



EDMONTON  
**FOLK MUSIC**  
FESTIVAL

## Coordinator Manual

### Contents

1. Intro
2. Festival Office Info
3. The Society
4. Coordinator roles, responsibilities, and benefits
5. Working with other crews
6. Yearly timeline
7. Volunteer Recruitment & Placement
8. Communicating with your crew
9. Setting Expectations – Informing your crew
10. Dealing with performance issues
11. Crew Supplies
12. Badge & T-shirt Distribution
13. At the Festival
14. Teardown
15. Following up with Volunteers
16. Crew Reports
17. Expenses
18. Emergency Response Planning

### Appendix

- A. Code of Ethics and Harassment Policy
- B. Report Template
- C. Meeting Planner



## 1. Intro

Crew coordinators are essential to the Edmonton Folk Fest – they are super volunteers who are incredibly passionate about the Festival, and want to provide the best experience possible to everyone involved. They're incredibly organized, and are team-oriented, ready to motivate and inspire their crew.

Without the generosity and care of crew coordinators, the Festival wouldn't exist, and we wouldn't be where we are today. A heartfelt thank you for your hard work and dedication. We're here if you need us.

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Manager of Volunteers	Asst. Volunteer Manager (Seasonal)

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### The Volunteer Office

There are two staff members managing the festival's volunteer program – one full time and one seasonal. Sometimes we have a practicum student join us for extra coverage right around the festival.

Our major role is to provide support to coordinators and their volunteers, and we also function as a liaison with other administrative staff. Here's what we work on:

- Receive new volunteer applications and place people on crews
- Facilitate crew change requests
- Host new volunteer orientation sessions
- Set meeting dates and make coordinators aware
- Promote the festival's volunteer program through the website, social media, etc.
- Provide volunteer information on the website
- Assist coordinators with volunteer management, issues, etc.
- Help manage crew accounts in Better Impact (Volunteer Impact) and manage the system overall
- Inform coordinators about the festival, its policies, programs, and procedures
- Process and facilitate coordinator requests (supplies, etc.)
- Provide tools, training, and support to crew coordinators
- Facilitate coordinator meetings and appreciation events
- Include coordinators in the planning process
- Facilitate teardown sign up, etc.



## 2. Festival Office Information

The Festival Office is located at 10115 97A Avenue. Year round there are approximately 6 staff in the office (including someone in the Volunteer Office). During the summer, another handful of staff join the office in seasonal positions. We'll always direct you to the correct person, but here's some info about staff you might come in contact with:

- **Terry Wickham – Producer** ([twickham@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:twickham@edmontonfolkfest.org)) → Have a question about performers or the Festival in general? He's the guy.
- **Richard Stuart – Administrator** ([admin@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:admin@edmontonfolkfest.org)) → Handles a variety of items, and works most closely with those crews handling cash.
  - Shauna Stewart – Asst. Administrator ([admin2@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:admin2@edmontonfolkfest.org))
- **Geoff Frisby – Production Manager and Anne Wenschlag – Associate Production Manager** ([pm@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:pm@edmontonfolkfest.org)) → Manage the entire physical site; nearly everyone needs to chat with him at some point, and it's a good idea to contact Geoff/Anne or their assistants to set up a walk through of your area prior to the Festival.
  - During the summer there are two assistants who liaise with coordinators to ensure needs are met. They can be reached at [site@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:site@edmontonfolkfest.org)
  - Starting the second week of July, the Site Office is functional at the Edmonton Ski Club (9613 96 Avenue); 780.466.4488
- **Muffy McKay – Communications & Vendor Relations** ([communications@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:communications@edmontonfolkfest.org)) → Arranges crafters and concessionaires, as well as handling the Festival's website. She is also the person any parking requests go to (we'll cover those shortly).
- **Stéphane Levesque /Glenda Zenari – Festival Kitchen** ([kitchen@edmontonfolkfest.org](mailto:kitchen@edmontonfolkfest.org)) → Things like platter requests, or names for pre-Festival meals (where applicable), go to Stéphane – our head chef – or to his assistants.

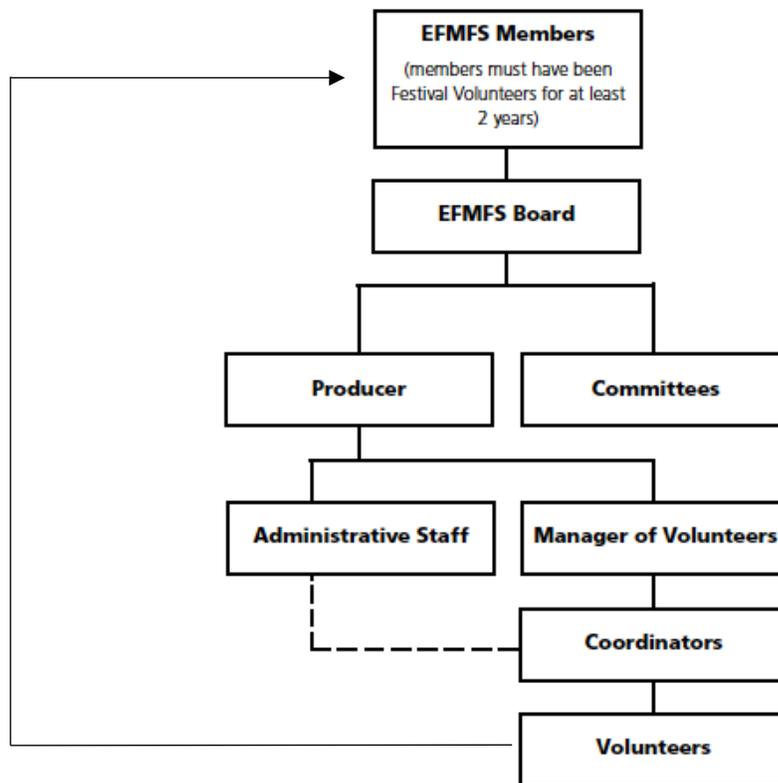


### 3. The Society (EFMFS → Edmonton Folk Music Festival Society)

The Edmonton Folk Music Festival began in 1980 (in Gold Bar Park) with a single staff member and 300 volunteers. We are now considered one of the world's leading folk music festivals.

We are dedicated to presenting and promoting folk music in all its diversity in Edmonton and Alberta (you can consider this our mission statement if ever asked!).

Although it contains hierarchies, our organizational structure is cyclical. People who have volunteered for two or more years may apply to become society members who elect the board; the board hires the Producer (who hires remaining staff, including the Manager of Volunteers). The Manager of Volunteers works with coordinators to manage all volunteers... Then we're back at the start!





#### 4. Coordinator Roles, Responsibilities, and Benefits

##### Leadership Roles & Titles

Each crew is different – some have a single coordinator, some have multiples, some have assistants and shift leaders. It all depends on the tasks involved, and the size of the crew. Things change, and we're consistently working with coordinators to strike the right balance.

***Always chat with us when considering a change to your leadership team.***

Here are the titles\* we work with within each crew:

- Coordinator(s) – Liaise with the Volunteer Office and other crew coordinators; manage the crew while keeping the big picture in mind.
- Asst. Coordinator(s) – Assist the coordinator with their duties before, during, and after the festival as needed.
- Shift Leaders – Take on a leadership role during the festival.

\*It's not necessary to have someone in each of these roles. Figure out what works best with your working style.

When you move someone into a leadership role, set expectations for them up front:

- What tasks will you need them to complete?
- How much time will it take?
- When will the bulk of their volunteer hours take place?
- Will they be interacting with volunteers? If so, what exactly will their responsibilities be?
- Do they need to attend coordinator and/or database training?

If issues arise, it will be easier to speak with them based on the expectations they agreed to up front.

##### **A Note on Succession Planning:**

It's a good idea to identify someone who could take on coordinator-ship 'just in case', or for the future when you might want to take some time off or retire (ensure you discuss with them too). Not only is this necessary for the organization as a whole, but it will take some of the pressure off – share the load! We ask coordinators to identify potential leaders in the Coordinator report each year.



Remember that the number of years a person has been volunteering with the festival doesn't always reflect how effective they'll be as a leader. Consider a person's entire volunteer career, their personal and professional experience, the way they interact with fellow volunteers, and their availability. You can always chat with us if you're unsure, or can't identify someone already on your crew.

### Coordinator Responsibilities

- Adhere to and have knowledge of policies and the Code of Ethics (Appendix A)
- Attend bi-annual coordinator meetings, crew meeting, and others as necessary
- Manage crew member status in Better Impact
- Contact volunteers and make them aware of crew meeting date and other info
- Have a written job description(s) and manual for the crew, and distribute to volunteers
- Provide training, orientation, and information to volunteers at annual crew meeting
- Complete required orders and forms by designated dates
- Schedule crew members by designated date (preferably using Better Impact)
- Promote and encourage volunteers to sign up for Teardown; follow up
- Ensure volunteers are aware of expectations specific to the crew, benefits, policies and the Code of Ethics, and any other information required to function as an effective crew member and EFMF volunteer
- Track and be aware of crew materials and other needs
- Provide a report on current processes and activities of the crew, along with volunteer evaluations, by designated date following the festival (Appendix B)
- Inform the Manager of Volunteers, or their Associate, of personnel issues immediately following the festival; discuss action(s) to be taken
- Represent the festival admirably year round

*Stuff happens* – if you can no longer meet these expectations, ensure you speak with us to make alternate arrangements.

### Coordinator & Asst. Coordinator Benefits

- Invite to coordinators' fall get together
- Invite to winter appreciation event
- Complimentary Society membership (ask for a form!)
- Tickets to concerts and other events as they arise
- All volunteer benefits (access badge, t-shirt, meals, parties)
- Be identified and recognized as a coordinator and crew leader

### **Notes:**



## 5. Working with other crews

The key to our success is 2500+ volunteers coming together to make the festival happen. This is partly magic, and mostly coordinators and volunteers working together and communicating effectively with other crews. We all have our individual focuses, but in the end, *we're all on the same team.*

While we can help connect coordinators, it's often easiest to get in touch directly – after all, you know your crew operations far better than we do. Each spring we distribute a coordinators list with contact info, and during the festival, you can find radio and contact lists at the Communications Desk (north side of the ski club/Production).

Here are the most common types of relationships between crews:

- Your crew depends on another crew's operations for yours to be successful (usually some type of delivery) (eg. Water delivery)
- Your crew works with another crew on a task for a portion of the day (eg. Gate opening)
- Your crew and another interact/work with the same people (eg. Performers)

Issues that arise in these relationships are generally due to a lack of communication. Just because something happened a certain way the year prior, don't assume it will come together on its own the following year.

**In short** - *Reach out prior to the festival to make plans and arrangements with other crew coordinators. This will also make it simpler to fix small issues that arise during the festival, since you've already made a plan.*

*Which crews will you be working with? What are you working on together?*

**Notes:**



## 6. The Timeline

Each year we post dates, deadlines, and forms on the Coordinators Page (<https://edmontonfolkfest.org/volunteers/coordinator-information/>). We'll also send out reminders via email.

<b>Late January</b>	Coordinators & Members Appreciation
<b>January through May</b>	Coordinator and database training sessions (as necessary)
<b>Mid–Late March</b>	Spring Coordinators' Meeting
<b>April 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Returning volunteer deadline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact your crew a month out to see who's returning.</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>	T-shirt Orders (early June) Communication Requests (early June) Item & Purchase Requests (late June) Access Requests (late June)
<b>Mid-July</b>	Signage Requests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't know your inventory? Contact one of the Signage coordinators.</li> </ul> Site build begins Platter requests (as needed only)
<b>July – August</b>	Crew Meetings (various locations; never Fridays or Saturdays) Site Crew begins (third Friday in July)

### **August – FESTIVAL (weekend following long weekend)**

<b>Teardown</b>	10 days following Festival
<b>Late September</b>	Coordinator Reports
<b>Mid–Late October</b>	Fall Coordinator Meet up

→**The Meeting Calendar** – We have a Google Calendar in the volunteer section of the website that is consistently updated with info for both coordinators and volunteers. This includes important dates and deadlines, and crew meeting info.

Most pertinent, general volunteer information, including the Volunteer Handbook, is also available via our website (<https://edmontonfolkfest.org/volunteers/>).



## 7. Volunteer Recruitment and Placement

The Volunteer Office is responsible for placing volunteers on crews depending on the skills, experience and interests listed on a person's application, as well as the spots available on various crews. We do our best to place people who fit with the needs of your crew.

*We need to know how many spots you have available by April 1<sup>st</sup> so we can assign new volunteers to your crew. Most placement occurs in April and May.*

Here's the deal:

- For the most part, we're placing volunteers from the group of applicants on file. Some come in on their own ("I came across your website!"), but most list an EFMF volunteer who suggested they get involved. Word of mouth continues to be the best recruitment method out there.
- Everyone who volunteers MUST create a MyVolunteerPage.com account and fill out an application.
- If you have someone you'd like to add (ie. an existing volunteer approached you about a friend joining, and you approve) shoot us a note with the name so we can watch for it.
  - *We'll still give final approval to a volunteer being placed – sometimes we can't make accommodations in these situations (we have someone fitting who applied earlier, etc.).*

A word of caution:

While we depend on word-of-mouth recruitment almost entirely, we do watch where friends and family members are placed. Sometimes partners break up, friends fight, or things just become cliquy. Always keep group dynamics and diversity in mind when approached about having someone join your crew.

*Talk to us if you're unsure, or need some back up saying no.*

### **Once someone is placed on your crew...**

Follow up with a new volunteer as soon as possible. Create a form email in Better Impact introducing you and the crew so you can fire it off easily. Include some possible dates (like the crew meeting) and your crew manual, as well as your contact info should they have questions.

Getting in touch quickly means there's a better chance of the person following through with their shifts. If you're using the scheduler in Better Impact, let them know so they can commit to their shifts and plan for the festival right away.

We arrange for new volunteers to attend a New Volunteer Training session for general info.



## 8. Communicating with your crew members

While we don't want to overload volunteers, it's important to stay in touch and encourage dialogue. *Remember that volunteer information is confidential, and is not to be used outside festival business* (eg. don't email your volunteers to sell them something, or add them to your personal newsletter). Here's a guide to communication methods:

"Your current volunteer message" – This is a message that will appear to volunteers when they sign in to MyVolunteerPage.com, and is quite passive. Write something that doesn't require an action, like a welcome to the page, or the date of your crew meeting.

### Email

- You don't require immediate response
- The information is clear and concise (no room for confusion)

When querying your crew about returning for the current festival (in March!), start with a group email via Better Impact. Include instructions to confirm their return, and set a deadline.

Send group emails from Better Impact; the system automatically BCC's (Blind Carbon Copy) those you're emailing. You'll receive responses directly to your inbox.

Text Messages – Quick reminders or queries that aren't sensitive.

### Phone Call

- You haven't received a response to your email(s)
- Emails are bouncing back
- Immediate response or action is required
- A sensitive issue

### In person

- Disciplinary or sensitive issues

### **Other communication:**

Feel free to send out a "Happy Holidays" message, or say "Happy Birthday" (the latter will pop up on Better Impact if a volunteer has entered it).

Consider some other ways to keep the crew connected:

- Organize a pub night or potluck post festival
- Start a Facebook or WhatsApp group



## 9. Setting Expectations – Informing your crew

### Crew Manual

A crew manual is important – it outlines your expectations of crew members in writing. If issues come up down the road, you can return to the information set out in your manual.

What to include:

- Role of the crew
- Volunteer responsibilities
- Common issues and mitigation
- Safety concerns
- What to bring to a shift
- Other pertinent info

While we don't expect coordinators to print paper versions of their training materials each year, ensure they're available via MyVolunteerPage.com, and remind volunteers to give it a read prior to each festival. It's a good idea to provide these materials to new volunteers directly, either by email or in person.

### The Crew Meeting

*The Volunteer Office sets dates for crew meetings by March. Make sure you check the calendar on the website to ensure you can be present to run your meeting.*

While there's a large focus on picking up badges and t-shirts, the crew meeting is a great time to run through your crew manual and address any changes. Leave a little time so your crew members can meet one another (check out some icebreakers that don't suck:

<http://www.cultofpedagogy.com/classroom-icebreakers/> OR  
<https://www.wrike.com/blog/ultimate-guide-team-building-activities/>).

A template is also available in Appendix C to help plan your meeting.

### Training

In person training is important. While someone can read your crew manual 100 times, it doesn't always prepare them for the festival experience. Take advantage of the time you have during your crew meeting, but also consider organizing a site walk through prior to the festival, where you can explain your crew operations in depth, in the spot they'll take place.

General Site Orientation is also available (mostly targeted at new volunteers), and takes place over a few days leading up to the festival. It's good to know these dates, though we'll also let new volunteers know.



## 10. Dealing with performance issues & conflicts

No matter how small, it is essential to address performance issues when they happen – issues seldom disappear when untreated. It's a good idea to keep a notebook, and keep your thoughts organized when you notice something unusual about a volunteer's behaviour.

*Always respect peoples' privacy – address performance or other personnel issues in person or by phone. Never discuss sensitive issues or incidents over email or text (with us, them, or a fellow coordinator), or in front of other volunteers.*

Here are the ways we work to address performance issues, from small things to the most serious:

- a. Non-disciplinary – Examples: Late for a shift; using a cell phone on shift; lost badge; negative attitude; not taking initiative.

Sometimes a person just doesn't fit with the crew. Often these people know themselves, and will request a crew transfer, etc. If not, you can talk to us about shifting them to another crew (during the off season).

- b. Disciplinary – If an issue becomes disciplinary, get in touch with the Manager of Volunteers to discuss, before speaking with the person (you might even want to have us there).
  - i. There's hope yet – Examples: Skipping shifts, being rude to fellow volunteers/patrons, disruptive behaviour.

In a situation where a person could potentially correct their behaviour, and continue to be a good crew member, there are a few options – send the person home for the day, swap their badge for one without benefits, or ask them to take the following year off.

- ii. The last straw – Examples: Harassment, consuming alcohol (etc.) on shift, other code of ethics violations.

In extreme cases, a volunteer might need to be let go – this generally happens following the festival, though in rare cases, a person's badge may need to be removed during the festival. Make sure you contact the Manager of Volunteers in any of these situations; they may also decide to involve the Volunteer Committee. *Don't panic – these situations are very rare!*



## Addressing conflicts and performance issues with a volunteer

- Review the Volunteer Pocket Guide and/or Code of Ethics, or your records. Make some notes to guide the discussion.
- Be Calm – As a coordinator, it's important to lead by example. If a volunteer is upset, be a calming presence, and don't get upset as well.
- Documentation – Always document conversations you have related to any conflicts, or if you notice something unusual. That way you can reference it later, and aren't relying on recollection.
- Be Objective & Fair – Be consistent with everyone on your crew. Consider what is reasonable, and how you have dealt with similar issues in the past.
- Understand the Problem – Don't jump to conclusions. Voice your concern, and allow the volunteer to present their side of the story. Sometimes things aren't as they appear.
- Keep Emotions Out of It – We're all passionate about the Festival, and sometimes it's difficult to remove emotions from difficult situations. It's important to recognize your emotions (for your own well-being), but operate based on facts.

### **11. Crew Supplies**

Almost all crews require supplies to function – from pens to tables and chairs to stamps. It's up to coordinators to keep track of their supplies, order necessary new items each year, and get supplies to and from site (or make other arrangements).

Remember, you don't need to request items that are already part of your inventory, unless they need to be replaced.

#### **a. Ordering & Purchasing**

We have a volunteer (The Sourcer-er) who shops for new items, submitted via the request form. Those items are made available for pick up about a week before the Festival at the Festival Office.

*Sometimes it might be easier to purchase an item yourself if it's very specific, but please do check with us before purchasing crew items. Information on claiming expenses is below.*

#### **b. Inventory & Storage:**

Each year the Festival provides inventory forms, and asks coordinators/crew members to fill them out, keep a copy, and provide a copy for the Festival Office. These will be available when you pick up your new requests, or at Volunteer Services.

Please refrain from storing crew supplies at home.



Crews should store items at the warehouse or in 'rock boxes' (which end up in sea cans or in our warehouse). Make sure you keep an inventory, and be in touch with Site if there are specifics about delivery or pick up of items.

## 12. Badge & T-shirt Distribution

**Badges** – There are many ways to handle distribution of badges. Some coordinators prefer to hand everything out at their crew meeting, and make arrangements for volunteers to pick them up from them directly. Others prefer to have us hand out at the meeting, and keep them for distro at our 'Late Badge Pick up' leading up to the Festival.

Figure out what works best for you and your crew. The most important thing is to let your volunteers (and us) know where they should pick up their badge.

**T-shirts** – In general, the Festival Office (and Festival Support volunteers) will facilitate handout of t-shirts at crew meetings. Once again, some coordinators prefer to take them off our hands, and deal with distro from beginning to end.

Following the crew meeting, we ask that coordinators take any remaining t-shirts with them, and that volunteers pick up at their first shift. Neither the Festival Office or Volunteer Services is able to hand out t-shirts.

→**The Volunteer Pocket Guide** – Volunteers receive a hard copy of the handbook (& Code of Ethics/Harassment Policy) at either their crew meeting, or when they pick up their badge. It's also available in the volunteer section of the website.

## 13. During the Festival

All Coordinators handle the Festival itself differently. Some stay in their crew area the entire time, some schedule themselves for shifts during busy periods, and some are on call. Figure out what works best for you and your crew.

An important item during the Festival is *team building*. Besides the crew meeting, this is often the only time your volunteers will be around one another. Whether it's you, your assistant(s) or shift leader(s), take time to have pre-shift meetings with your crew to celebrate successes, or talk about things that didn't quite work, and encourage feedback. Be gracious and thank your crew, or specific volunteers, when applicable.

These small things go a long way when it comes time for volunteers to decide to return the following year.

## 14. Teardown



The Volunteer Office manages sign up for teardown along with the Production Office (via MyVolunteerPage.com). You can refer volunteers to the volunteer section of the website ([www.edmontonfolkfest.org/volunteers](http://www.edmontonfolkfest.org/volunteers)) to sign up for teardown.

Please encourage your volunteers to come out, and follow up on Better Impact to ensure they made it down. Remember, we ask 50% of all returning volunteers to assist with teardown.

### **15. Following up with Volunteers**

It's a good idea to send a wrap up email once things are all said and done (generally following teardown). For example, give a quick run down on the successes from the Festival, thank everyone, and let people know you're looking forward to working with them again the following year. You may also want to ask for feedback from volunteers to include in your report, and to encourage dialogue.

### **16. Crew Reports**

Each fall we ask coordinators to submit a report detailing crew responsibilities, successes, and planned improvements for the following year. If there is more than one coordinator on your crew, submit as a group – we just need one report per crew. We summarize all reports and distribute them amongst fellow coordinators. This process allows us all to step back and take a look at the broader picture.

Please complete your report in a timely manner! The template is provided in Appendix C and is always posted on the Coordinator Page of the website.

### **17. Expense Claims & Pre-arranged Payment**

*We do not expect coordinators to take on any financial burden related to Festival operations.*

If you make purchases for your crew – generally crew supplies – contact us for an expense claim form. We'll also send these out following the Festival. Once again, please clear purchases with us prior to making them.

In rare situations, you may need to make large or multiple purchases. Contact us to make arrangements.

### **18. Emergency Response Planning**

Our Production Manager, Geoff Frisby, works with an outside contractor to ensure response planning is in place. The coordinators of those crews involved in the administration of the response plan are contacted prior to each festival with updated details.



All coordinators can access the full plan via the document section of Better Impact. Brief info is provided in the volunteer handbook for all volunteers. If your crew is involved in administering the response plan, ensure volunteers are aware of their role should they be on shift.

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## **Summary**

Being a coordinator can be hard work, but we never want it to be taxing, or take away from your enjoyment of the Festival. Stay in touch, and chat with us about any issues or challenges you might have, to figure out the best course of action (or you may just need to vent – we're here for that too!).

Give us feedback on your experience, and let us know of things we can do to make our coordinator program better, to improve your crew, or the volunteer experience over all. Remember that you know your crew and their tasks better than we do, and we value (and depend on) your knowledge and experience.

In short, we're here if you need us.

Marianne & Elka  
{EFMF Volunteer Team}