



Santropol Roulant's Volunteer Handbook

“A friend of mine came into Santropol Roulant the other day to do deliveries with me. In the middle of the route, she asked, ‘All these volunteers cook and deliver these meals for free?’ I mean the answer is obvious; volunteer work is not paid work. But for a moment, I was stunned by the fact that the Roulant manages to deliver so many meals every day due to the goodwill and hard work of these volunteers.

Why do people volunteer at the Roulant? Why do so many come back? Why do they enjoy themselves so much? There are so many reasons: the magic generated by youthfulness, the good food prepared with care, the gratitude of those living with a loss of autonomy, the good kitchen tunes, the diversity of people working together, and the overwhelming feeling of community.”

-Stephen Kohout (former staff member)

Santropol Roulant's Little Volunteer Handbook

Who we are

Santropol Roulant is a Montreal-based, not-for-profit organization founded and run by young people in the community. We bring people together across generations and cultures through our innovative meals-on-wheels service, our intergenerational activities and volunteer programs.

Santropol Roulant uses food as a vehicle to break social and economic isolation between generations and to strengthen and nourish our local community. A social service with an environmental and social change ethos, Santropol Roulant aims to bring only the most nutritious and ethically produced food to our community. We engage a diversity of people to take an active role in their communities through initiatives that address the health and food security needs of seniors and Montrealers living with a loss of autonomy.

Governance & Membership

As of October 2004, Santropol Roulant is a **Membership-based Organization**. Our membership plays the vital role of electing the **Board of Directors** at our Annual General Meeting, who are the ultimate guarantors of objects and policies of the Roulant.

Our Members consist of anyone who has, within the past year:

- Received meals from Santropol Roulant;
- Made a donation to Santropol Roulant;
- Volunteered at Santropol Roulant;
- Been an employee at Santropol Roulant.

The story of Santropol Roulant

In the early 90's, Keith Fitzpatrick and Chris Godsall, both waiters at Café Santropol, began to think about working more directly in their community. When the pair volunteered for an existing Meals-on-Wheels organization, they were moved by the simplicity and the absolute positivity of the experience - they loved it! They realized that this type of community work was truly rewarding, both for those receiving meals and for those giving them.

Inspired by their own volunteer experiences, the pair began to research the existing services in Montreal and soon understood that with a rapidly growing seniors population and continuing health-care cuts, there was a great need for more and better services to assist seniors and those living with a loss of autonomy. In 1995, Keith and Chris solidified their partnership for a youth-run Meals-on-Wheels organization and received a Youth Service Canada federal grant that supports non-profit organizations in Canada. Keith and Chris were visionary in recognizing the need to address social isolation and malnutrition among Montreal's seniors while providing an accessible way to engage young people in their communities, and to gain valuable employment experience and skills.

Although the Roulant has evolved, its philosophy remains the same: faith in young people, in their ability to contribute meaningfully to society and in the special things that happen when the young and old get together. This philosophy is reflected in the friendly, open atmosphere that permeates this workplace.

Santropol Roulant volunteer-members

Officially, a volunteer is a person who: chooses to offer a service or carry out an activity without being forced

or feeling obligated to do so; carries out the activity to help a person, an organization, or the community as a whole; is not paid for the service or activity provided.

Since we began delivering meals in 1995, volunteers have supported Santropol Roulant in its efforts to create healthy, diverse, intergenerational communities in Montreal. Santropol Roulant's Meals-on-Wheels service requires more than 100 volunteers every week to prepare and deliver meals throughout Montreal. In addition to the daily kitchen and delivery shifts, volunteers help out as board members, gardeners, graphic designers, bike mechanics, event organizers, public relations consultants - in short, in any way they can.

90% of our volunteers are young people between the ages of 16 and 35. They are students, travellers, artists, parents, in between jobs, professionals and neighbours. Some are new to Montreal, others are new to Canada. From the outset, young people have been the driving force behind Santropol Roulant's success. This is remarkable at a time when national trends show a decline in the number of young people volunteering, with the lowest rate of youth volunteerism right here in Quebec.

We realize how valuable everyone's time is, and greatly appreciate the enthusiasm and commitment that our volunteers bring to the organization. Whether a volunteer for three months or three years, it is **responsibility, compassion, innovation, teamwork and integrity** that are most valued in the work that takes place at Santropol Roulant.

Santropol Roulant client-members

Santropol Roulant clients receive meals through the intergenerational Meals-on-Wheels service. All clients

are living with a loss of autonomy, which means different things for each client. The majority are elderly and have difficulty with the mobility required in order to obtain and prepare balanced meals on a daily basis. Other clients are referred to us because they are: hospital outpatients, physically disabled, chronically ill or HIV positive. Levels of autonomy vary from individual to individual; therefore, while some receive meals only once or twice a week, others receive meals 5 days per week. Similarly, some clients require the service for only a short period of transition or recuperation while others have been and will remain clients as long as they are living independently in their residences. Social workers, nurses and other healthcare professionals working within hospitals and CLSCs, (Centre Locale de Service Communautaire), refer clients to Santropol Roulant.

Receiving meals through Santropol Roulant's Intergenerational Meals-on-Wheels service helps to ease the social isolation that challenges many people living with a loss of autonomy.

Our community - events, activities, ways to get involved

The Santropol Roulant community is made up of our volunteers, meals-on-wheels clients, staff, board members, neighbours, funders, friends, and community partners. Throughout the year we organize different events, gatherings and fundraisers in order to bring together our diverse community.

Intergenerational get-togethers, such as holiday brunches and picnics, are a great way for clients and volunteers to get to know each other and the organization a bit better. These gatherings are fun, relaxed and about sharing food and good company.

Volunteers help out with the set-up, transportation of clients and clean-up on these special days.

Other annual events include our Bazaar in September, a Pumpkin Carving party in October, the Cabane à Sucre outing every spring, and a volunteer-driven cabaret fundraiser in December, our summer BBQ, the Harvest Fest, our birthday celebration and more. To get involved, talk to staff - and if you have ideas for events or fundraisers, let us know!

Volunteering in the kitchen - job description

Volunteers and kitchen staff prepare between 85-100 hot meals per day, 5 days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday) in the Santropol Roulant kitchen. The meals consist of a main dish, two side dishes, served with a choice of a dessert (with a diabetic option), pudding, fruit salad or green salad. No main dish repeats itself within any given month. We accommodate special dietary needs such as allergies and vegetarian/vegan diets, and when possible the general likes and dislikes of the clients. The meals are low-fat, low-sodium, not-too-spicy and pretty darn good.

The relaxed atmosphere in the kitchen is a great opportunity to meet other volunteers. There is always good music and interesting people around. A kitchen coordinator is always present to answer any questions you may have and to assist in the work. While it is casual in the kitchen, there are a few rules to follow in order to ensure that the kitchen remains a safe and hygienic place.

Kitchen rules

COVER YOUR HEAD! - Everyone working with food in the kitchen must wear a hat or scarf on his or her head to prevent hair getting into the food. There are many hats available in the kitchen or bring your own!

WASH YOUR HANDS! - Everyone's hands are full of germs, which can contaminate the food. Our clientele is particularly vulnerable to infection and illness through contamination of food, therefore, it is crucial that you wash your hands thoroughly with hand soap each time you enter the kitchen or touch anything unclean and **NO NAILPOLISH!**

BE CAREFUL WITH KNIVES! - We use many different types and sizes of knives when preparing food - be extremely cautious when using any of them. Carry knives point-down beside your body. When knives need washing, do it immediately and carefully - do not throw dirty knives into a sink full of dirty dishes.

CLEAN UP! - Working in any kitchen is equal parts cooking and cleaning. Dishes are everyone's responsibility. Do your share and help keep the kitchen spic and span.

MEAT! - Volunteers perform all aspects of food preparation, however, it is important that the kitchen coordinator is involved in the preparation of the meat to insure it is prepared and cooked properly and safely.

BE GREEN! - Please **compost**, recycle and keep waste to a minimum. Everything we do affects our larger community so keep up these good habits at home too!

COOK WITH LOVE! - This is special food for special people. Take care to prepare all food so that it tastes and looks as delicious as possible.

Daily kitchen schedule

The kitchen supervisor arrives around **9 am** each morning to open the kitchen and prepare for the day. The volunteer schedule for the kitchen is divided into 2 shifts.

Morning - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm (5 volunteers)

The morning volunteers prepare the regular and diabetic desserts, vegetable side-dishes, the fruit salad, the green salad, the main dish and the alternative meal. Simply put, all food that is needed for that day is prepared in the morning. Afterwards, the dishes and the work surfaces must be cleaned.

Afternoon - 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm (4 volunteers)

The afternoon shift is usually less busy and therefore needs fewer volunteers. The desserts should be divided and wrapped in plastic and the meals are individually packed in containers. It is important to keep the containers neat and respect the meal portion. When all the meals are packaged, the kitchen must be cleaned (there is a detailed list in the kitchen).

Volunteer deliverers - job description

Volunteers deliver between 85-100 meals daily, 5 days a week to Montrealers living with a loss of autonomy. Delivering food to our clients ensures, not only, that they receive a hot, balanced meal that day, but also a smile, a personal visit and a friendly chat.

As a deliverer, you must arrive at Santropol Roulant at **2:45 pm**, at which time you will; check the daily route schedule to see what route you are delivering and with whom, go over your route sheet to double-check food totals and to be sure of the delivery order and directions.

PACKING BAGS - When packing the bags, always make sure you have the exact number of meals and be sure to check for special meals. **SPECIAL MEALS** are marked with the last name of the client. Meals are packed in our specially designed backpacks, which must first be lined with a plastic bag to avoid any leaks from being

absorbed into the bags and then separated with plastic dividers to prevent meals from squishing one another. Always bring 3 or 4 extra plastic bags in case clients are not home.

ON DELIVERIES - When delivering, always verify route sheets for specific delivery notes (e.g. slow to answer, leave meal if not home...etc.). When you arrive at a client's home **BE PATIENT**. It often takes our clients a while to reach the door, or they may be hard of hearing. When the client answers the door, be courteous, polite, and aware. Use the route sheets to note any comments or questions the client has or that you may notice (e.g. client seems confused, wishes to cancel a meal, or client wasn't home). When a client does not answer, confirm with the delivery notes and, unless otherwise indicated, leave the meal in a plastic bag hanging from the doorknob (it is easier to reach than if it is left on the ground). Use common sense and good judgement while on deliveries. Do not enter homes unless you are invited and feel comfortable doing so, and please report to staff any behavior that seems inappropriate.

AFTER DELIVERY - Return to Santropol Roulant, there are several routes you can choose; ask a staff member beforehand which is best for you.

There will always be a staff member in the office when you return from your delivery route. Please give this person your route sheet and let them know about any questions, concerns, and/or feed-back from clients. If

there are meals left over, write the date on the meal's cover and leave it in the fridge. Wipe out bags with vinegar spray and paper towels and hang them up on hooks.

Volunteer drivers - job description

We have two vehicles at Santropol Roulant. We use the cars for deliveries and to pick up/drop off clients for special activities. We often require volunteers to use these vehicles. Volunteers are not permitted to use these vehicles unless authorized by a staff member.

We ask that all our drivers have clean driving records and at least three years driving experience. We also ask that all potential drivers permit Santropol Roulant to access their driving record and other pertinent information.

As drivers, both volunteers and staff accept responsibility for the well-being and safety of their passengers, be they other volunteers, staff members or clients. Please be considerate of those in the car with you - they should feel comfortable and confident in your driving abilities.

General Car Rules

Everyone in the vehicle must wear a seatbelt at all times.

Don't take risks - this means risking the safety of yourself, your passengers, other drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, etc., risking the condition of the vehicle, and risking receiving tickets! Any reckless driving or excessive speed will not be tolerated.

Don't let the car idle. If you will be stopped for more than 10 seconds, turn off the car.

Pay attention to parking regulations - Parking tickets are a huge expense that we cannot afford. Please be

sure that you are parking the car in a legal spot (if you are not 100% sure, ask someone in the office).

Finally, remember that other volunteers will be using the car after you, please keep it tidy.

Volunteer Ticket Policy

1. Santropol Roulant will exercise discretion and may reimburse parking tickets obtained during delivery service.
2. Any other infraction will be the sole responsibility of the volunteer and Santropol Roulant will not reimburse tickets.
3. Santropol Roulant reserves the right at any time to terminate the driving privileges of a volunteer.

There is no smoking in the cars.

Please remove garbage from the cars when exiting.

Both cars are equipped with cell phones, which should be switched ON at all times when you are in the car. Please only use phones when cars are stationary.

Inform a staff member if there are any problems with the vehicle - (strange noises, warning lights, bad smells, anything else).

Take note of gas levels when exiting the vehicle. Although filling up the cars is a staff responsibility, your input is appreciated. If you do fill up the car, you must check the oil at the same time!

Be careful & safe!



*The following is a sample copy of the signing portion of the Volunteer Application form that we keep on file at Santropol Roulant.

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF VOLUNTEERING

Training & Commitment

To apply as a volunteer, please fill out and sign this form and attend one of our VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION SESSIONS. Please be aware that, because of Santropol Roulant's moral and legal obligation to safeguard the well-being of its members, who are among the most vulnerable in society, your personal reference may be contacted and other screening procedures may be used before you are accepted as a volunteer. If you have been convicted of a criminal offence involving violence or theft, and have not received a pardon, you must let us know so that a reasonable decision can be made regarding your candidacy and assignment. This information will be kept confidential in accordance with the applicable legal rules. Santropol Roulant reserves the right to require volunteers to change responsibilities or discontinue their service if they are not compatible with the volunteer program. Volunteers are not paid for their services.

Special Volunteers

If you are volunteering to fulfill hours assigned through a school program, a community work/compensatory work program or a reinsertion/reintegration program where you will need your hours documented, paperwork filled out, or letters written confirming the number of hours volunteered, it is MANDATORY that you convey this to the Volunteer Coordinator before beginning to volunteer with Santropol Roulant.

Scheduling

Once you have signed your name up on the Volunteer Schedule for a shift, we consider it a confirmation that you will be here for that shift. If, for any reason, you are unable to come in for your volunteer shift, it is absolutely necessary that you notify us, preferably 24-hours in advance. Similarly, if you know that you will be late for your shift, please call us and let us know. **It is particularly important that you arrive for deliveries by 2:45 p.m.**

Bicycle

Volunteers are welcome to use the bicycles supplied by the Roulant for deliveries. You are required to use the helmets and locks available. During the fall and winter months, deliveries occur after sunset so please wear bright clothing. Please exercise good judgement while using bicycles: Santropol Roulant assumes no responsibility for your safety on the road.

Hygiene/Sanitation/Safety

Santropol Roulant is a HEALTH ORGANIZATION that provides a food service, and therefore must uphold the strictest standards of sanitation and hygiene. The food must be prepared in sanitary conditions and handled with the utmost care and cleanliness.

Both volunteers in the kitchen and on deliveries must be aware of these standards and make efforts to have clean hands and appearance at all times. **If you are sick or contagious please DO NOT come in.** Our clientele is considered to be particularly susceptible to illness and should not be put at risk.

DRUG and ALCOHOL use are absolutely forbidden while representing Santropol Roulant within the community and while working with our clients. For safety reasons,

anyone judged to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted to work in the kitchen or to deliver meals. Volunteers using drugs or alcohol may be asked to discontinue their participation in the Volunteer Program at Santropol Roulant.



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The word "Canada" is written in a black, serif font. A small red maple leaf is positioned above the letter "a".