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|  | CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_  VOLUNTEER POLICY  Thank you for development of these policies and for sharing their use with other cities:  MJ Scott, City of Edina  Jackie Maas, City of Plymouth  Kelly O’Brien, City of Roseville  Diane Erickson, Cities of Apple Valley,  Inver Grove Heights, Rosemount and West St. Paul |

# GENERAL

## Overall Policy on Utilization of Volunteers

The achievement of the goals of the City is best served by the active participation of community citizens. The City accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels of City government and within all appropriate programs and activities. All City staff persons are encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve and to assist in recruitment of volunteers from the community.

## Purpose of Volunteer Policies

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. These policies are intended for internal management guidance only, and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The City reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the City Manager.

## Scope of Volunteer Policies

Unless specifically stated, these policies apply to all non-elected volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken on or on behalf of the City, and to all City departments and sites of operation.

## Definition of ‘Volunteer’

A ‘volunteer’ is anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the City. A ‘volunteer’ must be officially accepted and enrolled by the City’s Volunteer Services department prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as ‘employees’ of the City.

## Special Case Volunteers

The City also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, alternative sentencing or diversion programs, corporate volunteer programs, and other volunteer referral programs. In each of these cases, however, a special agreement must be in effect with the organization, school, or program from which the special case volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and care of the volunteers.

## Service at the Discretion of the City

The City accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the City. Volunteers agree that the City may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer’s relationship with the City. The volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer’s relationship with the City. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer’s supervisor and/or Volunteer Services department.

## Scope of Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers may be utilized in all programs and activities of the City, and serve at all levels of skill. Volunteers should not, however, be utilized to displace any paid employees from their positions.

# VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

## 2. 1 Maintenance of Records

A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer with the City, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, and evaluation of work. Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to the Volunteer Services department. Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

## 2. 2 Conflict of Interest

A person, who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the City, whether personal or financial, can be accepted to serve as a volunteer with the City as long as said conflict of interest is disclosed.

## 2.3 Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, client, or other person or involves overall City business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer’s relationship with the City or other corrective action.

## 2.4 Worksite

An appropriate worksite shall be established prior to the enrollment of any volunteer. This worksite shall contain necessary facilities, equipment, and space to enable the volunteer to effectively and comfortably perform their duties.

## 2.5 Dress Code

As representatives of the City, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to citizens and within the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

## 2.6 Time Records

Individual volunteers are responsible for checking in and checking out via the volunteer system to ensure accurate time records are maintained. In the case of an absent volunteer system, volunteers will be responsible for the timely submission of timesheets.

# VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

## 3.1 Service Descriptions

Volunteer staff, just as paid staff, require a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the position which they are expected to fill. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a service description must be developed for each volunteer position. This service description will be given to each accepted volunteer and utilized in subsequent management and evaluation efforts. Service descriptions should be reviewed and updated whenever the work involved in the position changes. All service descriptions shall include a description of the purpose, time commitment, activities/duties of the position, a designated supervisor and service location, a listing of job qualifications/desired skills, and a description of job benefits/results expected. The Volunteer Coordinator is available to assist staff in the development of volunteer positions and service descriptions.

## 3.2 Staff Requests for Volunteers

Requests for volunteers shall be submitted in writing by interested staff, complete with a draft service description and a requested timeframe. All parties should understand that the recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by creative and interesting jobs and by advance notice.

## 3.3 Recruitment

Volunteers shall be recruited by the City’s Volunteer Services department on a pro-active basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, handicap, age, race or other condition. The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of the City. Volunteers may be recruited through either an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. No final acceptance of a volunteer shall take place without a specific written volunteer service description for that volunteer.

## 3.4 Recruitment of Minors

Volunteers who have not reached their age of majority must have the consent of a parent or guardian prior to volunteering. The Volunteer Services department will maintain this record.

## 3.5 Interviewing

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will be interviewed by the Volunteer Services department and/or City Staff who supervise volunteers to ascertain their suitability for and interest in that position. The interview should determine the qualifications of the volunteer, their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position, and should answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position. Interviews will be conducted in person.

## 3.6 Criminal Records Check

As appropriate for the protection of clients, volunteers in certain assignments may be asked to submit to a background criminal check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background check may be refused assignment.

## 3.7 Placement

In placing a volunteer in a position, attention shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the volunteer position. No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met: no volunteer should be assigned to a ‘make-work’ position and no position should be given to an unqualified or uninterested volunteer.

## 3.8 Staff

Whenever possible, staff who will be working with the volunteer should participate in the design and conduct of the interview.

## 3.9 Acceptance and Appointment

Service as a volunteer with the City shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer position. Notice may only be given by an authorized representative of the City who will normally be the Volunteer Services staff. No volunteer shall begin performance of any position until they have been officially accepted for that position and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer shall complete all necessary enrollment paperwork, an agreement of service with the City, and a copy of their service description.

## 3.10 Re-Assignment

Volunteers who are at any time re-assigned to a new position shall be interviewed for that position and shall receive all appropriate orientation and training for that position before they begin work. In addition, any screening procedures appropriate for that specific position must be completed, even if the volunteer has already been working with the City.

## 3.11 Professional Services

Volunteers shall not perform professional services for which certification or licensing is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. A copy of such certificate or license should be maintained by the Volunteer Services department.

## 3.11 Leave of Absence

At the discretion of the supervisor, leaves of absence may be granted to volunteers. Even if a leave of absence is approved, a position may be filled by another volunteer.

# VOLUNTEER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

## 4.1 Orientation

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the City and the mission of the volunteer program. Additionally, all volunteers will receive general orientation on the nature and purpose of their assigned position, on the operation of the program or activity for which they are recruited.

## 4.2 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.

## 4.3 Staff Involvement in Orientation and Training

Staff members with responsibility over supervising volunteers should have an active role in the delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers. Those staff who will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

## 4.4 Volunteer Involvement in Orientation and Training

Experienced volunteers should be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training.

## 4.5 Meeting Attendance

Volunteers are authorized to attend meetings which are relevant to their volunteer assignments, including both those of the City and of other organizations. Prior approval from the volunteer’s supervisor should be obtained before attending any meeting.

# VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

## 5.1 Requirements of a Supervisor

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position within the City must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

## 5.2 Volunteers as Volunteer Supervisors

A volunteer may act as a supervisor of other volunteers, provided that the supervising volunteer is under the direct supervision of a paid staff member.

## 5.3 Volunteer/Staff Relationships

Volunteers are staff and considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the City, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential for the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

## 5.4 Acceptance of Volunteers by Staff

Since individual staff is in a better position to determine the requirements of their work and their own abilities, no volunteer will be assigned to work with a staff person without the consent of that staff person. Since volunteers are considered a valuable resource in performing the City’s work, staff is encouraged to seriously consider creative ways in which volunteers might be of service and to consult with their supervisor and Volunteer Services department if they feel they might benefit from the assistance of volunteers.

## 5.5 Staff Volunteer Supervision Training

An orientation on working with volunteers will be available to all staff. In-service training on effective volunteer utilization will be provided to staff highly involved in volunteer management.

## 5.6 Volunteer Involvement in Staff Evaluation

Examination of their willingness to engage and effectively utilize volunteers may be a component in the evaluation of staff persons who are assigned to work with volunteers.

## 5.7 Lines of Communication

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate memos, materials, and meetings relevant to the work assignments. Primary responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer receives such information will rest with the direct supervisor of the volunteer. Lines of communication should operate in both directions, and should exist both formally and informally. Volunteers should be consulted regarding all decisions which would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

## 5.8 Absenteeism

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regularly scheduled and timely basis. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer’s work assignment or term of service.

## 5.9 Substitution

Volunteers may be encouraged to find a substitute for any upcoming absences which might be filled by another volunteer. Such substitution should only be taken following consultation with a supervisor and care should be taken to find a substitute who is qualified for the position. Substitutes may only be recruited from those who are currently enrolled as volunteers with the City.

## 5.10 Evaluations

Volunteers shall receive periodic evaluations to review their work. 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 City, 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. The evaluation session is an opportunity for both the volunteer and the City to examine and improve their relationship.

## 5.11 Written Basis for Evaluation

The position description and standards of performance for a volunteer position should form the basis of an evaluation. A written record should be kept of each evaluation session.

## 5.12 Staff Responsibility for Evaluation

Affected staff should be involved in all evaluation and work assignments of volunteers with whom they are connected.

## 5.13 Corrective Action

In appropriate situations, corrective action may be taken following an evaluation. Examples of corrective action include the requirement of additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service.

## 5.14 Notice of Departure or Re-Assignment of a Volunteer

In the event that a volunteer departs the City, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new position, it shall be the responsibility of the Staff Volunteer Supervisor of the Volunteer Services department to inform those affected staff and clients that the volunteer is no longer assigned to work with them.

## 5.15 Resignation

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the City at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of their departure.

## 5.16 Exit Interview

Exit interviews, where possible, should be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improving the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the City.

## 5.17 Evaluation of City Volunteer Utilization

The Volunteer Services department will conduct an annual evaluation of the utilization of volunteers by the City departments. This evaluation will include information gathered from volunteers and staff.

# VOLUNTEER SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION

## 6.1 Access to County Property and Materials

As appropriate, volunteers shall have access to City property and materials necessary to fulfill their duties, and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. Property and materials shall be utilized only when directly required for City purposes. This policy does not include access to and use of City-owned vehicles.

## 6.2 Insurance

Liability and accident insurance is provided for all volunteers engaged in City business. Specific information regarding such insurance is available from the City’s Human Resources department.

## 6.3 Informal Recognition

All staff and volunteers responsible for volunteer supervision are encouraged to undertake on-going methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from simple ‘"Thank You’s" to a concerted effort to include volunteers as full participants in program decision making and implementation.

## 6.4 Volunteer Career Paths

Volunteers are encouraged to grow and develop their skills while serving with the City, and are to be assisted through promotion to new volunteer positions to assume additional and greater responsibilities. The Volunteer Services department can assist volunteers in maintaining appropriate records of volunteer experience that would assist the volunteer in future career opportunities, both paid and volunteer.