



**A.R. 6-37
VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Effective Date: August 1, 2016

Sections: I-IV

I. Authority

The authority for this regulation is contained in the City Charter and City Code provisions authorizing the City Manager to establish administrative procedures for the direction, supervision and coordination of City volunteers.

II. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to establish City-wide guidelines for volunteer participation. The policy will provide a consistent approach to the following areas for departments to use:

- i. Advertisement for Volunteer Needs
- ii. Onboarding and Screening
- iii. Standards of Conduct
- iv. Ethical Conduct
- v. Training
- vi. Utilization of Volunteers (Tracking)
- vii. Recognition
- viii. Feedback Survey
- ix. Dismissal

Volunteers who serve the City of Alexandria provide significant value to the City through their service. This policy is meant to codify best practices to assist the departments to recruit, utilize and measure the value of volunteer service in a consistent manner that can produce both quantitative and qualitative results on the benefits of volunteerism to the City of Alexandria.

III. Definition

Volunteer – Any person who, of his own free will provides goods or services without any financial gain, to any agency of the City. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, employees may not volunteer, without compensation, additional time to do the same work for which they are employed.

IV. Procedure

A. Advertisement for Volunteer Needs

i. All departments are encouraged to work with the Office of Communications and Public Information (OCPI) to advertise any volunteer opportunities on www.alexandriava.gov, in addition to pursuing any other volunteer advertising methods including Volunteer Alexandria. The City web page will act as a central advertising site for all City department opportunities. It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Coordinator(s) of the program(s) to notify OCPI when needs arise and once volunteer needs have been met so that opportunities may be posted and removed accordingly.

B. Screening and Placement Process

i. Prospective volunteers will complete an initial application that departments can create internally. A standard application template can be found on AlexNet. An exception to this rule is a one-day volunteer opportunity or event in which there are no interactions between volunteers and children and/or other vulnerable populations or the interactions are supervised by City employees.

ii. Prospective volunteers will undergo an initial interview, as needed, to ensure appropriate placement and utilization. Volunteer Coordinators or designated employees will conduct interviews with volunteers.

iii. Following the interview process, some prospective volunteers will be required to undergo a background check at varying degrees of security depending on the type of work the volunteer will be doing. The City will work through the Proforma system to conduct the background checks, if needed, and HR Liaisons will provide results to the appropriate Volunteer Coordinators at the department level.

Background checks are required for:

- Volunteers with direct contact with children or other individuals experiencing vulnerability when that contact is for any amount of time when a City employee is not present and supervising.
- Volunteers with direct contact with children or other individuals experiencing vulnerability when that contact is ongoing (i.e. weekly, monthly), whether a City employee is or is not present.
- Volunteers performing office support functions conducted at a City facility where the volunteer would need to access secured locations, databases, etc.

Background checks are not required for:

- Volunteers participating in one-day events or single events over the course of several days- including those with direct contact with children or other individuals experiencing vulnerability- when a City employee is present and supervising.
 - Volunteers performing office support functions conducted at a City facility where the volunteer would not be alone with children or vulnerable adults and would not be accessing highly secured locations, databases, and any other sensitive information.
 - City employees who have already completed the necessary background checks for employment.
 - If, through the results of the background check, the prospective volunteer has been convicted of a crime(s), the department will determine, on a case-by-case basis, if the prospective volunteer is eligible for volunteer services. Each department should abide by their own process.
 - Once results of the background check are completed and approved by the Volunteer Coordinator, the candidate will be notified by the best means of contact as stated on the application.
- iv. If a volunteer will be transporting clients, the Volunteer Coordinator or designee should contact Risk Management to determine what steps need to be taken to allow this volunteer to drive while volunteering for the City of Alexandria. (ex. Defensive Driving course requirements).
- v. Virginia Child Protective Services checks are required for anyone working with children who meets the above requirements for a background check.
- vi. All forms completed by volunteers or Volunteer Coordinators should be housed within the Coordinator(s) respective departments and retained for a minimum of three years.

C. Training and Orientation

Every volunteer will be trained on their respective work duties and the relevant policies and procedures of the departments in which they work. The Volunteer Coordinator or other designated staff will coordinate trainings for volunteers. Volunteers will be asked to sign an agreement confirming training completion. A template can be found on AlexNet. As necessary, volunteers will be given IDs, key cards, keys, computer credentials, and any other security items, if applicable.

D. Standards of Conduct

Volunteers will adhere to the following behaviors while working with the City of Alexandria. Departments are encouraged to review this list during the training/orientation process:

- i. Have a positive attitude about the work being done.
- ii. Work with staff to accomplish goals.
- iii. Perform duties to the best of their ability.
- iv. Seek guidance and accept decisions of staff.
- v. Recognize the responsibilities of paid staff and stay within the scope of their volunteer responsibilities.
- vi. Be on time and follow a mutually agreed upon schedule.
- vii. Record time.
- viii. Give notice as soon as possible if they cannot fulfill their scheduled time.
- ix. Dress appropriately according to the volunteer program.
- x. Adhere to department rules and procedures.
- xi. Refrain from expressing religious, political, social or other views to customers.
- xii. Maintain the confidentiality of all department and/or customer information.
- xiii. Maintain safe practices while volunteering and be familiar with all safety policies of the respective department.

E. Ethical Conduct

The following statements define the commitment of City volunteers to moral and ethical behavior that reflects the highest standards of personal accountability and integrity. Departments are encouraged to review this list during the training/orientation process. Guiding Principles include:

- a. Volunteers act ethically by putting the public interest first, communicating openly and consistently demonstrating professional integrity.
- b. Volunteers understand that as City representatives they are entrusted with protecting and preserving the integrity of the City.
- c. Volunteers will act in a manner that is fair, impartial and free from favoritism or prejudice.
- d. Volunteers will exercise courtesy in dealings with fellow volunteers and employees and with the public. Volunteers will conduct themselves in a manner that reflects favorably on the City.
- e. Volunteers will serve the public interest during the performance of their official duties and will take no action that will result in or create

the possibility for personal material gain or the appearance of such.

F. Utilization of Volunteers (Tracking)

The City will utilize centralized software for tracking volunteer hours served. Volunteer Coordinators will be trained to use this software to ensure efficacy of tracking of all volunteer attendance.

G. Recognition

Volunteers can be recognized in various ways per the department's/program's discretion. Recognition can be in the form of but not limited to the following: a certificate for work completed; a party to celebrate project completion or end of the tenure of the volunteer (s); or cards and small gifts or other tokens to acknowledge birthdays and work completed.

H. Feedback survey

Upon completion of volunteer services, the Volunteer Coordinator is encouraged to administer a feedback and/or exit survey to determine job satisfaction, and invite feedback. A template can be found on AlexNet. Informal surveys, either written or oral, can be conducted on an as needed basis.

I. Separation from Service

Volunteers are required to return their IDs, key cards, keys and any other security items given upon commencement of their volunteer services, if applicable. It is the Volunteer Coordinator's responsibility to ensure this is done on the last day of work for the volunteer. It is also the Volunteer Coordinator's responsibility to ensure the volunteer's computer credentials to any City systems (Munis, Rec Trac, Harmony, etc.) are removed, if applicable.

J. Dismissal

Each department should determine dismissal practices to be followed should a volunteer need to be dismissed for misconduct. Volunteers do not have access to the City employee grievance process.


Mark Jinks
City Manager