



Volunteer Policy Statement

1.1 Overall Policy on Utilization of Volunteers

The goal of this agency is best served by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, the agency accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the agency and within all appropriate programs and activities. All staff 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.

1.2 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 agency 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 Volunteer Program Manager.

1.3 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 agency, and to all departments and sites of operation of the agency.

1.4 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 agency. A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by the agency prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as 'employees' of the agency.

1.5 Special Case Volunteers

The agency 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 whom the special case volunteers originate and must identify responsibility for management and care of the volunteers.

1.6 Employees as Volunteers

The agency accepts the services of staff as volunteers. This service is accepted provided that the volunteer service is provided totally without any coercive nature, involves work which is outside the scope of normal staff duties, and is provided outside of usual working hours. Family members of staff are allowed to volunteer with the agency.

1.7 Clients as Volunteers

Agency clients may be accepted as volunteers, where such service does not constitute an obstruction to or conflict with provision of services to the client or to others.

1.8 Service at the Discretion of the Agency

The agency accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the agency. Volunteers agree that the agency may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the agency.

The volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer's relationship with the agency. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

1.9 Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to this agency, its staff, and its clients. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done.

In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the agency.

1.10 Scope of Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers may be utilized in all programs and activities of the agency, and serve at all levels of skill and decision-making. 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 agency, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work, and awards received. Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information in a timely and accurate fashion.

Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

2.2 Two Hat Policy

Members of the agency's board of directors are accepted as direct service volunteers with the agency.

2.3 Conflict of Interest

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the agency, whether personal, philosophical, or financial shall be accepted or serve as a volunteer with the agency.

2.4 Representation of the Agency

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate the agency, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the agency as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

2.5 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 agency business.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the agency or other corrective action.

2.6 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 to volunteer to effectively and comfortably perform their duties.

2.7 Dress Code

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

2.8 Timesheets

Individual volunteers are responsible for the accurate completion and timely submission of timesheets.

Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

3.1 Position 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 position description must be developed for each volunteer position. This position will be given to each accepted volunteer and utilized in subsequent management and evaluation efforts. Position descriptions should be reviewed and updated at least every two years, or whenever the work involved in the position changes substantially.

All position descriptions shall include a description of the purpose and duties of the position, a designated supervisor and worksite, a timeframe for the performance of the job, a listing of job qualifications, and a description of job benefits. The Volunteer Management Department is available to assist staff in the development of volunteer jobs and position descriptions.

3.2 Recruitment

Volunteers shall be recruited by the agency 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 agency. 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 position description for that volunteer.

3.4 Interviewing

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will be interviewed 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 may be conducted either in person or by other means.

3.5 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.

3.6 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 agency.

Volunteer Training and Development

4.1 Orientation

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the agency, an orientation on the nature and operation of the program or activity for which they are recruited, and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position which they are accepting in that effort.

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 responsible over delivery of services should have an active role in the design and 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.

Volunteer Supervision and Evaluation

5.1 Requirement of a Supervisor

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the agency 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 and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the agency, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential for the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understand and respect the needs and abilities of the other.

5.4 Staff Involvement in Volunteer Evaluation

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

5.5 Absenteeism

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular 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.

5.6 Standards of Performance

Standards of performance shall be established for each volunteer position. These standards should list the work to be done in that position, measurable indicators of whether the work was accomplished, and appropriate timelines for accomplishment of the work. Creation of these standards will be a joint function of staff and the volunteer assigned to the position, and a copy of the standards should be provided to the volunteer along with a copy of their job description at the beginning of their assignment.

5.7 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 agency, 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 agency to examine and improve their relationship.

5.8 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.

5.9 Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the agency or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff.

5.10 Resignation

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the agency at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision.

5.11 Exit Interviews

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 agency.

Volunteer Support and Recognition

6.1 Reimbursement of Expenses

Volunteers are [may be] eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking business for the agency. The Executive Director shall distribute information to all volunteers regarding specific reimbursable items. Prior approval must be sought for all expenditures.

6.2 Access to Agency Property and Materials

As appropriate, volunteers shall have access to agency 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 agency purposes.

6.3 Insurance

Liability and accident insurance is provided for all volunteers engaged in agency business. [Volunteers are encouraged to consult with their own insurance agents regarding the extension of their personal insurance to include community volunteer work.] Specific information regarding such insurance is available from the Executive Director

6.4 Recognition

An annual volunteer recognition event will be conducted to highlight and reward the contribution of volunteers to the agency. Volunteers will be consulted and involved in order to develop an appropriate format for the event.

6.5 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.

