



**sportable**

*Creating opportunities. Transforming lives.*

# **Volunteer Manual**

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# Overview

## **A Message to Volunteers:**

**Welcome to Sportable – Richmond Adaptive Sports & Recreation and Paralympic Sport Club Richmond. Thank you so very much for your interest in helping us break down barriers one sport at a time. We look forward to working with you and are excited to have you on our team to help our athletes enjoy the benefits of adaptive sport and recreation.**

## **Mission:**

**Our mission is to create opportunities and transform the lives of people with physical and visual disabilities through sports.**

## **Core Values:**

- **INTEGRITY**  
*Being true to our word and honoring our commitments to our athletes, partners, and community*
- **PASSION**  
*Showing up ready to play every day with an enthusiasm toward our mission*
- **TEAM SPIRIT**  
*Supporting and working cohesively together toward a common goal*
- **INGENUITY**  
*Finding creative solutions to problems that aren't always visible or deemed possible*

## **Brand Pillars**

- **Freeing our athletes to see beyond their disabilities**
- **Building peer relationships and reducing social isolation**
- **Facilitating physical and attitudinal change in our community**

## **History:**

**Sportable was founded in 2005 by two Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists, and has risen as the leading provider of adaptive sports and recreation programs in the Greater Richmond community. In the past year we have seen great change as we have transitioned from a volunteer based non-profit to a full-time, staffed non-profit organization with office space at the Sports Center of Richmond (SCOR). Additionally, we have enhanced our community partnerships, added new sports to our program schedule, and recently became a Paralympic Sport Club. Our athletes have the desire, passion, and motivation to participate in sport and recreation activities that many take for granted and we provide them with the opportunities!**

## **Clients Served:**

**Sportable serves children and adults, ages 5 and up, with a physical disability. Diagnoses may include, but are not limited to spinal cord injury, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, amputations, muscular dystrophy, and other disorders that may cause physical limitation and require adaptations and/or modifications for full participation.**

## **Sports Offered:**

<b>Basketball</b>	<b>Power Soccer</b>	<b>Tennis</b>	<b>Strength &amp; Conditioning</b>	<b>Kayaking</b>
<b>Rowing</b>	<b>Cycling/Spinning</b>	<b>Softball</b>	<b>Archery</b>	<b>Air Rifle</b>
<b>Track &amp; Field</b>	<b>Swimming</b>	<b>Lacrosse</b>		

# **Goals & Objectives**

**We seek to offer a positive experience for our athletes. Our main goal is to coordinate and foster a program of adaptive sports for individuals residing in the Greater Richmond area and neighboring communities who have physical disabilities that prevent them from participating in typical able-bodied sports and recreation by:**

- **Providing competitive sport opportunities**
- **Providing top level sport training**
- **Providing recreational activities and events**
- **Providing other adaptive sports as the need and interest arise**

**We make this program available to children and adults of all ages and abilities by:**

- **Recruiting eligible individuals to the program through outreach and interfacing with other community organizations**
- **Assisting in raising funds for the necessary equipment, especially specialized wheelchairs and other adaptive equipment as needed**
- **Assisting in raising funds for the travel needed for true participation in adaptive sports on a competitive level**
- **Securing suitable sites for regular practices and competitions**
- **Providing the organization and expertise needed to run recreation and sports programming for those interested**
- **Providing coaching that will improve the participants' abilities**
- **Working with local and national community programs to combine with or enhance existing adaptive sports programs**
- **Working with local and national adaptive sports associations and governing bodies to offer competitive sports opportunities**
- **Working cooperatively with volunteers to assist in running the programs**

**We provide our athletes and members with opportunities to experience the following benefits that come from active participation in sports and recreation:**

- **Improved strength, cardiovascular health, and overall physical fitness level**
- **Camaraderie of sport and teamwork**
- **Learning the benefits of teamwork and working for the greater good**
- **Learning to accept and benefit from coaching**
- **Reaching greater independence**
- **Offering outlets to enjoy and improve socialization skills and experiences**
- **Improved mental health and well-being gained through positive experiences**
- **Enhanced self esteem**

## **Volunteer Definition & Determination**

### **Definition of Volunteer:**

**A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a service at the direction of and on behalf of Sportable. A volunteer will officially be accepted and enrolled as a Sportable Volunteer prior to the performance of assigned tasks. Volunteers are essential to the success of our programs; however, they are not categorized as employees of Sportable.**

### **Members and Their Relatives as Volunteers:**

**Members of Sportable may be accepted as volunteers, where such service does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with provisions of services to their family member or to others. In addition, members will not be placed in positions that may impact or affect the services a member receives from Sportable. Relatives of members may serve as volunteers with Sportable, but may not be placed in positions that would affect the level of service their family receives.**

### **Minors as Volunteers:**

**Interested individuals must be at least 14 years of age to volunteer at Sportable. Individuals under the age of 18 must have permission from a parent or guardian. Individuals under the age of 14 who wish to volunteer with Sportable must also have a parent or guardian accompany them and remain present at the sport program or event at which they are volunteering**

## **Volunteer Application & Placement Process**

### **Job Description:**

**Each volunteer will have a clear understanding and description for the type of task(s) and service(s) they will provide for Sportable. Volunteers, just as staff, benefit from a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the service that they are expected to provide. This description will be given to each accepted volunteer and should be utilized in subsequent management and evaluation efforts.**

### **Recruitment:**

**Volunteers shall be recruited to Sportable proactively, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement in the disability community. Volunteers shall be recruited and selected without regard to gender, disability, age, sexual preference, race, religion, or other condition. The sole qualification of volunteer recruitment shall be based upon the individual's ability and willingness to perform a service on behalf of and for Sportable without creating a safety risk to member and non-member athletes, other volunteers, employees, or the general public. Volunteers may be recruited through an interest in working with people with disabilities, interest in sport and recreation, program interest, and/or a general interest in volunteerism that may coincide with a particular event. Various methods of recruitment will be utilized to attract the required number of volunteers for Sportable.**

### **Interviewing:**

**Prior to being assigned a volunteer position, volunteers may be screened and interviewed (over the phone or in person) to ascertain their suitability for and interest in the volunteer position. This interview shall determine the qualifications of the volunteer and his/her commitment to fulfill the requirements of the service description. The interviewer shall attempt to answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position.**

### **Training:**

**Sportable requires that volunteers participate in a one-time educational training session on Disability Etiquette. Sportable will also provide, at no cost to the volunteer, all necessary training to help prepare the volunteer for any event and/or sport involvement when working with individuals with physical disabilities.**

### **Application:**

**All prospective volunteers will complete a volunteer application. By signing the completed application, prospective volunteers will certify that all statements are true with the understanding that false statements will be grounds for denying or revoking their participation as a volunteer with Sportable. One-time volunteers are required to fill out a standard application form. Additionally, Sportable requires all volunteers working with our youth athletes to complete a Safe Kids form, kept on file with our liability insurance carrier.**

### **References:**

**All interested individuals must list two professional or personal references (exclusive of family members) on the volunteer application. References may be called and the Volunteer Coordinator must document feedback before the volunteer may assume his/her duties.**

### **Criminal Records Check:**

**As appropriate and for the protection of Sportable athletes, volunteers, and staff, volunteers may be asked to submit to a criminal background check. Volunteers who refuse to comply with this policy will be refused assignment.**

### **Document of Assignment:**

**Prior to commencing service, each volunteer may be required to sign an agreement stating the terms of the volunteer service assignments, which include adherence to the Sportable confidentiality policies and a drug free environment.**

### **Placement:**

**When placing a volunteer in a position, consideration will be given to the interest and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirement of the volunteer position. A placement will not be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met. A volunteer will not be assigned to a position they are not comfortable with and/or agreeable to, nor will a position be assigned to an unqualified or uninterested volunteer.**

### **Service at the Discretion of Sportable:**

**Sportable accepts the services of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the discretion of Sportable. Sportable reserves the right to reject the application of any volunteer, for any reason, at its sole discretion. Sportable is not required to provide the reason(s) why it selects or rejects volunteer applicants. Volunteers agree that Sportable may at any time, within the sole discretion and without specific or stated cause, decide to terminate the volunteer relationship. The Executive Director will approve final acceptance of the volunteer.**

## **Volunteer Job Description & Performance Standards**

### **Volunteer Job Description:**

**Under the Supervision of the Volunteer Coordinator, volunteers will perform a variety of duties and activities. Typical volunteer responsibilities may include but are not limited to:**

- **Assisting staff with the planning and organizing of fundraiser events**
- **Assisting staff and sport coaches with practices and trainings**
- **Attending monthly event planning meetings and sub-committee meetings as needed**
- **Working on projects at home or in the office**

- **Soliciting cash and in-kind donation from community businesses and agencies**
- **Speaking to potential donors or sponsors on behalf of Sportable**
- **Setting up and taking down equipment at events**
- **Assisting staff with administrative duties**
- **Serving as Sport Coaches, Program Assistants, Program Coordinators, Medical Personnel, etc...**

### **Volunteer Job Performance:**

**Sportable values the highest standards of service to persons with physical disabilities. Volunteers play a significant role in assisting Sportable in achieving this goal. Volunteers are measured by the following list of performance standards:**

- **Adheres to assigned schedule**
- **Calls to inform supervisor if he or she is running late**
- **Arrives on time and is ready to work**
- **Demonstrates an enthusiastic and positive attitude**
- **Works in a cooperative fashion with staff, fellow volunteers, and athletes**
- **Represents Sportable appropriately and professionally**
- **Treats others with dignity and respect**
- **Prioritizes and completes assigned tasks**
- **Seeks clarification if he or she has a question or is unclear**
- **Demonstrates appropriate safety awareness**
- **Informs Sportable staff of problems as they arise**
- **Follows Sportable's policies and procedures**
- **Makes helpful suggestions which improve overall quality of event or activity**
- **Serves as a good role model for others to emulate**

## **Volunteer Training & Development**

### **Orientation:**

**The Volunteer Coordinator will provide orientation to Sportable programs and events for volunteers. All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the agency, the program, or activity for which they are recruited. Volunteers will not be allowed to assume their duties until all policies and procedures are reviewed and understood.**

### **Training:**

**Sportable requires that all volunteers attend a training and information session. Additionally, Sportable shall provide training pertaining to the specific program or event to which the volunteer will be assigned. Trainings will include situations particular to that program, event, or client population and may include on the job training. Volunteers will receive specific on- the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.**

### **Continuing Education:**

**At the sole discretion of Sportable, volunteers may participate in additional training sessions, such as those set up for staff at no cost to the volunteers. Just as staff, volunteers should attempt to improve their level of skill during their terms of service. Additional training and educational opportunities should be made available to volunteers during their connection with Sportable. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current volunteer assignment as well as more general information, and might be provided either by Sportable or by other**

outside organizations or groups.

## **Volunteer Policies & Procedures**

### **Sexual Harassment:**

**Sportable and federal laws prohibit sexual harassment. Outlined below is a definition of sexual harassment according to federal law. Sexual harassment is defined as unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances, as well as requests for sexual favors. Other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:**

- **Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or service term**
- **Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used for the basis of employment/service term affecting such individuals**
- **Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment**

**Sexual harassment can include a wide range of behaviors such as:**

- **Suggestive or obscene, language, letters, and/or gestures**
- **Derogatory comments, slurs, or jokes; crude or vulgar language**
- **Leering or sexually oriented gestures**
- **Display of sexually suggestive or derogatory objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters**
- **Whistling or catcalling**
- **Pinching or patting; unwelcome touching or hugging; impeding or blocking movement**
- **Commenting on the clothing of an individual in a sexual way**
- **Repeatedly asking someone out for a date after you have been turned down**
- **Threatening or insinuating that lack of sexual favors will result in retaliation; withholding support for an appointment, promotion or transfer; failure of probation; punitive actions; or poor performance evaluation**

**Whether or not the harassment occurred depends not on whether the act was intended to cause harm, but on the effect of the act on the individual's employment or work environment. All employees and volunteers should be able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment.**

**Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the professional relationship. No employee or volunteer, either male or female should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtones or conduct, either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Rather, it refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that lowers morale, and that therefore interferes with work effectiveness.**

**If you believe that you have been lawfully harassed, speak to an event supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator right away. Document the incident immediately including a description of the event, the date, and name(s) of any individual or witnesses involved.**

**If Sportable determines that an unlawful harassment has occurred, effective action will be taken in accordance with the circumstances involved. Any volunteer determined by Sportable to be responsible for unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Whatever action taken against the harasser will be made known to the complaining volunteer. Sportable will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.**

### **Confidentiality:**

***Sportable recognizes confidentiality as a living principle based on the sanctity and dignity of the human person. Therefore, Sportable will respect the privacy of personal information of all those it serves or employs. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This information may involve a single staff member, athlete, volunteer, or others or involve Sportable business. Failure to maintain confidentiality shall result in termination of the volunteer relationship or appropriate corrective action.***

### **Threat Policy:**

***A threat is defined as direct or implied expression of intent to inflict physical harm and/or actions that a reasonable person would deem as a threat to physical well-being and safety or property.***

***Sportable operates under a “zero tolerance” policy, meaning no threat will be tolerated even if said in a joking manner. Zero tolerance applies to everyone in the workplace including all employees, supervisors, and volunteers. Report threats immediately. The responsible person to conduct an investigation and take action, should a threat arise, is the immediate supervisor available at time of the incident, the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director.***

### **Drug Free Environment:**

***Sportable maintains a drug free environment. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited.***

### **Alcohol:**

***Volunteers are not to use alcoholic beverages during working hours or at any Sportable event. Volunteers are not to report to work under the influence of alcohol.***

### **Smoking:**

***Sportable is a smoke-free environment, smoking is prohibited anywhere on its premises. Smoking is not permitted during any Sportable sponsored event or program.***

### **Firearms:**

***Volunteers may not use, carry, or transport firearms during working hours or at any Sportable event.***

### **Cell Phone Usage:**

***Sportable understands that volunteers need to be accessible to family and friends in case of emergency. In order to focus on assigned duties, we request that all volunteers refrain from unnecessary and excessive cell phone usage during their service hours.***

### **Dress Code:**

***As representatives of Sportable, volunteers are responsible for presenting a good image to members, sponsors, and the community. Volunteers should dress appropriately for the environmental conditions and performance of their assigned duties. The Volunteer Coordinator will define proper dress, and when necessary and available, provide Sportable apparel to volunteers. Sportable staff has the authority to decline the services of a volunteer who is dressed inappropriately.***

### **Conflict of Interest:**

***A person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or the mission of Sportable, whether personal, philosophical, professional, or financial, may not serve as a volunteer.***

### **Professional Services:**

***Volunteers will not perform professional services for which a certification or license is required unless they are currently certified or licensed to do so. A current copy of such certification or license will be maintained in the volunteer's personnel file.***

### **Absenteeism & Leave:**

***Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a scheduled and timely basis. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform the Volunteer Coordinator and Program Director as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. Continual and unexcused absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's commitment to their assignment or term of service.***

***Volunteers are required to notify the Volunteer Coordinator prior to taking time off for leave purposes. Volunteers should not report to work when sick. In case of illness, volunteers should notify the Volunteer Coordinator as far in advance as possible before they are scheduled to serve.***

### **Time Commitment:**

***Volunteers are asked to help plan, organize, and work various adaptive sport and fundraising events. Individual volunteers will discuss their volunteer interest and commitment with the Volunteer Coordinator.***

### **Insurance:**

***Liability and accident insurance is not provided for volunteers engaged in Sportable business. Volunteers are encouraged to consult with their personal insurance providers regarding the extension of their individual coverage to include community volunteer work.***

### **Maintenance of Records:**

***A system of records shall be maintained for each volunteer within Sportable who carries management or direct service responsibility. Records will include the volunteer application, documentation of reference checks, training provided, hours contributed, and tasks accomplished, positions held, and evaluation of service. Volunteer records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records. Volunteers must document hours worked at home, in the office, and at events, on a regular basis and submit a list of hours worked to the Volunteer Coordinator by the end of each month.***

### **Evaluation:**

***Evaluation of a volunteer's performance, oral or written, may be provided upon request of the volunteer. When possible, annual performance evaluations shall be provided to volunteers in ongoing direct service or managerial positions. The evaluation session is utilized to review the performance of the volunteer, to suggest any changes in work style, to seek suggestions from the volunteer on means of enhancing the volunteer's relationship with the organization, to convey appreciation to the volunteer, and to ascertain the continued interest of the volunteer in serving in that position. Evaluations should include both an examination of the volunteer's performance of position responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position or project with which the volunteer is connected.***

# **Volunteer Recognition & Benefits**

## **Recognition:**

**Volunteers will be recognized both formally and informally.**

## **Benefits of Volunteering:**

**Volunteering is a way to provide a public service and to fulfill responsibilities to society. It provides an opportunity for people to be helpful. Volunteering can provide opportunities for learning, following an avocation and providing an outlet for creativity and energy. It can also provide valuable experience for future job opportunities.**

**Volunteering for Sportable can provide volunteers with advantages such as:**

- **Training**
- **Learning new job skills**
- **Supervision and team building experience**
- **Knowledge, skills, and ability expansion**
- **Experience to include in personal resume**
- **Recognition and intrinsic reward**
- **Improved sense of well-being through helping others**
- **Benefiting from being part of a team**
- **Insight into one's own abilities and beliefs**
- **New friends and acquaintances**
- **Making a difference in the lives of others**
- **Networking opportunities**

## **Access to Sportable Properties & Materials:**

**As appropriate, volunteers should have access to agency property and materials necessary to fulfill their duties. The volunteer will receive trainings in the operations of any equipment. Sportable, at times, provides confidential information to volunteers. A volunteer will only have access to confidential information if that person signs Sportable's confidentiality agreement promising to maintain the confidentiality of the material. Similarly, volunteers may be provided with documents and other materials from the organization during the periods of volunteer service. Volunteers are required to return all such materials at the conclusion of their service.**

## **Requesting a Reference:**

**Volunteers may use their experience as a reference for a job or furthering their education. All requests for a reference should be directed to the Volunteer Coordinator. Sportable reserves the right to provide references at its sole discretion.**

# **Grievances, Discipline, & Termination**

## **Corrective Action:**

**Sportable, in its sole discretion, in appropriate situations, may take corrective action following an incident or evaluation. Evaluation of corrective action may include the requirement of additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of a volunteer, or dismissal of volunteer service.**

## **Concerns and Grievances:**

**Decisions involving corrective action toward a volunteer will be reviewed for appropriateness by both the Volunteer Coordinator and Executive Director. If corrective action is taken, the affected volunteer shall be informed of the procedures expressing their concern or grievance. The Volunteer Coordinator will provide a written statement to the volunteer that describes the reason(s) for corrective action. A volunteer may provide a written request to the Volunteer Coordinator to voice concerns regarding any corrective action.**

## **Resignation:**

**Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with Sportable at any time. Because volunteers are so important to Sportable, it is requested that volunteers who request to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision.**

## **Exit Surveys:**

**Exit Surveys, where possible, will be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The survey will ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have for improving the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity at Sportable.**

## **Termination of Assignment:**

**Volunteer assignments may be terminated at the sole discretion of the agency for any reason or no reason. Typical reason for termination of assignment may include, but are not limited to, the following: misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, theft or misuse of property, noncompliance with agency policies and procedures, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties. Termination of the assignment may also coincide with the end of the assignment or project.**

**The Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible for identifying the reason for termination and to meet with the volunteer to inform him/her of the termination. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to express their views and opinions of the violation. Should the volunteer disagree with the termination, an investigation will be conducted. The final decision on the termination will be the decision of the Volunteer Coordinator and the Executive Director. The volunteer will be notified in writing of their dismissal.**

Thank you for your service,

*Kristen Lessig*

Kristen Lessig, Executive Director

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