

## FRIENDLY VISITOR VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Canadian Mental Health Association  
Windsor-Essex County Branch

<b>Title:</b> Friendly Visitor	<b>Reports to:</b> Community Support Worker/RN CSW
<b>Unit:</b> Mental Health Services	<b>Date Approved:</b> November 2000
<b>Last Updated:</b> December, 2008, November 2009	

*The mission of the CMHA-WECB is to enhance and promote the mental health of all persons and support the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness in our community through education, prevention, advocacy and services.*

### POSITION SUMMARY:

Trained volunteers will be matched on a one-to-one basis with people living in the community who are recovering from mental illnesses. The Volunteer will meet regularly with the client(s) to provide companionship, accompaniment and to establish a supportive relationship. The objective is to promote, support and/or encourage independence the areas of social skills, community living skills, emotional stability and self-confidence, working with the CSW and clients pre-stated goals. This role is non-clinical, with a goal to provide a friendly, supportive volunteer relationship. Each friendship is unique.

### DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Develop a friendly, supportive relationship with selected client partner
- Work cooperatively with the client partner and professional staff to identify areas of common interest and plan activities.
- Meet with client partner regularly (predetermined by CSW)
- Consult with professional program staff (CSW, RN/CSW) as needed and maintain communication on a monthly basis (minimum)
- Provide encouragement and support to client in reaching program goals
- May provide some life skills coaching at the direction of the professional program staff (taking bus, home organization etc.)
- Report any and all concerns to client partner's CSW (safety concerns must be reported immediately to CSW or a program manager)
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality of client partner outside of reporting responsibilities with professional staff
- Attend initial and ongoing training meetings
- Log hours and mileage

### PERSONAL QUALITIES:

Volunteers should exhibit characteristics of sensitivity, willingness to be accepting of others and the ability to encourage the development of client partner strengths. Other necessary qualities include maturity, reliability, the ability to earn trust and maintain client confidentiality, good listening skills and the ability to provide support, encouragement and assistance according to the specific preferences

of the person with whom they are matched. Experience with people who have emotional or mental health problems is not necessary but would be an asset.

**REPORTS TO:** Community Support Worker of assigned client partner

**QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS:**

- Minimum age of 18.
- Able to provide support and encouragement to people experiencing mental health problems to enhance their quality of life.
- Willing to:
  - ◆ Provide application information and participate in a selection interview
  - ◆ Participate in Volunteer Orientation, Privacy, and ongoing training sessions specific to role
  - ◆ Participate in match closure meeting at end of commitment
  - ◆ Submit to a police records check
  - ◆ Provide the names of three credible references
  - ◆ Participate in an evaluation meeting
  - ◆ Sign a confidentiality statement
- Background in social service field an asset

**TIME COMMITMENT:**

- Online Orientation and training.
- Ongoing training meetings as required.
- Minimum commitment of six months to volunteer match.

**ORIENTATION & TRAINING:**

Selected volunteer candidates will participate in a 2 hour training program.

- Online CMHA Orientation.
- Specialized Community Support Volunteer Training to include:
  - ◆ The Helping Relationship – Boundaries and Ethics
  - ◆ Establish the Relationship with the match partner
  - ◆ Community Resources
  - ◆ Handling Difficult Situations
  - ◆ Understanding Mental Illness
  - ◆ Non Violent Crisis Intervention Training
- ◆ Friendly Visitor Training to be completed prior to start date

**BENEFITS TO VOLUNTEER:**

- Personal growth and satisfaction from helping others.
- Opportunity to provide support and encouragement to individuals recovering from mental illnesses.
- Experience in the social service field.
- Participation in a unique community support program tailored to meet the needs of the individual client.
- Opportunity to provide input into the development of community mental health services.

- Invited to the annual volunteer recognition event
- Making a difference in the lives of those in the community

**REMUNERATION:**

- All expense reimbursements must be approved by Volunteer Services.

**LOCATION:**

- City or County placement.
- Meetings in home of consumer or community locations.

**APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT: PATTI LAUZON**

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Signature

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Date