

HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER IN POLAND?

A Manual from Regional Volunteer Centre of Opole



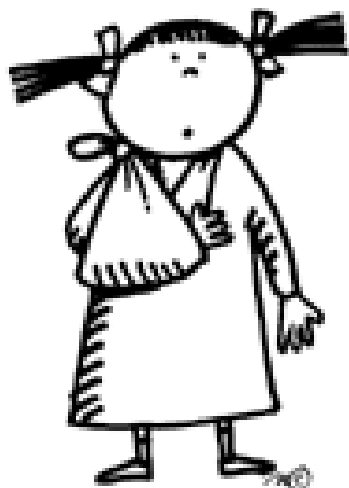
Forum for Social Organizations of Opole

www.ofos.opole.pl

THE FIRST STEP: WHO CAN BECOME A VOLUNTEER?

A volunteer is someone, similar to an employee, but within government regulations, who provides their services willing without receiving any compensation.

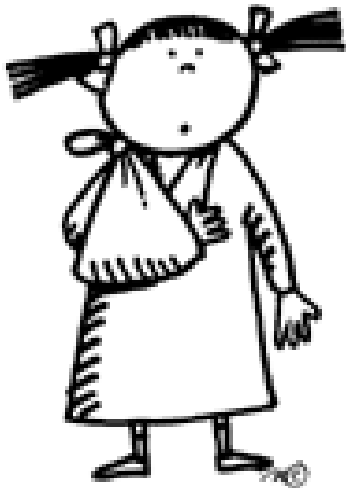
- **Unemployed** – People who are unemployed may volunteer without losing the status of their unemployment and benefits.
- **Foreigners** – Foreigners may volunteer without obtaining a work permit since volunteering is not considered as a service of work.
- **Minors** – People under the age of 18 can become volunteers with the written consent from their parents or guardian.



STEP TWO: WHERE CAN YOU BECOME A VOLUNTEER?

Many institutes and organizations, which are known as “Beneficiaries”, will be willing to accept volunteers. These include:

- **Non-government organizations** – most notably associations and foundations.
- **Associations of a local government** – i.e. unions of districts or communities and organizations controlled or supervised by public authorities.
- **Legal entities and organization of the Catholic church and other churches and distinguished organizations** – i.e. parishes, orders and religious organizations, Jewish or Muslim communities (in their range of the rules of statutory activities but with the exclusion of its economic activities!)



Beyond this:

- **Self-governed, central, and public administrations.**
- **Organization units dependant or controlled by public administrations** (*in their range of the rules of statutory activities but with the exclusion of its economic activities!*)

STEP THREE: THE AGREEMENT

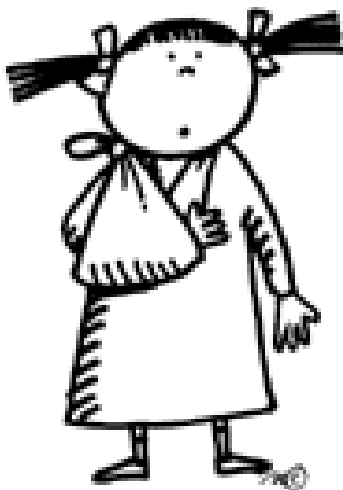
If you decide to perform services in an organization or institution, you will have to sign a civil contract, called an agreement. **The time, manner, place, and dates** of the services will be stated in the agreement. All conditions, on which the services will be performed, are agreed with the beneficiary.

The agreement should also consist of terms of its termination – it should state that the volunteer or beneficiary can end the agreement at will or with the expression of the term/s stated in the agreement.

Certification

On the demand of the volunteer, the beneficiary must give a written certificate on the completed services of the volunteer, including the range of the completed work.

*If the agreement between both sides is decided on **up to 30 days**, it can be made either in oral or written form. However, if the agreement with the beneficiary is **for longer than 30 days or without a time frame**, the agreement should be **always written***



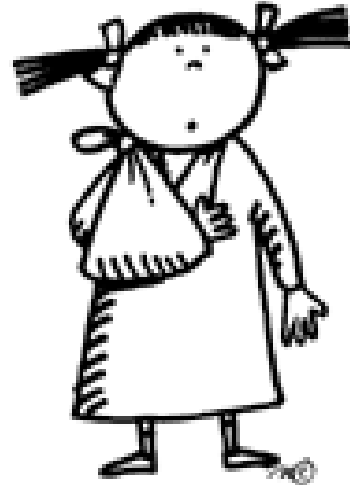
Opinion

On the request of the volunteer the beneficiary may produce a written opinion on the completed services of the volunteer.

STEP FOUR: KNOW THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF A VOLUNTEER

Rights:

- You have the right to be informed, by the beneficiary, about the health risks and other hazards that are related to your services.
- You have the right to perform your services in hygienic and safe conditions, and if it is necessary, you should be equipped with the right means of protection,
- You can also, with the concession and financial backing of the beneficiary, take courses to perfect your performance for the beneficiary.
- You can entrust your services to someone else, who is qualified to do them.
- You have the right to have the beneficiary cover all of your expenses related to your services for the beneficiary. However, the final decision in this case belongs to the beneficiary.
- The beneficiary is obliged to provide you with insurance for the consequences of any dangerous accidents that may occur. If you are not covered by health insurance, you can negotiate with the beneficiary to provide you with insurance.



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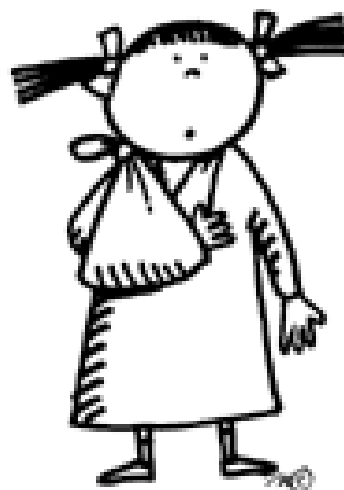
Duties:

As a volunteer you should have the qualifications necessary to complete your services, but only when it is required by a special regulation.

If you are under the age of 18, you should present the beneficiary with the written consent of your parents or guardians for you to become a volunteer.

You have the duty to perform the tasks with the upmost care.

If in the consequence of your actions the beneficiary or a third party is damaged, you will be held responsible for the damage. Therefore you should insist that the beneficiary provides you with insurance from civil liability.



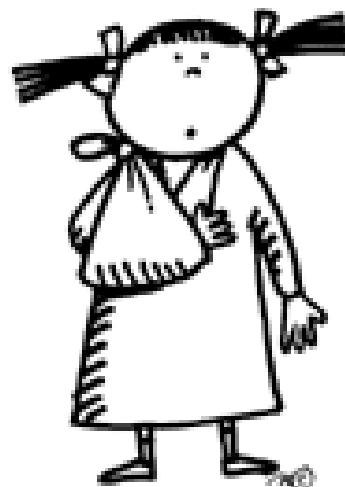
STEP FIVE: INSURANCE FOR THE VOLUNTEER

Insurance for consequences of any dangerous accidents

By being a volunteer you have the right to be insured for accidents, which can occur while you are performing your services.

If you are performing volunteer services over a course of time no longer than 30 days, and also if it was agreed upon an undecided period of time, the beneficent is obliged to insure the volunteer for any dangerous accidents.

If you sign an agreement with the beneficent for a period of time longer than 30 days, the beneficent is not obliged to provide you with insurance for any dangerous accidents because the act of law about provisions in case of accidents and professional illnesses originated under special circumstances (Dz. U. z 2002 r. Nr 199, poz.1674) gives you the right for insurance. In this case, you are entitled to insurance from the first day of the agreement.



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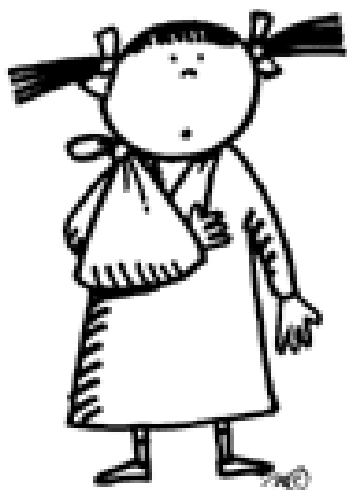
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Health Insurance

If you are a volunteer and you are not covered by any health insurance, the institute in which you perform services can provide you with health insurance. Don't forget that the volunteer is covered by health insurance from the set date in the agreement with the beneficiary and the National Health Foundation.

Insurance from civil liability

Its purpose is to insure against the consequences of our activities, failure of duties, or the lack of caring to complete services that damages the beneficiary or a third party. In this case the money coming from the insurance company will be able to cover the cost of the damage, which may exceed our financial possibilities.



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