

A Guide to Meeting Essential Service #2: Volunteer management training for nonprofits and other organizations at least once every two years

In order to assist Volunteer Centers in meeting Essential Service #2 this guide has been prepared by Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network staff and the members of the Volunteer Center National Network Essential Service Task Force. The Guide includes three sections:

1. Essential Service #2 Summary – as Volunteer Centers have begun examining the Affiliation Agreement in preparation for submittal, a number of questions have been raised about Essential Service #2 and its quality criteria. Below we have provided additional clarification.
2. Frequently Asked Questions – as more in-depth conversations have occurred with Volunteer Centers as they assess their ability to meet Essential Service #2 there are some common questions that have been raised. Through the Frequently Asked Questions section, we have tried to answer many of them.
3. Examples of Training activities that meet Essential Service #2 – as Affiliation materials have been received and reviewed, additional examples of what Volunteer Centers are doing that meets Essential Service #2 have been identified. This section seeks to provide some examples as another way to help Volunteer Centers understand Essential Service #2.

In addition, we want to remind Volunteer Centers of the current assistance that is available from the Foundation:

- Technical assistance to assess your current situation – the Foundation staff is available to help review your existing recognition activity to help determine whether it meets Essential Service #2. For more information contact Chris Krinock Davis, Senior Director, Technical Assistance and Strategies at (202) 729-8158 or CKrinockDavis@PointsofLight.org.
- Information on the Volunteer Management Training Series (VMTS) - VMTS is a high quality, comprehensive series of courses in volunteer management designed to be delivered to community organizations and volunteer managers by local Volunteer Centers. The curriculum is based on research and effective practices in volunteer management and is packaged in an easy-to-use format that includes everything needed to conduct a successful training. This training series is designed for use by the wide variety of Volunteer Centers, with easy-to use outlines suitable for even those with limited training experience and advanced topics and innovative learning activities for seasoned trainers. For more information about the Volunteer Management Training Series, contact Jeffrey Skarin at (202) 729-8149 or Training@PointsofLight.org.
- Additional Resources Related to Volunteer Management Training – from time to time and as resources permit, the Foundation provides Train-the-Trainer programs. In addition, the Foundation moderates a Trainer listserv for Volunteer Centers. For more information, contact Jeffrey Skarin at (202) 729-8149 or Training@PointsofLight.org.

Essential Service #2 Summary

Volunteer Centers must have “Volunteer management training for nonprofits and other organizations at least once every two years.” The essential service was created to promote consistent levels of service across the network and to promote volunteering. Further clarification on the essential service is provided by the following quality criteria:

- ❑ *Be conducted alone or with a partner:* As a partner, your Center can play a variety of roles (recruitment, venue, training delivery, registration). However, no matter what the role of your Volunteer Center, it must be a key and publicly recognized participant. This means that credit must be provided to your Center for your role, including use of your name and/or logo so that your Volunteer Center is positioned as an expert in the community on volunteer management training.
- ❑ *Be conducted at least once every 24 months:* The training must be conducted in the 24 months preceeding the beginning of the Affiliation Agreement start date. For example, the current Affiliation Agreement starts January 1, 2007. If you conducted a training that met the quality criteria between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006, you have met Essential Service #2. If you have not conducted a training during that period, you must schedule and conduct a training by December 31, 2007.
- ❑ *Cover, at the minimum, the following topics: understanding volunteering, planning your volunteer program, recruiting and placing volunteers, orienting and training volunteers, supervising volunteers and evaluating your volunteer program:* The Volunteer Center must offer training that covers all of these volunteer management topics. They do not, however, need to be offered as part of the same training, at the same time or even to the same group of participants.
- ❑ *Be a planned learning experience, with defined learning objectives, exercises and activities that reinforce learning and includes participant handouts:* Participants would engage in a group learning experience and would understand what they are going to learn in terms of skills and knowledge from the training (learning objectives) and engaged in a structured learning experience to ensure that the learning objectives are met. An activity or exercise includes an opportunity for interaction such as panel discussion, round table topics, small group work, individual worksheet activities and facilitated discussion.
- ❑ *Be open and available to all qualified nonprofits and other organizations:* Qualified nonprofits and other organizations are determined by individual Volunteer Centers (e.g. may be open to only nonprofits in the Volunteer Centers service area). Nonprofits should represent the various sectors of the community, not just one type of agency like youth development organizations. The training would be available to all nonprofits and other organizations that the Volunteer Centers work with in their community.
- ❑ *Be communicated and marketed to nonprofits and other organizations:* The training must be communicated about by the Volunteer Center and its partners. This can occur through one or more mechanisms, such as flyers, Web site, newspapers, newsletters, media, etc. Marketing and promotion of the activity helps position the Volunteer Center as an expert in the community on volunteer management training.
- ❑ *Measure the satisfaction of training participants, the number of training participants and number of nonprofits/organizations represented at volunteer management training:* The Volunteer Center should track and be able to report annually (during years in which the training occurs) the satisfaction of training participants, the number of training participants and number of nonprofits/organizations represented at its trainings that meet Essential Service #2. Training participants are provided a training evaluation tool to measure satisfaction and achievement of learning objectives. Number of participants and organizations represented are logged on a sign in sheet, through a registration process or some other process.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What if I plan an event, market it and no one registers/or I had to cancel it because there were not enough registrations. Because there was intent to deliver and work conducted to implement, but ultimately no delivery, would this be considered meeting Essential Service #2?**

No. While a great deal of work was done, the Volunteer Center and its partner must actually deliver the training, not just plan for the training in order for it to count towards meeting Essential Service #2.

- 2. In order to be considered as meeting Essential Service #2 at the start of this Affiliation Agreement (January 1, 2007), when must my last training have occurred?**

The training must have been conducted in the 24 months preceeding the beginning of the Affiliation Agreement start date (January 1, 2007). That means if you conducted a training that met the quality criteria between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006, you have met Essential Service #2. If you have not conducted a training during that period, you must schedule and conduct a training by December 31, 2007.

- 3. The Affiliation Agreement Checklist indicates that I must provide documents of a training (Copy of Training Calendar and Copy Training Brochure/flyer) from the last 12 months, isn't that inconsistent with the answer to Question #2?**

Yes, the Affiliation checklist should have said within the last 24 months, not the last 12 months. We apologize for this error. It was discovered recently when thinking through with the Essential Task Force questions like these. Any Volunteer Center who has already submitted their Affiliation Agreement and materials and indicated that they cannot meet Essential Service #2 will be contacted to make sure that they did not conduct a training that meets the quality criteria within the 24 months preceeding the Affiliation Agreement start date.

- 4. Can virtual training opportunities via Webinars, teleconference or self study meet Essential Service #2?**

They can if they meet the quality criteria clarified above. The one least likely to meet Essential Service #2, however, is a self-study program, as generally they do not take place in a group setting.

- 5. What are examples of activities that do not meet Essential Service #2?**

Examples of activities that do not meet Essential Service #2 are one-on-one technical assistance, consultation and a self-study program that does not incorporate a group setting as part of its execution.

Examples of Training Activities that Meet Essential Service #2

Volunteer Center of Bergen County, Inc., Hackensack, NJ

The Volunteer Center conducts the Volunteer Program Management Institute, which delivers topical and relevant training in volunteer program development, recruitment, management and related issues. At the heart of this program is the Volunteer Management Training Series, developed by the Points of Light Foundation & the Volunteer Center National Network, which consists of 6 courses on organizing and implementing a volunteer program in a non-profit or governmental organization. The program is open to Volunteer Directors, Board Members, Advisory Council members, or anyone interested in building capacity for effective volunteering.

Volunteer Center of Fresno County, Fresno, CA

As part of their services to nonprofit and community based organizations the Volunteer Center of Fresno County provides a 6-hour long training in Volunteer Management by a skilled Trainer. Topics that are covered include: Planning a Volunteer Program, Orienting and Training Volunteers, Volunteer Recruitment, Retention of Volunteers, Recognition of Volunteers, Risk Management Issues, Evaluating your Volunteer Program. The Center does charge a fee of \$60.00 for the 6 hour-long workshop.

Community Resource Network, Chicago, IL

The training curriculum is based on the Volunteer Management Training Series, developed by the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network. Business employee group volunteer topics are incorporated throughout the training. The training is conducted over two full days and includes the following topics: Day One: Understanding Volunteering, Planning Your Volunteer Program and Engaging Staff and Recruiting and Placing Volunteers; Day Two: Training Volunteers, Supervising Volunteers and Evaluating Your Volunteer Program. All volunteer coordinators who complete both days of this training are certified by Community Resource Network's Volunteer Center. They receive a certificate and their agency receives a special designation on the volunteer matching website, www.chicagovolunteer.net when they list their volunteer opportunities on the site. In addition, their agencies will receive special designation with Celebration of Caring, Community Resource Network's program for corporate employee volunteer groups.

Volunteer Center of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

Provided by The Volunteer Center in partnership with CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, workshops are specifically designed for managers of volunteers. These in-depth interactive sessions address various topics relevant to developing an effective volunteer program. Advance registration is required. Participants are also required to pay a fee to participate. The Volunteer Center promotes their partnership and these trainings on its website and through other materials. In addition, the Volunteer Center guided by input from agencies, and by emerging trends in volunteering and community involvement, presents a series of seminars and roundtable events each year. Each session is specifically designed for managers of volunteers to address issues and obtain information relevant to developing and maintaining an effective volunteer program. Registration is required to attend these sessions, as is a fee.

Volunteer Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL

Volunteer Jacksonville offers the Volunteer Management Training Series developed by the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network. The Volunteer Management Training Series is designed to help both veteran and new volunteer directors organize, implement, and evaluate their volunteer programs. The training is offered in an interactive format and allows for networking and problem solving. The 6 topics are covered in three day long sessions. Sessions are scheduled during the spring and fall for 3 consecutive Thursdays. VMTS participants who complete all six courses (including portfolio requirements) and earn satisfactory scores on post-tests are eligible for **Florida Volunteer Administration Certification**, a certificate issued by the State of Florida. Participants are charge a fee which includes course materials, assessment, snacks, and forwarding of materials to Volunteer Florida (Tallahassee) for issuance of official state certification in volunteer administration.