

## Audit of City Volunteer Policy



This Audit Report has been approved for release and has been transmitted to the individuals listed below. The report is considered privileged and confidential.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Welch".

**Deborah Welch**  
**Chief Internal Auditor**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AR 16 - 03

## Audit of City Volunteer Policy

### What We Audited

The City of Alexandria makes use of volunteers to fill departmental work needs. The audit of City volunteer policies and procedures was conducted to determine the level of controls in place within City departments; and, to identify and mitigate liability and others risks associated with the use of volunteers that help deliver City services.

We met with various department heads, division chiefs, and subject matter experts for the respective departmental programs. We compared the City's volunteer policies to comparable jurisdictions; and researched best practices with regard to a municipal volunteer program.

### What We Found

The City does not have a comprehensive policy that standardizes such critical issues as degree and nature of background checks; medical requirements for volunteers who interact with vulnerable populations; volunteer code of conduct; requirements for substance abuse testing; and, volunteers ethical guidelines. In addition, we found that the number of City volunteers, hours worked, and work accomplishments are not tracked on a City-wide basis by either the Office of Management and Budget or the Office of Performance Accountability.

During our audit, we noted that generally, data concerning the number and type of volunteers working in City departments is not uniformly collected or reported out. Without volunteers, departmental staff indicated that some programs that depend on the volunteers would have to be either eliminated or reduced in size. Determining the actual size of the City volunteer work force will also assist the Risk Manager with regard to insurance coverage needed for the volunteer work force. Henrico County estimates that volunteers have saved the county over \$4 million dollars last fiscal year. We also noted that Fairfax County stated that 12,000 volunteers donated over 464,380 hours of community service.

### What We Recommended

Our audit of City departmental policies and procedures; review of other localities volunteer policies and procedures; and our analysis of best practices indicates that the City should adopt an City-wide volunteer policy that establishes the over-arching framework for best practices with regard to volunteer services and should include, among other things, on-boarding policies (recruitment, volunteer screening process including back ground checks); training; volunteer job descriptions; a volunteer recognition program; and, volunteer evaluation.

In addition, we recommended that a City-wide performance measure be implemented that details the number of volunteer hours used to achieve departmental missions.

### Department Response

The City Manager will convene a committee to develop a City-wide volunteer policy.