



Gymnastics

Australian Capital Territory

Volunteer Policy

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Signed: _____
(President ACT Gymnastic Association Inc)

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1 INTENT OF THE POLICY

1.1 General

ACT Gymnastic Association Inc (ACTGA) recognises the critical role volunteers play within the gymnastic community.

Attracting and retaining dedicated volunteers is vital to the continued success of ACT Gymnastics and our many programmes and services. Volunteers have long been the lifeblood of state and national events staged by the ACTGA and we are committed to providing volunteers with challenging and rewarding experiences.

This ACTGA Volunteer Policy aims to clarify a range of issues surrounding volunteers and their roles within the ACTGA network.

1.2 Scope

The Policy covers all volunteers supporting the ACTGA in any capacity. Volunteers can range from officials, such as judges to children acting as score “runners” and may include parents, gymnasts, committee members and members of the general community.

1.3 Updates

This Policy will be reviewed and updated accordingly as part of the ACTGA annual policy review process.

2 POLICY BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

2.1 Definition

Formal volunteering is an activity, which takes place in not for profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- To be of benefit to the community;
- Of the volunteer’s own free will and without coercion;
- For no financial payment, and
- In designated volunteer positions only.

(courtesy of volunteering Australia Inc, <http://www.volunteering australia.org>)

2.2 Gymnastic Volunteer Program

ACTGA has a Gymnastic Volunteer Program (GVP) that is designed to assist the gymnastic community in developing a positive and supportive volunteer culture.

The program is aligned with the ACT Department of Sport & Recreation’s Volunteer Management Program.

The program concentrates on six components that form part of the volunteer management cycle:

- Recruitment;
- Selection / Screening;
- Orientation / Induction;
- Training / Development;

- Recognition, and
- Retention.

The program also complements planning and management practices already in place in the gymnastic community, such as:

- Strategic and Operational Plans;
- Risk Management, and
- Affiliation.

3 HOW THE POLICY WORKS

This policy applies to all ACTGA volunteers, employees, Committee Members, Technical Members and Affiliated Clubs.

4 OUR RESPECTIVE ROLES IN MAKING THIS POLICY WORK

4.1 Volunteers

Volunteers can expect:

- An adequate induction to the organisation;
- To be assigned and briefed on a job that suits their personal preference, motivation, skills experience and qualifications;
- To be trained to do their job;
- To have their personal information held confidentially;
- Protection, safety and insurance when carrying out their assigned tasks;
- To have their out of pocket expenses reimbursed wherever possible;
- To be respected by co-workers, ACTGA members, and staff.
- To have their complaints and concerns heard;
- To be given feed back about their performance;
- To be recognised for contributing their time, experience, ideas and skills;
- To be able to take time off for a holiday or personal reasons, and
- To be able to resign from their position.

Volunteers have the responsibility to:

- Ensure they have the time necessary to take on a volunteers position;
- Work within the policies and procedures of the organisation;
- Respect the privacy of staff, members and other volunteers;
- Be reliable and dependable;
- Complete agreed hours and tasks;
- Inform the organisation when they will not be able to volunteer;
- Be loyal to the organisation;
- Attend orientation and training sessions when required;

- Be a team player and support staff and other volunteers;
- Identify their limitations and expectations, and
- Be accountable and accept constructive criticism.

4.2 ACT Gymnastics

ACTGA expects volunteer's to show:

- Conscientious effort and service;
- Commitment and loyalty to the development of gymnastics in the ACT;
- Enthusiasm for their volunteer work, and
- Clear and open communication with ACTGA.

ACTGA has the responsibility to:

- Establish environments in which volunteers have meaningful work that helps achieve agreed results;
- Describe the criteria for volunteer participation, including the conditions under which the organisation and the volunteer may end their obligation;
- Ensure appropriate protect against risk in the way of adequate insurance cover;
- Ensure volunteers are given the required support to perform tasks;
- Keep volunteers informed about issues and concerns;
- Ensure that the work of volunteer staff complements but does not undermine the work of paid staff, and
- Ensure admission for all by removing physical, economic, social and cultural barriers to volunteer participation.

5 VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

In order to effectively and efficiently deal with issues surrounding volunteers, ACTGA recognises the need for establishing the position of 'Volunteer Coordinator'. The Volunteer Coordinator function will normally be carried out by the Executive Director but may be assigned to a specific person from time to time.

The Volunteer Coordinator has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that the ACTGA Volunteer policy is adhered to;
- Liaise with relevant staff regarding the training and induction of volunteers;
- Maintain a comprehensive database of all volunteer details;
- Play a role in the screening of volunteers and maintenance of confidential records relating to the volunteers' personal information.

The Volunteer Coordinator will work closely with ACTGA officials in relation to any event or program that requires the use of volunteers. Matters relating to the recruitment, training and retention of volunteers for a particular program or event will be coordinated by the relevant ACTGA staff member.

6 THE POLICY

6.1 Recruitment

To uphold the integrity of ACT Gymnastics and its programs, it is important that we attract and appoint the most dedicated, enthusiastic and skilled volunteers to work closely with our members. We rely heavily on our volunteer base to successfully deliver many of our programs and we are committed to ensuring the most appropriate people become volunteers of ACTGA.

6.1.1 Job Description

Each volunteer position will have clearly defined job descriptions that cover:

- A description of the position, including position objectives;
- Necessary skills or qualifications (mandatory and desirable);
- Key areas of responsibilities and a list of duties;
- Whom the position is accountable to;
- The days and times required
- Training requirements, and
- The flexibility to change the tasks of the position to suit the volunteer.

6.2 Selection and Screening

See ACTGA Member Protection Policy, Screening and Appointment Policy /Procedure (yet to be written)

6.3 Induction and Orientation

Induction is part of the recruitment process. The induction welcomes new volunteers to ACTGA and provides them with information about duties they are required to fulfil and the manner in which they are to fulfil them. This process will introduce the volunteer to the people they will be working with and provide them with the opportunity to ask questions about ACTGA in general.

The induction program must meet the following key objectives – the volunteer must gain a clear understanding of:

- The role and history of ACT Gymnastics;
- The program they are volunteering for;
- Their rights and responsibilities;
- Their duties, including any training requirements;
- Who they are responsible to and for, and
- Relevant ACTGA Volunteer Policies, including Risk Management.

Meeting these objectives can be achieved during a formal induction program conducted by ACTGA and/or in an ACTGA Volunteer Orientation Kit provided to the volunteer. (yet to be produced)

6.4 Training and Development

The competencies and skills of ACTGA volunteers have a direct impact on the programs and services we deliver to our members. ACTGA is committed to providing new and existing volunteers with appropriate, relevant training to assist them in fulfilling their specific duties, or taking on a new role.

When designing a training program, the following should be considered:

- Current skills and qualifications of volunteers;
- Identifying training opportunities appropriate to specific roles;
- Seeking out and providing access to opportunities to train volunteers through other organisations, such as the National Volunteer Organisations and the ACT Department of Sport and Recreation.

Well-trained volunteers will feel more capable and confident, increasing their job satisfaction. This in turn will have a positive influence on volunteer retention.

6.4.1 Mentoring

Volunteers possess valuable knowledge and information that may be lost when they leave their position or the organisation. Setting up a mentoring process will provide new volunteers with support, advice and encouragement during the transition period. It also keeps more volunteers involved in some capacity.

Having a mentoring process also enables ACTGA to implement a succession plan. Potential volunteers can be identified and developed in readiness to take over when required. This will ensure the departure of a volunteer is less likely to disrupt programs or services to members.

6.5 Recognition

Volunteers are truly special people. By celebrating the efforts of volunteers we create opportunities to raise the awareness about the vital contribution they have made and continue to make to ACT Gymnastics.

Accordingly, the ACTGA will formally recognise all of its volunteers on a regular basis and present appropriate volunteer achievement awards at the appropriate events each year.

6.6 Retention/Replacement

It is important to recognise how an individual may prefer to volunteer. There is an increasing preference among volunteers for short term, project based activities. Removing or limiting the barriers that may discourage volunteers should lead to a greater number becoming involved.

ACTGA will need to review its volunteer requirements annually. Like any organisation, structures evolve and this is true of volunteer support requirements and the tasks that volunteers are required to do.

There are also times when volunteers may not be placed in a role that suits them, or they do not recognise that the role has evolved beyond their capabilities. At these times the Volunteer Coordinator will need to develop processes to 'move them on'.

6.7 Performance Appraisals

Performance appraisals have many benefits:

- The volunteer can consider whether their needs are being met through their current position;
- The volunteer can resolve any ongoing problems and can re-assess their future commitment to ACTGA;
- ACTGA can gather feedback to help with the development of induction and training programs;
- Volunteer records can be updated and the information used to recognise and reward volunteers.
- ACTGA is made aware of how it might better support its volunteers.

ACTGA will develop a performance appraisal pro forma, which the volunteer completes annually