

Volunteer Delaware is here to help you recruit, engage, retain and recognize the people who make a difference in Delaware by donating their time and talents. Here are some tips designed to help you successfully find and engage the volunteers you need.

Planning Makes Perfect

Recruiting Volunteers can be approached in the same way that you would recruit paid staff members. Consider the following:

- What are the tasks that I want volunteers to perform? Be specific.
- Why would a volunteer want to perform these tasks?
- Realistically, how many volunteers are needed? What is the plan for coverage while volunteers are being recruited?
- What are some challenges to having a volunteer perform these tasks?
- Are there any safety considerations to having a volunteer perform these tasks?
- How will I respond to volunteer inquiries?
- What questions do I need to ask when interviewing a volunteer to ensure that I find the right volunteer for my program?
- What characteristics would help a volunteer to be successful with our program?
- Is the ideal volunteer for this position likely to come from a certain career field?
- Will the volunteer work a specific schedule? How flexible is the volunteer schedule?
- Can the volunteer work remotely and if so, what support will that volunteer require?
- How will I provide training for new volunteers? Will training be done in groups or individually? Can training be completed remotely?
- What will the volunteer's first day on the job look like?

Manage Expectations

When volunteers are looking for a new position, they want to know exactly what they are signing up to do. Volunteers will come to your organization for many different reasons and with many different expectations. Clear and agreed upon expectations will help build an excellent experience for your volunteers from day one. A clear position description with performance goals for the volunteer will help them to make informed decisions about where to dedicate their time and talents. Establishing those performance goals will help to ensure that your organizational time is focused on volunteers that will help your program succeed.

Finding Your New Team Members

The first question on anyone preparing to engage volunteers' mind is always "Where will I find all of the volunteers that I need?" It can seem very overwhelming. With a clear plan in mind, you can start to find the people to fill your newly created position descriptions. Here are some places to look:

- The Volunteer Delaware website <https://volunteer.delaware.gov> is a great resource for matching potential volunteers with your organization. Posting multiple listings with clear position descriptions and expectations for each will help your listing to get attention. You should check your listing at least once a week and make sure that all the information is correct. This will help keep your listing bumped to the top of the page.
- With a little research, you might find that other volunteer database sites target your audience. Many colleges, universities and professional organizations have volunteer opportunity listings. For example, if you are looking for someone to participate in a meal delivery program, your ideal volunteer might be a retired transportation worker. If you are looking for someone to give tours at your historic site, your ideal volunteer might be a student of history, retired teacher or a member of an organization like the Daughters of the American Revolution. Look for ways to build partnerships with these organizations. They can continually promote your opportunities to new members and you can provide them with a speaker for their next luncheon or even maybe a discounted service or entry fee.
- Social Media is a recruiter's best friend. Social media networks link people with similar interests and views together quickly. To effectively use social media for recruitment, you must be interactive.
 - When using Facebook: Post your specific needs for volunteers and then share them to Facebook Groups that match your target audience.
 - When using Instagram: Post more pictures and fewer words. Utilize relevant hashtags to build your audience.
 - When using LinkedIn: LinkedIn is best for highly skilled volunteers or volunteers with specific skill sets. This is a great place to connect with professional associations and retirees.
 - When using Twitter: Twitter is a good place to draw attention to your cause or organization without needing to target specific groups. Again, short posts with a call to action work well here and the right hashtag is important.
 - Volunteer Delaware can help promote your social media recruitment efforts! Tag us and use #VolunteerDelaware to get our attention or simply send us a message with the information you would like us to promote. Also, be sure to like and follow our pages. Interacting on our pages can be a great networking tool.

Remember targeted and active recruitment will yield the best results. As in most things, quality of candidates will always beat quantity. A few extra hours of effort researching and interacting with the right people for your organization will save you hours of time in the long run if you are onboarding and training volunteers who are not a good fit or have the wrong expectations. Not every potential volunteer is a fit for every organization. Finding the right volunteer is a win for everyone. For more personalized support, please contact

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