Front matter: Volunteer Database

Why It's Important

Volunteers are the engine of a community event, and a simple database keeps that engine organized. It holds contact details, skills, availability, and hours in one secure place, so you can match the right people to the right roles, reach the right groups quickly, and recognize the contributions people make. Handled well, it also protects volunteers' privacy and makes it easy to welcome them back year after year. Collect only what you need, keep it secure, and be clear about how it is used.

How to Use

1. Decide which fields you will collect. Start with the essentials and skip anything you will not use.
2. Tell every volunteer what you collect, why, who can see it, and how long you keep it, then record their consent.
3. Store the database in password-protected software or secure cloud storage, not on personal devices.
4. Limit access to the few organizers who need it.
5. Use the segments, such as skills or availability, to send targeted messages instead of emailing everyone.
6. Review records once a year, archive inactive volunteers, and honour any request to update or delete information.

What You Need

- A clear list of the information you actually need for the role.
- A consent statement and a way to record consent.
- Secure, access-controlled storage with regular backups.
- A named owner responsible for keeping records accurate and private.
- A privacy policy available to volunteers on request.

Event Ready Volunteer Database template

Collect only the information you need

Gather information that is directly relevant to volunteer management, such as:

- Full name
- Preferred name (optional)
- Contact information (email, phone)
- Emergency contact
- Availability
- Skills, certifications, and experience
- Volunteer interests
- Accessibility or accommodation needs (optional)
- Languages spoken
- Consent to receive communications

Avoid collecting unnecessary sensitive information unless it is required for the role.

Obtain clear consent

Tell volunteers:

- What information you're collecting
- Why you need it
- Who will have access
- How long you'll keep it
- How they can update or request deletion of their information

Document their consent for communications and data storage.

Keep data secure

- Use password-protected volunteer management software or secure cloud storage.
- Limit access to staff who need the information.
- Enable multi-factor authentication where possible.
- Avoid storing volunteer lists on personal devices.
- Back up the database regularly.

Keep records accurate

Review and update volunteer profiles regularly:

- Contact information
- Availability
- Training completed
- Certifications
- Emergency contacts
- Hours volunteered

Encourage volunteers to update their own information annually.

Track volunteer activity

Useful information includes:

- Events participated in
- Volunteer hours
- Roles performed
- Training completed
- Awards or recognition received
- Feedback from supervisors
- Preferences for future assignments

This helps match volunteers with appropriate opportunities.

Segment your database

Create categories to make communication easier, such as:

- Event volunteers
- Committee members
- Team leaders
- Specialized skills (first aid, photography, registration)
- Geographic area
- Availability (weekday, evening, weekend)

This allows targeted emails instead of sending every message to everyone.

Respect privacy

- Don't share volunteer contact information without permission.
- Use blind copy (BCC) or email marketing software for group emails.
- Remove access for former staff or organizers promptly.
- Have a privacy policy available.

Establish retention policies

Decide how long you'll keep inactive volunteer records. For example:

- Archive inactive volunteers after 2 years.
- Delete records after a defined period unless there's a legal or organizational reason to retain them.
- Allow volunteers to request removal of their information.

Use the database to strengthen engagement

Track:

- Birthday or anniversary recognition (if volunteers opt in)
- Milestone hours
- Training opportunities
- Volunteer interests
- Recognition awards

This supports long-term volunteer retention.

Comply with applicable privacy laws

Follow the privacy legislation that applies to your organization. For example:

- In Canada, organizations need to comply with federal or provincial privacy laws depending on where they operate and the nature of the organization.
- Ensure your practices align with applicable consent, security, and data retention requirements.

Volunteer Database

We have created a spreadsheet

Link here: [insert link here

Event Assignments

Event Name	Event Date	Volunteer ID	Volunteer Name	Assigned Role	Shift	Supervisor	Check-In	Check-Out	Hours

eventready

Volunteer Hours Tracking

Volunteer ID	Volunteer Name	Event	Date	Start Time	End Time	Total Hours	Approved By

Skills & Certificates

Volunteer ID	Volunteer Name	First Aid	Food Safe	Driver's License	Criminal Record check	Heavy Lifting	Customer Service	Languages	Other Skills