

Edmonton Overlanders Orienteering Club [EOOC]

Volunteer Policy

August, 2020

Volunteer Program Policy – Introduction & Background

Background

The orienteering community in Edmonton is comprised of many long-time members who are passionate about orienteering. These people include founding members, former national champions, club presidents, EIOC board members, provincial and national board members, and highly qualified orienteering officials. Over the past forty years, these individuals have selflessly volunteered tens of thousands of hours. We have a core of very able and experienced volunteers in Edmonton, but their average age is steadily increasing.

It is imperative that the knowledge and experience of these volunteers be passed onto others in the volunteer 'workforce'.

As per the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, an organization is most successful when all levels of an organization recognize the opportunity to engage volunteers. Through this Volunteer Policy, EIOC will endeavour to treat volunteers with respect, make safety a priority and enable members of the Club and volunteers to continue to participate at all levels.

Objectives of the policy

1. To strengthen the operational capacity and the ability to fulfill the mission and purpose of the EIOC by providing screened and suitable volunteers on an as-needed basis to key positions and programs.
2. To contribute to a well-managed, organized and enjoyable volunteer experience. High volunteer satisfaction levels contribute to high member retention.
3. To provide suitable opportunities for giving and volunteering that result in helping volunteers to reach their personal development goals.
4. To help guide the actions of all individuals involved in the Association by providing consistency in decision making among staff, executive members and volunteers. The policy also clarifies responsibilities and defines lines of communication and accountability.

Current Volunteer Management Practices

There are three major volunteer roles within Edmonton Overlander Orienteering

1. EIOC Board and committee members
2. EIOC volunteer coaches and officials
3. EIOC event and program volunteers, general support

Volunteers are currently being managed by the EIOC board members and one paid staff member. The volunteer management policy exists to contribute to the strategic direction, organizational governance and running of key programs/events for the Club. Basic management includes screening, orientation, mentoring and check in.

The EIOC affirms that volunteerism is an essential and highly regarded community value and strives to maintain and enhance volunteerism in the Club.

Volunteer Program Policy – Understanding Volunteers and their Value

Definition of a Volunteer

Orienteering is largely run by volunteers. The EIOC acknowledges a volunteer as anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs work at the direction of and on behalf of EIOC.

A volunteer is an individual:

- who chooses to undertake a service or activity; someone who is not coerced or compelled to do this activity
- who does this activity in service to an individual or an organization, or to assist the community-at-large
- who does not receive a salary or wage for this service or activity
- who works within the capacity of an executive member, coach, official, event organizer or coordinator without compensation, except expense reimbursement

Philosophy of Volunteer Involvement

The EIOC recognizes that volunteers are vital human resources and commits to the appropriate infrastructure to support volunteer involvement in the organization.

Involvement of a Volunteer

The use of volunteers is preferred where available. The volunteer ethic is to be encouraged and respect should be paid to the feelings of volunteers in any action made on behalf of the sport of orienteering.

Training of Volunteers

On-boarding, orientation, certification courses, workshops and mentoring will be offered to the EIOC board of directors and volunteers to help train them in various volunteer skills.

Volunteer Recruitment

When recruiting for a major volunteer task (with great responsibility of overseeing many others), an open selection process should be used with adequate advertising. This is to give an opportunity for all interested people to apply for the position.

The EOOO executive shall seek to recruit suitable volunteers. The executive will reasonably endeavour to provide effective volunteer training, orientation and supervision, and when necessary for certification, to assist in tracking volunteer contributions.

Volunteer Recognition

The EOOO will continue to recognize volunteers and their contributions on an ongoing basis. Recognition in the past has consisted of public acknowledgement and tokens of thanks at the Annual General Meeting. Recognition of Kids Run Wild volunteers has been recognized separately through that program.

NOTE:

Alberta Sport Connection recognizes outstanding coach developers, coaches, officials and sport volunteers biennially through their Sport Recognition Awards. Nominations open late in the even-numbered years. The Alberta Orienteering Association (AOA) Executive Director should poll Alberta orienteering clubs for nominees, but the nomination should be made by AOA. The EOOO executive can also forward the names of recommended recipients to the AOA. <https://albertasport.ca/programs/awards/recognition>

Honorary memberships (Bylaws, Article 3.1 (c)) can be awarded as recognition of exemplary service to the sport of orienteering in Alberta.

Volunteer Program Policy – The Basics

Volunteer Access to Policies

Volunteers will be provided access to all relevant policies, including this Volunteer policy. To honour the time of volunteers, EIOC will seek to provide only relevant policies and not overwhelm volunteers.

Volunteer Responsibilities

The safety, welfare, and health of volunteers and members are of high priority in all of the EIOC operations.

Volunteers will be given appropriate support, which can include the buddy system, event and site-based training, the provision of training and other opportunities as circumstances arise. Staff, executive members and volunteer officials are expected to, within reason, ensure a shared understanding of volunteer safety.

All volunteers will adhere to a risk management process described in the general guidelines, “Safety Rules & Recommendations for Orienteering” document [see link below], and will make their safety a top priority. This process will involve assessing and managing risk in the following areas:

- Volunteer positions
- Orientation and training of volunteers
- Volunteer support and management

Volunteers may refuse any assignment that they reasonably believe to be unsafe.

All volunteers who are in event/program in leadership roles should be familiar with the policies and procedures listed below [see link below]:

- AOA Volunteer Program Policy (this document)
- Safety Rules & Recommendations for Orienteering
- AOA Concussion Policy

All the above information can be accessed online on the AOA website:

<https://www.orienteeringalberta.ca/volunteers.html>

Volunteer Program Policy – Safety for Volunteers in Leadership Roles

Definitions:

Leadership roles: volunteers who are in positions of trust. 'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to a position of authority over another person or within an organization. e.g. Decision makers - executive members; Managers who supervise other volunteers or staff; Head coaches; Coaches who are responsible for any program with minors; key officials for events (e.g. event director, controller, safety chief). Positions of trust do not necessarily require a Police Information Check: some may, some may not.

Vulnerable Person: a person who, because of their age, disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, is in a position of dependence on others or who are at a higher than normal risk of being harmed by an authority figure.

Volunteer Screening

As a general principle, all EEOC volunteers will follow the "Rule of Two" guidelines from the Coaching Association of Canada (see Appendix).

The EEOC will work towards ensuring the appropriate screening of volunteers to maximize member and volunteer safety. This on the understanding that in most circumstances the EEOC is comprised of volunteers and operates on the basis of good faith efforts.

The EEOC shall require screening if the volunteer position involves situations where the individual may be alone and unsupervised with persons identified as vulnerable.

Police Information Checks (PICs) may be reasonable if a volunteer works in a position of trust but is not solely responsible for the well-being of vulnerable persons. A volunteer role like this does not necessitate a Vulnerable Sector Search, but for other risk considerations it may still be necessary to conduct one. Police Information Checks include existing criminal convictions, upcoming criminal court appearances, and a scan of the local police records in the jurisdiction in which the applicant resides. Keep in mind that they may include information on alleged crimes in which the person was not charged or convicted.

Police Information Checks (PIC)

Volunteers who have direct access to vulnerable persons will be expected to complete a Police Information Check (PIC). This includes programming with youth. The cost of the PIC will be reimbursed by the EEOC.

Vulnerable Sector Searches (VSS) are only requested as part of a PIC when a volunteer is solely responsible for the well-being of a vulnerable person including children under the age of 18. Merely being in contact with a vulnerable person does not necessitate a Vulnerable Sector Search, unless the volunteer is in a position with a significant degree of trust or authority and with unsupervised access to vulnerable persons.

The EEOC President, in consultation with the Volunteer Coordinator will request the volunteer or staff to submit VSS if it deemed necessary.

Potential volunteers are required to disclose to the EEOC President any security concerns that may be listed in a completed Police Information Check. Existing volunteers who become aware of any changes to their security clearance status must inform the EEOC President.

PICs will be valid within EEOC for three (3) years from the date they are completed.

Police Information Check (PIC) and where to obtain it

If a volunteer is required to apply for a Police Information Check and needs a volunteer application support letter it can be obtained through contacting the EEOC executive.

PICs can be obtained from your local Police Department or RCMP or, for your convenience, you can try to use the online services provided by Sterling Solutions partnership with the Coaching Association of Canada.

Police Information Check fee reimbursement for volunteers

Volunteers whose position requires a PIC will have the fee reimbursed by EEOC.

Contact the EEOC President or Volunteer Coordinator to receive approval prior to applying for the PIC.

Recommended Levels of Screening:

Many volunteers, both adult and youth, will not have a leadership role, nor a supervisory role in contact with minors. These people have no screening requirements.

1. EOOO executive members do not require a completed PIC. Executive members are expected to adhere to relevant club operational policies, including privacy policies, and apply their efforts in good faith.
2. Coaches in leadership/supervisory positions with minors will submit a Volunteer Application Form (link in Appendix) with listed related experience qualifications, and references and will be required to complete a PIC. The results of PICs will be made available to the EOOO President and relevant committee members who will report any issues to the EOOO executive. It is up to the executive to decide what action to take if there are issues resulting from a Police Information Check.
3. Volunteer screening for Youth Volunteers (12-17 years old): Not necessary with appropriate signed waivers and supervision from senior volunteers and/or paid staff. However, if in a supervisory role, they will submit a Youth Volunteer Agreement (link in Appendix), including parental agreement.

Adult Volunteer Waiver & Youth Volunteer Agreement

There is an Adult Volunteer Waiver (link in Appendix). There is also a Youth Volunteer Agreement (link in Appendix) which requires parental agreement; this must be signed by youth volunteers and their parent/guardian.

EOOO Volunteer Position General Descriptions

Volunteer positions and descriptions are found as part of the following documents and are to be made available to volunteers:

- EOOO Policy Manual
- Event Officials (Orienteering Canada)
- General Volunteers (ad hoc, duties are described by coordinating leader of an event or activity)

Volunteer Supervision and Evaluation

Volunteers may be supervised and if so, are expected to follow instructions.

Volunteer Management Success Criteria

Volunteer management will be built on the values and best practices, as per the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement. The CCVI lists the following standards for volunteer involvement:

- Volunteers have rights. EOOO recognizes that volunteers are a vital human resource and will commit to the appropriate infrastructure and to providing a safe and supportive environment for volunteers

- The organization's practices ensure effective volunteer involvement.
- Volunteers have responsibilities. Volunteers make a commitment and are accountable to the organization.
- Volunteers will act with respect for beneficiaries and community and act responsibly and with integrity.
- The success of volunteer management is reliant on the successful integration of these values and should be evaluated and enhanced on an ongoing basis.

Volunteer Insurance

Insurance for EOOO volunteers is provided through the Orienteering Canada insurance policy. More information about insurance: <http://www.orienteeing.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Insurance-Writeup-for-Website-2017.pdf>

Note

This Volunteer Program Policy was developed in August, 2020 and will be implemented in the 2020-21 season.

References:

Volunteer Alberta: "Volunteer screening program-Policies and procedures workbook"
http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/programs_services_resources/people/volunteer-screening/10-steps-to-screening/
Volunteer Canada: "The Screening Handbook"

APPENDIX

From the Coaching Association of Canada -- "Rule of Two"

<https://coach.ca/three-steps-responsible-coaching>

"The goal of the Rule of Two is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable, and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions in emergency situations.

Good practices to implement the Rule of Two

- *Ensure a coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent or volunteer) present.*
- *Allow the training environment to be open to observation.*
- *Ensure a participant rides in a coach's vehicle with another adult present.*
- *Consider the gender of the participant(s) when selecting the screened coaches and volunteers present.*
- *Eliminate one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents."*

AOA Adult Volunteer Waiver

<https://zone4.ca/register.asp?id=22508&lan=1&cartlevel=1>

AOA Youth Volunteer Participation Agreement

<https://zone4.ca/register.asp?id=23431&lan=1&cartlevel=1>

Volunteer Application Form for Leadership Roles

https://www.orienteingalberta.ca/uploads/1/0/2/2/102233682/volunteer_application_form-aoa-final.pdf