

OUTright Youth of Catawba Valley

Volunteer Manual

Index

Policy & Procedure	Page (s)
Mission, vision, goals, values	2 – 3
Equal opportunity	3
Executive Director	3
Terms of volunteer position	3
Volunteer positions	4
Solicitation of volunteers	4
Application form	4
Interview procedure	5
Criminal background check	5
Drug testing	6
Orientation	6
Personnel file	6
Rights of volunteers	7
Right to privacy	8
Volunteer responsibilities	8
Reporting	8
Standards of conduct	9 - 10
Conflicts of interest	10
Whistleblower Policy	10
Confidentiality code	11
Risk management	11
Dress code	11
Communications code	11
Communications procedure	12
Advanced training	12
Evaluation procedure	13
Recognition policy	13
Disciplinary action	14
Warrants	14

Mission, Vision Goals and Values

Our Mission

To create a safe environment where lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) youth may meet, interact, participate in educational and recreational activities and obtain referrals to resources that will help promote their health, safety and well being. To educate our community on the aspects of awareness, understanding, acceptance and inclusion of LGBT youth.

Our Vision

The youth of our community are one of our most precious assets. This asset is not always effectively safeguarded or nurtured in the current cultural, religious, political and familial environment and, as a result, the youth of our community leave when given the opportunity. We believe that a caring and safe environment, and group created to give LGBT youth the opportunity to meet each other for support, education and interaction best serves both the youth and our community as a whole.

Our Goals

- Create the opportunity for LGBT youth to meet in a safe and confidential environment where they can gain a greater understanding of themselves and build self-esteem through affirming a positive self-image and confidence.
- Create an outreach/speakers bureau to bring awareness, understanding, acceptance and inclusion of our LGBT youth to our community.
- Provide opportunities throughout the community to participate in the organization in any number of ways including serving within our organization or providing financial support.
- Develop means to gain parental support for their LGBT youth.
- Identify and advocate on behalf of at-risk LGBT youth by promoting emergency services where feasible.
- Create a listing of LGBT welcoming local businesses, religious institutions, youth service organizations, and reading materials where LGBT youth will find acceptance, understanding and inclusion.
- Create an atmosphere in our community to encourage LGBT youth to remain in the Catawba Valley area.

Our Values

Confidentiality	We value complete confidentiality with regard to all of the stakeholders of the organization
Respect	We value respect by requiring our board members, employees and volunteers to treat each person they encounter in a caring and respectful manner, sensitive to individual differences, and cultural and ethnic diversity
Service	We value service by providing the programs and service our community and our youth are entitled to, to enhance their quality of life
Community	We value community by encouraging active participation and communication within the organization, as well as with our youth, their families and our community as a whole
Awareness	We value the need for awareness of the existent challenges faced by our youth and within our community and will make every effort to thwart the intolerance and lessen the stigmas
Compassion	We value a compassionate approach to our youth, their families and within our community
Integrity	We value integrity and are continuously aware of our organization's mission, vision, ethical principles and the highest of ethical standards
Excellence	We value and demand excellence in our services and relationships
Innovation	We value innovation and will continuously strive to improve and expand the services we perform and the means to deliver them
Leadership	We value our role as a community leader in fulfilling the mission, vision and goals of our organization
Prudence	We value the need to operate our organization in a prudent manner and to maintain the highest of standards in the utilization of resources

Equal Opportunity

OUTright Youth of Catawba Valley (OYCV) offers equal engagement opportunity to volunteers. Their national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender or sexual orientation will not play a part in the selection of volunteers.

Executive Director

References throughout this manual to an Executive Director will be construed as a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors until such time as an Executive Director is employed.

Terms of Volunteer Position

No commitments are made to an applicant for a volunteer position as to the duration of that position which is terminable, at will, by either the volunteer or OYCV.

Volunteer Positions

OYCV volunteers make it possible for the organization to serve the youth in our community. Available positions will be posted on our website and other locations listing the qualifications needed for, and requirements of, the position.

Solicitation of Volunteers

OYCV is always looking for highly qualified individuals who would be willing to volunteer. Individuals who would be dedicated to the mission, vision, goals and values of the OYCV are encouraged to apply.

Should you know of anyone who might qualify, or you are approached by someone who expresses an interest in volunteering, please encourage her or him to come to OYVC and fill out an application form.

The applicant must be advised that after their application form is reviewed and vetted, they may be asked to meet with personnel of OYCV where they will be asked to complete a questionnaire and be interviewed. All volunteers must undergo, in any status, a criminal background investigation prior to participating with OYCV.

Application Form

Any individual who is interested in becoming a volunteer for OYCV must complete an application form – see addenda A. Applicants must provide the organization with three business or professional references and three personal references that can be contacted during regularly scheduled business hours.

This form will be reviewed by the appropriate personnel of the organization and references are to be checked – see addenda B.

Should those personnel of OYCV feel that this individual has the potential to become a volunteer for the organization the individual may invited for an interview.

If the applicant subsequently is engaged by OYCV and it is found that a fraudulent or misleading statement has been made on the application they will be subject to instant dismissal.

Interview Procedure

Individuals who expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer for OYCV must have previously completed an application form which has been thoroughly reviewed and references checked.

Should OYCV consider an applicant a viable candidate, she or he may be asked to come to OYCV for an interview with the appropriate personnel.

On the applicant's arrival, and prior to the actual interview, the applicant will be given a questionnaire to complete – see addenda C.

Volunteers will not, normally, be allowed to assume their position prior to going through the orientation process unless with the express written permission of the Executive Director. Volunteers may not participate in any event involving youth prior to successfully undergoing a criminal background check unless they hold a professional licensure that requires a background check providing similar safeguards.

The interview process itself should include:

- Questions arising out of the application form
- A review of the completed questionnaire
- Further questions as to their motivation, skills, etc.
- Discussion of the volunteer opportunities matching them to the individual's skills
- Overview of the responsibilities of the volunteer as detailed in this manual including their responsibility to read the Volunteer Manual and abide by it should they be selected as a volunteer
- Opportunities for qualified volunteers in the future including training, etc.
- The requirement for a criminal background check and/or a drug test prior to bringing the applicant on board based on the position and at the sole discretion of the Executive Director
- Questions from the applicant
- A timetable for advising the applicant.
- Thanking them for their expressed interest.

Criminal Background Check

All applicants will be required to get a criminal background check. The cost of the test may be paid by OYCV or may be reimbursed to the applicant after a designated probation period as a volunteer at the sole discretion of the Executive Director and in accordance with OYCV policy or guidelines. OYCV reserves the right to conduct periodic, random, or scheduled follow-up criminal background checks on staff, Board members, or youth serving in volunteer roles.

Drug Testing

Based on the position that a volunteer applicant may fill and the discretion of the Executive Director, the applicant may be required to undergo a drug test at an approved facility paid by the applicant in accordance with OYCV policies OYCV reserves the right to conduct periodic, random, or scheduled drug screens of volunteers or staff at the discretion of the Executive Director or Board of Directors.

Orientation

Volunteer orientations will be held when necessary. An agenda (addenda D) and copy of the Volunteer Manual is to be given to each new volunteer that fully details any and all aspects of their engagement by OYCV – addenda I.

The volunteer will be required to date and sign a statement that indicates that they have received this manual and that it is their responsibility to read, understand and abide by all of the provisions therein – addenda J.

Subjects will include:

- The mission, vision, goals and values of OYCV
- Introduction to personnel
- The programs of the organization
- Review of the Volunteer Manual
- Questions and answers

Personnel File

The Executive Director shall maintain a file for each volunteer of OYCV as if such volunteer were an employee.

The file is to retain all information relevant to the application of and engagement of the volunteer to include:

- Application form
- Reference checks
- Criminal background check and/or drug test if relevant
- Questionnaire
- Performance reviews
- Disciplinary actions
- All other relevant information

Rights of Volunteers

Volunteers shall be accorded all of the rights that we, and they, are required to maintain with all of the other stakeholders at OYCV to include the Board of Directors, management, staff, contractors, guests and youth.

Some of these rights are detailed further on in this manual and are to include:

- The right of being treated professionally and with respect
- The right of receiving appropriate tasks and being properly trained in all of the aspects of their position
- The right of being given clear guidelines and instructions in the execution of their responsibilities
- The right to privacy
- The right to confidentiality
- The right to work in as reasonable a safe and secure environment as possible
- The right to be reviewed on a periodic basis and to have the opportunity to respond to their review
- The right to be considered for advanced training if they merit such
- The right to clearly understand any disciplinary action taken against them and an opportunity to respond to that action

Should a volunteer be subjected to a violation of the rights they are to be accorded by a staff member or another volunteer they can bring that violation to the attention of their direct superior by filing a grievance form – see addenda E.

Should a volunteer be subjected to a violation of the rights they are to be accorded by a member of management they can bring that violation to the attention of the Executive Director by filing a grievance form – see addenda E.

Should a volunteer be subjected to a violation of the rights they are to be accorded by the Executive Director they can bring that violation to the attention of the Board of Directors by filing a grievance form – see addenda E.

The same procedures would be utilized, with the same order of reporting, in the event that the volunteer has discovered a significant violation of OYCV rules and regulations, criminal behavior and/or malfeasance.

Volunteers are discouraged from utilizing this procedure for minor issues that might be problematic for them but are not relevant to the overall performance of OYVC.

Volunteers should expect that their grievance or reporting of a significant problem will be given a fair and balanced hearing and that they are entitled to a proper response.

Right to Privacy

It is the policy of OYCV to protect the privacy of all stakeholders in the organization and applicants for those positions for whom information is recorded or known.

The collection and recording of pre-engagement information will be limited to data OYCV believes to be essential to the volunteer application decision and is legally acceptable.

Information accumulated subsequent to engagement will be limited to data OYCV considers necessary for personnel administration.

Information contained in a volunteer's personnel file will be released to management only on a need-to-know basis. Information obtained from a volunteer's file will be kept confidential.

The release of information from a volunteer's file to persons or organizations outside of OYCV will be only permitted with the written authorization of the volunteer

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers, as are all other stakeholders in OYCV, are required to thoroughly read, understand and accept all of the responsibilities required of them. Volunteers should extend to all others the same rights, respect, courtesies, etc as they expect from them.

These responsibilities shall include:

- The responsibility of being dependable. If commitments can not be met proper notification must be made to the appropriate party.
- The responsibility of treating all stakeholders in OYCV professionally and with respect
- The responsibility to respect the privacy of others and maintain the confidentiality of others
- The responsibility to perform their tasks in an accurate and timely fashion
- The responsibility to adhere to all of the rules and regulations of OYCV
- The responsibility of accepting evaluations and disciplinary actions if warranted
- The responsibility of properly communicating with other stakeholders
- The responsibility of being an ambassador between OYCV and the community

Reporting

All volunteers will be assigned to an individual to whom they report as decided by the Executive Director. This individual may or may not be a part of management or staff at the sole discretion of the Executive Director.

Standards of Conduct

Standards of conduct exist in order to provide a safe and businesslike atmosphere in which to work. It is the volunteer's responsibility to be aware of the requirements so that conduct that could jeopardize their status, and that of others, does not occur.

- It is incumbent that each and every volunteer of OYCV protects and safeguards both the reputation and the assets of OYCV.
- It is also implicit that the youth come first. Our youth are our reason for being. At all times these individuals will be accorded the respect they are due.
- Inquiries and requests by youth are to be considered the most important task we have at that moment. If a response is required, or advisable, it must be prompt, thorough and accurate. If the information is not available in a reasonable period of time the individual should be contacted and advised at the earliest possible moment.
- We should only promise what we can deliver, and deliver what we promise.
- Volunteers should be punctual. Each volunteer will be assigned a work schedule which may be during regularly scheduled office hours or for special events.
- Volunteers should make every reasonable effort not to be absent from their responsibility or late without good cause. It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform their immediate supervisor or management directly of any absences or lateness – leaving a message with any other person is not considered as having given notification.
- Volunteers may not engage in activities that distract them, or others, from the performance of their responsibilities.
- All use of communications devices should be kept to a minimum unless it is of urgent importance.
- Computers are not for personal use.
- Volunteers may not solicit or collect money, or sell or distribute merchandise for any purpose while at OYCV without the express approval of management.
- The volunteer may not falsify any records or present any incomplete or misleading information.
- The storage, sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages at OYCV is strictly forbidden at any time with the exception of social events of OYCV where the use of alcoholic beverages by individuals of legal age, who are not youth/clients of the organization are sanctioned by OYCV.
- The same rule applies to narcotics, hypnotics, stimulants, hallucinogens, or any other drug that is not prescribed by a physician. The proper use of over-the-counter medications is exempted from this requirement.
- No tobacco products, in any form, are to be used at OYCV.
- No firearms or weapons of any sort shall be brought onto OYCV property or to OYCV events at any location.
- The volunteer is subject to instant dismissal, penalty and/or prosecution for the deliberate taking or damaging of OYCV property or property belonging to any other individual. Volunteers are not permitted to remove any OYCV property from OYCV premises, for any purpose, including those that are work related without the express written authorization of management.

- Any act of a volunteer that is in violation of any and all criminal codes, Federal, State or Municipal, will be grounds for instant discharge and/or referral to public authorities for prosecution.

Conflicts of Interest

Under no circumstances is the volunteer to act in behalf of any other agency or enterprise in their actions or activities while being a volunteer at OYCV that could in any manner be construed as a detriment to OYCV whether in respect to the reputation of OYCV or the financial resources of OYCV.

Any representations made by a volunteer are not to be, in any manner, for their personal gain or for the gain of relatives, friends and other close associates.

This policy will be monitored and documented on an annual basis by the Legal Counsel.

Whistleblower Policy

All stakeholders of the organization must be constantly aware of how their actions and/or decisions impact the financial viability of the organization and set an outstanding example of prudence and a vigilant eye towards waste or other misuse of the assets of the organization.

Any indication that there are acts and/or decisions by any stakeholder in the organization that could negatively impact either that financial viability or the reputation of the organization must be brought immediately to the attention of the proper authority.

Stakeholders should not consider themselves either an investigative arm of the organization or render judgment as incidences or potential problems arise. It is their sole responsibility to make the proper authority aware of any instance that might require further action.

Proper authority shall be construed as to being the individual to whom the person suspected of possible improper behavior reports to, legal counsel for the organization, or any member of the executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

No retaliatory action will be taken against any stakeholder that reports legitimate concerns of the organization to the proper authority.

Confidentiality Code

All information attained about any stakeholders of OYCV, whether it be the Board of Directors, management, staff, other volunteers and especially youth and whether this information was received at OYCV or outside of OYCV is to be strictly confidential.

Any and all inquiries must be forwarded to the Executive Director. This shall include inquiries as to the identities, personal information, contact information, attendance at events, or any other information regarding personnel of OYCV, volunteers at OYCV and youth at OYCV.

Should the volunteer have any question as to the appropriateness of the question they should respond: "I am not in a position to be able to respond to your inquiry. Let me get you into contact with our Executive Director."

Risk Management

In the course of events, relevant to the activities of OYCV, whether at the OYCV facility or at events in which OYCV participates, incidents and accidents will occur.

While many would seem to be insignificant, they often have residual effects. As this is a highly litigious society it is incumbent upon all stakeholders in OYCV to follow the proper policy and procedures in dealing with the incident or accident to protect OYCV.

An Incident/Accident report (addenda F) shall be completed by a staff member of OYCV taking into account the relating of the particulars of the event by the individual who has experienced the event and any witnesses to the event. That report shall be given directly to the Executive Director at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

Dress Code

All volunteers are expected to dress in a professional, businesslike and appropriate manner whenever at OYCV or at OYCV related activities whether or not they are, at that time, engaged in activities of OYCV.

The Executive Director, or person in charge of a specific event, can, at their sole discretion, specify specific attire.

Communications Code

All volunteers are expected to communicate in a professional and businesslike manner whenever at OYCV or at OYCV related activities whether or not they are, at that time, engaged in activities of OYCV.

Communications Procedure

Any and all inquiries from persons not directly affiliated to OYCV either as an employee of OYCV or as a member of the Board of Directors shall be responded to only if it directly pertains to the programs of OYCV, the scheduling of fund-raising events, other events open to the public and volunteer opportunities.

Any and all other inquiries must be forwarded to the Executive Director. This shall include inquiries as to personnel of OYCV, volunteers at OYCV and youth of OYCV.

Should the volunteer have any question as to the appropriateness of the question they should respond: "I am not in a position to be able to respond to your inquiry. Let me get you into contact with our Executive Director."

Advanced Training

It may be advantageous to OYCV that a volunteer, to further enhance their knowledge or skills, be requested to attend an education program or any such educational endeavor as OYCV deems advisable.

To be eligible for such a program the volunteer must be in good standing with OYCV as determined solely at the discretion of the Executive Director.

OYCV will remit any and all direct expenses such as fees, books, extraordinary travel expenses or other reasonable and necessary costs incurred by the volunteer or the program providing that:

1. The volunteer has been requested by OYCV or OYCV has approved, in writing, the volunteers request to attend an educational opportunity;
2. The volunteer has been pre-approved for the expenses incurred;
3. The volunteer will be a volunteer in good standing on the completion of the opportunity; and
4. The volunteer has successfully completed the requirements of the educational opportunity and has submitted written evidence thereof if available.

Evaluation Procedure

Volunteers will be considered on probation for the first three months of volunteering with OYCV.

After that initial period volunteers will be reviewed annually on the anniversary of their starting date with OYCV.

Evaluations shall be in writing with the volunteer being afforded the opportunity to respond both verbally and in writing – see addenda G.

Volunteers shall be rated on performance as follows:

- Outstanding – superior performance, exceeding their peer group
- Excellent – exceeds the expected level of performance
- Satisfactory – fulfills criteria requisites but does not additionally contribute
- Below average – shows the capability but does not meet the minimal expectations; must improve their performance within a stated period of time, and, will be re-evaluated at that time
- Not acceptable – the volunteer is either not capable of or not motivated to meet the minimal standards for the criteria. Their position may be terminated.

Criteria for evaluation and review will include:

- Learning – Ability to learn and grasp instructions
- Job knowledge – of procedures and quality standards
- Job skills – technical, professional or clerical
- Performance – accuracy of work and quantity of work produced
- Motivation – personal ambition and dedication as evidenced by hard work, an inquiring mind and continuing self-improvement
- Reliability – follow through on instructions and work with minimal supervision
- Dependability – attendance and observance of scheduled hours
- Flexibility – ability to respond rapidly and appropriately to changing requirements including hours
- Cooperation – willingness to help out with staff members and other volunteers as workloads and requirements fluctuate
- Initiative – ability to respond to situations without supervisor initiating

Recognition Policy

OYCV will develop a recognition policy for volunteers which will be a later inclusion in this manual.

Disciplinary Action

Regrettably, at times, volunteers are in violation of the rules and/or regulations of OYCV or of the standards of conduct expected of them.

OYCV reserves the right to take the necessary disciplinary action as it deems responsive and reasonable as relevant to the particular violation or violations.

The disciplinary actions OYCV may take are to include, but are not exclusively limited to:

1. Verbal warning
2. Written warning
3. Suspension
4. Termination

OYCV reserves the right to bypass all warnings and/or suspension if the violation is considered to be extremely serious or deliberate.

All disciplinary actions will be properly documented (addenda H) with the volunteer being made fully aware of the causes of such action and their ability to respond, in writing, to same.

If a volunteer disagrees with a disciplinary action taken, the volunteer may appeal the decision by submitting a written objection to the action to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors within 10 days of notice of the disciplinary action.

Amendments

OYCV warrants that we have the right to amend the rules and regulations of OYCV at any time in order to protect OYCV and that disciplinary action may be made not exclusively on the basis of the Volunteer Manual in order to reasonably protect OYCV.