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## **Purpose**

Volunteers can be an important part of any organization and are proven to be a valuable asset to law enforcement agencies. Volunteers help to increase police responsiveness, service delivery, and information input, and they provide new program opportunities. In addition, volunteers can bring new skills and expertise to the job and prompt new enthusiasm. This policy establishes this department's position on the utility and management of its volunteer program and provides guidance on its management and administration.

## **Policy**

It is the policy of this police department to use qualified volunteers for specified tasks and duties that can create efficiencies for the department and improve services to the community. Volunteers are intended to supplement and support, rather than supplant, sworn officers and civilian personnel.

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

*Volunteer:* Someone who performs service for the department without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services rendered. This may include unpaid chaplains, unpaid reserve officers, interns, persons providing administrative support, and youth involved in a Law Enforcement Explorer Post, among others.

### **II. PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Administration**

1. The volunteer coordinator, or his or her designee, shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. Recruiting, selecting, and training qualified volunteers for various positions
  - b. Maintaining employment records for each volunteer
  - c. Maintaining the volunteer handbook, which outlines expectations, policies, and responsibilities for all volunteers
  - d. Maintaining a record of volunteer schedules and work hours
  - e. Completion and dissemination as appropriate of all necessary paperwork and information
  - f. Planning periodic recognition events
2. All requests for volunteers shall be routed through the designated chain of command for review and volunteer selection.

#### **B. Recruitment**

Volunteers shall be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis consistent with this department's policy on equal opportunity nondiscriminatory employment. A primary qualification for participation in the application process shall be an interest in and an ability to assist the agency in serving the public.

### C. Screening

1. All prospective volunteers shall complete the volunteer application form.
2. The volunteer coordinator, or designee, shall conduct a face-to-face interview with an applicant under consideration.
3. A documented background investigation shall be completed on each volunteer applicant and shall include but not necessarily be limited to the following:
  - a. Traffic and criminal record
  - b. Employment
  - c. References

### D. Selection and Placement

1. Upon their selection, applicants shall receive a confirmation letter prior to the start of service.
2. All volunteers shall receive a copy of the volunteer manual specific to the unit they are assigned to.
3. All volunteers shall be required to sign a Volunteer Agreement & Release of Liability.
4. Volunteers shall be placed only in job assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills, abilities, and the needs of the agency.

### E. Position Description

1. Volunteers shall be provided with a comprehensive written position description detailing their duties.
2. Volunteers shall be used only in accordance with this description. Volunteers shall not work without a written job description or outside the limits of job responsibilities specified in the job description.
3. Position descriptions shall be reviewed periodically to ensure that they accurately reflect the volunteer's duties and responsibilities.

### F. Training

1. Volunteers shall be provided with a training and orientation program to acquaint them with the department, personnel, policies, and procedures that have a direct impact on their work assignment.
2. Volunteers shall receive position-specific training to ensure they have adequate knowledge and skills to complete tasks required by the position.
3. Volunteers shall receive ongoing training which will be conducted on a monthly basis.
4. Training shall reinforce to volunteers that they may not intentionally represent themselves as, or by omission infer that they are, sworn officers or other full-time members of the department. They shall always represent themselves as volunteers.
5. All volunteers shall comply with the rules of conduct and with all orders and directives, either oral or written, issued by the department.

### G. Fitness for Duty

1. No volunteer shall report to work or be on duty when his or her judgment or physical condition has been impaired by alcohol, medication, other substances, illness, or injury.
2. Volunteers shall report to their supervisor any changes in status that may affect their ability to fulfill their duties. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Driver's license
  - b. Medical condition
  - c. Arrests
  - d. Criminal investigations
  - H. Dress Code
3. Volunteers shall conform to department-approved dress consistent with their duty assignment.
  4. Uniforms authorized for volunteers shall be readily distinguishable from those worn by sworn officers.
  5. No volunteer shall wear his or her uniform or identifiable parts of that uniform while off duty.
  6. Volunteers shall be required to return any issued uniform or agency clothing at the termination of service.

#### I. Confidentiality

1. With appropriate security clearance, volunteers may have access to confidential information such as criminal histories or investigative files. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor or departmental policy, all police information shall be considered confidential. Only that information specifically identified and approved by authorized personnel shall be released. Confidential information shall be given only to persons who have a need and a right to know as determined by departmental policy and supervisory personnel.
2. Each volunteer shall sign a Nondisclosure Confidentiality Agreement. Subsequent disclosure of any confidential information, verbally, in writing, or by any other means, shall be grounds for immediate termination and possible criminal prosecution.
3. Volunteers shall not address public gatherings, appear on radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as correspondents to a newspaper or other periodical, release or divulge any information concerning the activities of the agency, or maintain that they represent the agency in such matters without permission from the proper agency personnel.

#### J. Property and Equipment

1. Volunteers shall be issued an identification card that must be worn at all times while on duty.
2. Any fixed and portable equipment issued by the agency shall be for official and authorized use only.
3. Any property or equipment issued to a volunteer shall remain the property of the agency and shall be returned at the termination of service.

#### K. Disciplinary Procedures/Termination

1. A volunteer may be removed from the volunteer program at the discretion of the police chief. Termination of volunteers shall not be subject to due process considerations and volunteers shall have no property interests in their continued employment.
2. Annual performance evaluations indicating the following may be ground for removal from the program;
  - poor performance

- discipline or ethical issues
- lack of volunteer time
- excessive absence from scheduled meetings

#### L. Evaluation

1. An evaluation of the overall volunteer program shall be conducted on an annual basis.
2. Regular personnel evaluations shall be conducted with volunteers to ensure the best use of human resources available, to ensure personnel problems can be identified and dealt with promptly and fairly, and to ensure optimum job satisfaction on the part of volunteers.

#### M. Regulations

1. All volunteers will operate under their assigned unit's regulations policy which is written specifically for the particular duties and responsibilities for that unit.

### **Reference or Revision Date(s):**

A. REFERENCE:

B. REVISION DATE(S):