

Managing a Difficult Volunteer

While many programs have steps in place to respond to challenging staff behavior, it is equally important to have similar policies in place when dealing with volunteer behaviors. Planning for these encounters ahead of time will allow for a systematic, professional, and ultimately more beneficial, response.

Communicating Concerns

- Specify the problematic behavior.
- Avoid getting personal. Focus on the behavior that needs to change.
- Be specific about the instances where performance was unsatisfactory.
- Don't get angry or defensive. Remain professional.

Creating Positive Change

- Involve the volunteer in discussing the issue.
- Have potential solutions in mind and solicit volunteer feedback on course of action.
- Together, develop a detailed plan of action.
- Establish a time frame for reviewing the issue.
- Acknowledge positive changes in behavior.

Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law (UPIL)

- The volunteer contract with your agency should include UPIL as a reason for termination of service with your agency.
- Volunteer orientation should include information on what constitutes UPIL and implications on the client, volunteer and agency.
- Volunteers should understand that BIA accreditation allows legal immigration work to be completed ONLY when working with your agency. Once they leave your agency or an event sponsored by your agency (such as a workshop), they are not authorized to offer legal advice.

Resources consulted:

http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/publications/providers/downloads/Managing_Volunteers_08.pdf

<http://www.npgoodpractice.org/category/Evaluation>

<http://www.mavanetwork.org/>