

**Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities
Policies and Procedures**

VOLUNTEER POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for volunteer participation in Department programs. The Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities actively pursues volunteers and supports volunteerism. The Department encourages the use of volunteers in providing programmatic support and assistance in maintaining and beautifying the department's parks and facilities.

II. PROCEDURE

This Administrative Policy sets forth the department's guidelines on Volunteerism.

Definition: Volunteer is a person who of his/her own free will offers their time and skills without compensation.

1. **Recruitment:** Staff and the Volunteer Coordinator will routinely recruit and solicit volunteers through various mediums to include flyers, newsletters, television, radio, and other outreach efforts. All volunteer/applicants will be required to sign a Background Consent Form prior to participation.

2. **Screening:** Through an application process staff will identify volunteer skills and areas of interest so that appropriate placement can occur. This will enable volunteers to be placed in a job that is appealing as well as satisfy program needs. All "first time" volunteer/applicants criminal background will be reviewed. Once a volunteer/applicant is approved, he/she will be required to submit to a background check every two years. Screening will be conducted prior to the start of the program.
All volunteers ages 18 and older will be required to undergo a background investigation. This screening process will not be considered complete until the background investigation has been completed. Anyone with criminal charges against children or senior adults will be disqualified from volunteering.

3. **Interviewing:** Staff is responsible for arranging interviews with volunteers. This will enable both the volunteer and staff to become acquainted and determine if the skills the volunteer possess best fit his/her needs. It also creates the opportunity for the volunteer to better understand the job for which he/she applied.



4. **Training:** The supervising staff is responsible for orientating and training volunteers for specified assignments. The supervisor will convey necessary information to the volunteer in order for he/she to perform the job to best of his/her ability. Each supervising staff will attend a training session to prepare for volunteer supervision.
5. **Evaluation:** Both volunteers and staff will conduct an evaluation to assess the programs effectiveness from both perspectives quarterly. Most importantly, the goals and objectives of the program and methods for achieving these goals will be reviewed.
6. **Recognition:** Volunteer Logs will be maintained for each volunteer, which will include the number of hours spent in volunteer service and documentation of volunteer accomplishments. The Commonwealth of Virginia has designated the month of April as Volunteer Month, generating great media coverage for volunteerism statewide. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities will honor its volunteers through various activities to include recognition banquets, letters of thank you, special tokens of appreciation etc. to citizens of Richmond.
7. **Identification:** Volunteers will be provided with picture identification badges acknowledging them as Department volunteers. A district representative will direct this process.
8. **Use of City Vehicles:** Volunteers are NOT allowed to operate city vehicles.
9. **Dress:** All volunteers are required to dress appropriately for the assigned task and location.

Criteria for Exclusion

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities wants to be sure that every decision made about an individual's eligibility to volunteer is correct. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities will carefully consider all the information before any decisions are made that affect an individual's eligibility.

A person shall be disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer if the person has been found guilty of the following crimes:

- **SEX OFFENSES**

All Sex Offenses – *Regardless of the amount of time since offense.*

Examples include: *child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.*



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- **FELONIES**

All Felony Violence – *Regardless of the amount of time since offense.*

Examples include: *murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated Burglary, etc.*

All Felony offenses other than **violence** or **sex** within the past 10 years.

Examples include: *drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.*

- **MISDEMEANORS**

All misdemeanor violence offenses within the past 7 years

Examples include: *simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit & run, etc.*

All misdemeanor drug & alcohol offenses within the past 5 years or Multiple offenses in the past 10 years.

Examples include: *driving under the influence, simple drug possession, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.*

Any other misdemeanor within the past 5 years that would be considered a potential danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.

Examples include: *contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor, theft – if person is handling monies, etc.*

Guilty means that a person was found guilty following a trial, entered a guilty plea, entered a no contest plea accompanied by a court finding of guilty, regardless of whether there was an adjudication of guilt (conviction) or a withholding of guilt. This recommendation does not apply if criminal charges resulted in acquittal, Nolle Prose, or dismissal.

- **PENDING CASES**

Anyone who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court should not be permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case.

- **DETERMINATION OF ELEGIBILITY**

Upon finding a record that may result in an ineligible determination, The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities will contact the volunteer to make certain all information provided is accurate. The volunteer's information will be investigated to confirm the accuracy of the information before a determination is reached. If a volunteer's background check includes a charge set forth on the list of disqualifiers above, The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities shall immediately disqualify that individual from volunteering. A letter will be sent from The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities to the volunteer/applicant and to the center site



supervisor/director notifying them of the volunteer/applicant's ineligibility to volunteer.

- **APPEAL PROCESS FOR INELIGIBILITY**

Volunteer applicants who are determined ineligible will receive a letter of denial. The letter will reference the City's background check policy and the disqualifier that led to the decision. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities will ensure every volunteer who wishes to work with The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities programs has a fair and equitable opportunity to do so. In the event a volunteer wishes to challenge the results of a background screen, he/she will be granted the right to appeal as outlined in the letter of denial.

To appeal a decision, a person must file a notice of appeal by submitting all matters for consideration in writing. The volunteer shall be responsible for providing all documentation to support his/her claim.

The notice of appeal must be received by The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities within 12 days of the date on the background check notification letter. A copy of the decision that is being appealed (e.g., the notification letter) should be included with the notice of appeal and sent to:

**April L. Steed/ DPRCF Volunteer Review Board
900 E. Broad Street Rm. 407
Richmond, Virginia 23219**

The notice of appeal should include:

1. The full name and address of the appellant.
2. The name of the person, if any, making the request for an appeal on behalf of the appellant (e.g., lawyer or spokesperson)
3. The address of the person making the request on behalf of the appellant.
4. The grounds for the appeal (provide a detailed explanation of the appellant's objections to the decision; describe additional facts or factual errors in the decision.)
5. The particulars relevant to the appeal (describe any background facts that relate to the appeal including how you are affected by the decision.)
6. A description of the relief requested (what do you want to see happen at the end of the appeal.)
7. The signature of the appellant or the appellant's representative.

The City will generally respond within 10 days of receipt of an appeal.

- **VOLUNTEER DISCLOSURE RESPONSIBILITY**

Any volunteer determined eligible to participate in youth programs and subsequently arrested, charged, committed, and/or found guilty of any disqualifying offense (as defined above) shall immediately (the next business



day) notify The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. The volunteer shall be immediately removed from the voluntary position until the official disposition of the case is reviewed by The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. Failure to notify the Department immediately shall result in the volunteer being permanently disqualified for participation in youth programs.

- **APPROVED VOLUNTEER LIST**

A list containing all of the names of approved volunteers, the date of their background check and the date it needs to be renewed will be listed on the G-Drive, so it is accessible to confirm if a volunteer is approved.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All records will remain the property of The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities and will be held in confidence. No portion of the documents will be disseminated in any way, except for The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Review Board to determine the eligibility and suitability of a volunteer/applicant.

OTHER TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS:

Court Appointed Community Service – Individuals who need to perform community service at an approved agency as a stipulation set forth by a judge.

- Any employee receiving a request by a court-directed individual will refer the individual to the Department's central clearing location.
- Any units willing to accept community service applicants should submit a form detailing terms of participation to the central clearing location. The appointing authority or designee will specify the level of offense acceptable for participation in community service programs.
- Information regarding the individual's offense must be submitted along with the request for community service assignment. Contact information for the individual's probation officer or other court designee must be provided prior to beginning community service assignment.
- In cases involving illegal drugs, child abuse, assault, or sexual offenses, all requests will be denied. In cases where information regarding the individual's offense is not made available, manager or site supervisor may deny request.
- The central clearing location will be kept apprised of any problems occurring during assignments. A copy of the final report detailing hours, duties, etc. will be provided to the clearing location after required community service hours are met.
- Sites may refuse or dismiss any community service participant at the discretion of the supervisor.



Interns- An intern is defined as a student who works on an entry-level professional basis under the supervision of a designated leader.

a. High School Students:

- Must be in good standing
- The attending school makes recommendations for possible intern

b. Undergraduate Students:

- Must be in good standing
- Enrolled in degree program
- Registered during internship
- 2.0 overall grade point average (GPA)
- Completed freshman year to be eligible

c. Graduate Students:

- Must be in good standing
- Enrolled in degree program
- Registered during internship
- 3.0 overall grade point average (GPA)
- Completed 6 credit hours to be eligible

d. Doctorate Students:

- Must be in good standing
- Enrolled in degree program
- Registered during internship

Note: Students must submit an official college transcript and approval from Academic Advisor or Career Development Counselor in order to participate in the Internship Program. Individuals enrolled in special developmental programs will be considered for participation in the Internship Program on a case-by-case basis.

e. Salary:

- If any will be determined by current compensatory plan
- Hourly paid employees are not eligible for vacation or sick leave or any other City benefits

Note: Students requiring an internship for completion of satisfactory academic progress will be consider stipend.

f. Status:

- *Year round:* For a period of twelve months.
- *Seasonal:* For a limited period, usually for no less than one semester.
- Number of Hours:



- *Part-time* from 10-20 hours weekly. During the school year from September to May, Interns will be assigned to work part-time hours only.
- *Full-time* from 30-40 hours weekly. During the summer from May to August, Interns may be assigned to work either full-time or part-time hours.

g. Guide:

- All work requests for Interns must be coordinated through Intern Coordinator for the City of Richmond.
- Work request forms must include position number, job description and length of assignment.
- Applicants must fill out Intern Application Form (Appendix A).
- Applicants must be screened, interviewed, and hired with the assistance of the Intern Coordinator.
- Applicants must review Internship Partnership Performance Evaluation during the interview (Appendix B).
- Intern positions do not need to be re-advertised if the Supervisor intends to re-hire the Intern.
- Applicants must follow normal payroll procedures (complete City of Richmond Application and all other necessary paperwork in order to be activated in TEMs).

III. REFERENCES

Approved:

Director or Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities

Date

