



Volunteer Manual

This Volunteer Policy Manual is intended to establish and explain the policies by which volunteers will be incorporated into RISE Resource Center. Initially adopted on September 23, 2011, this manual is considered a living document and will continue to grow with RISE Resource Center's volunteer program. Revisions will periodically be made to address circumstances and changes necessary to operate the program efficiently and continually in support of the mission of RISE Resource Center, Inc. and its programs and ensure volunteers find success and fulfillment in their contribution of time.

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1.0 Introduction

RISE Resource Center, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2009 and incorporated in Nevada in 2009 by four homeschooling mothers with a desire to support educational choice in Nevada. RISE Resource Center Inc. became a project of Citizen Outreach Foundation in 2011 and obtained a rental facility in September of 2011 allowing RISE to begin it's Family Mentor program, Supplemental Education Classes program, Homeschool Group Support program, and the RISE Adult and Teen Volunteer Programs.

1.1 Program Mission

Mission and Objective Statement for RISE Resource Center, Inc.

The mission of RISE Resource Center, Inc. is "to provide a facility and resources that support educational choice".

Objective: To educate the community on the educational choices available to them in Nevada through low to no cost family mentoring and to support the education already being provided to the children of Nevada through classroom rentals, supplemental classes, and other educational programs.

1.2 Purpose of Volunteer Program

Volunteers have made significant contributions to RISE Resource Center, Inc. In an effort to provide more structure and coordination to these ongoing efforts, as well as explore ways of utilizing skills and desires of citizens to participate, RISE Resource Center began to formalize its volunteer program in 2009. RISE values the donation of effort and time from volunteers as a means to extend the abilities of RISE staff in managing the resource center while also providing education and support to the community.

The role of volunteers within RISE is unique when compared to other local volunteer programs both in terms of frequency of participation as well as type of activities. RISE currently maintains a facility open to the public that is staffed by volunteers or that may require volunteer assistance to provide direct ongoing services for the community. Some volunteers will contribute their time as part of a schedule, by contributing their time by choosing to participate in activities ranging from a single four-hour weekend event, to an ongoing and flexible project. Various factors, such as availability, type of task, and location influence participation by volunteers. Those that participate in at least one activity each year are considered ACTIVE, even if they are unable to participate in any subsequent opportunities. The RISE Volunteer Program can be further differentiated from other programs because a significant number of opportunities involve working with children, sometimes with special needs, requiring special training or previous experience.

RISE Utilizes volunteers to assist with fundraisers, family mentoring, facility maintenance, clerical duties, janitorial duties, and special projects. In order to provide a well-organized and successful volunteer program for both RISE Resource Center, Inc. and volunteers, staff will follow the policies set forth in this manual.

2.0 Entry Into RISE Volunteer Program

2.1 Initial Contact

Staff will be available to receive inquiries via phone, email, and in person at the facility or at events from citizens interested in volunteer for RISE. Anyone, regardless of race, creed, disability, sexual orientation, age, etc. may become a RISE volunteer. All volunteers are required to provide their own transportation to the facility or to the location of a project or any pre-arranged meeting place. Due to the specific nature of some of our volunteering programs, some opportunities may not be appropriate for all volunteers. Young children may participate in appropriate projects, i.e. bake sales, Science Expo, Fresh and Easy, Box Tops collection, and other family volunteer events, but they must be accompanied by parents or responsible guardians and must be pre-approved by the RISE Resource Center Directors or volunteer coordinator. Project requirements including, but not limited to, minimum age, level of difficulty or need for heavy lifting will be included in Project Descriptions as essential job functions to ensure volunteers that sign up for a project are capable of the activity.

Volunteers will also be actively recruited into the RISE Volunteer Program through announcements via electronic methods such as internet-postings, emails to group contacts or individuals, notices to relevant group list servers, or through announcements at public engagements such as educational events and display booths. Language about the volunteer program will be included in print materials where appropriate, such as program brochures. Staff may also meet and encourage individuals such as students and neighbors who are interested in the educational programs or events to sign up as volunteers.

Individuals seeking information about the volunteer program as well as the RISE Resource Center programs may contact staff or visit the RISE web page. (www.riseresourcecenter.org) Contained within the volunteer program pages is general information, a photo gallery of past projects, a downloadable copy of this manual, and an online registration form. Copies of these documents are also available in the RISE Director offices for review.

2.2 Volunteer Application Form (See Appendix B)

Individuals or groups wanting to volunteer at the RISE Resource Center should complete a Volunteer Application Form. The form is available at the RISE facility, or can be faxed or mailed upon request. The Volunteer Application Form provides RISE staff with contact information such as address, phone numbers, and email, as well as preferences for type of activity interest. A slightly modified form is available to accommodate teens and groups wanting to become volunteers. The address is

collected for instances when letters or other correspondence needs to occur by postal mail, although email is the preferred method of correspondence whenever possible. Phone numbers are important when staff need to contact volunteers quickly, as is the case when events are cancelled or times are changed. On the form, volunteers are also able to record any special needs, their availability and any special skills. Key information captured on the form is a volunteer's preference for type of projects. This preference allows staff to better tailor recruiting announcements for projects.

2.3 Release of Liability and Emergency Contact Form (See Appendix B)

All volunteers are required to sign a Release of Liability Form and fill out an Emergency Contact Form. Typically, these forms are signed immediately prior to participation in the first volunteer activity. The Release of Liability Form, once signed, is valid for one year – a date tracked in the volunteer database that is maintained by the volunteer coordinator. At the time of renewal, an Emergency Contact form must also be simultaneously renewed, allowing for any updates in contact information, doctor names, etc.

2.4 Background Checks

Background checks are required for all adult volunteers with the exception of those under the age of 18. Background checks can be completed on site or at 1851 Stella Lake (off Martin Luther King just north of Vegas Drive) or at any police substation. The cost is \$10 and background checks done off site must be returned to the RISE Program Director. Current CCSD Licenses or current CCW Licenses are accepted as acceptable proof of background check completion.

2.5 Management of Volunteer Information

Information provided on the Volunteer Application Form by volunteers is entered into a customized database program. This computer program allows Staff to efficiently maintain the data, query for activity preferences, email out announcements for activities, track volunteer projects by RISE program, and track hours each volunteer contributes to each activity in which they participate. A volunteer's contact information will not be voluntarily provided to any other entity outside of RISE Resource Center, Inc. without permission of each volunteer in each instance. If information regarding a volunteer is required to be provided under the Nevada Public Information Act, the volunteer will be notified. To safeguard electronic mail addresses, mail announcements are sent out using the blind copy function. Volunteer documentation is kept on file in a secure cabinet and accessed by staff working to coordinate volunteer activities including Directors and management.

Volunteers that participate once but prefer not to be routinely notified for further opportunities may indicate that on their form or to staff. Periodically, announcements about educational events both inside and outside the facility will be

sent to volunteers by staff coordinating the events unless volunteers indicate on the form they would rather not receive such announcements.

2.6 Recruitment of Volunteers for Projects

All potential volunteers or those interested in volunteering for projects both inside and/or outside of the RISE facility must complete an application and background check. Some volunteers may be interviewed.

The Volunteer Application has been created to ensure that potential volunteers are placed in a volunteering position best suited for his or her skills and interests.

Interviews of potential volunteers may be conducted by staff members at the staff's discretion. Interviews are done in order to determine the best candidate for a project and are based on the potential volunteer's skills according to the needs of the project. Interviews are mostly necessary in cases where more than the required number of volunteers have offered to help with a project. However, interviews can be conducted in order to determine the best candidate for a special project requiring special skills and prior education or certification.

Background checks are mandatory for all volunteers in order to ensure the safety of the children in our community who are taking part in our programs and services at the RISE facility and at RISE sponsored events outside the facility.

Volunteers are recruited for activities that further the mission of RISE Resource Center, Inc. Most activities will occur at the RISE facility but may occur in other outside locations including but not limited to outside fundraising events, educational expos, and conventions.

The most common form of volunteer recruitment is through use of the RISE Volunteer database according to the following steps:

- Staff determines project needed, who will be project lead, and the date and time project will occur. Whenever possible, projects will not be scheduled sooner than ten days from announcement date in order to give adequate notice of opportunity. Seasonal limitations and staff availability play a role in putting projects together.
- A detailed project description is completed and contains the project title, project date, project location, goal of project, explanation of project task(s), number of volunteers needed and relevant safety information. Staff strives to give clear descriptions about project logistics and conditions so volunteers understand the physical or other requirements and sign up for a project with clear expectations.
- A query is made in the database to generate a list of volunteers whose preferences approximate the needs of the project. These volunteers are send an announcement of the opportunity using the BCC (blind copy) option for selected volunteer email addresses to protect their information.

- Volunteers may respond to the email to sign up for a project or to ask for clarification on the project details. They will receive a confirmation of their participation along with directions to the facility or location of the project. Volunteers uninterested or unavailable for the project do not need to reply and can simply delete the message, waiting for a better future fit. Alternatives to recruiting through the use of the RISE volunteer database include:
 - Use of first hand knowledge of a single volunteer or group of volunteers with special skills where they are contacted directly via email or phone.
 - Use of knowledge of groups that have expressed interest in participating in a project open only to their membership. A request for exclusivity will be honored as long as sufficient participation is garnered so a project can be completed per the needs of the RISE staff. If necessary, staff may augment a group's membership on an activity with other members of recruitment to ensure project success.

There is a possibility that a volunteer will be denied the opportunity to participate in a project if they do not have the appropriate knowledge, skills, or abilities required to effectively contribute to the project completion and/or could put themselves or another volunteer at a safety risk. Staff will communicate with the Program Managers about any such concerns, document the concerns, and sensitively discuss the matter with the volunteer. Effort should be made to find a more appropriate project for the volunteer.

3.0 Types of Volunteer Projects

All volunteer projects require approval from the Program Director. Projects are proposed by staff and may be posted by trained volunteers, through the use of an internal form, which is submitted to the Program Director for approval. Completion of the form facilitates consideration of seasonal or other conditions making the project time sensitive, limitations based on age and physical ability, tools, protective equipment for safety, required certifications, and other details. This step must occur in order for the Program Director to approve access to the facility and ensure it will not conflict with concurrent classes or activities scheduled for the facility at the same time.

3.1 Monthly Volunteer Projects

RISE Resource Center has the goal of holding at least one volunteer project a month. To track these specific projects, they are designated as Monthly Volunteer Projects, or MVPs, and represent the backbone of volunteer projects. It is important to note that MVPs are not necessarily projects that require a larger group and are not more important than other projects; it is simply a designation for program accountability. These projects are almost always fundraising events held on a weekend, involve a group of volunteers, and are led by a RISE staff member, or in rare cases their designee. The project leader is responsible for providing access to the RISE facility

or project location, having volunteers complete Release of Liability and Emergency Contact forms on site, and providing project orientation, training, and safety.

3.2 Special Onsite Projects

Special Onsite projects occur outside of the core of MVPs. These projects may occur only on one day or may be set up as an ongoing activity, and in some cases after hours or at night. They are accomplished with a range of volunteer assistance from a single volunteer to a large group. Special onsite projects are carried out differently based on whether volunteers will work alongside RISE staff or be authorized for independent access to the RISE facility. (i.e., Volunteer Assistant Manager)

Group activities within this type of project are managed as an MVP in that a RISE staff member or their designee leads them and holds responsibility for access, guidance and safety. While most MVPs are on weekends, special onsite projects may be held on weekdays.

Independent onsite projects entrust volunteers to manage themselves at the facility. Volunteers receive guidance, training and orientation from staff as is necessary to fulfill needs of the project, but accept responsibility for access onto and off the property, their own personal safety, and maintaining communication as is required with staff. For these reasons, there are specific procedures and protocols volunteers need to follow in order to maintain their project assignment:

- Volunteers with approved access will be issued documentation, in the form of a letter and/or identification badge that will contain the terms of their access. Volunteers are expected to have their access documentation with them at all times while on RISE property.
- Volunteers will be given the contact information for their supervising staff member and backup contact information for the project to which they are assigned.
- Volunteers must be accompanied by a RISE Manager to gain access to the property, office, or area for the project they are working on and are expected to keep all information confidential.
- Volunteers wishing to take an individual with them to either assist with the project or be a companion for safety reasons must provide the name(s) of that individual(s) to their primary contact and RISE employee coordinating volunteer activities. The individual(s) will need to complete a Release of Liability and Emergency Contact form, even if they do not wish to sign up to become an ongoing RISE volunteer.
- Volunteers who have their access pre-arranged based on a set schedule are required to check in with the front desk and his or her primary contact periodically to provide follow up information.
- Volunteers must follow the guidelines established in Conduct of Volunteers detailing what can and cannot occur on RISE property.

- Volunteers should track the dates and number of hours they spend on a volunteer project and report that information to the RISE staff responsible for volunteer coordination no later than at the end of every month.

3.3 Special Offsite Projects

Special Offsite Projects are most often projects such as fundraising events and writing or research assistance where a volunteer works independently, even if they are one of several volunteers contributing to the same project. Occasionally, a project might require construction or similar activity that a group accomplishes at another location or on the outside of the RISE property. Offsite projects are under the direct supervision of staff, however, projects still require the volunteer to be responsible for their own safety while off the RISE property.

4.0 Orientation and Training

At an MVP, Offsite, or Special Onsite Project with a group led by staff, volunteers will receive an orientation to the program, by RISE staff, RISE Directors or managing staff. Training for these projects typically includes the safe and proper use of tools and equipment, assembly of tents or other build outs, set up instructions, need for personal protective equipment, and method of task implementation, and is provided on the spot and on the job.

Special Onsite or Special Offsite projects that have more flexibility and independence for volunteers require more customized orientation and training. When a team of volunteers will be participating in the same task, albeit in an independent capacity, staff may conduct an introductory meeting to provide the same information to all volunteers and make efficient use of staff time or meet volunteers at the event locations. Staff will consider project needs, volunteer comfort with project tasks, and safety when determining the best method. At any time for any project, volunteers are able to ask questions to staff or state their need for more instructions in order to carry out the project and be successful.

5.0 Safety

5.1 Why Safety is Important

Of paramount importance is the safety of volunteers and staff while working on projects for RISE Resource Center, Inc. Many projects involve physical work and the use of tools where injuries can occur. As well, most projects involve working with children of all ages. Concerns for safety are compounded by the fact that volunteers may work in projects with children who become sick, have certain allergies, or have special needs.

5.2 Safety Guidelines

To mitigate the potential for injury or harm, RISE Resource Center, Inc. has established the following guidelines for project safety:

- When projects occur on RISE property, volunteers will receive an orientation including safety information from the project leader prior to the start of the activity. Stakeholders or other RISE staff who are coordinating activities under agreement with RISE Resource Center, Inc. are required to comply with this policy. The orientation and safety talk will follow the points listed on the Safety Checklist for Volunteers Projects (see appendix B) including key points such as hydrations, proper use of tools or equipment, Check in procedures, and child safety precautions.
- Staff will possess completed Release of Liability and Emergency Contact forms for each volunteer on the project. Volunteers that are under 18 must be accompanied by an adult and be included on the adult's forms. The Release of Liability is important for safety because it serves as a reminder that project work can sometimes result in injury and should be carried out carefully. The Emergency Contact form instructs staff on whom to contact in the event of an injury impairing communications with a volunteer and the absence of a volunteer's friend or spouse.
- Tools and supplies for volunteer use will be maintained in good condition so that they perform as intended. They will be transported by staff and used carefully so as not to endanger the volunteer or others. Misuse of tools or supplies during a volunteer project, especially to the extent that someone could be injured, may result in a volunteer being dismissed.
- Personal protective equipment will be provided as appropriate for the particular tools in use. If volunteers are approved to use their own tools, including power tools, they must wear the appropriate Personal Protective equipment as required by RISE policy.

No volunteer should attempt to access the facility on their own. Volunteers may only access the facility in the presence of a RISE Manager. Volunteers must, for safety reasons, notify a manager before leaving the facility. If staff is aware that a volunteer is on the property but is not notified that they have left, they will attempt to contact the volunteer to check on their status and/or contact the appropriate supervisor to assess if the volunteer has left or help is needed. As mentioned in section 3.2, volunteers wishing to bring a companion with them on a project for safety reasons must receive pre-approval from staff and facilitate the completion of a Release of Liability and Emergency Contact form for this person.

6.0 Conduct of Volunteers

Volunteers will be treated fairly, politely and without discrimination by staff and are expected to treat staff and other volunteers in the same manner on RISE property or at outside RISE sponsored events. Volunteers must provide their own transportation to the RISE facility and any RISE outside events or projects. If RISE Resource Center has supplied transportation to an outside event or project, as passengers, volunteers should not distract drivers, throw anything from the vehicle, damage interior or exterior condition of driver's vehicle, or cause a disruption.

Volunteers should understand that the RISE facility is shared with another non-profit organization and entrance is not allowed unless a RISE Manager is present. If challenged by members of staff not associated with RISE Resource Center, Inc., or law enforcement officials, individuals unable to provide documentation approving their and any companion's access to the RISE facility or property will be considered trespassers and action will be taken accordingly.

When participating in a project on behalf of RISE Resource Center, Inc., a volunteer may not:

- Remove from the site any materials including but not limited to tools, office supplies, furniture, signs, games, art supplies, music equipment, computers, books, toys, etc. unless under the direct approval of staff.
- Smoke in or on the property.
- Bring a dog or any other pet with them onto the property while participating in a volunteer project or program unless the animal is found necessary AND prior approval from staff or RISE Directors has been obtained.
- Bring companions or small children with them onto the property without the pre-approval of staff AND the companion's or child's completion of Release of Liability and Emergency Contact forms.
- Store a bicycle or other alternative transportation on RISE property while participating in a volunteer project or program unless they have approval of the Program Director, NOT VOLUNTEER STAFF.
- Cause damage to the property, either the property's contents or structure, through intentional action or negligence.
- Leave the facility without notifying a Manager.
- Leave children, guests, or teachers alone in the facility at any time.
- Be alone with a child, (other than their own children) anywhere inside or outside of the facility at any time for any reason.

6.1 Volunteer Use of RISE Property

RISE Resource Center provides volunteers with tools and equipment as is necessary and available to participating in a project or program. Volunteers are expected to carry and use tools carefully and as instructed so as not to endanger themselves or others, cause damage to the property or facility, or intentionally break or render a tool unusable. If a volunteer is participating in an independent project where they use RISE equipment, they will be asked to read the Equipment Loan Policy and sign the Equipment Check Out Form (see appendix B) completed by staff. The form specifies the date of equipment return, condition of equipment upon loan out, and staff member sharing responsibility in an effort for RISE to provide due diligence in protecting RISE assets. This form will also alert staff to maintenance or repair needs after use.

6.2 Volunteer Use of Personal Property

Occasionally, volunteers may offer to use or prefer to use their own equipment or materials for a project, class, or program. This is allowed as long as protective equipment meets RISE standards for safety, volunteers are responsible for their property at all times, and volunteers accept the risk of use of their property and will not hold RISE Resource Center, Inc. responsible. In the latter case, RISE Resource Center, Inc. will not be responsible for the misuse of volunteer property by the owner or another volunteer, damage incurred in the process of carrying out a volunteer project, class, or program, damage incurred by the dropping or submerging in water, or damage from exposure to climatic elements during outside projects, classes, or programs.

Disregard for the aforementioned guidelines will result in the suspension of a volunteer's participation on a project and the possible release of an individual from the RISE volunteer roll.

7.0 Conflict Resolution

This manual was developed to establish the policies under which volunteers participate in RISE activities and avoid misunderstandings and conflicts before they develop. Appropriate placement and training of volunteers and open communication between all parties can help alleviate potential problems. However, situations may arise when there is a conflict between volunteers or between a volunteer and a staff member that need to be addressed.

Volunteers that are unhappy or dissatisfied with a project, a fellow volunteer, or a staff member are encouraged to communicate with that staff member. If they are uncomfortable approaching the staff member with whom they have a conflict, they are encouraged to contact the RISE volunteer coordinator. If the conflict is with the volunteer coordinator and a volunteer is uncomfortable with a direct approach, they may contact either the Program Director or the Operations Director.

If staff have concerns about a volunteer's performance on a project or program, especially that which interferes with achieving project or program success or the mission of RISE Resource Center, they should communicate those concerns to the volunteer with consideration to privacy and confidentiality whenever possible. If communication with the volunteer does not correct the situation, staff should communicate with their supervisor and the RISE volunteer coordinator who will determine appropriate next steps. This procedure should also be followed if a volunteer is disregarding the conduct guidelines. These concerns will be documented and discussed directly with the volunteer in the presence of a third party if deemed necessary. However, if staff observe directly or are told by multiple individuals that a volunteer's actions on a project are threatening to their own or other individual's safety or welfare, staff have the authority to ask the volunteer to leave immediately and/or escort them from the property.

All attempts will be made to address conflict within RISE, if necessary under the facilitation of the Directors of RISE who make the final decision on an issue. If

necessary, the Directors of RISE may request assistance from RISE Board of Trustees or outside assistance from someone skilled in conflict resolution. It is the goal with this process to resolve conflicts, have all parties learn from the situation and improve how all parties continue to work together. When concerns are documented, additional language should be attached about how the conflict was resolved and how it can be avoided in the future. This may involve a review of this policy manual and update of signatures on the Release of Liability form as well as suggested changes in methods of communication.

Repeated or blatant non-compliance with this policy manual and disregard for resolutions to conflicts on the part of a volunteer may result in the revocation of their access authorization and/or status change to inactive for RISE Resource Center, Inc.

8.0 RISE Commitment to Volunteers

Staff will treat volunteers fairly, politely and without discrimination. Staff will manage the RISE volunteer program professionally and efficiently. Volunteers are not only an important component in achieving success for the RISE classes and programs, they are citizens with an interest and stake in the supporting of educational choice in Nevada. Therefore, staff will make every attempt to share their knowledge about the facility, answer volunteer questions, explain the purpose behind a volunteer project, and point out interesting features of the facility to volunteers during or after project work. In appreciation of the significant donation of time and energy made by volunteers, RISE will also follow through on the following program details.

8.1 Confidentiality of Information

RISE Resource Center recognizes that volunteers provide and entrust staff with their personal contact information when completing the required paperwork. Maintaining the confidentiality of this information in order to protect the privacy of its volunteers is of the highest priority for RISE. Information on file is generally accessible only to RISE staff through the use of a secure login process through the RISE computer system. Volunteer Information Forms, Release of Liability Forms and Emergency Contact forms are stored in a secure filing cabinet locked when the office is closed. Emails sent to distribution lists of volunteers will utilize the blind copy, or BCC, function to minimize any possibility of personal email addresses being available to others. However, as stated in Section 2.5, documents and information maintained by RISE Resource Center is subject to open records requests per state law.

At times, volunteers may have the need to contact fellow volunteers to share information, ask questions, or discuss a schedule of work if cooperating on a project. Staff will always solicit the permission of volunteers to pass on their contact information to others prior to doing so, as well as prior to developing a directory of contact information for volunteers on a project, fundraiser, or program team.

8.2 Volunteer Recognition and Service Awards

RISE Resource Center, Inc. hosts an annual service award event every fall, based on available funding, to show appreciation to the numerous citizens that have supported the program through their donation of time. The event is timed to acknowledge the efforts of volunteers in the previous fiscal year, which runs from January 1st to December 31st. Volunteer activities with RISE during the given fiscal year will receive an invitation for themselves and one guest to the event. During the event there will be a brief program to highlight the variety of tasks volunteers accomplish and to recognize their outstanding service through the distribution of service awards.

Service awards are given to volunteers based on the number of hours they have contributed in one year at the levels of 10-25 hours, 25-50 hours, 50-100 hours, and greater than 100 hours. Special recognition is given to volunteers who have contributed more than 250 hours in one year and to those that have achieved a lifetime contribution of hours to RISE beginning at 1,000 and subsequent 500 hour levels.

8.3 Volunteer Feedback

Staff will periodically solicit feedback from volunteers on a wide variety of factors, from the “customer service” they receive from staff to their level of satisfaction with participating in activities. This information will allow staff to improve the management of and communication with RISE volunteers.