

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

Subject

County of San Diego Volunteer Policy

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Purpose:

To establish a policy which provides guidelines on the use of volunteers in County programs and specifies the roles and responsibilities of those involved in County Volunteer programs.

Background:

The County supports and encourages the use of volunteers when and where it is feasible and appropriate. Volunteers enhance and expand the work of paid staff. Volunteer programs in the County of San Diego are department-based and managed. The Clerk of the Board provides coordination of Countywide volunteer recognition, communication and reporting. The County partners with community organizations in sharing resources and supporting effective volunteer programs.

Policy:

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS:

County Department/Agency Directors may establish a Department Volunteer Program upon determining that volunteers could make an effective contribution toward meeting the needs of the department/agency, that the use of volunteers is appropriate to the mission and tasks of the organization, and that resources will be dedicated to establishing and maintaining a volunteer program.

Upon the determination to establish a volunteer program, the department should designate a Volunteer Coordinator. It is the Department Volunteer Coordinator's role to serve as a point of contact for the department's volunteer activities and to assist the department in organizing, implementing and overseeing the volunteer program, including the establishment of goals, objectives and appropriate department-level volunteer policies.

Elements essential to the establishment of a volunteer program include:

A) Application - A Volunteer Services Application serves to ensure that volunteers are registered and that their status as volunteers is documented. Each volunteer must have a current Volunteer Services Application on file

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with the department they serve. This is necessary for workers' compensation and liability coverage. Volunteers are covered only when registered as a member of a County Department Volunteer Program and when performing assignments within the course and scope of their written job description. Applications are to be developed at the department level, but should have, at the least, the following common elements:

1. Registration Form - Contains applicant information which may include: interests, contact with law enforcement (applicants may request volunteer hours to comply with a court requirement, however, may be precluded from performing certain assignments, such as Children's Services), emergency contacts, and an agreement to adhere to the policies of the County, department and program (such as Drug and Alcohol, Violence and Threats in the Workplace, Sexual Harassment, etc.).

- a. Any volunteer who will drive on County business should possess valid driver's license and be enrolled in the DMV – Pull Notice Program.
- b. County volunteers may be subject to a criminal background check.

2. Volunteer Status Agreement - The form must be signed by each applicant acknowledging that they understand their work is NOT for payment.

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B) Job Description - The department shall ensure that a written volunteer job description and a record of having communicated the job description with the volunteer, is placed in the volunteer's personnel file.

II. MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS:

Elements essential to the successful management of a volunteer program include:

- A. Recruitment - Citizens interested in volunteer opportunities with the County of San Diego may be referred to a Department Volunteer Coordinator by local community groups, through the recruitment efforts of the coordinator, by other Department Coordinators or by the Office of the Clerk of the Board. When possible, the department coordinator should ensure that a formal interview with potential volunteers takes place, during which the volunteer's skills and interests are compared with the department's opportunities to ensure an appropriate match.
- B. Readiness - Before beginning an assignment, volunteers should receive an orientation to the volunteer program, the department, the responsibilities and duties of their position and a review of applicable County and department policies. Department staff who will be working with the volunteer should also receive an orientation to prepare them for working with and supervising volunteers. Both the volunteer and staff orientation will help ensure that volunteers will be eagerly accepted as part of the department team serving the community.
- C. Goal Setting - Volunteers shall be treated as unpaid staff subject to performance evaluations, termination and other personnel management techniques. Volunteers should be provided with appropriate initial training and ongoing supervision by the department to which they are assigned. The composition and extent of training may vary with the assignment and the completion of any training should be documented within the volunteer's performance evaluation. Goals should be established for each volunteer program and for volunteers within the program.
- D. Recognition - The recognition of volunteer efforts is the responsibility of the department to which a volunteer contributes. Departments are encouraged to recognize volunteers in as many ways as possible, both formally and informally. Additional

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recognition opportunities are provided by the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors (see "The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors").

- E. Record Keeping - Volunteer records will be compiled and maintained for reference, recognition, and required statistical reports. Records for all volunteers shall be updated when necessary to reflect performance evaluations, the completion of any training, changes in emergency information, changes in job description, etc. The total number of hours each volunteer works should be maintained in the department's personnel file (and/or within a computerized tracking system) and reported to the Clerk of the Board in preparation for the County's Annual Report.
- F. Review - Departments are encouraged to conduct a periodic review of their volunteer program to evaluate its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement and/or expansion. Annually, each department shall provide to the Clerk of the Board a description of their recruiting program(s), special volunteer activities/achievements, and volunteer program goals for the upcoming year.

III. THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Through cooperation with Department Volunteer Coordinators, the Clerk's office will assist County departments with their volunteer programs and ensure that the following functions and/or roles are filled:

- A. Communication - The Clerk of the Board shall disseminate information relevant to the County's volunteer program participants during periodic scheduled meetings with Department Coordinators, through electronic mail, and when circumstances warrant.
- B. Recognition - The Clerk of the Board shall execute a regular volunteer recognition program and an annual volunteer event for the Board of Supervisors as means of formally recognizing and thanking volunteers for their contribution to the community.
- C. Referral - The Clerk of the Board shall refer potential volunteers to suitable work locations within the County.
- D. Annual Volunteer Report - The Clerk of the Board shall submit an annual consolidated report to the Board of Supervisors

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encompassing information provided by all San Diego County departments which utilized volunteers during the previous fiscal year. The information reported shall include volunteer program benefits, donations to volunteer programs, volunteer program costs, and the net benefit to the department from the volunteer program. Additionally, each department shall provide to the Clerk of the Board a description of their recruiting program(s), special volunteer activities/achievements, and volunteer program goals for the upcoming year.

- E. Promotion- The Clerk of the Board will assist Department Volunteer Coordinators in organizing unified promotional materials using mediums such as the County Television Network, brochures and pamphlets, newspaper advertisements, etc.

Sunset Date:

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12/31/18

Board Action:

4/13/99 (14)

5/11/04 (04)

12/09/08 (33)

11-08-11 (24)

CAO Reference:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors