

Volunteer Training Application Information

Thank you for considering volunteering with Cowichan Hospice! We appreciate your interest in serving bereaved and palliative members of the Cowichan Valley community. If you are thinking about volunteering with us, please consider the following information:

- Volunteers give a lot – both emotionally and physically. Essential qualities include the ability to:
 - Maintain strict confidentiality of information
 - Listen with sensitivity and compassion
 - Respect diverse lifestyles and personal, cultural and religious beliefs
 - Uphold appropriate relationship boundaries, even under challenging circumstances
 - Have an understanding of one's own relationship with life and death
 - Participate as a team member while under the direction of Cowichan Hospice coordinators
 - Balance care of others with care of self
 - Be reliable and committed to client and/or other Cowichan Hospice assignments
- Cowichan Hospice is committed to excellence in service delivery of clients and in support of our valued volunteers. You can expect to receive ongoing volunteer training, support, and review to foster your connection, awareness, skills, and alignment with Hospice values and best practices.
- While it is impossible to predict every life eventuality, we ask that applicants are prepared to commit to an average of four hours of volunteer time a week, for a minimum of two years.
- After providing your completed Volunteer Application form and two reference letters speaking to your qualities, the Volunteer Program Coordinator meets with applicants to determine if hospice volunteering is the “right thing at the right time.”
- All volunteers providing client support complete our 40-hour training to support awareness and skills for providing companioning support for grief or palliative clients. There are usually 10 seats in each training cohort, which typically takes place on one day a week for eight weeks, once per year. If you are accepted into the training, we ask for a commitment to full attendance (unless you are ill or urgent family matters require your assistance).
- The tuition for the client service volunteer training helps to cover the training costs and is based on a sliding scale of \$25 - \$250. We hope that financial stress won't impede anyone from exploring volunteering. The Volunteer Coordinator will support you to identify a tuition amount that works for you.
- All volunteers must have an approved criminal record check for working with vulnerable populations, from the Ministry of Justice. This will be completed during the training period.

- Once the core training is completed, the Volunteer Coordinator will meet with the new volunteer to assess readiness for client service work or if further training or a different volunteer role is needed.
- The first 6 months of volunteerism is considered an apprenticeship period, with mentorship by a seasoned volunteer and a review at the end that includes self-assessment and feedback from mentor and coordinators.
- Client service volunteers are expected to attend at least one volunteer support meeting each month, and to engage with training opportunities that support awareness, skills and knowledge. Volunteer support meetings offer time to reflect on our work, practice skills, engage in peer and staff support, and stay connected. Hospice staff are available for debriefing when needed.
- If you are interested in volunteering in a capacity that does not involve direct client support (i.e., fundraising projects, gardening, etc.) please complete the non-client service volunteer application. An orientation to Cowichan Hospice will be provided if accepted to a volunteer position.
- New volunteers are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (minimum 2 vaccinations). Existing volunteers who are not fully vaccinated may provide client support virtually or by phone. Volunteers working in an Island Health facility (i.e., Hospice House) must also maintain current influenza vaccination status. Proof of vaccination status is required for volunteer files.
- All volunteers of Cowichan Hospice Society are required to keep a current membership in the organization. As well as demonstrating your support and allowing you to vote at our Annual General Meetings, being a member in good standing keeps you covered under our non-profit liability insurance coverage. The annual membership fee is currently \$10.
- While volunteers do not transport clients in their personal vehicles, to lessen liability of the Society for their volunteer work, they are required to have vehicle liability insurance coverage of \$2,000,000. A copy of the insurance coverage is required for their volunteer file.

Please don't hesitate to call 250-701-4242 or email tina@cowichanhospice.org should you have any questions. We appreciate your interest in volunteering with Cowichan Hospice.