

Volunteer Application Checklist

Applications are an important tool in screening prospective volunteers. By gathering basic information about a prospective volunteer, applications can help determine an individual’s availability, interests, and qualifications, as well as provide information to help customize interviews.

Listed below are various types of information you may wish to collect through an application. Review each box, consider which types of information will be relevant to your screening process, and design application questions accordingly. Because collecting personal information can have legal and ethical implications, consult with legal counsel when designing or updating your volunteer application.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Contact information

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address

Emergency contact information

- Name
- Relationship of the contact
- Phone number

Date of birth

Opinions vary regarding the legality and/or appropriateness of asking for a date of birth on applications. For volunteer positions with age requirements, an application can simply request confirmation without asking for a date of birth.

For example:

- Are you age 18 or over?
 - Yes
 - No

Employment Status (and employer, if relevant)

Many companies offer matching gifts and/or volunteer grants in honor of employees who volunteers. Collecting this data at application can help build resources in the future.

INTERESTS AND AVAILABILITY

How the applicant first heard about the organization

This information can help you assess the effectiveness of various recruitment tactics.

Reasons for volunteering

This information provides insight into motivations and types of volunteer positions the applicant may find rewarding.

Preferred volunteer positions or activities

List volunteer positions and ask applicant to indicate their interests and preferences.

Availability

- Weekdays
- Weekends
- Evenings

EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS

■ Previous work and/or volunteer experience

This information can help you assess relevant experience, qualifications, and skills which could be relevant for this position.

■ Education

- Schools(s) attended, degree (or highest level of education attained)

■ Language(s) spoken

This question should only be asked if relevant to a volunteer position in which fluency in other languages is listed as a qualification in the position description.

■ Physical abilities

Some volunteer positions have physical requirements – for example, ability to lift 50 pounds. Avoid asking about specific disabilities or conditions and instead confirm whether the applicant can meet the physical requirements, as long as those requirements are also listed in the position description.

- Are you able to lift 50 pounds?

- Yes
- No

CERTIFICATIONS AND CREDENTIALS

■ Valid driver's license number

This is important for volunteer positions that require driving.

- Driver's License number
- Issuing state
- Expiration date
- Insurance information

■ Training and experience related to the volunteer position for which candidate is applying

- Certifications (e.g., First Aid, CPR with dates of certification and expiration)

BACKGROUND CHECK AND REFERENCES

■ References

Request this information only if you plan to do a reference check. If so, ask for two or more references including personal and professional.

- Name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Relationship to applicant

■ Criminal convictions or offenses

States vary regarding the legality of asking questions about criminal convictions so it is advisable to seek legal counsel on this issue.

■ Social Security number

Ask only if necessary for background and/or credit checks and consider developing a separate form for background checks that is handled entirely by the background check company/portal so your organization does not have direct access to this information.

AGREEMENTS AND SIGNATURE

■ Disclaimers

Include your organization's equal opportunity statement or other commitments and philosophy statements.

■ Waivers

Image release or photo waiver may be included as well as an agreement to a background check.