

Volunteer Policy

Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society



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1.0 The Volunteer Program

1.1 Introduction

The Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society (hereafter known as the Society) has a long and rich history of support provided by its volunteers. Volunteers are essential to the entire operation of the Society from the Board of Directors through to the kitchen helpers and animators. The success of the Society and its operation of a heritage village and archives are directly linked to a strong, vibrant and satisfied team of volunteers. Volunteers are critical to the achievement of the Society's strategic vision for every visitor to the "Village" to leave having made a personal, positive connection with a knowledgeable "Villager" (defined as volunteers and staff of the Society). As such, the Society is committed to recognizing and supporting the involvement and contribution of volunteers in assisting in the overall fulfillment of the Society's mandate.

1.2 Policy Purpose

This volunteer policy provides a framework for the volunteer program: the recruitment, development, deployment, protection and benefit of volunteers as part of the Society. It ensures a structured and mutually beneficial volunteer program, supporting volunteers in their significant contributions while also ensuring volunteers benefit from a rewarding experience.

This policy and the relationship between volunteers and the Society does not create a legally binding contract. The Society reserves the right to change this policy and any other policies that impact on volunteering at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy once this is communicated to volunteers. Any exceptions from this policy may only be granted after consultation by the Executive Director with the Board of Directors.

1.3 Policy Scope

Unless specifically stated, this policy applies to all Society volunteers. Exceptions of specific points and procedures related to volunteers that make up the Society's Board of Directors have been noted.

1.4 Volunteering Definitions

Orientation: providing information to a volunteer about the program they will be involved in; providing them with the rules and regulations and the code of conduct. (Source: Volunteer Canada)

Screening: an ongoing process designed to identify any person who may harm participants or the organization. Screening protects participants and ensures the right people take on responsibilities that suit them best. (Source: Volunteer Canada)

Training: a learning process, during which time an individual is taught specific skills which will assist them in performing their duties. (Source: Volunteer Canada)

Volunteering: the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. It is the act of offering one's time, energy and skills of one's own free will. (Source: Volunteer Canada)

Volunteer: a person who freely chooses to give their time and skills, without financial remuneration, to help advance the mandate of the Society and its programs.

1.5 Volunteer Coordination

A productive and mutually beneficial volunteer program requires a planned and organized effort. The Executive Director shall have overall responsibility to supervise, schedule and otherwise manage all volunteer activity. All volunteers, with the exception of the Board of Directors, are accountable to the Executive Director for their activities in relation to their involvement with the operation of the Society, Memory Lane Heritage Village and the Eastern Shore Archives. Volunteers are ultimately responsible to the membership of the Society as represented by the Board of Directors.

On a day-to-day basis, volunteers report to their designated Volunteer Stream Lead (e.g., Head Cook, Facilities Manager), or in the absence of such, the Executive Director. The Executive Director may delegate authority to another staff member or senior volunteer as the individual responsible for particular tasks or projects.

All staff and volunteers are expected to work together in an atmosphere of positive collaboration to achieve the goals of the Society.

1.6 Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

The Society adheres to Volunteer Canada's Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement's guiding principles which aim to keep relationships between organizations and volunteers reciprocal and mutually beneficial.

The Society recognizes volunteers have the following rights:

- To be given meaningful volunteer work
- To be treated as equal co-workers
- To be supported by effective supervision
- To full involvement and participation
- To recognition for work done

The Society is committed to ensuring effective volunteer involvement and providing a safe and supportive environment for volunteers.

In return, volunteers make a commitment and are accountable to the Society, agreeing to:

- Actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities
- Follow Society policies and procedures
- Act with respect for the Society, its mandate, staff and other volunteers, stakeholders, visitors and the community
- Carry out their involvement responsibly and with integrity

1.7 Who Can Volunteer

Employees as Volunteers

The Society gratefully accepts the services of staff as volunteers where staff wish to further contribute to the Society through volunteering. The Society will not coerce staff to volunteer and there will be no expectation that staff also volunteer. An expression of desire to volunteer should come from the staff member themselves, rather than being asked if they would volunteer. Any volunteering undertaken by staff should, ideally, be outside the scope of their normal duties and should be outside of usual working hours. Should staff choose to volunteer, all policies, procedures, recognition and rewards will apply to them when volunteering (i.e. they will be treated as volunteers when volunteering).

Right to Work

Non-Canadians, including international students, do not need a work permit to volunteer for the Society as long as they are not being remunerated (apart from reimbursement for expenses) and their volunteering is incidental to their reason for being in Canada. A

stipulation to this is that the volunteer is not filling a placement position that is intended to be part of a student's course of study.

Employment Insurance

People receiving EI may volunteer without this affecting what they receive as long as there is no remuneration in exchange for volunteer work (apart from reimbursement for expenses) and the hours involved are limited. There is no set limit to the number of volunteer hours someone receiving EI can work, however, a presumption of non-availability would arise if someone is spending a significant number of hours completing volunteer work, especially if little or no time is left to seek employment. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to check that they meet any conditions that come with the particular benefits they receive.

Volunteers Under 19

Volunteers who are under the age of 19 will be required to provide written consent from a parent or legal guardian to join the Youth Volunteer Program. They may be limited in the type of tasks they can carry out and the Executive Director and Volunteer Stream Leads will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate support and child protection measures are in place.

All youth volunteers under the age of 12 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult (19+ years old) at all times. The supervising adult is responsible for the youth's safety at all times. Youth volunteers aged 12 and 13 may be able to volunteer at the Village without adult accompaniment - this will be determined on an individual basis based on the youth's level of maturity. Youth volunteers between 14 and 18 may volunteer without adult accompaniment.

1.8 Scope of Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers are welcomed to contribute in all areas and activities of the Society, and serve at all levels of skill and decision-making. Volunteers should not, however, be utilized to displace any paid employees from their positions.

1.9 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The Society is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and welcomes volunteers with a diversity of backgrounds, opinions and abilities, as this diversity is reflective of our community, and will strengthen the Society's ties and relevance to the community. All prospective volunteers will be equally considered regardless of personal attributes such as race, religion, cultural background, gender and age.

Where reasonable adjustments or additional support are required to enable an individual to volunteer, measures will be put in place to the best of the Society's ability within the limitations of the physical environment of the Heritage Village. Volunteering opportunities will be publicized through a variety of channels to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to get involved.

The Society does not allow discrimination of visitors, staff or other volunteers in any way. Discrimination occurs when a person is treated in a manner which, either intentionally or not, results in that person suffering adverse consequences because of their race, colour, religion or creed, age, sex, marital status, physical or mental disability, national or ethnic or aboriginal origin, or any other grounds of discrimination prohibited by provincial legislation.

2.0 Volunteer Management Procedures

2.1 Maintenance of Records

A system of records will be maintained on each Society volunteer, including personal information captured through the Volunteer Expression of Interest and Volunteer Registration Forms (e.g. email address, emergency contact), dates of service, roles and duties performed, training undertaken and annual check-in notes. Volunteers and appropriate staff will be responsible for submitting all records and information to the Executive Director or other designated individual in a timely and accurate fashion. Volunteer records will be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

The majority of volunteer records will be maintained in a bespoke volunteer digital database; however, some paper records may be maintained. For information related to data protection as it relates to volunteer records, please see section 2.5.

The recording of volunteer hours is of particular importance as several government agencies, particularly the CMAP program, require annual reports on the level of volunteer engagement. Volunteer hours and their associated valuation are also often included as part of grant applications as a demonstration of the importance of the Society to the community. Volunteer hours should be recorded on the Volunteer Tracking Sheets located at the Hosking Store (kept by the Storekeeper); the Cookhouse; the Bar and the Archives.

2.2 Two Hat Policy

Members of the Society's Board of Directors are welcome to undertake other volunteering roles with the Society and the Society gratefully recognizes that this is reflective of the approach to volunteering across LCAHS where many volunteers wear many different hats.

2.3 Conflict of Interest

The Society has adopted the Canadian Museum Association's Code of Ethics document in its entirety. This document is available for review on the Society's website under About > Volunteers & Membership. A copy is also available for review in the Hosking Store offices and can also be emailed upon request.

In particular, volunteers should review section L which, to summarize, explains personal conduct around conflict of interest. Volunteers should avoid conflict of interest situations such as when making donations of artifacts or archives to the Society, or when negotiating donations of artifacts from potential donors. It is entirely unethical for a volunteer to take advantage of a visitor's generosity for their own personal or family gain. Volunteers should disclose any affiliations to partners or businesses that may allow for a conflict of interest, such as a business receiving financial gain from the Society. Volunteers must recuse themselves from any position of power or decision making if there is a real or perceived conflict of interest.

2.4 Representation of the Society

Volunteers are the Society's greatest ambassadors and the Society appreciates the valuable work volunteers do in spreading the word about the Society, the Heritage Village and archives, and various events, projects, and programs. However, volunteers do not have the authority to represent the Society, make contracts for the Society or make any other commitment on its behalf, unless they are a member of the Board of Directors or have consent from the Board of Directors and/or the Executive Director to do so.

2.5 Data Protection

While a volunteer does not have the same protections and legal status that an employee has, the reasons for collecting and making use of the data of volunteers who undertake unpaid work for the Society are similar to those for paid employees. The Society's Privacy Policy outlines how personal data are used, the rights of the volunteer, and how those rights can be applied.

2.6 Information Security & Confidentiality

Consideration should be given to the information volunteers are able to access and whether the level of access is proportionate. Volunteers will receive information security training as part of their orientation and are expected to maintain the confidentiality of any sensitive data that they may encounter, including personal information related to staff, other volunteers and visitors or event attendees. Failure to maintain confidentiality will be taken very seriously and may result in concluding the volunteer's relationship with the Society depending on the severity and/or regularity of data breach.

Where possible volunteers accessing Society databases will be provided with their own log-in details, which should be obtained from the Executive Director.

2.7 Worksite

The Society will provide appropriate worksites for the various volunteer roles which will contain the necessary facilities, equipment, and space to enable volunteers to perform their duties effectively and comfortably. Volunteers may use their own equipment and materials - further information on this can be found in Section 6.3.

2.8 Volunteer Safety

The Society is committed to the safety of all volunteers working within the Memory Lane Heritage Village site while also recognizing that many volunteer roles inherently involve some element of risk. Volunteers are expected to follow the Society's health and safety procedures. All general health and safety issues and procedures will be included in the orientation volunteers receive. Volunteers will also receive health and safety training in relation to the specific tasks they carry out and will be expected to read and sign all relevant risk assessments. Volunteers who have concerns or questions relating to health and safety should raise these with either the Executive Director or the designated Health & Safety Officer (Facilities Manager). It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to review the work of volunteers, ensuring that they understand the risks involved and that they have taken reasonable precautions to avoid injury.

Safety Principles

1. All youth volunteers age 11 and under must be supervised by a designated and accompanying adult volunteer at all times, who will ensure that the youth(s) are always within their sight.
2. Youth volunteers aged 12 and 13 may be able to volunteer at the Village without adult accompaniment - this will be determined on an individual basis based on the youth's level of maturity.
3. Youth volunteers between the ages of 14 and 18 may volunteer at the Village without adult accompaniment provided they have advance permission of the Executive Director and their parent/legal guardian has signed the Youth Volunteer Waiver included in the Youth Registration Form.
4. All volunteers accompanied by a youth between the ages of 12 and 18 are responsible for the youth's safety, even when the youth is not within their sight.
5. Volunteers who participate in activities that are potentially hazardous, such as bike riding, cooking, wood chopping, and operating mechanical equipment, participate at their own risk and should ensure that they have received proper training, are confident in what they are doing, and understand the risks.
6. Volunteers operating heavy machinery and equipment will request or find a "buddy" to be with them during this time to ensure the safety of the volunteer and the public.
7. Society workers (staff and volunteers) shall take a proactive approach to all ascents, seeking affirmation from the volunteer that they are confident and comfortable in any ascent being attempted. Society workers will assist with all ascents (holding ladder, etc.) and will encourage fellow workers to always use regulation steps to reach heights and not other devices such as a chair.
8. When ascending a height of more than 2 meters volunteers must have prior approval from the Facilities Manager or Executive Director. As a general rule, volunteers will not ascend a height of more than 2 metres without a fall harness although there may be exceptions agreed in advance for certain experienced volunteers and for certain tasks such as putting up Christmas lights. In compliance with Nova Scotia Safety Standards, any ascent over 3 meters (10ft) must use a fall harness.
9. Volunteers will not work in confined spaces without approval from the Executive Director or in the company of the Facilities Manager.
10. No volunteer will carry out electrical work that affects the existing electrical system unless approved by the Executive Director and a member of the Board of Directors. Volunteers carrying out electrical work should hold a qualification in this area.
11. No volunteer may start or tend a fire in any of the stoves unless they have been specifically trained and authorized to do so by the Executive Director.

12. Volunteers will be made familiar with the location of first aid boxes, fire extinguishers, eye wash stations, emergency kits and muster stations.
13. Volunteers must have special permission to operate any of the Village's vehicles, must hold a valid driver's license, must be over 25 years in age (applies to truck & car but not the tractor), and must have received training on how to drive the antique vehicles.
14. Visitor safety is paramount and should not be compromised for any reason. Volunteers must consider that visitors may not be aware of, or able to identify, potential safety issues such as burns from woodstoves, smoke and steam from the steam box, butts from sheep, and fall hazards from the low balcony. A volunteer is obliged to point out any behavior that may cause injury to a visitor or a fellow worker (volunteer or staff).

2.9 Dress Code

As representatives of the Society, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to visitors and to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties making particular note to ensure that clothing and shoes are suitable for any maintenance tasks (e.g. no open-toed shoes if operating machinery) and are suitable for the weather as the Heritage Village is an open-air site and most volunteers will be outside for at least a portion of their time volunteering.

Animation volunteers - responsible for bringing the Village alive by dressing in period clothing and interacting with the buildings, artifacts, and visitors - will adhere to the separate Animator Policy and Animator Costume and Research Guidelines.

2.10 Volunteer Valuation

Financial valuation of volunteer hours contributed (for the purposes of grant applications etc.) will be valued at two dollars above minimum wage for general volunteering, as most volunteers are more skilled in their work than an entry-level employee.

More specialized skills should be valued at fair market value. For example, if the market rate for hiring a carpenter on a contract basis in the local area is \$20/hr, then this is the value used. In all cases, the valuation should be reasonable and defensible in the event of an audit by Revenue Canada or any of the Society's funding partners. In the case of more expensive hourly rates for professional services such as legal, surveying, design, project management, bookkeeping, or computer programming, evidence of the individuals' usual hourly rates, or the market rate for such services, should be provided. This could be in the

form of an invoice for similar services to a separate organization, or in a letter to the Treasurer of the Society specifying the individuals' usual hourly rates.

Where an individual is providing services which might have different hourly rates, then an average rate should be used. The designated rates should be proposed by the Treasurer of the Society to the Board of Directors for their approval. This rate will then be used for any transaction between the individual and the Society that might involve invoicing and the issuing of a charitable donation tax receipt.

3.0 Volunteer Recruitment & Selection

3.1 Role Descriptions

Volunteers, just as paid staff, require a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the role which they are expected to fill. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a description must be developed for each volunteer role. Role descriptions will be utilized as part of volunteer support, supervision and evaluation efforts. Role descriptions should be reviewed and updated, if necessary, at least every two years, or whenever the work involved in the role changes substantially. All role descriptions will include a description of the purpose and duties of the role, a designated Volunteer Stream Lead and worksite, time commitment required, and a list of desirable knowledge, skills, qualities and experience. Each role description will have an associated risk assessment.

Every effort will be made to maximize the different strengths and interests of the Society's volunteers. The Society recognizes that any amount of time given by a volunteer is valuable and that volunteering should inspire individuals to participate, rather than feel like participation is an obligation.

All volunteers are equally important, but they are divided into different groups because of the jobs they do, and the specific arrangements made with them as part of their volunteer commitment.

General Volunteers

These volunteers may be required to wear a costume, but often they will be behind the scenes and not viewed by the public. General volunteering encompasses many areas of volunteer involvement (which the Society calls Volunteer Streams) including Maintenance, Event Help, Cookhouse & Kitchen Help, Admin & Organizational Support, and

Communications & Marketing. They may volunteer at home (like sewing or transcribing) or assist with special events, weddings, and one-time projects.

Animator/Guide Volunteers

Animators are volunteers who dress in period clothing and have learned to portray a “character” such as a schoolteacher in the school or a fisherman in the fisherman’s store. They may also have trained to be a greeter or a guide. Animators are required to learn how to interpret the Village, demonstrate traditional skills, or impart specific information and knowledge to groups including school children and seniors. Animators will be on a path of continuous learning, as interpretive elements change and improve.

Archives & Collections Volunteers

Archives and collections volunteers are trained in all aspects of using and working with the collections. Archives volunteers will have signed a confidentiality agreement and may have received specialized training through the Council of Nova Scotia Archives or archives staff. Collections volunteers will have learned how to care for and handle artifacts, to use cataloguing standards and will understand the code of ethics around the processes of collecting. They will have received training from the Executive Director and may have participated in workshops presented by the Association of Nova Scotia Museums or similar professional organizations. Archives and collections volunteers will be on a path of continuous learning as technology and best practices standards are often revised.

One-Time Volunteers

One-time volunteers are generally not part of the Society’s volunteer database. They are usually recruited to help with a special event by a participating partner, such as the Antique Car Show Committee or the Ship Modelers Guild. Often these volunteers will bring something tangible that is part of the attraction of the event, such as models to display. They are recognized on the day they volunteer, but are not recognized with full volunteer recognition. One-time volunteers, however, may become general volunteers over time.

Detailed role descriptions can be found in the appendices.

3.2 Recruitment

Volunteers are recruited through various channels including: call for applications via newsletter, website, and social media; word of mouth; youth volunteer program; partner organizations; recruitment posters in the community and advertising in local papers; and information and taster volunteer events. Volunteers are recruited by the Society on a proactive basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community.

The first stage of recruiting a volunteer is the receipt of an Expression of Interest Form (included in the appendices). Data from this form will be entered into the volunteer leads portion of the volunteer database and the volunteer screening process will begin.

3.3 Screening

Upon receipt of an Expression of Interest Form, prospective volunteers will be contacted for an informal chat to better understand their volunteering goals, skills, and level of commitment as well as answer any questions the prospective volunteer might have about the Society, volunteer program and associated volunteering opportunities. If it is agreed to move forward with the volunteering relationship, a Volunteer Registration Form will be completed and data captured via this form will be entered into the volunteer database. This informal chat may be conducted in person, on the phone or via video call, whatever the prospective volunteer's preference.

Depending upon the volunteering role and the likelihood of unsupervised volunteer contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the volunteer may be asked for permission for a Criminal Records Check or a Nova Scotia Child Abuse Register search to be completed. For those volunteers who have a Check or Search undertaken in relation to their volunteering role, the result and the date the Check or Search was conducted will be recorded in the volunteer database. Criminal Records Checks and Nova Scotia Child Abuse Register searches will be updated for volunteers every five years.

All prospective volunteers under the age of 19 will require a parent or legal guardian to sign their Youth Volunteer Registration Form. Volunteers age 11 and under or 12-13 with identified need for supervision require an adult (19+) to volunteer with them.

Once both the prospective volunteer and the Executive Director or staff member with delegated authority to progress volunteer applications are agreed that the volunteering opportunity is a good fit, a Volunteer Agreement will be signed. This will set out the rights and expectations of each party but is not intended to create a contract. A Volunteer Agreement Template can be found in the appendices.

As standard, the Society does not require references to be taken up for volunteer positions. Exceptions to this may include members of the Board of Directors or for specialized roles.

3.4 Placement

In placing a volunteer in a role, attention shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the volunteer position.

Unless a specific role is required of a volunteer (archives / collections / animator) tasks will be posted as available on the private Facebook Group and via email. Volunteers can choose to pursue a request for volunteering or pass, they are under no obligation to volunteer other than when they are willing and able.

3.5 Probationary Check-in

While there is no official probationary period for volunteers with the Society, new volunteers should have an informal check-in with either the Executive Director or staff member with delegated authority for volunteer coordination within the first three months of starting to volunteer. This check-in should be a simple, quick chat to determine if the new volunteer is settling in and enjoying their volunteering and may be conducted in person when the volunteer is already at the Village or over the phone. For those volunteering less regularly (e.g. event help volunteers) a follow-up should be conducted after their first volunteering shift to confirm they are interested in further volunteering and happy to continue in their role or explore any interest in other roles available.

3.6 Professional Services

Volunteers will not perform any professional services for which certification or licensing is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. Examples include acting as legal representation for the Society or as the Society's accountant. A copy of such certificate or license should be maintained as part of the volunteer's record.

4.0 Volunteer Training & Development

4.1 Orientation

All new volunteers will receive a general orientation which will cover the Society, Heritage Village, archives and their purpose and mandate, the volunteer program and the role of volunteers within the Society, health and safety, risk assessments, and relevant policies and procedures. Orientation will also include a tour of the Village - both public facing and behind the scenes spaces - to ensure new volunteers are comfortable with the worksite.

Orientation for adult volunteers will usually take place in May ahead of the Village opening for the summer season but additional orientation events may be organized at other points through the year to coincide with additional volunteer recruitment periods. Orientation for youth volunteers will generally take place in June to support young people volunteering

over the summer vacation period. Orientation materials will be available for volunteers to review at home throughout the year should they be unable to join an orientation.

All new volunteers will receive a copy of the Volunteer Handbook, Volunteer Policy, a Visitor Guide, and additional training material depending on their area of interest.

A training record for all volunteers will be maintained and orientation will be included in this record.

4.2 Training

Training for specific tasks is taken care of on a more individual basis with the Executive Director, Volunteer Stream Lead or another staff member or experienced volunteer taking on the responsibility of delivering on-the-job training to provide volunteers with the information and skills necessary. The timing and methods for delivery of such training will be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the role/task and the capabilities of the volunteer. The most effective method of training is to use a job shadow/buddy system. Training for specific special events is provided ahead of the event along with a written procedure for what the job entails. Volunteers will also be made aware of training resources such as slide packs and videos which they can make use of when and where it is convenient for them.

Due to constricted budgets, outside training of volunteers can be limited from year to year. However, the Society periodically organizes and pays for Food Handlers certification for all willing volunteers. Similarly, the Society will compensate for First Aid training for volunteers who have a long-standing record of volunteering at special events and during group tours. Workshops provided by the Council of Nova Scotia Archives and the Association of Nova Scotia Museums, as well as by tourism marketing organizations are also subsidized as budgets allow. Volunteers interested in further training are encouraged to request assistance from the Society.

4.3 Staff & Volunteer Involvement in Orientation & Training

Volunteer Stream Leads with responsibility for delivering different areas of operation (e.g. facilities and maintenance, Cookhouse, communications and marketing) should have an active role in the design and delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers. Volunteer Stream Leads and those staff who will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers will have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to their area of work with support from the Executive Director or staff member with delegated authority for volunteer coordination. Experienced volunteers should be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training.

4.4 Continuing Learning & Development

The Society encourages and aims to empower volunteers to improve their skills and knowledge during their time volunteering. While training opportunities and resources will be made available, the Society is also extremely grateful for any efforts volunteers make on their own to learn more about coastal rural life on the Eastern Shore during the 1940s and will support these efforts however it can.

The Society is also looking to develop in 2024 a volunteer mentorship program connecting volunteers with lived experience and knowledge of traditional skills and crafts with volunteers interested in learning these skills and crafts in order to support knowledge transfer.

5.0 Volunteer Supervision & Evaluation

5.1 Volunteer Stream Leads

Each volunteer will have a clearly identified Volunteer Stream Lead (e.g. Head Cook, Facilities Manager, Communications Manager). The Volunteer Stream Lead will be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and will be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. In some instances, a volunteer's Volunteer Stream Lead may be the Executive Director. If a volunteer has multiple roles, they may have multiple Volunteer Stream Leads if they are involved in different streams of volunteering. An experienced volunteer may act as a deputy for a Volunteer Stream Lead in their absence.

5.2 Annual Check-in

A volunteer check-in will be held annually in March/April ahead of the summer season. This check-in will take the form of a questionnaire asking volunteers about how their volunteering has been going, interest in other roles/projects, training needs, concerns and/or suggestions etc. Volunteers will also be extended an invitation to meet with the Executive Director or member of staff with delegated authority for volunteer coordination if they would prefer this over completing the questionnaire. The meeting may be held in person, over the phone or via video call, whatever the volunteer's preference. The check-in (either via survey or by other means) is not mandatory.

5.3 Taking on a New Role

Volunteers who wish to take on a new role will receive all appropriate training for the role before or as soon as is practicable upon starting to deliver tasks and duties associated with the role. In addition, any screening procedures appropriate for the new position, such as a Criminal Records Check, must be completed before beginning in the new role, even if the volunteer has already been working as a volunteer with the Society.

5.4 Volunteer/Staff Respect

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in delivering the mission and activities of the Society, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential for the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

Creative, positive and otherwise appropriate interactions between Society staff and volunteers are encouraged. All staff and volunteers are expected to work together in an atmosphere of positive collaboration.

5.5 Staff Volunteer Management Training

An orientation on working with volunteers will be provided to all staff. Staff who are more highly involved with volunteer coordination and feel they would benefit from additional volunteer management training are encouraged to speak to the Executive Director about this as part of their training needs. As with all training needs, the Society encourages and supports staff to undertake ongoing self-learning and recommends resources available on the Volunteer Canada website: volunteer.ca

5.6 Lines of Communication

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their responsibilities and tasks. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in, and have access to, all appropriate communications, materials, and meetings relevant to their role. The main channels used to communicate with volunteers are Mailchimp mail-outs, private Facebook group, Google Forms and individual emails, text messages and phone calls. Staff should be mindful when communicating with the volunteer pool at large, or groups of volunteers, that a number of volunteers do not have email or Facebook access. Primary responsibility for task related communications will rest with the Volunteer Streams Leads. Responsibility for other communications will rest with the Executive Director or staff member with delegated responsibility for volunteer coordination.

Lines of communication should operate in both directions, and should exist both formally and informally. Volunteers should have access to an anonymous communication channel such as a suggestion/complaint box.

Volunteers should be consulted regarding all decisions which would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

5.7 Volunteer Feedback

Feedback from volunteers is important to the Board of Directors and Management of the Society and Heritage Village and always gratefully received. The Executive Director seeks input and suggestions on an ongoing basis throughout the year. For example, after new programming for schools or after a tour has been undertaken, the Executive Director or a designate will do a debrief with the volunteers in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Similarly, after events a written or verbal evaluation is carried out with volunteers in order to ascertain improvements. Volunteers are periodically surveyed for input on improving volunteering at the Heritage Village and visitor experience and are encouraged to use the suggestion box if they would prefer to give feedback anonymously.

5.8 Communication with Youth Volunteers

It is critical to the success of the Youth Volunteer Program that Society staff are able to engage and communicate with youth volunteers effectively and safely.

Young people 12-18 may be communicated with directly (e.g. via social media or cell phone) although parents/legal guardians should be copied in on any communications using channels where this is possible. Communications to youth volunteers 11 and under should always go through the parent/legal guardian.

Communication should not take place with youth volunteers between the hours of 9pm and 7am or on staff members' days off, unless in an emergency. Note this does not mean staff have to be available to youth volunteers at all other times. Youth volunteers should also note that, while staff will exercise appropriate discretion in dealing with the substance of communication, they cannot promise confidentiality. An effective way to speak about sensitive matters with youth is to give options. For example, "If we get to a point where I think it would be important for your parents to know this, I'll give you some options. You can tell them. I can tell them. Or, we can do it together. Does that sound ok?"

Breaches of the guidelines included in this policy point will be taken very seriously and may result in termination of employment.

Consent Forms

Parents/legal guardians will be given the option to consent to the following in the media release/consent form included as part of the Youth Registration Form:

- Official use of photos of children/young people taken during the course of their volunteering used in publications, on the Society's Facebook and Instagram accounts, website and displays.
- Young people to have email contact with staff in accordance with the guidelines included here.
- Young people to make and receive calls and texts to and from staff in accordance with the guidelines included here.
- Young people to connect with staff via social media in accordance with the guidelines included here.

Emails

- Once permission is given via the Youth Registration Form, staff can hold and access email addresses for youth volunteers in the volunteer database.
- Staff should only email youth volunteers using their work account and not personal email accounts.
- Emails should be short and should usually be a one-off communication to arrange a volunteering shift/task or remind youth volunteers to attend an event.
- Conversations of significance should not be had over email. Staff should arrange to meet one-to-one with a youth volunteer if the young person would like to talk.
- If an email raises any child protection or safety concerns, the staff member must raise the issue with the Executive Director. Examples of concerns might include neglect, abuse or self-harm.

Phone Calls/Texting

- Once permission is given via the Youth Registration Form, staff can hold cell phone numbers of youth volunteers. Ideally, only work cell phones will be used to contact youth volunteers. Any phone numbers of youth volunteers held in personal cell phones must be deleted at the end of every summer season.
- Text communication should be short and should usually be a one-off communication to arrange a volunteering shift/task or remind youth volunteers to attend an event. When possible, staff should use a group text that includes another staff member.
- Staff should use an appropriate tone; friendly, but not over-familiar or personal. While communications should be warm and friendly, they should not suggest or offer a special relationship.

- Conversations of significance should not be had over text. Staff should arrange to meet one-to-one with a youth volunteer if the young person would like to talk.
- Staff can have phone calls with young people, but these should be kept short. If a disclosure is made that raises a safeguarding concern, verbatim notes should be made as soon as possible. Staff must raise the issue with the Executive Director as soon as possible.

Social Media

- Staff should not befriend, follow or be followed by youth volunteers. All staff using social media sites should set their privacy settings accordingly and check them periodically.
- If youth volunteers form their own social media groups, adults should not join these groups.
- Staff **and volunteers** cannot be friends with or follow a youth volunteer under 19 on any social media platform where their contact has been established through their role as a staff member or volunteer. Once a youth volunteer reaches age 19, it is then the volunteer or staff member's choice whether to be friends with or follow them.
- The Society's official social media accounts should not follow youth volunteers' accounts.
- Youth volunteers age 13 and over can join Society Facebook groups. Groups must be closed/private and be monitored by at least two staff members who have admin rights.
- Staff **and volunteers** should not connect with youth volunteers on anonymous apps such as Snapchat, WhatsApp, YikYak, Whisper, Kik etc. where their contact has been established through their role as a staff member or volunteer. This is due to the lack of accountability and ability to retain records of communications on these apps.
- Staff **and volunteers** should not subscribe to any youth volunteer's YouTube channel or comment on their uploads.

5.9 Inability to Volunteer without Notice

The Society understands that, of course, things come up unexpectedly that can prevent volunteers from completing agreed shifts and tasks. Volunteers who are unable to complete a scheduled or agreed shift or task shall inform their Volunteer Stream Lead as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. If there is a pattern of a volunteer agreeing to shifts/tasks and then cancelling, particularly at the last minute, the Executive Director or member of staff with delegated responsibility for volunteer coordination will schedule a chat with the volunteer to discuss what barriers they are

encountering to their volunteering and if there is perhaps another role that would better suit the time they are able to commit.

5.10 Concerns & Grievances

While the Society does not have a formal grievance process, grievances, or any concerns, criticisms, advice are gratefully and willingly received by the Executive Director. The Society cannot improve without volunteer feedback. No concern is too small to address. All concerns and grievances should be directed to the Executive Director, however, if a volunteer is uncomfortable with this approach, they can report to a member of the Volunteer Support Committee (names and contact details listed in the Volunteer Handbook) either verbally or in writing. The grievance will be brought before the Volunteer Support Committee for discussion and a decision on how to address the grievance. The Society's approach to volunteers is a very open one, evoking a two-way exchange and encouraging volunteers to be empowered to request changes or improvements.

Where a dispute arises, this will be discussed informally by the relevant parties, with reference to the Volunteer Policy and any other relevant Society policies. It is hoped informal discussions will prevent serious problems arising.

The Society will make every effort to ensure a positive outcome of any volunteer grievance, however, where a resolution cannot be reached and no further recourse is available, the Society and volunteer may choose to conclude their volunteering relationship. Equally, if there are persistent and ongoing concerns about a volunteer's behaviour not being of an appropriate standard, the Society may decide the best course of action is to conclude the volunteering relationship.

5.11 Ending the Volunteer Relationship

The Volunteer Agreement is not a formal contract and either the volunteer or the Society can end the volunteer relationship at any point. The volunteer does not need to give a reason or a notice period should they choose to end the volunteer relationship, although they should always be asked why they are leaving and if there are any adjustments that could be made that would encourage them to continue their volunteering. If the Society chooses to end the volunteering relationship with a volunteer this should always be as a last resort and come after discussions with the volunteer and attempts to preserve the volunteering relationship.

Ending a volunteer relationship, regardless of which party initiated the ending, should be handled with the utmost care, sensitivity, and confidentiality and every effort should be

made by Society staff to ensure that the ending is handled in a way that maintains goodwill towards the Society wherever possible.

5.12 Exit Interviews

Exit interviews will be offered to volunteers who are leaving the Society but are not required. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving, suggestions the volunteer may have to improve the volunteer program or the role(s) they were volunteering in, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the Society.

The Executive Director or staff member with delegated responsibility for volunteer coordination should conduct volunteer exit interviews unless for reasons due to grievance or capacity this would be inadvisable or not practical. In such cases a member of the Volunteer Support Committee should be asked to arrange and conduct the exit interview. Departing volunteers will be offered the option of having the interview conducted one to one or with an additional staff member or member of the Volunteer Support Committee present.

An Exit Interview Template is included in the appendices.

5.13 Evaluation of Volunteer Involvement & Program

The Volunteer Support Committee will conduct an annual review of the Society's volunteer involvement goals and whether these goals are being met through the current volunteer program. This review will be based on information gathered from volunteers and staff throughout the year via mechanisms such as volunteer annual check-ins, feedback from anonymous volunteer suggestion box, Executive Director's monthly reports to the Board of Directors etc. This Volunteer Policy as well as risk factors associated with volunteering (volunteer stream risk assessments) will also be reviewed annually. Any required or suggested updates will be fed back to the Board of Directors.

6.0 Volunteer Support & Recognition

6.1 Reimbursement of Expenses

In general, the Society does not reimburse volunteers for expenses such as travel (particularly to and from the Heritage Village) or in the instance where a volunteer makes a choice to purchase equipment or materials related to their volunteering.

Volunteers may claim travel costs for journeys specifically related to business undertaken on behalf of the Society in which the volunteer has been asked to carry out the activity in advance by the Executive Director. At times volunteers may use their vehicles, trailers and other machinery to carry out tasks on the Society's behalf. In every instance the volunteer should be asked if they are comfortable with assuming the task and if they are prepared to be compensated for the mileage or gas. The reimbursement rate per kilometer is set by the Society and is generally under the recommended amount posted by the Government of Nova Scotia. Reimbursement for travel may come in the form of a fuel voucher. A Volunteer Expense Claim Form is included in the appendices.

Where a volunteer feels they require additional equipment or materials to carry out their volunteering, they should speak with the Executive Director or their Volunteer Stream Lead (if different). If it is determined equipment/materials are required these will be purchased by the Society. If it is determined equipment/materials are not required and the volunteer proceeds to purchase these independently, no reimbursement will be made.

Any expenses claimed apart from travel require receipts to be submitted.

6.2 Access to Property, Equipment & Materials

As appropriate, volunteers will have access to Society property, equipment, and materials necessary to fulfill their duties, and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. Property, equipment, and materials will be used only when directly required for Society purposes. Designated volunteers may be given keyed access to specific buildings. This access is at the discretion of the Executive Director and a Key Assignment Form must be signed by both parties before keys are given to the volunteer.

6.3 Use of Volunteers' Own Equipment & Materials

The Society is grateful for the additional resources provided by volunteers who choose to use their own equipment and materials in the course of their volunteering. That said, there is no expectation that volunteers should use their own equipment and materials.

Any equipment or materials owned and used by volunteers should be in good working order and appropriate to the task at hand. Volunteers agree to immediately cease activity and notify the Executive Director or their Volunteer Stream Lead (if different) if at any time they experience any deterioration of their equipment or materials which would increase the risk of the task or endanger themselves or others.

Any materials used as part of animation (e.g. shoes) should adhere to the Society's Authenticity Policy (included in the appendices).

Any equipment or materials owned by volunteers are their responsibility and the Society is not liable to cover repairs, replacements etc.

6.4 Insurance

Volunteers are covered by the Society's general liability insurance for the activities they carry out as directed by their supervisor, protecting them from liability in the same way that staff are protected. Furthermore, volunteers are protected from liability by Nova Scotia's Volunteer Protection Act:

https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/58th_2nd/3rd_read/b098.htm which protects volunteers from liable damages if "the volunteer is acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities in the non-profit organization at the time of the act."

Society volunteers are considered to be part of the Society and therefore if an injury or accident befalls a volunteer onsite, they will have little grounds to sue the Society. Since volunteers are offering themselves freely, they are unable to make a liability claim against the Society for injuries they may sustain in the course of their volunteering. Essentially, it would be like suing themselves. However, should gross negligence on the part of the Society be proven, then the volunteer may have some success suing the Society and this would be covered by the Society's existing general liability insurance.

6.5 Recognition

All volunteers, including event help volunteers, are entitled to a free Cookhouse meal on the day they volunteer and are invited (along with a guest) to the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to highlight and reward their contribution to the Society. Volunteers who have logged 10 or more hours in any calendar year are also entitled to a free membership that will be issued for the next calendar year unless otherwise requested. As a member, volunteers will receive:

1. Free admission to Memory Lane Heritage Village
2. Reduced rental rates on buildings within the Village (for those who have had a longstanding membership, i.e. 5+ years)
3. Free admission at most Special Events
4. A 10% reduction on the cost of Heritage Dinners and Cookhouse Chow
5. Discounted branded merchandise at the Hosking General Store

Volunteers will be periodically consulted about volunteer recognition and the ways in which they wish to be recognized.

6.6 Informal Recognition

All staff responsible for volunteer coordination and supervision, the Board of Directors, and any senior volunteers with supervisory responsibilities are encouraged to undertake on-going methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from simple "Thank You's" to a concerted effort to include volunteers as full participants in program, activity, and event decision making and implementation.

Furthermore, communications and marketing - from the Society website to social media channels - will highlight the significant contributions volunteers make to the Society and platform volunteer voice and experience.

6.7 Volunteer Progression Pathways

Volunteers are encouraged to grow and develop their skills while volunteering with the Society, and will be assisted through encouragement to try new volunteer roles, take part in projects, and take on greater responsibilities if they choose. If desired by the volunteer, the Society can assist in maintaining appropriate records of volunteer experience that would assist the volunteer in future career opportunities, both paid and volunteer, and also provide references.

For the Society's youth and young adult volunteers, there are annual opportunities for those in full-time education to apply for student positions funded by various levels of government student works programs.

For our older volunteers who are at the stage of life where they are looking to reduce their volunteering commitments, the Society will be introducing a Volunteer Alumni program in 2024 to support those who have given so much to the Society over the years and to keep them engaged with the Society and Heritage Village.

The Society envisions the volunteer program as welcoming and supporting all members of the community interested in joining the Village "family" and is committed to providing a range of opportunities through volunteering that will help people along their various paths in life.