



Policies for Volunteers of The Riverwood Conservancy

Welcome

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Volunteer Policies

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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 Chappell House or TRC's website.

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 Chappell House or TRC's website.

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 Chappell House or TRC's website.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Corrective Action and Termination of Volunteer Status

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.

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.

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

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