	Gloves	Dust mask
Shovel	rec	rec		rec	
Spade	rec	rec		rec	
Pitch Fork	*	rec		rec	
Moving of heavy materials	rec	rec		rec	
Edging tool	rec	rec		rec	
Loppers	rec	rec	rec	rec	
Hand pruners, hand saws	rec	rec	rec	rec	
Broom	rec	rec		rec	rec
Weeding	rec	rec		rec	
Hand trowel	rec	rec		rec	
Raking	rec	rec		rec	

**\* = required**

**rec = recommended**

## **Finding a Weapon, Trap or Snare**

Any volunteer who discovers a weapon, trap or snare or sees another person with a weapon, trap or snare at Riverwood is required to do the following:

- Do not touch the weapon, trap or snare
- Leave the area immediately and go to a safe location
- Contact TRC's office; they will contact the police or Corporate Security
- After hours, contact police or corporate security, then leave a message on TRC's answering machine OR send a detailed email
- Complete an Accident/Incident Report Form
- If notified of a weapon or someone armed with a weapon, clear the area and avoid it until police determine it is safe to re-enter

## **Finding an Illegal Plant**

Any volunteer who discovers an illegal plant at Riverwood is required to do the following:

- Leave the area immediately and go to a safe location
- Notify TRC main office and provide as many details as possible (location, quantity, etc.). The office will contact police
- If notified of an illegal plant finding by authorities, clear the area and avoid it until police determine it is safe to re-enter
- After hours, contact police or corporate security, then leave a message on TRC's answering machine OR send a detailed email to TRC

# Appendix B

## Guidelines for Delivering Accessible Customer Service

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed by the Ontario legislature with the goal of creating standards to improve accessibility across the province. One of the specific standards that has been developed, and made law, is the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

### ***What is Accessible Customer Service?***

The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC) is committed to providing programming/ volunteer opportunities to persons with disabilities in a manner that:

- Respects their **dignity** and **independence**;
- Is **integrated** as fully as practicable into the method of service delivery;
- Ensures reasonable efforts are made to provide an **opportunity equal** to that given to other participants or volunteers to take part in our programs; and
- Allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way to other participants/volunteers.

Accessible customer service can mean many things. Mostly, it is the understanding that each individual may need a slightly different type of accommodation.

### ***Who are TRC's "Customers"?***

- Children participating in education or garden programs
- Anyone participating in our Discovery@Riverwood programs
- Volunteers assisting with TRC programs
- Invited guests

TRC does not own Riverwood, therefore our customers are those who volunteer with us or attend our programs, not the general public.

### ***What can I do?***

Always start with people first. In language, that means saying “person with a disability”, rather than “a disabled person”. In any interaction, it means addressing the person’s service needs, rather than focusing on the disability.

### ***For More Information***

Please see our Guidelines for Delivering Accessible Customer Service. This document can be emailed to you, provided as a hard copy or found on our website. It outlines various disabilities and provides tips for interacting with people who have those disabilities.

# Appendix C

## Forms

### **Accident/Incident Report form**

This form is to be used when there is an accident, near-accident or incident while volunteering at Riverwood.

“Accident” refers to any time someone has an injury, however minor and from whatever cause. Examples include: getting a splinter, sustaining a cut, slip and fall, etc.

“Near-Accident” refers to any time you notice a potential for an injury. Examples include: participants tripping on a tree root, but not falling or injuring themselves; slippery trails or pavement, etc.

“Incident” refers to anything that should be reported to TRC. Examples include: a fist fight in the parking lot; a child runs from a special needs class, etc.

These forms should be completed as soon as possible after the event and provided to the supervisor and/or Office Manager. Forms should be in each first aid kit; if it’s easier, an email can be sent with details.

### **Volunteer Time Sheet**

This form is used by volunteers who are birdfeeding, gardening, assisting with the education programs, assisting in the office, or working with our summer volunteer program (see page 14). Hours are collected monthly and entered into our database.

These forms will be in a binder kept by your supervisor or in the office.



## Accident/Incident Report

### Internal Document Only

Date	Location of Accident/Incident		
Name of Injured Person		TRC Program Name	
Address		City	
Telephone Number		Circle one: Student                      Adult                      Child	
Date of Birth (if under 18)		Parent/Guardian Name and Address (if under 18)	
		Telephone:	
Description of Accident/Incident (please include whether occurrence was during TRC program)			
Description of Injury			
First Aid Given?    Yes    No If yes, by whom?		Sent to Hospital?    Yes    No	
		Mode of Transport:    Ambulance    Private car	
Reported to Police?    Yes    No		If yes, Officer's Name Badge Number Occurrence Number	
Follow-up Action			
Witness Name(s)		Telephone	
Address		Date of Birth (if under 18)	
Form completed by		Contact Info	

Please return to TRC office within 48 hours of incident

