Recruiting volunteers is vital to the success of your program. Once a prospective volunteer has made the commitment to join your program, an interview and selection process begins. Volunteers succeed if they are a good fit for the position and your group. An interview is a useful way to ensure that the volunteer has the necessary attributes for the job. An interview is also a useful way to introduce your agency and program so the volunteer also has a clearer picture of the program and the qualifications necessary for the position.

A volunteer application is necessary before any interview occurs. The application asks basic information but is also an opportunity to ask questions that may seem unusual but will give you a clearer picture of the volunteer’s motivations. Information that is not appropriate is the same as a paid position application — i.e. age, religion, marital status, etc.

**Application information can include:**

- Education and Employment
- Previous volunteer experience
- Club and organization memberships
- Hobbies and leisure activities
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Days and times available

Learning to conduct an interview is essential. Be ready to interview a volunteer by having a set of questions ready that every prospective volunteer is asked as well as a knowledge of what the answers were on the individual’s application.

**Other items to establish for a good interview:**

- Select a comfortable location and make the volunteer feel welcome
- Have written information about the organization as well as volunteer positions within the organization
- Have a set of open-ended questions for a good interview discussion
- Explain any confidentiality and screening procedures that are required
- Let a volunteer ask you any questions

**Be a good interviewer:**

- Be an active listener
- Pay attention and observe body language
- Maintain eye contact
- Evaluate on an individual basis — avoid stereotypes
- Describe the position — all positives and negatives
- Explain what the next step is — training, reference checks, etc.

**Alaskan concerns:**

- Can I interview a potential volunteer over the phone?
- How do I turn down a volunteer?
- How do I get new volunteer to commit and then stay in the position?

Learn more about these topics at Everyone Ready

**VNG-Volunteerism for the Next Generation:**

- Engagement of Volunteers: “Interviewing Potential Volunteers”
- “Recruitment Interviewer’s Evaluation”
- “Following Up with a Prospective Volunteer”
- “Interview Questions for a Potential Volunteer”

**Everyone Ready:**

- Interviewing, Screening and Placing Volunteers