

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS 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 to cultivate and enhance civic engagement and participation. A volunteer is an individual who willingly gives their time for the common good, without salary, by performing and providing services. County of San Diego volunteers assist staff by enriching and expanding services. Volunteer programs are department-based and managed, and implemented when and where feasible and appropriate. The Clerk of the Board provides coordination of Countywide volunteer recognition, communication and reporting. The County partners with community organizations and educational institutions in sharing resources and supporting effective volunteer programs.

**POLICY**

**I. ESTABLISHMENT OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS:**

County Department 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.

A volunteer assignment may range from one instance (or day) or ongoing.

Elements essential to the establishment of a volunteer program include:

A) Application - A **volunteer application** serves to ensure that volunteers are registered and that their status as volunteers is documented. Each volunteer must have a current volunteer application on file with the department they serve. Applications are to be developed at the department level, but should have, at the least, the following common elements:

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1. Participation Agreement - Contains applicant information which may include: general personal information, experience, interests, 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, Code of Ethics, etc.).
  
2. Any volunteer who will drive on County business should possess a valid driver's license, maintained liability insurance in accordance with state law, and be enrolled in the DMV–Pull Notice Program.
  - a. County volunteers may be subject to a criminal background check and/or medical examination.
  
  - b. Court-ordered community service opportunities may be available with participating departments.
  
3. Age Requirements - Volunteers 18 years and older, depending on the volunteer program, may be required to take specific trainings.
  - a. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have their parents/guardian sign a waiver, and if applicable, obtain the community organization's liability coverage, before they begin volunteering.
  
- B) Volunteer Assignment - The department shall ensure that a written volunteer assignment and a record of having communicated the assignment with the volunteer, is placed in the volunteer's file.

**II. MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS:**

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

- A. Recruitment - Individuals interested in volunteer opportunities with the County of San Diego may be referred to a department Volunteer Coordinator through the recruitment efforts of an online volunteer management system website or by the Office of the Clerk of the Board. When possible, the department coordinator should ensure that a screening 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.

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- B. Readiness - Before beginning an assignment, volunteers should receive an orientation to the volunteer program, the department, the responsibilities, and duties of their assignment and a review of applicable County and department policies. Volunteers should be provided with appropriate initial training and ongoing supervision by the department to which they are assigned. Department staff who will be working with the volunteer should also receive an orientation to prepare them for working with and supervising volunteers.
- C. 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 the completion of any training, changes in emergency information, changes in assignment, etc. The total number of volunteer hours should be maintained in the department's file (and/or within a computerized tracking system) and reported to the Clerk of the Board in preparation for the County's Volunteer Annual Report.
- D. 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 of the Board of Supervisors' 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.

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- 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 encompassing information provided by all San Diego County departments which utilized volunteers during the previous fiscal year

**SUNSET DATE:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-2025.

**BOARD ACTION:**

- 4/13/99 (14)
- 5/11/04 (04)
- 12/09/08 (33)
- 11/08/11 (24)
- 10/30/18 (23)

**CAO REFERENCE:**

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
Community Services Group Executive Office  
Department of Human Resources