



# Volunteer Handbook

*Last revised April 10, 2023*



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## **Welcome from the Executive Director**

Thank you for becoming a volunteer at The Riverwood Conservancy!

At TRC, our goal is to support a community that is in harmony with nature. More than ever before, people in our community have expressed a need for nature and outdoor spaces in the city; in our highly urbanized community, Riverwood's 150 acres of gardens, forest and trails along the Credit River offer a welcome way to relax and recharge.

Our programs can only happen with the support of our volunteers. Whether you are interested in assisting with a class of students, feeding our bird friends, caring for the gardens, or reaching out into the community for support, there is a place for you here. We hope that you will find the experience valuable.

Many thanks, once again. I look forward to meeting you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sara Wilbur-Collins'.

Sara Wilbur-Collins, CFRE  
Executive Director  
The Riverwood Conservancy

## Introduction from the Board of Directors

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

Volunteers are an important part of The Riverwood Conservancy team and the programs it provides. We work together to provide the best service and experience possible to our participants and visitors, and want your participation to be beneficial and rewarding. Your loyalty and dedication to furthering the mission, reputation, and integrity of The Riverwood Conservancy is of the utmost importance. As people with a passion for education, horticulture, and natural environment, 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. To ensure that the volunteers have the best possible foundation, TRC has adopted the Canadian Code of Volunteer Involvement.

This Volunteer Handbook is a compilation of information, policies, and operating procedures of TRC, while also describing a few of the many volunteer opportunities that are available. I am confident that you will benefit from the content and direction of this Volunteer Handbook, and hope as a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to work in many aspects of TRC, as we strive to make the volunteer experience fun, inspiring, engaging and educational.

In gratitude for the service and commitment of our volunteers,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Shaw".

Heather Shaw  
Chair of the Board of Directors  
The Riverwood Conservancy

## About The Riverwood Conservancy

The Riverwood Conservancy is a volunteer and member-based charity that provides programs and services focused on environmental education, conservation, gardening, and horticulture. We invite individuals and families to explore this natural space in the heart of Mississauga and take advantage of our range of programs and activities.

Founded in 1985 as the Mississauga Garden Council, today The Riverwood Conservancy works with like-minded groups and individuals to enable people of all cultures, ages, and abilities to respectfully connect with nature and learn about the importance of protecting and experiencing the beauty of Riverwood.

### ***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 Values***

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.

## **Land Acknowledgement**

The Riverwood Conservancy would like to acknowledge that the land on which we operate is within the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the traditional land of the Wendat Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. This land is part of the Upper Canada Land Surrenders to the Crown. Today, the region surrounding Riverwood remains home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work here.

## The Riverwood Conservancy'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](#).



## 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, and actively steward the site.

**Riverwood:** Riverwood is a 150-acre natural area in the heart of Mississauga, consisting of forests, marsh, meadow, river, swamp, and garden ecosystems. Riverwood acts as a crossroads for wildlife in the region, and is identified as both an Ecologically Sensitive Area and a Centre for Biodiversity in the Credit River system. Many species of plants and wildlife call Riverwood home, and there are many gardens on site, maintained by TRC volunteers and the City 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, courses, 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, barbecues, 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.



## **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 are members of a diverse community in Mississauga, have a variety of interests, and represent many different cultures, ages, and backgrounds. Our volunteer base consists of people in many different situations - those who are employed full or part time, retirees, students, and many others. Volunteers contribute to our administration operations, committees, 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 nature and education

### **Do I Have to be a Member or a Donor to be a Volunteer?**

You do not have to be either a Member or a donor in order to volunteer with TRC. Over time, some volunteers wish to do so, as they become more involved.

Our Members receive a range of benefits that help them engage with TRC. There is information about membership at [theriverwoodconservancy.org/membership](http://theriverwoodconservancy.org/membership).

Some volunteers also choose to make a donation to support TRC or a particular program. There is information about ways the community can give at: [theriverwoodconservancy.org/ways-to-give](http://theriverwoodconservancy.org/ways-to-give).

### **Youth Volunteer Program**

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

## 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 – [theriverwoodconservancy.org/volunteer](http://theriverwoodconservancy.org/volunteer) – for positions available. Below are general categories of volunteer positions:

### Education Programs

- **Education Naturally and LEADS:** School-based programs in outdoor science education.
  - Volunteer Roles: Education Assistants, College/University Placement Students, Secondary School Co-Op Students
- **Enabling Garden:** Therapeutic horticulture programs for people with disabilities.
  - Volunteer Roles: Enabling Garden Assistant
- **Discovery:** Public programs on topics in nature and gardening.
  - Volunteer Roles: Discovery Program Assistant, Discovery Helpers, Riverwood Tour Guides

### Gardening Programs

- **Gardening at Riverwood:** Plant and maintain the gardens of Riverwood, including beautiful perennial beds, rhododendron gardens, vegetable gardens, pollinator gardens, and more.
  - Volunteer Roles: Garden Leaders, Gardeners, Waterers, Garden Tour Guides

### Conservation Programs

- **Conservation:** Maintain the trails, plant trees, manage invasive species, and maintain habitat for wildlife.
  - Volunteer Roles: Conservation Workers, Stewardship Committee member, College/University Placement Students, Secondary School Co-Op Students
- **Bird-feeding:** Feed the birds of Riverwood year round.
  - Volunteer Roles: Bird-feeder Coordinator, Bird-feeders

## Other Areas of Volunteerism

- **Committee Participation:** A volunteer Board of Directors governs TRC, and committees made up of volunteers support TRC staff by actively planning and participating in each program. Operational committees include Education, Events, Fund Development, Gardening, Health and Safety, Human Resources, Stewardship, and Volunteer Committees.
- **Office/Administration:** TRC often needs assistance with office administration tasks, including filing, mailing, research, and data entry.
- **Fundraising support:** TRC's operations and programs require a robust fundraising plan. Volunteers who wish to support this plan can help by supporting fundraising initiatives, promoting TRC, and making connections within the community.
- **Events:** TRC holds special events from time to time. Volunteers assist at these events by promoting ticket sales and sponsorships, planning, and helping during the events themselves.

## 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 and Procedures in Appendix C.



## **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, they are 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, volunteer hours must be recorded on a Volunteer Timesheet found in a binder. The Program Lead will direct you to the location of these binders.
- For those assisting with the Discovery program, Education Naturally, LEADS, and Enabling Garden programs, you will be using Signup.com to sign up for a volunteer shift. The SignUp link will be provided to you, which will enable you to sign-up for these programs as a volunteer. The Coordinators then provide your volunteer hours to the Volunteer Department.
- For conservation events, you will be asked to sign in at the event.
- For those assisting with Bird-feeding, volunteer hours will be scheduled and collected by the Bird-Feeding Coordinator.
- 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.
- Not sure how to report your hours? Ask your supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator!

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

TRC staff enter volunteer hours into the Volunteer Database on a monthly basis. Information regarding the number of volunteer hours contributed to TRC programs and operations is used to seek additional funding opportunities 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 will be covered by your volunteer training.

### **General Safety Guidelines**

Certain health and safety guidelines are applicable to all program areas. For volunteers working outside, whether bird-feeding, 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
- Ensure you follow the posted rules on using the Trails
- Be aware of the trail colours, names (e.g., Culham Trail)
- Be aware of others who use the paths as well, including cyclists
- Be aware of dogs off-leash and any wildlife
- Dress appropriately for the weather
- Get inside the nearest shelter when bad weather (e.g., thunderstorms, high winds) strikes
- Know where the nearest First Aid Kits and 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 or know the park boundaries

In the event of an injury, First Aid Kits and Defibrillators are located in Parker Room in the Chappell House, and in the MacEwan Field Station. Visual Arts Mississauga (VAM) also has a defibrillator if needed.

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

For any health or safety incident, an incident report must be completed; blank forms are located in Chappell House, in the first aid cabinet located in the kitchen. A staff member can help you locate the sheets whenever needed. 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.)

### **Off-Site Events**

TRC participates in 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.

### **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

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

Both Chappell House and MacEwan Field Station 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 they are in the parking lot.
- 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, and 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.

**In the Event of a “Duty to Report” Situation**

In accordance with Ontario’s Child, Youth and Family Services Act, any TRC volunteer or employee 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 as soon as is reasonably possible ([www.peelcas.org](http://www.peelcas.org), 905-363-6131). We ask that you report such a situation to a TRC staff person, who will be available to support you in this process, and complete an Accident/Incident Report form within 24 hours.

**In the Event of a Weapon Being Discovered**

Any volunteer who discovers a weapon, or sees another person with a weapon is required to follow these procedures:

- Upon the discovery of a weapon
  - Do NOT touch the weapon or try to determine whether it is real
  - Leave the area immediately
  - Go to a safe location such as a vehicle or nearby building
  - Notify TRC main office, the office will contact the Police. If after hours, contact the police then leave a message on TRC’s answering machine
  - Complete an Accident/Incident Report
- 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.



**In the Event of Illegal Plants Being Discovered**

Any volunteer who discovers, or sees anyone in the possession of an illegal plant at Riverwood is required to do the following:

- Upon the discovery of an illegal plant:
  - Leave the area immediately
  - Go to a safe location such as a vehicle or nearby building
  - Notify TRC main office and provide as many details as possible (location, quantity, etc.). The office will contact the Police.
  - If notified of an illegal plant finding by authorities, avoid that area until police determine it is safe to return.
  - After hours, contact police then leave a message on TRC's answering machine OR send a detailed email to TRC.

**Emergency Preparedness and Safety: Vitally 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 and 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

## Personal Protective Equipment

As a TRC volunteer, certain tasks you might be asked perform in the course of your duties will require you to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing, such as steel-toed boots, gloves, or goggles. This is for your safety, and wearing such PPE is a condition of your volunteer status for certain activities. You will be trained in the proper use and maintenance of any PPE you are required to wear.

### PPE for working outdoors

For gardeners and conservation volunteers working outdoors, closed-toe (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.

### PPE For working with tools

When working with certain tools additional PPE is either recommended or required as outlined below.

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/Garden Fork	*req	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	

**\*req = Required | rec = Recommended**

#### Definitions

- **Footwear:** 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 TRC

- **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 TRC
- **Dust Mask:** Covering the nose and mouth, provided by The Riverwood Conservancy

### **PPE for disease prevention**

The above lists do NOT include PPE for health protection and prevention of disease spread during the COVID-19 pandemic. Any such requirements will be listed in separate documentation.



## Appendix A: 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 B: 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.

## Accident/Incident Report (Internal Document Only)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location of Accident/Incident</b>		
<b>Name of Injured Person</b>			
<b>TRC Program Name</b>			
Address		City	
Telephone Number		Circle one:    Adult       Youth       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**



# Volunteer Time Sheet

This form is used by a number of different TRC Programs. Hours are entered into our Volunteer Database monthly. Program Leaders will provide you with details on how volunteer hours are recorded for their programs.

# TRC Volunteer Timesheet

**First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please print CLEARLY**

Date	Number of Hours	Activity
	TOTAL HOURS:	

## **Appendix C: TRC Volunteer Policies and Procedures**

### **TRC Volunteer Policies**

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.

#### **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 Policies are also posted on TRC's website on the [Volunteer page](#).

#### **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, disability, or any other grounds 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 is committed to ensuring equal volunteer opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* provides further detail and clarification of the "definition" of who is covered under Clause 2.0 for the purposes of discrimination.

TRC complies fully with its obligations under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. TRC prohibits discrimination in employment against otherwise qualified applicants and employees because of a physical or mental disability, and also prohibits discrimination based on a perception of,

or association with people with such a disability. TRC recognizes its duty to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. TRC will make reasonable accommodations to enable qualified persons with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the job, where doing so would not result in an undue hardship, and is consistent with TRC's legal obligations.

It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform TRC if they feel that they are disabled and that an accommodation is needed in order for the volunteer to perform the essential functions of their position. Should the volunteer feel that accommodation is needed, employees are requested to speak with their immediate supervisor or the Executive Director (ED).

### **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 annual volunteer celebrations.

### **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 their 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 may be asked to wear an item identifying them as a TRC volunteer. This item can be provided by TRC.
- 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.

- 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 as needed.

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**

The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC) is committed to ensuring the safety of both volunteers and our program participants. TRC employees and volunteers who work with financial and banking information are required to have a Level 2 Criminal Record and Judicial Matters check. TRC employees and volunteers who work with children, seniors, or any other vulnerable population are required to have a Level 3 Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC). It is the volunteer's responsibility to obtain the proper check at their own expense.

Vulnerable Sector Checks are to be current within the last 3 years. An Offence Declaration is to be submitted each subsequent year after a VSC has been completed/updated, and until a new VSC is required.

### **Health and Safety**

The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC) is committed to the health and safety of all its employees, consultants/contractors and volunteers.

The protection of employees, consultants/contractors and volunteers is an important and continuing objective of TRC. TRC management will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe and healthy working environment. TRC will manage its Health and Safety Program in accordance with the Province of Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Management is responsible for ensuring that all equipment is safe and in good working order, and that employees, consultants/contractors and volunteers are trained in the use of any equipment and work in compliance with legislative requirements and established safe work practices. All employees, consultants/contractors and volunteers are entitled to adequate training and supervision in their specific work assignments for the purpose of protecting their health and safety. TRC management will provide employees, consultants/contractors and volunteers with training and training updates to meet the requirements outlined by law and in our Health and Safety Program.

## **Workplace Harassment**

TRC's equal opportunity policy is to ensure that all individuals have the right and opportunity to work and volunteer in an environment that is free from unlawful harassment.

Everyone in the workplace must be dedicated to preventing Workplace Harassment. For purposes of the Workplace Harassment Policy, "workers" shall be defined as: Managers, supervisors, volunteers, consultants/contractors, Program participants and full-time, part-time and probationary employees. All "workers" as defined herein are expected to uphold this Policy and will be held accountable by TRC.

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.

TRC is committed to the prevention of harassment in the workplace and is ultimately responsible for worker Health and Safety. TRC will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect workers from harassment from all sources.

Harassment is defined as 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. Workplace harassment may include bullying, intimidating or offensive jokes or innuendos, displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials, or offensive or intimidating phone calls. Under the Ontario Human Rights Code harassment, on the following basis, is prohibited: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic group, citizenship, creed, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or record of offences. Harassment may relate to these forms of discrimination, but it does not have to.

Sexual Harassment is a form of Discrimination. It is also one of the most prevalent forms of Harassment. Sexual Harassment includes comments or conduct of a sexual nature that you do not welcome or that offend you. It also includes negative or inappropriate comments or conduct that are not necessarily sexual in nature, which are directed at you because of your gender. People of all genders can be victims of harassment, and anyone of any gender is capable of perpetrating harassment.

Every worker must work in compliance with this Policy. All workers are encouraged to report any incidents of Workplace Harassment to their immediate Manager or, if the offending party is the immediate Manager, to the Executive Director (ED). If the offending party is the ED, workers are encouraged to report incidents to the Board Chair. There will be no negative consequences for reports made in good faith.

## **Workplace Violence**

TRC's Workplace Violence policy is to ensure that all individuals have the right and opportunity to work in an environment that is free from unlawful violence in the Workplace. TRC is committed to working with workers to maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, intimidation, and other disruptive behaviour.

Solely for purposes of the Workplace Violence Policy, "workers" shall be defined as: Managers, supervisors, volunteers, consultants/contractors, Program participants and full-time, part-time and probationary employees. All "workers" as defined herein are expected to uphold this policy, and will be held accountable by TRC.

"Workplace Violence" means:

- i) The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker in the workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker. This includes, but is not limited to, physical acts such as punching, hitting, kicking, pushing or throwing objects;
- ii) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in the workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; or
- iii) A statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

TRC is committed to the prevention of workplace violence and is ultimately responsible for worker Health and Safety. TRC will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect the workers from workplace violence from all sources.

Workplace violence is defined as the exercise of physical force that causes or could cause physical injury; an attempt to exercise physical force; a statement or behaviour that could be reasonably interpreted as a threat to exercise physical force.

Workplace violence can include domestic violence. While often originating in the home, domestic violence can significantly impact workplace safety and the productivity of victims as well as co-employees. When a current or former spouse or partner or another family member assaults, criminally harasses or stalks a worker at the workplace, then domestic violence is considered Workplace Violence. TRC has The Riverwood Response Program that highlights the process for this Policy. It includes measures and procedures to protect workers from Workplace Violence, a means of summoning immediate assistance and a process for workers to report incidents or raise concerns.

TRC, will ensure that this Policy and the supporting Program are implemented and maintained and that all workers and supervisors have the appropriate information and instruction to protect them from violence in the workplace. Supervisors will adhere to this

Policy and the supporting Program. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that measures and procedures are followed by workers and that workers have the information that they need to protect themselves.

Every worker must work in compliance with this Policy and the supporting Program. All workers are encouraged to raise any concerns about workplace violence and to report any violent incidents or threats to their immediate Manager or, if the immediate Manager is the offending party, to the Executive Director(ED). If the concern involves the ED, workers are encouraged to report incidents to the Board Chair. There will be no negative consequences for reports made in good faith.

Management pledges to investigate and deal with all incidents and complaints of Workplace Violence in a timely and fair manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned to the event possible. Management will also follow-up with any complainants to let them know any outcomes.

### **Duty to Report**

In accordance with Ontario's Child, Youth and Family Services Act, any TRC worker 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 as soon as is reasonably possible.

### **Substance Abuse**

It is TRC's policy to endeavour to take steps to ensure a safe and efficient working environment. Drug and alcohol use adversely impacts on this goal, adversely affects productivity, and impairs judgement.

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.

### **Impairment on the Job/Fit for Duty**

Impairment is a longstanding Occupational Health and Safety issue that can pose hazards in the workplace. Impairment can be the result of short-term or long-term situations, including (but not limited to) impairment arising from fatigue, family or relationship problems, sleep deprivation, and substance use, and other situations which includes legal, illegal, over-the-counter, and prescription substances. Being fit for duty is a worker's ability to perform the job safely and effectively without impairment.

Volunteers performing work when they are unable or unfit to do so safely may introduce a hazard to the workplace, to themselves or to others, and workplace parties are required to address such hazards under the OHSA.

Volunteers undergoing prescribed medical treatment with drugs that could impair their performance is not grounds for disciplinary action, however, it is expected 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.

Any persons engaged by TRC found to be impaired while not he job, regardless of the source of impairment, may be subject to disciplinary action, including immediate termination.

### **Tobacco, E-Cigarettes and Cannabis Use**

Volunteers are prohibited from smoking or vaping tobacco or cannabis products, in any buildings at Riverwood and during program delivery. In accordance with municipal by-laws, the smoking or vaping of cannabis is not permitted anywhere on Riverwood property by anyone. Volunteers who wish to use tobacco products may do so only during their scheduled breaks, and at minimum of nine (9) meters away from any building in accordance with Region of Peel By-Law 49-2019.

Problems encountered in the application of or adherence to this Policy will be handled in accordance with existing TRC Policies. Although the use of tobacco products or use of cannabis products off-site in itself is not considered a basis for discipline, failure to abide by this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of volunteer status.

### **Privacy Policy**

TRC is committed to respecting the privacy of personal information of individual persons and explain how it may collect, use, protect and disclose personal information. The commitment and recognition to this obligation meets the spirit and terms of the Federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).

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

TRC maintains information systems including, but not limited to, computer equipment including TRC-owned cell phones and laptops, 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.

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. Violations of this Policy may result in discipline, suspension and termination of volunteer status, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Use of TRC Resources**

All TRC volunteers are responsible for the protection of TRC property, equipment, tools, facilities, and information. No TRC property, including electronic (e.g., USB key) and hard copy files and equipment, may be removed from TRC premises without prior authorization from Management. TRC-owned resources, such as laptops and cell phones, may be provided to volunteers, who are responsible for the protection and safe-keeping of these resources.

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 written approval of a Manager. Use of TRC resources, including the photocopier, in violation of this or other TRC policies may subject a volunteer to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of volunteer status.

### **Personal Mail, Email and Telephone Calls**

TRC volunteers are expected to exercise discretion in using personal phones or any portable electronic and data storage devices, and are asked to interact with these devices only for emergencies during program time, or as the supervising staff member stipulates. TRC volunteers are encouraged to ensure that friends and family members are aware of TRC's policy on personal communication devices during programs.

TRC will not be liable for the loss of personal phones or any portable electronic and data storage devices brought into the workplace.

### **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 services, procedures, projects, finances, members, donors and clients.

Under no circumstances is confidential information to be disseminated to third parties not employed/engaged by TRC. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information may result in discipline up to and including termination of volunteer status.

## **Social Media Policy**

Volunteers who post or engage on any social media platform must adhere to the confidentiality and privacy policies of TRC. Volunteers must not share or post images, recordings, and/or information about our members, donors, employees, other volunteers, or program participants without the consent of those individuals.

If a volunteer of TRC chooses to identify as such on a website or social media platform, posts must uphold our value of respect and not include defamatory or disparaging comments about TRC, our partners, or other individuals, including TRC's members, donors, employees, volunteers, and/or program participants.

## **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 adherences 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 their 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.

Upon request, a letter of reference may be provided to a volunteer outlining the following information:

- Position(s) held
- Duties/ responsibilities of this position(s)
- Length of volunteer service and/or volunteer hours contributed

Additional information may be provided at the discretion of the Supervisor and/or Volunteer Coordinator.

### **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, Director of Development and Communications, or the designated spokesperson.

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

## **1. Following TRC Volunteer Policies**

Every volunteer at TRC is expected to conduct themselves in accordance with these policies. Periodically, issues arise which may require progressive corrective action. 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
- Violation of Workplace Violence Policy, and/or Workplace Harassment Policy.

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.

## **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 the volunteer every opportunity to improve their 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. Termination of Volunteer Status**

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

- If a volunteer informs TRC of their 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 their supervisor;
  - 3) Perform their volunteer job satisfactorily or 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 policy document helps you to understand the policies and procedures at TRC. Please remember that policies and procedures 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!

# TRC Volunteer Procedures

## Personal Protective Equipment List

As a TRC volunteer, certain tasks you might be required to perform in the course of your duties may require you to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing, such as steel-toed safety shoes or boots, gloves, or goggles. In addition, PPEs may be required in accordance with Pandemic or another wide spread Health Emergency protocols. Masks and other protective equipment which may be prescribed by Pandemic Public Health Mandates or recommendations, shall be supplied by TRC, at no cost to the volunteer.

Volunteers will be trained in the proper use and maintenance of this clothing and equipment. Below is the chart of which piece of equipment is required for which tool. This list does NOT include PPE for pandemic.

### Definitions

- **Footwear:** 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 TRC
- **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 TRC
- **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/Garden Fork	*req	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	

req = Required

rec = Recommended

## **Discovering Weapons**

Any volunteer who discovers a weapon, or sees another person with a weapon is required to follow these procedures:

- Upon the discovery of a weapon:
  - Do NOT touch the weapon or try to determine whether it is real.
  - Leave the area immediately.
  - Go to a safe location such as a vehicle or nearby building.
  - Notify TRC main office, the office will contact the Police. If after hours, contact the police then leave a message on TRC's answering machine.
  - Complete an Accident/Incident Report.
- 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.

## **Discovering Illegal Plants**

Any volunteer who discovers, or sees anyone in the possession of an illegal plant at Riverwood is required to do the following:

- Upon the discovery of an illegal plant:
  - Leave the area immediately.
  - Go to a safe location such as a vehicle or nearby building.
  - Notify TRC main office and provide as many details as possible (location, quantity, etc.). The office will contact the Police.
  - If notified of an illegal plant finding by authorities, avoid that area until police determine it is safe to return.
  - After hours, contact police then leave a message on TRC's answering machine OR send a detailed email to TRC.