



Volunteer Orientation & Policies

Version 3

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1 Introduction

This document serves two purposes:

- Firstly, it acts as an orientation manual providing York Pride Fest volunteers with insight into our goals, history, organization and volunteering opportunities,
- Secondly, it describes our volunteer policies to which all York Pride Fest volunteers are required to adhere.

This version of this document is effective commencing November 2016 until superseded by a subsequent version.

2 Welcome to York Pride Fest

York Pride Fest is a not-for-profit community based organization hosting social events in York Region, which include Canada's largest regional Pride Week Festival, staged each June to celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT+¹) residents throughout our community.

Our organization is run exclusively by a team of dedicated volunteers as well as representatives from various local community organizations.

York Pride Fest has organized York Region's annual Pride festival each year since 2007.

2.1 Our Mission

The purpose of York Pride Fest is:

To organize festivals, events, entertainments and other initiatives which, in the context of sexuality and gender identity, across York Region and beyond, illuminate and celebrate human diversity, captivate the general public, inspire inclusivity and foster harmony and acceptance.

2.2 Our History

Annual pride celebrations have been staged in York Region since 2001. For the first five years, they were hosted by individual, volunteer-based organizations, but those groups had ceased their operations by the end of 2005 resulting in the lack of any pride week events during the following year.

Subsequently, York Pride Fest was launched in February 2007 by the York Region LGBT Community Outreach Project, a four-year Trillium funded initiative to develop and support the delivery of services to meet the needs of LGBT+ persons and their families in York Region. Since that time, York Pride Fest has operated as a coalition of local LGBT-relevant service providers and community volunteers, working together to organize and progressively expand the region's annual pride festival.

2.3 Our Events

Each year, pride week celebrations organized by York Pride Fest have included proclamation/recognition requests to local government bodies, LGBT awareness displays presented at libraries across the region, as well as a number of hosted events that have included:

- Pride BBQs with live entertainment
- Pride church services
- Youth beach, arcade and dance events
- Social nights at various restaurant venues
- Pride parade staging and participation.

Over the first four years, 2007-2010, the number of annual pride events was increased from 3 to 7, overall event attendance tripled and the number of awareness display venues was increased from 6 to 12.

Starting in 2008, York Pride Fest commenced participation in Toronto's annual pride parade in order to represent and enhance the visibility of York Region's LGBT+ community.

The following year, for the first time, rainbow flags were flown throughout pride week by three of the region's municipalities, with two more towns and all Seneca College campuses agreeing to raise the flag in 2010, and a total of six municipalities flew the flag in 2011 and 2012. Every year eight

¹ LGBT+ means as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Transsexual, Intersex, Queer, Questioning (i.e. people unsure of their sexuality or gender identity), Two-Spirit, and Allies of the individuals in the preceding categories - aka LGBTTIQ2SA. Throughout this document, LGBT+ is always implied even when the LGBT acronym is used in a phrase such as 'LGBT related' and not suffixed with a plus sign.

municipalities and our regional government have continued to grant proclamations or official recognition of our pride week.

In 2013, York Pride Fest staged the region's inaugural Pride Parade in Richmond Hill. Parades have also been staged in each subsequent year.

2.4 Our Organization

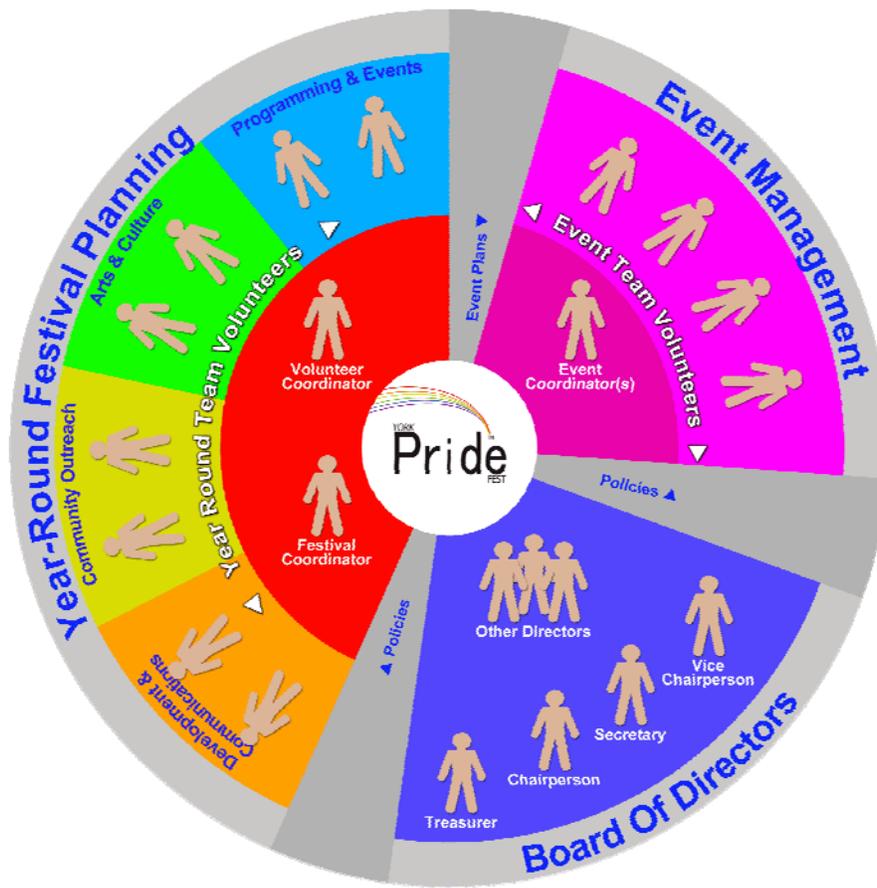
York Pride Fest comprises a board of directors and a number of teams that are run by year-round or event volunteers.

The role of the board of directors is to formulate the organization's policies, as well as strategies that will enable us to best serve the interests of both York Pride Fest and our local LGBT+ community.

In contrast, the role of the volunteer-led teams is to plan our Pride Week festival, raise funds, generate publicity/awareness and to stage festival events with the assistance of additional event volunteers.

York Pride Fest employs an organic, non-hierarchical organizational structure as illustrated by the diagram below. Consequently,

- decision making authority is decentralized to encourage leadership and to give volunteers a higher level of shared responsibility and accountability,
- volunteer creativity is not hampered by confining individuals to particular areas of specialization,
- teams benefit by the flexible sharing of human resources, enabling greater agility and adaptability.



3 Opportunities for Volunteers

York Pride Fest offers opportunities for both year-round volunteers and event volunteers.

3.1 Event Volunteers

Event volunteers assist with the staging of specific Pride events but are not necessarily involved in the planning of those events. Other than undertaking the roles assigned to them during those events, no additional commitment is expected of an event volunteer.

The roles of event volunteers include:

- Setup prior to an event
- Parade marshalling
- Parade participation
- Greeting attendees
- Food preparation and service
- Event photography and videography
- Tidy up and take down after an event

3.2 Year-round Volunteers

In contrast, year-round volunteers assist with planning, administration or management activities throughout a pride year². To do so, they join one of more York Pride Fest teams covering various areas of responsibility, meet periodically with other members of their team(s) and, as a team member, carry out their share of the work that their team(s) need to do.

The roles of year-round volunteer teams include:

- Programming & Events
 - Development and refinement of event concepts and their implementation.
 - Arrangement of required facilities, permits, services and resources.
 - Liaison with service providers to ensure common expectations and understanding.
 - Creation and management of attendee registration systems and ticketing systems, as well as donation, raffle and other revenue generating opportunities.
 - Formulation of event logistics, task and activity schedules, location and route maps, emergency procedures and contingency plans.
 - Publication of detailed event planning information and distribution to all relevant volunteer teams and, as appropriate, to service providers, sponsors, partners and other parties.
 - Provision of event specific training to event volunteers
- Arts & Culture
 - Arrangement of relevant, appropriate and culture-based entertainment programming, including visual, musical and interactive performances.
 - Engagement of talent and booking of related venues or facilities.
 - Acquisition or rental of required equipment or other resources.
- Community Outreach

² A **pride year** is a period of approximately twelve months starting on the day immediately following the later of the York Region pride week and the Toronto pride week in the previous calendar year. A pride year ends after the later of the York Region pride week and the Toronto pride week in the current year. For example, the 2016 pride year runs from 29 June 2015 until 3 July 2016.

- Liaison with local organizations, neighbouring pride organizations and municipal government, e.g. to request proclamations and flag raising ceremonies.
- Planning of LGBT awareness displays and acquisition/control of related materials.
- Pursuit of new opportunities to build community awareness.
- Arrangement for presence at community events, attendance at those events and management of related resource materials, equipment and social networking activities.
- Development & Communication
 - Fundraising activities, to secure funds by donations, sponsorship or special events.
 - Development of media, marketing materials, website content, announcements, photo opportunities and speech writing.
 - Creation and distribution of festival and event publicity, to increase visibility and understanding by enhancing awareness and event attendance.
 - Fostering of long-term partnerships with LGBT supportive businesses, public bodies and other allies.

3.3 Volunteer Coordinator

The Volunteer Coordinator is a year-round volunteer responsible for:

- Advertising volunteer opportunities
- Managing the recruitment and orientation of new volunteers
- Maintaining an up-to-date database of volunteers and tracking their role preferences and current or desired assignment to volunteer teams
- Liaising with volunteer teams to identify human resource or skill shortages and initiating remedial actions.

3.4 Festival Coordinator

The Festival Coordinator is a year-round volunteer responsible for coordinating the activities of volunteer teams to:

- Ensure that necessary tasks are not overlooked or given insufficient priority
- Ensure awareness and adherence to York Pride Fest mission, vision, values and policies, recommending policy changes when appropriate.
- Prevent duplication of effort or conflicting actions across teams.
- Monitor actual versus budgeted expenditure
- Ensure appropriate items of information are conveyed between volunteer teams and the board of directors.

3.5 Volunteers from Other Organizations

The majority of our volunteers are community members who volunteer their own free time to assist York Pride Fest.

But York Pride Fest also welcomes and is grateful for assistance from other organizations whose mission, vision and values align to those of York Pride Fest. And on occasions, these organizations kindly provide members of their staff to act as York Pride Fest volunteers.

To prevent ambiguity or potential for conflicts of interest, York Pride Fest requires that any volunteers representing any other organization, or employed by any organization relevant to the LGBT+ community, must declare this fact when they register as a York Pride Fest volunteer.

Subsequently, if acting as a year-round volunteer, they must notify the attendees at any planning meeting, if and when:

- They cease to represent the same organization and are now attending as a community member without affiliation to any organization or as a representative of a different organization.
- They perceive a potential conflict of interest, in any discussion that may lead to a decision-making process, i.e. the mere possibility that the most favourable decision result for York Pride Fest might be the least favourable result in the context of their own organization.

In the latter case they would then be expected to withdraw from that discussion.

In the event that an organization wishes to derive benefits from York Pride Fest, in exchange for providing staff to act as volunteers, mutual consent to any such arrangement must be negotiated and confirmed by a written agreement, signed by a senior member of the organization and a York Pride Fest board member. Without such an agreement, York Pride Fest will bestow no special benefits to any organization, unless they are a York Pride Fest sponsor (in which case their sponsorship agreement will define the benefits they are eligible to receive).

3.6 Team Leaders

From our event and year-round volunteers, more experienced individuals are selected and invited to become team leaders.

In addition to other volunteer activities, team leaders will be trained and entrusted to:

- coordinate the work of a team of volunteers,
- provide support and guidance to team members,
- act in a pivotal decision-making role during the planning and/or execution of events,
- appropriately report and escalate matters of concern or uncertainty.

3.7 Event Coordinators

During an event, one or a small number of year-round volunteers will be designated as event coordinators, with overall responsibility for all logistical aspects related to the execution of the event.

Event coordinators are in attendance throughout their event. They monitor all activities, communicate information to and between volunteer teams, initiate appropriate actions to address unexpected problems and strive to ensure that event attendees are satisfied with their experience.

3.8 Members

A year-round volunteer, after meeting qualifying criteria, may apply to become a 'member' of York Pride Fest

Members of York Pride Fest:

- Can vote on some strategic decisions,
- May attend the organization's annual general meeting,
- Can nominate and vote to elect directors
- Are eligible to be nominated and elected as a director of York Pride Fest
- Have other rights as members of the corporation as described in the York Pride Fest bylaws and the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act.

A local LGBT-related organization that provides staff to act as volunteers, after meeting qualifying criteria, may also apply to become a member of York Pride Fest in order to gain similar privileges.

For more information about membership, please refer to York Pride Fest's bylaws and 'Membership Policies' documents.

4 Expectations

York Pride Fest volunteers can expect:

- To benefit from a variety of experiences
- To be treated as part of a team
- To meet and work together with members of York Region's LGBT+ community.
- To receive feedback and recognition
- To be treated with dignity and respect in an environment free from harassment
- High school students can also expect to earn OSSD community hour credits for time spent volunteering for York Pride Fest, subject to school approval.

In return, York Pride Fest expects that its volunteers will:

- Work together as team members, providing support, encouragement and assistance to other team members.
- Carry out duties as needed:
 - to ensure the success and advancement of York Pride Fest, and
 - to promote the well-being of York Region's LGBT+ community.
- Represent York Pride Fest in an appropriate, responsible and polite manner.
- Be attentive to their assigned tasks and to the needs of others, in particular event attendees, avoiding distractions such as excessive personal cell phone use.
- Maintain open lines of communication
- Honour commitments and promises, and complete all tasks assigned to them.
- Comply with the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

York Pride Fest is an avid supporter and advocate of the York Region Character Community Initiative (<http://charactercommunity.com>). As representatives of our organization, we expect all of our volunteers to consistently exhibit the 11 character attributes of this initiative.

4.1 Forbidden Activities

York Pride Fest strictly does not permit:

- Any volunteer to engage in any activity related to the supervision of minors (i.e. persons under the age of 18), unless accompanied by at least one other volunteer.
- Any volunteer under the age of 18 to be assigned to any activity unless accompanied by at least one other volunteer.

And we will never ask or expect volunteers to:

- Engage in any illegal activity
- Perform any excessively strenuous task
- Lift or move any excessively heavy object, except when a team comprising a sufficient number of volunteers are working together to share the load.

As a volunteer, you must never ask another volunteer to engage in any activity that would contravene these restrictions.

4.2 Timeliness

Please arrive promptly for all events or meetings that you attend. If you know you are going to be late, please call the event or team coordinator to let them know.

4.3 Inability to Attend

We understand that illness or other unforeseen circumstances can sometimes prevent attendance at an event or a team meeting.

If, as an event volunteer, you are unable to attend an event for which you have volunteered, please contact the event coordinator as soon as possible so that he/she can find another volunteer to take your place.

Likewise if, as a year-round volunteer, you are unable to attend a meeting of a team of which you are a member, please send your regrets to the team coordinator at the earliest possible opportunity.

4.4 Year-round Volunteers

Year-round volunteers may offer or be asked to become a member of any of our volunteer teams, each of which performs a specific role. Usually, different teams are established at the start of a pride year² and existing volunteers are invited to join them. New volunteers can however join existing teams later in the pride year. And, occasionally, it may be necessary to create a new team later in the pride year.

Each team is managed by one or more volunteers who is/are elected as the team leaders. The team will meet periodically but no more than once a month, except in special circumstances or during the month immediately prior to pride week when there may need to be weekly or biweekly meetings. Some teams may meet less frequently, particularly early in the pride year and some team meetings may be conducted using telephone conferencing. The duration of team meetings is variable, but they typically take between 60 and 120 minutes. The date, time, venue and anticipated duration of each team meeting will normally be set during the preceding meeting of the team, therefore providing at least one month notice. In other circumstances, at least two week's notice will be given.

To act as a year-round volunteer, you are expected to join at least one of our teams. The workload for different teams varies depending on the nature of their work and the total number of volunteers that are team members. It is therefore important for you to understand the level of involvement required by individual teams when deciding which team(s) to join. Team leaders will be happy to discuss this with you.

You may apply to join more than one of our teams, so long as this does not impact your ability to fulfill your commitments to the team(s) of which you are already a member. If you are considering joining more than one team, be careful not to commit a greater level of involvement than you are reliably able to honour on an ongoing basis.

4.4.1 Application

To become a year-round volunteer you must apply by submitting an online volunteer registration form. Subsequently, you will be invited to attend a brief and informal volunteer orientation session during which team membership options will be discussed and decided.

Should any of your information change after you have registered, please be sure to advise us of the change. You can do this by notifying your team leader or by sending a message to us about the change by using the 'Contact Us' button at the bottom of any page of our website. In this message, please tell us your name and the email address that you provided when you registered.

4.4.2 Minimum Period of Commitment

We ask all year-round volunteers for a minimum period of commitment up to the end of the pride year in which they register to become a volunteer.

If you have previously been a York Pride Fest volunteer, but have not participated as a year-round volunteer during the current or previous pride year, you will be required to re-apply and attend another orientation if you wish to continue as a volunteer.

4.4.3 Minimum Level of Commitment

All year-round volunteers are expected to pledge a minimum level of commitment. Consequently, all teams will expect at least this level of commitment from all of its members who are not also members of other teams. At a minimum, you will be expected to:

- a) Attend all meetings of the teams of which you are a member, which may be as many as one meeting per month for each team, and as many as one meeting per week in the last month of the pride year.
- b) Make available at least the following number of hours, between meetings, to perform required tasks:

Time of Year	Minimum hours
First two quarters of pride year (typically July-December):	4 hours per month
Third quarter of pride year (typically January-March):	6 hours per month
Last quarter of pride year: (typically April-June)	12 hours per month

- c) Be contactable by email or cell phone, responding within an appropriate period and always within one week. During the last month of a pride year, year-round volunteers who are members of event planning teams will normally be expected to respond within a 24 hour period or to give advance notice to their team coordinator(s) ahead of any period when they are unable to do so.

4.4.4 Notice of Leaving

Where possible, we ask that year-round volunteers provide at least 2 weeks' notice in advance of taking time off or pursuing any other activity that will impact their availability. Whenever feasible, we request a greater period of notice if your availability will be impacted within the final month of the pride year.

Even after Pride Week when we are not holding regular planning meetings, please do let us know if you decide you no longer wish to volunteer, so that we can remove your information from our volunteer database.

4.5 Event Volunteers

4.5.1 Application

To become an event volunteer you must apply by submitting an online volunteer registration form. Subsequently we will contact you when planning an event for which we need volunteers.

Should any of your information change after you have registered, please be sure to advise us of the change. You can send a message to us about the change by using the 'Contact Us' button at the bottom of any page of our website. In this message, please tell us your name and the email address that you provided when you registered.

Please also let us know if you decide you no longer wish to volunteer, so that we can remove your information from our volunteer database.

4.5.2 Vulnerable Sector Screening

In order to become eligible to join a York Pride Fest team that involves any interaction with youth, volunteers over the age of 18 must successfully complete a vulnerable sector screening check, valid at the start of the current pride year or at a later date.

4.5.3 Orientation

A week or two before a major event, we will hold an event volunteer orientation meeting on one or more dates. These are informal meetings that are usually held at or very near to the event venue and may include a tour of the venue location.

During an event volunteer orientation meeting we will:

- share detailed information about the event and important safety information,
- answer questions about the event or about any of our policies,
- assign volunteers into their teams, introducing them to their team leader,
- ensure that everyone is equipped to perform their assigned role(s) effectively.

Attendance at an event volunteer orientation meeting is a mandatory requirement. Consequently, individuals who fail to attend an orientation meeting will not be permitted to volunteer at the event.

4.5.4 Check-In and Check-out

On the day of the event, prior to the start time, we will require event volunteers to check-in at a control point. During check-in we will hand out volunteer T-shirts and equipment to be used during the event, such as walkie-talkies.

When you complete your period of volunteering, we ask that you visit the control point to check out prior to leaving the event site. At this time, we will complete and sign your OSSD form.

4.5.5 Media Policy

If questioned by a journalist or representative of any organization during an event, you may offer your personal opinion in response to any question asked. You must however make it clear that you are providing only your own opinion and that you are not able to speak in any official capacity on behalf of York Pride Fest.

Should the questioner require an official statement from York Pride Fest, they should be referred to either an event coordinator or to any York Pride Fest board member in attendance.

4.5.6 T-Shirt Policy

For our signature events, e.g. the Pride Parade and Pride In The Park, we require that event volunteers wear York Pride Fest volunteer T-shirts at all times throughout the event.

T-shirts can be tailored or personalized, for example by removing the sleeves or adding additional decorations. However, any wording and the logos that are printed on the shirt (i.e. the York Pride Fest logo or the logos of our sponsors) must not be removed, altered or obscured.

4.6 Volunteer Registration

As outlined above, York Pride Fest requires that all volunteers register as a volunteer using the online volunteer registration system on the York Pride Fest website. This system captures the following items of information:

- Title (Mr, Miss, Mrs, Ms, Mr or Mx). The Mx title is intended to be used by anyone who prefers not to identify any gender, irrespective of whether they are transgendered.
- First Name
- Last Name
- Company or Organization (if applicable). This information must be provided by volunteers who wish to represent any other organization, or who are employed by a company or organization that has any specific relevance to the LGBT+ community.
- Email Address
- Cell phone number (optional)
- Home phone number (optional)

- Office phone number (optional)
- Location (Durham Region, Peel Region, Simcoe County, Toronto, Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Other)
- Age Group: (Under 16, 16-18, 19-26, Over 26)
- Mobility (Doesn't drive, Drives but doesn't have use of a car, Drives and sometimes has use of a car, Drives and usually has use of a car)
- Preferred Roles. A list of year-round and event volunteer roles, from which any combination can be selected.

We ask all volunteers that they only provide telephone numbers on which it would be convenient for them to receive calls from York Pride Fest.

Except where otherwise indicated, all of the above items of information must be provided.

5 Communication

5.1 Teamspace

Volunteers will be provided with access to, and are required to make use of a special 'Teamspace' section of our website which provides access to various online facilities whose use is reserved for our volunteers.

All York Pride Fest volunteers are assigned a unique, lower-case, volunteer id (**ypfid**) which comprises first name, a period, an alpha character and a numeric digit. For example, volunteer 'Fred Smith' might be assigned a ypfid of 'fred.s1'.

To access the Teamspace section of our website, volunteers must initially visit the Teamspace logon page and enter their ypfid into the "New Volunteer" box. Subsequently, an email will be sent to their personal email address, containing a link that can be used to set a Teamspace password. Subsequently, volunteers can login to Teamspace using their ypfid, together with their Teamspace password.

Volunteers must keep their Teamspace password confidential and should not divulge it to any other person. On the Teamspace website, a facility is provided to enable the password to be changed and it is strongly recommended that volunteers should periodically change their password.

5.2 Emails

Full details of our internal email system, including our mailing list facilities, are made available to volunteers via the Teamspace website.

The following policies apply to all email communications related to York Pride Fest:

- Volunteers who need to engage in email communication with external contacts must request a York Pride Fest mailbox if they do not already have one.
- Volunteers should provide external contacts with their York Pride Fest email address.
- Personal email addresses **MUST NOT** be provided to contacts for the purpose of inviting communication related to York Pride Fest. This is because, in the event of a volunteer becoming unavailable, ceasing to volunteer, or changing his/her personal email account, subsequent emails from the external contact could be lost, as could all records of previous communications.,
- All emails to external contacts **MUST** be sent only from York Pride Fest mailboxes and never from personal email addresses, for the reasons given above.
- Emails to and from external contacts **MUST NOT** be deleted from York Pride Fest mailboxes until after the end of the Pride year.
- Emails related to contractual or legal matters **MUST NOT** be deleted from York Pride Fest mailboxes for a period of 6 years.
- The York Pride Fest email system should be used only to send emails that are necessary and relevant to the operation of our organization.
- Volunteers should not send or store in their York Pride Fest mailbox any emails which contain personally confidential information. This is because, in the event of a volunteer becoming unavailable or ceasing to volunteer, in order to ensure continuity it may become necessary to give another volunteer access to their mailbox.

6 Copyright

6.1 Your Materials

If, as a York Pride Fest volunteer, you create copyrightable materials for use by York Pride Fest, the making available of those materials to York Pride Fest will constitute your consent to an immediate transfer of copyright ownership to York Pride Fest, except as follows.

If you wish to retain copyright ownership in any such copyrightable materials that you create, when making available those materials to York Pride Fest you must simultaneously provide written notice itemizing the materials, advising your retention of copyright ownership and granting the right for York Pride Fest to use those materials without limitation for an indefinite period.

6.2 Our Materials

In order to perform your role as a volunteer you may be given access to various materials for which York Pride Fest own the copyright. These materials include all internal documents as well as image files containing photographs or artwork, such as our logo.

You may not make personal use of any of these materials in their original or an altered form, nor distribute them to anyone who is not a York Pride Fest year-round volunteer unless either:

- one of our policies specifically allows you to use or distribute the item in the way you intend to, or,
- the item, in the exact format you intend to use it, has already been published, e.g. on our website, for the purpose of downloading and reuse to promote our festival or events, or
- you have asked and been given consent by a York Pride Fest board member.

7 Privacy and Confidentiality

As a York Pride Fest volunteer, you may receive or come into contact with confidential information of York Pride Fest, including online passwords, and personal details (e.g. contact information) of other volunteers. You must agree to maintain all confidential information in strict confidence and to take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized access to that information.

For example, you may not disclose to anyone the home address, phone number or personal email address of another volunteer without their express permission.

By virtue of this policy, York Pride Fest attempts to protect your privacy but cannot be held responsible for the inappropriate disclosure of your confidential information by another volunteer.

8 Duty to Report

Volunteers are invited to contact any York Pride Fest board member at any time if they have a matter of concern that cannot be reported to or addressed by team leaders or other volunteers. Board members will treat all such communications with volunteers as confidential.

All volunteers are required to immediately notify a York Pride Fest board member should they become aware of any infringement, or suspect any possible infringement, of any of the organization's policies, including those outlined in this document.

Reprisals against any volunteer reporting such matters will never be tolerated and, at the sole discretion of the board of directors, will usually lead to the immediate termination of those responsible.