

MSFA

**RECRUITMENT
& RETENTION
GUIDELINES
MANUAL**



MARYLAND
VOLUNTEER

Introductions

It is the goal of the Recruitment and Retention Committee of the Maryland State Firemen's Association to assist member companies in obtaining and maintaining volunteers. We have prepared this brief overview of some basic guidelines for the development of a successful volunteer program. Section I (Planning and Organizing) and Section II (Developing Policies and Procedures) cover what needs to be done before a volunteer applicant sets foot in your station. Clarifying the need for volunteers, developing goals and objectives, and writing position/task descriptions are some of the preliminary tasks. Section III (Volunteer Recruitment) and Section IV (Screening Interviewing and Placing) will help you locate volunteers and judge whether they are a good fit with your organization.

Once aboard, Section V (Orientation and Training) stresses the importance of introducing the volunteer to your organization and emphasizing the expectations you have for each other in order to develop a successful relationship. Section VI (Supervising Volunteers) will help to ensure the success of your program. Section VII (Volunteer Performance Evaluation) outlines the steps for developing an evaluation system to determine whether the complement of volunteers continues to be suited to the agency. Section VIII (Exit Interviews) provides an excellent assessment of your organization. Section IX (Recognition and Retention) suggests ways to recognize the contributions that volunteers make to your organization. A strong retention tool is recognized volunteers. Various kinds of recognition result in bonding people together and provide them with incentive. Section X (Measuring Volunteer Program Effectiveness) features insights into assessing how well your volunteer program works, including insights into assessing how well your volunteer program works. Often crucial for potential funding, this section will help you determine whether you are meeting your goals and objectives. The final section, Section XI (Suggested Resources for Further Reference), directs you to more detailed information on each of the topics in this publication.

The inspiration for this manual was taken in part from the Governor's Office on Services and Volunteerism manual. The MSFA Recruitment and Retention Committee would like to acknowledge its former members for their efforts with this manual; Marcine D. Goodloe, William F. Cooke, John J. Denver, William J. Wagner, III, Paul Sterling, Mike Kelly, and Jim Brown.

We hope that this manual will be of valuable assistance in your development of an effective and ongoing volunteer program.

For more resources, materials, and how-to's, please visit the MSFA Recruiter Portal at <https://marylandvolunteer.org/recruiter/>



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION

- I.** Planning and Organization
- II.** Developing Policies and Procedures
- III.** Volunteer Recruitment
- IV.** Screening, Interviewing, and Placement
- V.** Orientation and Training
- VI.** Supervising Volunteers
- VII.** Volunteer Performance Evaluation
- VIII.** Exit Interviews
- IX.** Recognition and Retention
- X.** Measuring Volunteer Program Effectiveness
- XI.** Suggesting Resources for Further Reference

SECTION I: Planning and Organization

Planning for your volunteer program gives you the opportunity to work out the purpose of the program, the role of volunteers in the organization, the program's contribution to the organization's mission, and how the volunteer program fits into the structure of the organization. Planning is best done with input from those who will be effected by the volunteer program, particularly the departments' leaders and the community organizations leaders.

A thorough planning process will include the following elements:

Mission Statement: Why does the volunteer program exist?

A mission statement is a sentence or short paragraph that states the purpose of the volunteer program and the needs the program addresses. A volunteer program's mission statement should impart a sense of purpose among volunteer staff, helping each to understand the importance of the work they do, and how each complements the other.

Vision Statement: What will the future be like because of the volunteer program?

A vision statement provides a description of what the world will look like when the mission is accomplished. It should address everything the program strives to change, for example, the large community, the environment of the organization, and the well-being of the citizens.

Needs Assessment: What needs will the volunteer program address?

Formal and informal input from community citizens and leaders will help focus the talents of volunteers where they can be of most assistance. Input from staff will also help address any concerns they may have about effectively working with the volunteer program to meet unmet needs. Obtaining input from the people being served at the initial stage helps to build investment and support from your volunteer program.

Goals and Objectives: What will be the impact of the volunteer program?

Defining measurable goals and objectives gives your volunteers a clear picture of what needs to be accomplished and provides the department leaders with a way to evaluate the program. Measurable goals incorporate what will be accomplished, by whom, how often, and to what extent.

Budget: What is the budget for the volunteer program?

"Volunteer" does not mean "free". Be sure to determine the financial, in-kind, and human resource support necessary to develop and sustain the volunteer program. A good starting point for a volunteer program budget would be a line item for each of the sections of this publication. For example, include in the budget expenses for developing policies and procedures, producing and disseminating recruitment materials, conducting background checks, obtaining training supplies, and hosting recognition events.

Position Descriptions: What will volunteers do?

Position descriptions are critical to the success of your volunteer program. Your department will most likely to be able to recruit and retain volunteers if you offer clearly-defined positions that take into account a volunteers needs as well as the department's. Every volunteer should receive a written position description that includes: his/her title, the purpose of the assignment, the results to be achieved, suggested activities, evaluation criteria, qualifications, time frame, the site where the volunteer will work, supervision, benefits, and the desired results.

SECTION II: Developing Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are critical to the success of your organization. Careful consideration should be given to the development and implementation of a policy. Failure to comply with that policy can have legal ramifications not only for the individual volunteer, but your organization as well.

Reasons to define policies:

- Provides structure for sound management.
- Formalizes and records the decisions of your governing body.
- Provides a structure for sound management.
- Ensures continuity over time and promotes equity and standardization.
- Permits productiveness, retention and volunteer satisfaction through participation in their development.

What information should be in your policies:

- Your mission statement
- The chain-of-command for your organization
- Requirements for participation (Physical, background checks, time commitment age, etc.)
- Rules to specify expectations, regulations and guides to action (e.g., confidentiality, duty time and training outlines.
- Today, it is important to have a code of ethics and personal conduct. This code should contain information on what is discrimination, what conduct will not be tolerated and overall rules of the station.
- Information should be contained within each policy as to the penalties for disobeying the policy, the process of discipline, and appeal rights.
- Policies overall should have a procedure for their development, approval and amending.
- Policy manuals should contain information regarding benefits for your members and how they are obtained.

Specific levels of policies:

- Organizational – broad, general statements (e.g. your beliefs, values, mission as a whole).
- General – policies about your volunteer program (e.g., why it exists, what constitutes a volunteer, etc.)
- Specific – policies that cover all requirements, rules of the station, or anything that is expected of all of your members in order to have an efficient and effective service.

What should policies contain?

- Operational guidelines, standards and procedures
- Be sure to include all your duty requirements, training, uniform, station rules and procedures.
- Provide policies that recognize all levels of volunteer participation
- Develop operational guidelines, standards, and procedures for volunteer involvement

Cited in part from: “By Definition: Policies for Volunteer Programs”, Volunteer Ontario, Spring 1993



SECTION III: Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment means attracting and inviting people to consider becoming involved involvement with your organization. Many new volunteer administrators make the mistake of starting recruitment before they have an idea of why they are recruiting and for what positions. The most important step for recruitment is planning and design. In order to do this, you must spend time learning about your organization from the inside as well as how your organization is perceived by the community and public at large.

Recruitment Message

The recruitment message should be inviting and encourage people to become involved with your organization. An organization may have multiple recruitment messages tailored to the volunteers being sought, such as students, professionals, neighborhood residents, or family members.

Each message should identify:

- The specific need (of the community and/or the organization);
- How the volunteer can alleviate the need; and
- The benefits to the volunteer.

In evaluating your recruitment message, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the message honor the volunteer?
- Can I see why some people might not say yes?
- Is the message tailored to a target audience?
- Does my invitation include the needs of our community?
- Who in the organization can best deliver this message?

Recruitment Strategies

The two most common strategies used to recruit volunteers for defined positions are “non-targeted” recruitment and “targeted” recruitment. Non-targeted recruitment means looking for people with general skills, such as volunteers to provide the various emergency services of the organization. Targeted recruitment involves looking for people with specific skills, such as lawyers, public relations experts, or other administrative needs. Both strategies must use the recruitment messages as described above.

Recruitment Process

People most often volunteer when they feel they are being asked to get involved personally. Recruit for specific projects and programs throughout the year rather than during a once-a-year campaign. When recruiting volunteers, involve the entire organization, from the President or Chief to the board of directors to current active volunteers. Sometimes the chief officers are not the most effective recruiters. In membership groups such as the Kiwanis or Rotary, an active member of the group is the better choice to deliver the message. In addition, peers may be especially good at recruiting students and professionals.

Recruiting for Diversity

Diversity should be an essential element in your recruitment plan. In addition to race and ethnicity, consider other components of diversity, such as age, gender, education, income levels, religious beliefs, physical abilities, and skills. Know the demographics of the community your organization serves. The organization will be more effective if your volunteer staff reflects the community. This demonstrates to the community that people are assets, and it tells your community that you value them as partner, not just as future customers.

Finally, consider a deliberate and strategic outreach to youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. These groups have traditionally been viewed as targets of volunteer efforts, not as potential volunteers. Everyone has something to offer, and youth organizations may be an ideal position to bring out the best in those who may have a great future in your organization.

Recruiting Techniques

There are many techniques available for recruiting volunteers. You must decide which is best for disseminating the recruitment message for your organization and for your specific volunteer positions. Some recruitment techniques to try are:

- Social media and websites
- Volunteer fairs
- High school career events
- Outreach materials to membership or professional organizations
- Direct mail
- Articles in local newspapers and newsletters of other organizations
- Referrals from individuals associated with your organization



SECTION IV: Screening, Interviewing and Placement



There are various screening techniques that you can use to help insure that the individual applying will become a successful member of your organization. Some screening tools are applications, reference checks, interviews, background checks, probation period, and observation. Screening potential volunteers should be consistently applied, and documented. It is also an advantage if you have a dedicated Recruiter who is responsible for developing a program to recruit individuals into your organization.

Initial Contact

The initial contact is the first step in the process of determining the fit between a potential volunteer and your program. Whether the contact is by email, telephone, or in person, be prepared to provide some basic information about your organization and the opportunities available. Also, get a general idea of what the person is interested in doing and why he/she wishes to serve. If it appears they may be a fit, gather relevant contact information, including:

- Method of contact
- Name
- Address, including zip code
- Telephone numbers (with area code)
- Fax number and E-mail address
- Referral source (how they heard about you)

Applications

After the initial contact, you will want to either schedule an interview or have the prospective volunteer complete an application and decide after reviewing it whether to invite the person in for an interview. Applications may be very simple or extremely detailed. Most importantly, the application and your interview should elicit enough information to determine whether the individual is appropriate for your organization.

Background Checks

Due to the nature of the services we provide, public contact, and the need for insuring the creditability of fire/rescue/EMS volunteers, background checks are this is an important requirement. Ensure that you do not go beyond legal guidelines and adhere to non-discriminating requirements.

Additional Screening tools may include:

- Personal and/or employment references. References should be adults but not family or relatives.
- Driving records checks
- Substance abuse tests
- Physical examinations
- If a minor - school reference and parental consent forms

Interviews

During face-to-face interviews, you can give a more detailed discussion of your mission, vision, goals, training requirements, and organization requirements. You can determine the individual's interests, motivations, and needs. You should be consistent with your questions, as well as the interview panel. It is advisable to have more than one interviewer. Remember that the demeanor, appearance and conduct of your interviewers will set an example to the

potential volunteer. Points that you should be able to determine from your application and interview are:

- Knowledge, skills, and experience pertinent to the service.
- Preferences or aversions that will reflect on their volunteer requirements.
- Willingness/ability to make the necessary time commitment; and
- Willingness/ability to meet other requirements and deal with all aspect of the service.

Interviewers Common Mistakes

Interviewers should be aware of common mistakes and try to avoid them. A set interview procedure will assist in avoiding errors.

Some of the mistakes are:

- The Interviewer monopolizes the interview and little is heard from the applicant
- Does not allow the applicant to answer the question before they go to the next question
- Does not permit the applicant to express concerns, such as dangers, responsibility, etc., and/or fails to address them
- Detailed information is lacking in the interview questions
- Allows prejudices to reflect in their attitude and influence his/her judgement

Placement

It is important to have a mentor program within your organization. This provides a new member with a source to rely on for information and/or concerns. Ensuring that the new member is given a feeling of inclusion is also critical. You will know their interest and abilities, thus utilizing those factors by assigning them specific tasks, assisting in their retention. It is also an incentive to have a program where you have some type of induction swearing in ceremony that can include the new member's family.

Exit Interviews

Exit Interviews are an excellent tool to assess the success of your organization. It will provide you with a means to review various areas of your requirements and personnel. You might see a pattern develop if there are routine responses of reasons for leaving that need to be addressed. More information on Exit Interviews can be found in Section 8. The MSFA Recruitment and Retention Committee has additional information available on Exit Interviews. Please contact the Chair and we will be glad to send you a copy.

Performance Review

A performance review should be done on a continuing basis. The Performance form specifies what the responsibilities assigned to the volunteer are and how their supervisor (officer-in-charge) believes they are being accomplished. The review also helps to retain the volunteer because it allows them to express any dissatisfaction with the department assignments, fellow volunteers, leadership, opportunities, recognition and any other concerns. It allows the opportunity to reconfirm what is expected of the volunteer, cite where they are succeeding and where they need improvement. It also allows the supervisor to make reasonable and appropriate changes. Many problems can be eliminated and result in an increase in productivity by using this confidential review.



SECTION V: Orientation and Training

Initial orientation and training prepares volunteers to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. The policies and procedures developed form the basis for the orientation; the position description forms the basis for the training. Volunteers who understand what is expected of them do a better job and feel satisfied by performing their duties and serving your organization.

Orientation

Orientation to your agency helps volunteers see their service within the context of the organization. Even the most menial tasks can become meaningful if presented in such a way that the volunteer understands how the task fits. Orientation is typically provided by the professional volunteer manager and includes the following topics:

Agency Overview

- Description and history of the agency
- Explanation of existing assignments and responsibilities
- Mission, goals, and objectives
- Location of restrooms, supplies and equipment
- Organization, structure, and introduction of key
- Description of department activities, programs and projects
- Awards

Culture and Language of the Organization

- Handbook of policies and procedure
- Glossary of terms
- Index to codes and abbreviations

Volunteer Program Policies and Procedures

- Types of tasks or other ways in which volunteers contribute
- Service requirements
- Check-in procedures
- Record keeping
- Training opportunities
- Continuation/termination policies
- Evaluation procedures

Facilities and Staff

- Tour of the facility
- Where to store personal belongings

Orientation and Training

To ensure understanding of and compliance with program policies and procedures, provide each volunteer with a written resource in the form of a volunteer handbook, orientation packet, or other reference guides. This written resource may be provided during the orientation or during their induction into your program. The resource reinforces the information presented in training, helps to address questions that arise during service, and can prove useful as a supervisory tool in dealing with performance issues.

Treating volunteers as part of your organization from day one helps them feel they are part of a team and fosters commitment and retention. Volunteers help represent your department to the public. The more they know and understand about the nature of your operations and mission, the more they can contribute to public relations, and your organization's good reputation.



Training

Training gives volunteers the direction and skills necessary to carry out assigned tasks. Training is provided by MFRI, NFA, and MIEMSS on a convenient schedule. In general, training should be:

- Specific to the requirements of the volunteer position
- Geared to the skill level of the volunteer
- On-going and address needs identified by both volunteer and supervisor
- Periodically evaluated to determine if it is on track

Training is also a form of recognition and serves to keep to a volunteer motivated, committed, and performing the quality of service you need. Sending a volunteer to a special class or a conference can be a reward for service, even if the class is not directly related to the volunteer's assignment but is of broad interest to your organization.

SECTION VI: Supervising Volunteers

Volunteers need support to perform their duties. They should have a designated training supervisor to whom they can turn for advice, guidance, encouragement, and feedback. The supervisor/officer-in charge also needs to provide the materials, training, and direction to enable the volunteer to perform assigned tasks.

A supervisor is responsible for getting the job done by enabling others to do the work. The most important responsibility of a supervisor of volunteers is creating an environment that empowers the volunteers to perform their duties. Empowered volunteers are willing to take responsibility for what they do, contribute more than expected, and perceive themselves to be important members in the organization.

Empower volunteers by providing:

- Sufficient orientation to the organization
- Clear and appropriate expectations
- Proper training and equipment
- Evaluation of performance, and
- Regular reinforcement and recognition

Volunteers want and need to be held accountable for their performance by their supervisors. An effective supervisor should ensure that that volunteers have confidence in themselves, are satisfied with their level of contribution, and have the opportunity to grow personally and professionally through their service.

The supervisor should be willing and able to manage your volunteers. Not everyone knows how to work with and motivate volunteers. While many of the principles of supervision are the same for volunteer or career staff, managing volunteers effectively takes special effort to see that the volunteers' need for satisfaction with their assigned duties is met. A professional volunteer manager can support the supervisors of volunteers by eliciting feedback from the supervisors and using it to evaluate the volunteer program periodically, by facilitating the sharing of experiences among the supervisors, and by showcasing good volunteer supervision.

SECTION VII: Volunteer Performance Evaluation

Volunteers add value to an organization. Evaluating their performance is one way to quantify their contributions toward achieving the mission of the organization. The volunteer program administrator and the volunteer's supervisor conduct periodic evaluations to give volunteers feedback on how they are performing assigned duties and tasks and meeting current objectives. These evaluations also give the administrator and the supervisor opportunities to set new goals for the volunteer, identify additional training needs the volunteer may have, and determine the effectiveness of the volunteer program procedures.

Performance Criteria

When you evaluate your volunteer personnel, use the same criteria that you use to evaluate the performance of your career staff, if applicable. Clearly-defined position descriptions are the basis for fair and equitable performance evaluations. Performance criteria should address both skills and accomplishments.

Criteria used may include:

Skills:

- Dependability
- Cooperation
- Effective communication

Accomplishments:

- Supplies organizational vision and mission
- Meets goals and objectives of position
- Completes assigned tasks

Tips for Effective Evaluation

Effective evaluation is conducted at regular intervals and draws information from a variety of sources:

- Personnel feedback
- Self-evaluations
- Program records

This information presents a picture of the volunteer's effectiveness. The information should be shared with the volunteer in such a way that it:

- Reinforces the volunteer's contributions
- Emphasizes the volunteer's impact on the organization
- Focuses on the volunteer's skills and accomplishments

Options When Volunteer Performance is Substandard

When volunteers are performing below expectations or their service is no longer in the best interest of your organization, it may become necessary to take corrective action. You may consider:

Re-training

- Transferring the volunteer to a new assignment
- Disciplinary action
- "Retirement"

There are circumstances, difficult and often uncomfortable for both parties, when the dismissal of a volunteer is necessary to maintain the credibility and integrity of your volunteer program. Volunteers should understand from their initial induction into your program that they may be terminated with or without cause. Spell out in advance that infractions of rules and regulations, violations of the law, and other unsafe or inappropriate conduct are all grounds for termination.



SECTION VIII: Exit Interviews

1. Why do we need an exit interview?

- It will provide your department with a source of information as to why folks are no longer interested in volunteering.
- It will provide your department with trend information.
- It will provide a means to review your policies, training, procedures and overall performance for possible changes or alterations.
- It could possibly reveal an issue that can easily be resolved and the individual could be retained.
- Gives closure to their membership in a professional and caring manner.

2. What points should an interview contain?

- Use questions that are geared to your organization's structure.
- Clear understanding that the information will remain confidential if so desired.
- Stay away from using questions that can be answered yes or no.
- Provide a system of "follow through," including corresponding with the individual, as to any actions taken.
- If you see a trend be willing to make appropriate changes.
- Make questions short and sweet and to the point.
- Provide an opportunity for the individual to either sit down with a designated department official to go over their Exit Interview, to hand it in, or mail it in.
- Make sure your questions are appropriately worded so as to avoid anyone finding them to be biased or discriminatory remarks.
- Again, ensure that the exit interviews are secured and maintained for a year after the departure of the member.
- The Exit Interview needs to be updated from time to time to include any new changes or procedures in your organization.



During your Exit Interview, keep in mind these Basic Principles. If your organization is lacking in any of these areas, this may be playing a part in your volunteers' decision to leave your organization:

1. Communication: Need for communication training that teaches both sides of the communication process – Are you speaking and listening? Remember these key phrases for important communication.

- Open communication sets the tone
- Listen, listen, listen
- Send signals of compassion and positive recognition – no negatives
- Communicate willingness to co-manage.
- Communicate personal fallibility
- Communicate initiative through leadership
- Communicate trust
- Communicate fun and enjoyment
- Communicate a vision
- Communicate willingness to help individuals to achieve goals

2. Recognition

- Pride/personal responsibility in daily effort
- Outstanding recognition programs
- Determine how your volunteer wants and needs to be recognized
- Control the “competitiveness and popularity contest” of the recognition.
- Evaluate criteria for recognition
- Recognize effort and success regularly and promptly
- Do not recognize inferior performances just for the sake of giving an award.
- Look for attitude, aggressiveness, appearance and results to grant awards.

3. Performance Management

- Show honest and sincere appreciation at every opportunity.
- Make others feel needed and important.
- Make your mission bigger than your ego.
- Work toward progress and not perfection.
- Be solution-conscious, not problem-oriented
- Look at both efforts and results with results having priority
- Recognize, accept and work with weakness; including your own.
- Always remember to say thank you.
- Give regular, specific, and observable behavior feedback on performance evaluations.
- Respect the line of communication and authority.
- Make timely decisions.
- Be accessible.
- Encourage creative ideas.
- Provide personal support

4. Is your organization lacking motivation and leadership? Here are some warnings signs:

- Leaders unwilling or unable to make decisions in a timely manner.
- Members do not clearly understand their responsibilities.
- Lack of communication.
- Low morale.
- Lack of interest in task or assignment
- Absence of clear-cut goals and/or objectives of the department.
- Lack of discipline.
- Lack of delegation by leadership resulting in unbalanced workloads.
- Lack of fair and equitable treatment to members.
- Privileges, promotions and/or opportunities given based on friendships or relationships rather than performance.

Remember

- Management cultivates members.
- Management must be competent and trusted to be respected.
- Management must give others direction, hope, encouragement, and respect.
- Lead by example.
- Where and how a person starts is not as important as where they finish

SECTION IX: Recognition and Retention

Recognition of your volunteer member efforts is crucial to retention. People need to know that they are appreciated. By providing recognition at the company level, as well as to the general public, the individual will feel that their efforts are more worthwhile. They will become even more motivated when they know that they will be recognized for their hard work.

Member Recognition

We just identified recognition as being a basic principle. Recognition of your volunteer member's efforts is crucial to retention. People need to know that they are appreciated. By providing recognition at the company level, as well as to the general public, the individual will feel that their efforts are appreciated and valued. They will become even more motivated when they know that they will be recognized for their hard work.

Some of the ways Additional ways to recognize the efforts of your members include dedicating a member of the year, recognizing persons for years of service, and honoring a member for a heroic service to the community. Be sure to post their accomplishments to your website, social media pages and congratulate them on a job well done.

Retention

Retention of volunteers gives the department a base of experience. It also provides the organization with staffing consistency and reliability. There are two major components to volunteer retention. The first is volunteer experience and the second is volunteer benefits. Volunteer experience includes the treatment they receive, leadership and supervision, and interaction with other members. Volunteers must be treated fairly and with respect. The second component is the benefits that the volunteer gets as a member. Although they do not receive a salary, they need to feel "compensated". Make sure all new members realize the benefits they will get as a volunteer, from both the local and state levels.

Promotion

Promoting the efforts of your members is also very important. Make sure that others see the successes of your department's activities. Share trainings and events on your social media platforms and highlight them on your website. Send an article to the local newspaper. Press releases to local radio and television stations allow the media to cover important events like open houses and annual banquets. Share subsequent articles and footage on your website and social media platforms.

SECTION X: Measuring the Effectiveness of Your Volunteer Program

Your organization must make critical decisions regarding the distribution, use and management of available resources. To help make those decisions, your officials need to document (1) how financial, material, equipment, in-kind, and human resources have been, are being, and will be used by you to support your efforts, and (2) what benefits these resources have brought to the service you provide.

Evaluation should be tailored to your organization's capacity to evaluate. There are two basic types of evaluation. Formative program evaluation is used to monitor ongoing program effectiveness and to manage activity. It guides mid-year (or mid-project) adjustments and provides mid-year data for a year-end report. Summative program evaluation is a year-end (or project-end) report that includes results, strengths, weaknesses, recommendations, and future plans.

Data Collection

To measure program outcomes or attainment of program objectives, it is necessary to systematically collect and record baseline data in the early stages of planning. This data reveals how things were before your program went into effect. Once you established the baseline, collect data that will show changes in behaviors, skills, or attitudes of the people affected by the program and the added value the program brings.

You may want to collect quantitative and qualitative data, such as the number of volunteers, the total time they have committed, duties performed, achievements, and the overall effectiveness of the program.

Data can be collected on the following bases:

- Program goals and objectives
- Group targeted for evaluation
- Activities to be evaluated
- Resources available for implementing the evaluation

Evaluation Report

This data should be used to analyze if the plan met expectations and how well it was implemented. Try to collect the best data the budget will allow and ensure you give adequate time for gathering and analyzing the data. The findings should summarize the results or outcomes of the program activities.

Consider who will receive the report and how the information will be used. Identify which of the following groups the data is intended to inform or influence:

- Board of Officers
- Funding sources
- Membership
- General public

In determining the content and appearance of the report, you should consider whether the goal of the report is to:

- Justify funding
- Gain additional support
- Demonstrate effectiveness
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the program
- Determine future planning
- Celebrate accomplishments

Key Questions to Ask

You can have endless questions in any evaluation so limitations need to be set. Limitation of time, money, and personnel will focus the evaluation questions to the most essential ones to give you information to improve your program.

Some possible questions:

- Is the program operating in the way it was originally designed?
- Have adjustments been made as needed?
- Were the stated outcomes achieved?
- Is evaluation data being used for future planning?

Section XI: Suggested Resources for Further Reference

MarylandVolunteer.org Recruiter Portal & Helpful Documents

Mentorship Program Guide

Mentorship Implementation Roadmap

Customizable Recruitment Materials - Create your own personalized recruitment materials.

Recruiter Educational Video Series

Recruitment Media - Use MSFA recruitment commercials and videos in your own community.

Social Media Guide

Community Outreach & Education: It Affects Everything (Jordan Cramer, Community Risk Reduction Coordinator)

Recruiting for the Long Term: Identifying PSM-Public Service Motivators (Dr. Jason Decremer, Recruitment & Retention Coordinator, Southbury CT Volunteer Fire Department)

Reaching, Recruiting, & Retaining At-Risk Volunteers in the Fire Service (Dr. Candice McDonald)

Top 10 Commandments for Recruitment & Retention

Top 10 Tips to Drive Volunteer Fire & EMS Recruitment in 2022

Recruitment & Retention Action Plan

The Art of Speed Recruiting

Google For Non-Profit Set-Up

Social Media Essential

Canva Resources

Starting & Growing Fire/EMS Youth Programs

The Recruiter's Playbook for National Night Out 2024

12 Strategies for 2024

Websites

Maryland State Firemen's Association: www.msfa.org

Maryland Fire Rescue Institute: www.mfri.org

Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems: www.miems.org

International Association of Fire Chiefs: <https://www.iafc.org/topics-and-tools/volunteer>

National Volunteer Fire Council: www.nvfc.org

The Professional Volunteer Fire Department: www.theprofessionalvfd.com

US Fire Administration: www.usfa.fema.gov/a-z/volunteer-fire-service.html

Articles and Books

Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services; FEMA, 2023

The Professional Volunteer Fire Department by Tom Merrill

Recruiting, Training, Maintaining Volunteer Fire Fighters 3rd edition; IAFC

The Volunteer Project: Stop Recruiting. Start Retaining. 2015 Kizer, Kreisher, Whitacre

Volunteer Engagement 2.0: Ideas and Insights Changing the World 1st Edition; Rosenthal/Baldwin



MARYLAND

VOLUNTEER



PRESENTED BY



First Arriving