



CITY VOLUNTEER POLICY

City of Lake Elsinore

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The City Council believes that volunteers are a key resource in the achievement of the City's vision of building a stronger, sustainable and healthy community for future generations. Volunteers contribute to the political, social, economic environmental and cultural well-being of the City by:

- a. Strengthening community cohesion, social wellbeing and trust;
- b. Expanding the ability of the City to respond to the needs of its citizens and provide a range of services and activities;
- c. Engaging the community in protecting the lake and local resources, improving the physical environment and support for environmental and lake-related issues;
- d. Encouraging understanding of, and acceptance of, diversity within our population;
- e. Demonstrating that one person can make a difference.

Sound policies, procedures and processes are necessary to support volunteering along with protecting the safety and welfare of all concerned. Accordingly, the purpose of the City of Lake Elsinore Volunteer Policy is:

- a. To establish an administrative policy and procedures for promoting volunteerism and connecting volunteers with various service opportunities within the City of Lake Elsinore;
- b. To recognize and promote the substantial and ongoing contribution made by volunteers to the quality of life of our citizens;
- c. To help effectively engage volunteers to meet the City's mission, vision and values;
- d. As part of the City's commitment to volunteerism, this policy document establishes the expectations for a productive partnership.

1. SCOPE

- a. The volunteer policy applies to all City Departments;
- b. The volunteer policy is effective immediately upon adoption by the City Council;
- c. Existing department policies and procedures involving volunteers may augment, but are not a substitute for, this volunteer policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

A. Community Service Participants

Persons that are seeking to participate in City supervised activities for the purpose of satisfying community service hour requirements imposed by a court or school.

B. Minors

A person under 18 years of age.

C. Trainees

A person participating in City-supervised activities that substantially meet the following requirements:

- 1) The purpose of the participation is training;
- 2) The training is for the benefit of the trainee;
- 3) The trainee does not displace a regular City employee;
- 4) The City derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainee;
- 5) The trainee is not entitled to a job following completion of the training period;
- 6) The trainee understands that he/she is not entitled to wages for the time spent in training.

D. Volunteers

Persons volunteering time and services without any present or future expectation of remuneration other than meals, transportation, lodging, or reimbursement for incidental expenses. (See California Labor Code Section 3363.5). This is not an employment relationship and the volunteer is under no obligation to provide time or duties of resources, other than what he or she chooses to freely provide. City volunteers must be officially accepted and enrolled by the City of Lake Elsinore prior to undertaking any volunteer task.

City volunteers include, but are not limited, to:

- 1) Volunteers who serve on committees or groups that are a part of ongoing City-sponsored services and programs at City venues;
- 2) Volunteers who serve under the auspices of a City Department;
- 3) Sworn disaster service works under the auspices of the Lake Elsinore Citizen Corps.

Exceptions:

- 1) Members of City Council appointed Commissions, such as the Planning Commission and the Public Safety Advisory Commission;
- 2) Members of not-for-profit and/or community based and faith-based organizations delivering services within the community under the auspices of their organizations;
- 3) Community Service Participants;
- 4) Trainees.

E. Youth Program Volunteers

Anyone who is likely to have access to minors and includes mentors, coaches, recreation leaders, instructors, teachers, teacher aides, helpers, or persons engaged in any capacity, which would allow them to have control or supervision over minors.

3. RECRUITMENT, QUALIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

A. What Volunteers Can Expect from the City

Volunteers are individuals who contribute time, energy and service to the City of Lake Elsinore, which the City acknowledges and supports as a valuable resource.

Volunteers can expect the City to:

- 1) Provide a clear job description;
- 2) Provide orientation, training and supervision for the tasks assigned;
- 3) Provide appropriate workspace, including consideration for disabilities;
- 4) Provide necessary information about the workplace, agency mission and program goals needed to carry out assignments;
- 5) Treat volunteers with courtesy and respect;
- 6) Respect the value of a volunteer's time by providing work that best matches their interests, talents and skills;
- 7) Reimburse volunteers for agreed-upon out-of-pocket expenses;
- 8) Be receptive to suggestions and comments from any volunteer;
- 9) Respond promptly to any complaints that are brought to the attention of a supervisor or City staff;
- 10) Be treated as a valued member of the City's team.

B. Determining the Risk

- 1) Before a volunteer position is created by the City, each volunteer position must be examined to determine its inherent level of risk. The determined level of risk will then dictate the appropriate mitigation steps required;
- 2) The supervisor(s) of any volunteer, the City's Risk Manager and Department Management share responsibility for minimizing any potential risks to the volunteer, the public, and the City.

C. Risk Management

- 1) Risk management is intended to mitigate or limit safety risks involved in volunteer work and related tasks;
- 2) Before a volunteer begins service, the supervisor is responsible for informing the volunteer of safe work practices as required for all employees;
- 3) Any injury to the volunteer or losses to any third party which involve a volunteer must be reported and processed in accordance with existing City policies. The volunteer incident report form should be used for documenting injury or loss (see appendix __).

D. Minors

- 1) Persons under the age of 18 must obtain written consent from parent or legal guardian to volunteer;
- 2) The minimum age of a City volunteer is 14;
- 3) Volunteers between the ages of 14 and 15 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, or other parent-authorized program or school representative during their service;
- 4) A volunteer over the age of 15 may provide service without the presence of parent or legal guardian;
- 5) Minors may work during non-school hours only, unless a written release giving the consent of their school or home school is obtained;
- 6) Minors are not to operate power tools, machinery or City vehicles;
- 7) Volunteers under the age of 18 will not be permitted to ride along with City employees in City vehicles without written permission from the parent or legal guardian and prior permission from the Department Director, under one of the following conditions:
 - a. The City employee is the parent or legal guardian of the minor who is doing the ride along;
 - b. At least two City employees will be in the vehicle at the same time during the ride along.

E. Recruitment Process

- 1) The volunteer recruitment process is intended to be open, to allow equal access to volunteer opportunities and to reflect the diversity of the City of Lake Elsinore;
- 2) Volunteers must meet the qualifications established for the position and must be able to perform the specified duties.

F. Position (Job) Descriptions

- 1) Every assignment or activity for which volunteers are used must have a written job description, which will provide both staff and volunteers with a clear explanation of the project scope, start and end date and follow up as needed;
- 2) A job description should include a description of the duties, skills, requirements and physical abilities needed to perform the job, as well as a description of working conditions for the job (e.g., working outdoors or indoors, working days or nights, etc.).

G. Application Form

- 1) An application form is a screening tool that each potential volunteer must complete. Some departments may have an application form specific to the unique requirements of a volunteer position; however, a universal volunteer application form must be completed and kept on file in the Human Resources Department;
- 2) All volunteers under the age of 18 must have written parental consent. Volunteers between 14 and 18 years of age must have their parent or legal guardian complete and

sign the parental information section of the application form before a minor can participate in a City volunteer program.

H. Waiver and Release Form and the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997

- 1) The City of Lake Elsinore currently has not adopted a resolution providing workers' compensation to volunteers. Therefore, all City volunteers must sign the 'Volunteer Program Waiver and Release' form prior to starting a volunteer assignment;
- 2) The signed Volunteer Waiver form must be kept on file with the Human Resource/Risk Management Department Manager;
- 3) City volunteers are protected under Public Law 105-19; the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 as signed into law by President Clinton on June 18, 1997. The purpose of this law is to reform laws to provide certain protections from liability abuses related to volunteers serving nonprofit organizations and governmental entities.

I. Interviews

- 1) All persons applying for volunteer positions will be interviewed;
- 2) The interview will offer the prospective volunteer the opportunity to learn about the volunteer positions and will help determine the qualifications, ability and suitability of the individual to perform work on behalf of the City;
- 3) For some positions, depending on the level of risk, more than one interview may be required;
- 4) In considering staff for any volunteer position, note that the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) prohibits employees from volunteering to do the same activities that they are normally paid to perform. Staff may, free of coercion, volunteer to carry out activities not significantly related to their paid positions and may do so only outside of their usual paid hours.

J. Reference Checks

- 1) Volunteers may be required to provide personal references upon request, with the expectation that references may be used to help determine the suitability of an applicant for the position;
- 2) For any volunteer who will be interacting with minors, references must be checked.

K. Background Screening and Fingerprinting

- 1) By State law, some positions involving interaction with minors require volunteers to submit to a police background check and fingerprinting, which will be arranged through the Lake Elsinore Police Department and coordinated with the Human Resources Department. Certain volunteer positions may be unsuited for an applicant depending on the results of a police background check;
- 2) The City of Lake Elsinore may also require fingerprinting and a background check (Live Scan) for volunteer positions involving cash handling, confidential information, or others;

- 3) In certain cases, a potential volunteer may be denied or referred to a more suitable placement, as warranted.

L. TB Testing (if required)

- 1) As determined by the City's Human Resource Manager, some volunteer positions may be required to meet the same health requirement under California Public Resources Code 5163, which requires that City and County recreational employees in a position requiring contact with children, or food service, to have on file with the City or County a certificate showing that within the past two years the person has been examined and has been found to be free of communicable tuberculosis;
- 2) For persons with a positive TB skin test reading, a physician's medical clearance must be obtained prior to services being provided as specified above.

M. Orientation

- 1) All volunteers must be given proper orientation to the position to which they are assigned before commencing their work assignment. An orientation can be provided either by staff or another volunteer;
- 2) It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure the orientation is carried out.

N. Supervision of the Volunteer

- 1) Supervision, including regular contact with participants or one-on-one interaction on a continual basis, is essential for guiding volunteers and to ensure success in their performance;
- 2) Each volunteer will have an on-site contact and is expected to follow the procedures and instructions by their staff supervisor. The job description identifies a supervisor and related job duties. The supervisor will be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance. The supervisor will provide periodic feedback and encouragement;
- 3) The supervisor is the first in the chain of command for any questions about assignments, scheduling, injury and accident reporting, and conflict resolution.

O. Evaluation of the Volunteer

- 1) Evaluating a volunteer's performance is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor;
- 2) Evaluations should be scheduled and conducted by the supervisor in a constructive manner. In addition to aiding the volunteer to succeed, the evaluation should also assess the program objectives in relation to a volunteer's performance, to identify opportunities for improving program participation and the volunteer experience;
- 3) Periodic oral evaluations for all volunteers will be made to help determine if the volunteer is satisfied or comfortable with the job duties that have been given, and to manage job performance through the appropriate level of supervision or instruction;
- 4) Volunteers should be encouraged and given the opportunity to make comments and suggestions on assignment improvements, as well as a self assessment of performance;

- 5) It is a supervisor's responsibility to complete the Volunteer Evaluation Form, which serves as a tool to document performance and to ensure consistency in the performance assessment process. Copies of this form are to be kept on file with the Human Resource Manager;
- 6) All written evaluations should be signed, dated and kept on file for reference.

4. VOLUNTEER RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. What the City Expects from Volunteers

Volunteers who make a commitment to the City are accountable to their City supervisor(s), co-workers and the people they serve.

The City of Lake Elsinore expects volunteers to:

- 1) Read and follow the City's volunteer policy;
- 2) Learn their responsibilities and duties and perform them to the best of their ability;
- 3) Report to duty on time and as scheduled;
- 4) Keep confidential or sensitive information confidential;
- 5) Accept the supervisor's authority and communicate effectively with the supervisor;
- 6) Work cooperatively with fellow volunteers, City employees and others;
- 7) Practice safety at all times;
- 8) Immediately report all on-the-job accidents/injuries and unsafe procedures, conditions or procedures to the supervisor;
- 9) Use good personal hygiene and grooming habits, as well appropriate dress, for volunteer work assignments;
- 10) Provide adequate notice before terminating the volunteer relationship;
- 11) Return all City property in a timely fashion;
- 12) Share ideas and suggestions with City staff as part of the planning and/or program evaluation process.

B. Accidents Involving Vehicles

Volunteers are not authorized to operate City vehicles. In the event of an accident involving a volunteer's own vehicle, immediately contact the Lake Elsinore Police Department. The volunteer should also notify the supervisor, who will be able to assist with further documentation requirements, including filing an accident report with the Human Resources/Risk Manager.

C. Alcohol

Volunteers may not consume or possess alcoholic beverages on any City premises or while conducting any City business. Volunteers who violate this policy are subject to immediate dismissal.

D. Absences and Tardiness

Unexcused absences and tardiness may lead to dismissal. The supervisor should be notified about any absence in a timely manner. Arriving on time is expected of volunteers just as it is for City employees.

E. Attendance and Punctuality

Volunteers are expected to always be prompt and on time in reporting for their assignment. Being late is discourteous to others. When unforeseen circumstances arise, it is up to the volunteer to notify their supervisor about being late or to give advance notice of the need to be excused. Failure to appear or to notify a supervisor about missing a shift may result in dismissal from the volunteer program.

F. Communications Equipment

1) Telephone

- a. Volunteers may use City telephones for authorized business, but are prohibited from calling from City phones for personal use.

2) Radios

- a. Two way radios may be provided by the City for event management, Citizen Corps/CERT training and emergency functions. Such equipment is for authorized City uses only and is to be returned to the City promptly, or as directed;
- b. Lost, stolen or damaged communications equipment is to be reported to the supervisor immediately.

G. Confidentiality

Private, sensitive or confidential information discussed or handled within the course of a volunteer assignment must be kept strictly confidential. Volunteers are required to uphold this policy. Private, sensitive or confidential information is not to be shared. Any questions about what information is appropriate to release or discuss should be communicated between the volunteer and their immediate supervisor.

H. Customer Relations

A volunteer is also a City ambassador, and should conduct City business with staff and the public in a customer-friendly manner.

I. Dress Policy

Volunteers are expected to dress and groom in accordance with accepted business standards as defined in the City's dress code, particularly if their job involves dealing with the public. Volunteer attire must be clean and non-offensive and not interfere with personal safety in the work environment.

J. Driving Record and Insurance

- 1) Volunteers whose service requires operation of a motor vehicle must maintain a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Any change in either must be reported to the supervisor immediately;
- 2) Automobile insurance follows the automobile. If driving one's own vehicle, even while on City business, the volunteer's insurance will be applicable on a primary basis per the California Vehicle Code, CVC 17152;
- 3) Liability insurance is provided to a City volunteer under the City's general liability policy, so long as the volunteer is acting within the scope and course of assigned duties.

K. Drug Free Workplace

Any volunteer who uses, brings, possesses or is suspected of being under the influence of any form of narcotic, drug, or hallucinogen, except prescribed drugs and under the direction of a physician, is subject to immediate dismissal. In addition, any volunteer who transfers, sells or attempts to sell drugs on City property or while on City business, at any time, is subject to immediate dismissal.

L. Expense Reimbursement

Pre-approved out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed by submitting a request for reimbursement form to the supervisor for approval. The reimbursement request must be accompanied by a receipt for purchase or invoice. Reimbursement requests are subject to petty cash limits, which may require the supervisor to process a check request according to the City's purchasing procedures.

M. Harassment

All City workers have a right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive. Consistent with the City's respect for the rights and dignity of each employee and volunteer, harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or any characteristic protected by law, will not be sanctioned or tolerated.

N. Personal Use of City Property

Personal use of City property by City volunteers is not allowed and may result in dismissal. Personal use includes, but is not limited to, borrowing power tools, hand tools, equipment, supplies, City vehicles, trailers, generators and unauthorized duplication of City keys.

O. Record-Keeping and Reporting

Accurate records of time and attendance must be kept for all volunteers. A sign in log, timesheet, or other form may be used for tracking volunteer participation for statistical or other reporting needs.

P. Reporting Emergencies

In the case of a medical emergency, accident, or injury, report it immediately. The Supervisor is responsible for completing any related forms and reports required by the Human Resources/Risk Manager.

Q. Safety

Safety is everyone's job. Volunteers are to be trained to be alert at all times to safety precautions and hazards. Unsafe conditions should be reported to a supervisor at once.

R. Security

- 1) Volunteers are to become familiar with the security provisions of their assigned work areas. As necessary, volunteers will be provided with security permissions related to their work areas, to facilitate ease of entry and access;
- 2) Volunteers are responsible for the security of their personal belongings and vehicles while working for the City.

S. Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all City facilities, including City vehicles. Volunteers and employees who wish to smoke may do so outside a City facility in designated smoking areas.

T. Software, Internet, E-mail Policy

- 1) The City requires computer-using volunteers to read and sign a copy of the City's Software, Internet and E-mail Policy, and to adhere to this policy;
- 2) Volunteers acknowledge that all computers, software and computer information or data is City property; therefore, those who use City computers cannot assume any right to privacy in such use;
- 3) Volunteers are prohibited from unauthorized copying of software from City Computers, or downloading or installing software of any kind onto City computers;
- 4) Volunteers must adhere to the City's policy governing appropriate use of the Internet;
- 5) Volunteers acknowledge that use of City e-mail is a public record and that there should be no expectation of privacy in such use.

U. Theft/Property Loss

Theft of any kind will not be tolerated and is grounds for dismissal. Removal of City property for personal use is considered to be unauthorized use or the taking of City property. The crime of theft is subject to prosecution.

V. Use of Tools by Volunteers

- 1) In general, subject to approval of City staff, volunteers may use office equipment, recreational equipment and supplies, unpowered hand tools provided by staff and, with proper training and permission, some power equipment in the completion of the designated project or service;

- 2) The City will create a 'List of approved hand tools and power equipment for volunteer use' in coordination with the City's Human Resources/Risk Management Department;
- 3) No volunteer under age 18 is permitted to use power equipment requiring additional training;
- 4) From time to time, it may be beneficial for volunteers to use their own tools and equipment to complete a project. Volunteers assume full responsibility for use of their tools or equipment, specifically the potential wear and tear. The volunteer must sign a release form ensuring the City is not liable for damage, replacement or maintenance of privately-owned tools and equipment. Only those tools that are identified on the 'List of approved hand tools and power equipment for volunteer use' will be permitted.

W. Dismissal

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules, policies and regulations of the City, or fail to perform their assignments satisfactorily, are subject to dismissal. A volunteer may be dismissed at any time. The City reserves the right to request that a volunteer leave immediately if circumstances warrant such action.

X. Ending Volunteer Service

Giving notice at least two weeks before the anticipated separation date is a courtesy that allows the City sufficient time to make other volunteer arrangements for coverage.

5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM REVIEW

Reviewing the Volunteer policy and associated administrative procedures is the responsibility of the Human Resources Manager. The program is to be evaluated annually, or as often as is required.

APPENDICES

- i. **Checklist for Volunteer Program**
- ii. **Adult Volunteer Application Form**
- iii. **Youth Volunteer Application**
- iv. **Parental Release Form**
- v. **Volunteer Waiver and Release: No Workers' Compensation**
- vi. **Sample Job Description**
- vii. **Volunteer Performance Review**
- viii. **Tool Waiver and Release Form with *List of approved hand tools and power equipment for use by volunteers***
- ix. **Volunteer Incident Report Form**
- x. **Volunteer Manual**
- xi. **Volunteer Protection Act of 1997**