

IO2- Volunteering

10:15 A.M.- 10:30 A.M. (15 minutes)- What is volunteering and what is not volunteering? How do I recognize volunteering?

Very often young people know to ask us what volunteering is and how it differs from other activities such as practice. So here's a nice explanation below.

In order for an activity to be considered a voluntary activity it must have three key characteristics: volunteering, being organized for the benefit of others or the community (wider public interest) and being unpaid for the labor of those who participate in it. Those involved in the activity should be involved on a voluntary basis, meaning they want to be part of that activity. The purpose of the activity must be to achieve the good of the community or to help others. And all those involved are not charged for their involvement.

In the broadest sense of the word, this means voluntarily contributing to the community (and society in general) without being paid for it. For example, as a volunteer you can help organize a charity event, be involved in an organization that helps animals, actively participate in the action of collecting clothes for the homeless, help in the implementation of activities in the municipality, civil society organizations and others non-profit institutions, etc. Additionally, you should do all this voluntarily, of your own free will, without expecting any compensation for it.

According to the law, the term "volunteer" means a person who provides his / her personal services, knowledge and skills, for the benefit of other persons, organizations or institutions, voluntarily and without compensation.

However, not every unpaid job is volunteering. Thus, for example, internships are different from volunteering because there the goal is to gain practical experience and skills of the intern regardless of whether there is a wider public interest. Therefore, the internship is aimed mainly at students and the unemployed, unlike volunteering, which covers all structures of society.

Volunteering is also not volunteering because it is required by law to perform certain professions (doctors, lawyers, etc.) so the principle of volunteering is not observed. The same goes for the practice that is mandatory for pupils and students within education. Helping with household chores at home and for the extended family is not considered volunteering because there is no wider public interest.

10:30 A.M.- 10:45 A.M. (15 minutes)- Why is volunteering IMPORTANT?

By volunteering you can improve your community and your life. By participating in volunteer activities you show that you care. Helping others has been proven to be good not only for the recipients of your work, but also for improving your well-being. Taking time out of your busy schedule to do a good job may seem daunting, but there are plenty of opportunities to help, even if you only have a few minutes, an hour, or an afternoon.

Here are some great ways to start volunteering in an area that interests you.

10:45 A.M.- 11:15 A.M. (30 minutes)- Discussion - ideas for volunteering ...

Discussion questions:

- How important is the motivation of the individual for the quality of his / her volunteer engagement?
- How much does it affect the users or organizers of volunteering?
- Can the motivation change?

DO YOU LOVE ANIMALS?

5 minutes: It is enough to spread or share some information on your social media, with your neighbors, to a school for certain animals that are given for adoption. In this way you will help reduce the number of street animals and at the same time you will give space for an animal to find its own home and bring happiness to a family.

30 minutes: Be creative and make a pet toy with a plain sock in the shape of a bone, buttoning the ends and donating them to pets in need or to a family you know is keeping an animal.

One hour: Help at your local street animal hospital. Any help is welcome there.

Ongoing: Build a temporary home shelter with plain cardboard boxes. It will help a lot, especially in the winter days.

WANT TO PROMOTE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT?

5 minutes: Sort your trash. Encourage your neighbors to do the same.

30 minutes: Spend some time cleaning a local park or playground.

One hour: Plant a seedling in the local park. Tree, flowers, greenery, everything is welcome.

Ongoing: Organize a waste sorting group (plastic, glass, paper). Organize actions for collecting a certain waste on a certain day and take it to the recycling points.

ARE YOU HUMANE?

5 minutes: Give a piece of fruit, a bottle of water or a sandwich to a person who needs it.

30 minutes: Donate clothes to a local organization.

One hour: Find an option to cook a meal and share it with a family in need.

Ongoing: Join local organizations that help citizens at risk get back on their feet through job counseling, life skills classes and more.

IF YOU WANT TO HELP IN EDUCATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY ?!

5 minutes: Give a book that your child used to the younger children in the neighborhood.

30 minutes: Collect books and unused school supplies and donate them to a local school or library.

One hour: Apply to be a tutor in a local school subject and help a child improve.

Ongoing: Become a volunteer to support adult education in local organizations. There are programs to help adults learn to work on a computer, learn English or work on professional development skills.

DO YOU WANT TO HELP THE ELDERLY CITIZENS OF YOUR COMMUNITY ?!

5 minutes: Help an old man shopping or crossing the street.

30 minutes: Help your older neighbor / neighbor in some daily responsibilities at home, such as Saturday cleaning, Sunday shopping, paying bills, etc.

One hour: Organize a social gathering with retirees through a local NGO e.g. play a board game, reading, or chess tournament.

Ongoing: Join a local organization that works with seniors to visit and help regularly.

Opportunities everywhere...

There are many ways to get involved in an activity that will improve the life of your community. You need to have an idea and want to! Be a volunteer - because that helps a lot!

About volunteering in North Macedonia.

11:15 A.M.- 11:30 A.M. (15 minutes)- Which are my rights as a volunteer?

- Reimbursement of pre-agreed costs related to volunteering (food costs, transportation to and from the volunteering site, business travel expenses as well as training of volunteers);

- Protection of privacy and personal data;

- To be consulted and informed when deciding how to provide services;

- To be acquainted with the general acts of the organizer of the services, ie those parts that refer to the volunteer services for which you are engaged;

- On daily rest;
- To receive in writing the description of the rights and obligations that you need to fulfill and to be familiar with the conditions and dangers related to the time of volunteering before starting the volunteering;
- To use means for protection at work in accordance with the law on protection at work;
- Training if it is needed to provide a service that is the subject of the contract.

11:30 A.M.- 12:00 A.M. (30 minutes)- Do I have responsibilities as a volunteer?

Yes - You have a duty to:

- inform the organizer of volunteering for illness or some other reason for inability to provide services;
- You provide a service in accordance with the law, ie the volunteering agreement and the general acts of the volunteer organizer with which you are previously acquainted;
- You provide service personally and directly;
- Participate in training in order to ensure the quality of service;
- You keep the confidential data, ie the classified information of the organizer of the volunteer work with which you are familiar before providing the service;
- To inform the organizer of volunteer work about harmful consequences for which he / she is aware that may occur for the organizer and for himself or for a third party.

Do I have to sign a contract as a volunteer?

- If you volunteer for more than 40 hours per month, you need to sign a contract. Otherwise you have no obligation to do so. The contract can be concluded by persons who volunteer for less than 40 hours per month, but it is not mandatory;
- Juvenile volunteers require written consent from parents / guardians to be able to sign a contract;
- Regardless of whether you have concluded an agreement, you have the same rights and obligations.

How can I prove that I volunteered?

Proof of your volunteer engagement is the volunteer booklet. It can be obtained by any volunteer from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (regional offices), by attaching an identification document and a volunteering agreement. It is the responsibility of those responsible for volunteering to register regularly. You can use the booklet wherever you volunteer.

Do I need to receive a volunteer fee?

The law allows the volunteer to be reimbursed for travel and food expenses, but this is not mandatory. If they allocate funds, they can amount to a maximum of 15% of the average salary in the Republic of Macedonia paid last year.

12:00 A.M.- 13:00 (60 minutes)- Role play - learning from adults

The participants are young and old people of their own culture. Sit in a circle or other comfortable way for everyone to see and hear others. Share your thoughts on:

- ✓ How and why did people help each other in the past?
- ✓ How and why do people help each other today?
- ✓ What does the word “volunteer” mean to you?
- ✓ How can we continue to respect our volunteering traditions or help one another?

Each participant tells their own story or experience to the other participants.

13:00 A.M.- 14:00 (60 minutes) Small group discussion

Planning activities to increase and support volunteers in our community.

Participants will be divided into small groups, where everyone will give ideas for specific activities that will be organized as small projects in the community, which can be planned and organized without a large budget, and at the same time will have an impact on the community, and will include new volunteers during implementation. Each small group reports the main points of their discussion to all participants, and finally decides on 3 specific ideas that will be implemented.