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MISSION:

The Citywide Volunteer Program is committed to encouraging community participation and the efficient coordination of volunteers to enhance community programs and services.

OVERVIEW:

In San Mateo, City organizations and residents have a long tradition of working together to enhance the quality of life of our community. The Citywide Volunteer Program provides a wide range of expertise, skills, and support for city programs as well as an opportunity for residents to participate in making measurable differences on the local level.

These policies and procedures are intended to help provide a general overview of the City’s volunteer program and provide information necessary to help make volunteering for the City of San Mateo a positive experience.

Citywide Volunteer Program Objectives:

- ❖ To develop a reliable and varied skilled network of Volunteers to support the delivery of quality services to the community
- ❖ To provide opportunities for the community to participate in local government
- ❖ To bring together volunteer resources to augment city services

DEFINITIONS & ROLES

Volunteer – volunteers are individuals or groups who give their time, talent, and skills to meet a need or to further a mission without being paid for their services. Volunteers serve at the will of the city, and their assignments can be altered or terminated by the city at any time and for any reason not prohibited by law.

- **Short-term Volunteer** – volunteer who assists with special events/projects or for a short period of time. Service hours and length will vary, often short-term volunteers assist for 30 hours or less for a school project or community service.
- **On-going Volunteer** – volunteer who helps on a regular scheduled basis, and may provide services for many months or years.

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- **Youth Volunteer** – a volunteer who is under the age of 18. A signed parental consent form is required for a youth volunteer to participate. A parent or guardian may sign for the youth volunteer. Minimum age requirements may be different depending on assignment needs.
- **One-Time Volunteer** – an individual, club, troop, or group as part of an assignment or program needs to complete volunteer service through a one-day project
- **Community Volunteer** – residents who contribute their time and service to enhance their community through a city department or affiliated non-profit agency
- **Court Referral** – an individual who has been referred by a local agency and has been sentenced by a court to provide volunteer service in the community. Not available in all departments.
- **Advisory Boards and Commissions** – community members provide policy direction, and help provide resources and services to City programs.

Citywide Volunteer Coordinator (CVC) – supports the City of San Mateo’s departments and staff as well as local community organizations by linking volunteers to citywide resources and programs and is the administrator of the Citywide Volunteer Database. If a problem occurs between Department Volunteer Coordinators and volunteers, the CVC may act as mediator to help solve any issue.

Department Volunteer Coordinators (DVC) – supervise the specific volunteer assignments for a department. The coordinator provides any necessary training and support for assignment while mentoring the volunteer. The coordinator also serves as the volunteer’s primary contact for the volunteering assignment.

Volunteer Source – serves as a quick and easy website link that connects potential volunteers to various department openings, assignment descriptions and online applications. The site highlights volunteers in action and other volunteer achievements. Website: www.cityofsanmateo.org/volunteer

Citywide Volunteer Database – The Citywide Volunteer Coordinator administers and maintains the citywide volunteer database. It is an online system used for recruiting, tracking hours and coordinating volunteers. New volunteer records are automatically created from online volunteer applications, providing powerful features to gather and report volunteer service information while saving staff time by eliminating manual hours of recordkeeping. Records are kept private and only used for volunteer purposes and notification of future City volunteer opportunities.

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CITYWIDE VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES

The following Citywide Volunteer Procedures are recommended guidelines for all volunteers, and can be supplemented with additional departmental procedures.

- **Recruitment**

Volunteers will be sought on a proactive basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community. They will be utilized for specific functions or needs within city programs and services. The recruitment process is executed without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and/or disability. Volunteers under the age of 18 require a parental consent form to participate. A parent or guardian may sign for the youth volunteer.

Departments are encouraged to contact the Citywide Volunteer Coordinator (CVC) for support with advertising volunteer opportunities more effectively through the City’s Volunteer Source at www.cityofsanmateo.org/volunteer and at other targeted resources.

- **Application**

A completed Citywide Volunteer Application is required for all volunteers. The application information will assist in evaluating applicants’ talents, qualifications, and other areas of interest. This also includes a Volunteer Agreement & Authorizations form. All Department Volunteer Coordinators are encouraged to use online applications connected with the Citywide Volunteer Database to eliminate manual recordkeeping.

- **Volunteer Records**

A record for each volunteer will be maintained in the Citywide Volunteer Database. Volunteers will sign in and out by computer or in some cases use a preapproved departmental volunteer timesheets to record their hours of service. Volunteer records are kept private and confidential and may only be used for volunteer purposes that pertain to the City, or if they are required to be released by law. These records are to enhance future volunteer opportunities and City services.

- **Interview**

The purpose of an interview is to determine any additional skills or experiences that may help in the proper placement of the volunteer. Interviews may be conducted either in person or by other means i.e. telephone interviews. Questions that volunteers may have about the assignment can be answered at this time.

- **Orientation and Training Sessions**

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Once volunteers have been selected for their volunteer assignment, they will participate in an orientation session designed to inform volunteers about the City and Department, its policies, procedures, programs and safety regulations. This is designed to assist the volunteer in adjusting to their new role. The volunteer will also be provided with specific assignment training and on-the-job training by the Department Volunteer Coordinator or supervising staff.

- **Scheduling**

Scheduling aims to achieve the best possible match between the volunteer and the volunteering assignment needs. Volunteers should work with their supervisor to set a schedule that is mutually acceptable. If a volunteer cannot make it to their assignment, the volunteer will notify their supervisor as soon as possible. The City has the right to alter a volunteer’s schedule at any time.

- **Assignment Description**

Volunteers will have a clearly defined description of duties and responsibilities of the assignment. Descriptions should include a purpose of the assignment, a title, a listing of responsibilities and qualifications, any training requirement, and any time commitment needed. A citywide assignment description template is available on the intranet. One-time special event volunteers will receive on-the-job training and a clear description of their role at the function.

- **Criminal/Background Checks**

Volunteers may be required to submit to a background and fingerprint check and the required training for placement in some positions. This includes but is not limited to the Police, Fire, Parks and Recreation Departments. Volunteers who do not agree to the required checks may be refused assignment. By law, potential volunteers, who are interacting unsupervised with children, must be fingerprinted. *Aligns with [City Policy III-B-5 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).*

- **Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)**

The City of San Mateo collects and maintains private and confidential information while carrying out its functions and operations. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information they are exposed to while serving as volunteers, whether this information involves staff, volunteers, other persons, or involves city business. Volunteers may be required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) found on the intranet.

- **Waiver of Liability Form**

Volunteers will sign a waiver of liability approved by the City Attorney’s office before performing any services.

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- **Appearance**

Volunteers should dress professionally and appropriately to their volunteer assignment. Should a volunteer have any questions, or need more specific information about the dress code, the volunteer should speak with their Department Volunteer Coordinator. Failure to comply may lead up to dismissal.

- **Volunteer Identification**

Volunteer name badges help to visibly and officially link volunteers to their service role within each department. Volunteers are expected to wear their name badge at all times when on duty. Name badges can be created internally using plastic clip-on badges or using a keycard photo ID if special door access is required.

- **Attendance**

Volunteers are expected to report on time to their assignments. In the event that a volunteer will be late, is ill, or unable to work, they must contact their Department Volunteer Coordinator in advance. Failure to do so may end the volunteer assignment. Volunteers are expected to officially sign in and out with staff upon arrival and departure, so that accurate time may be recorded.

- **Dismissal**

Volunteers who do not follow the rules, regulations, and policies set forth by the City of San Mateo or fail to perform their assignments satisfactorily may be released from their volunteer assignment at any time and for any reason not prohibited by law. The City of San Mateo reserves the right to request that a volunteer to leave immediately if the circumstances call for such action.

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CITYWIDE VOLUNTEER POLICIES

- **Data Protection**

Access rights to the City's information technology systems and resources, including the accessing of internet and email, are provided in order to perform volunteer assignments associated to the City. All who use City computers cannot assume any right to privacy in such use. If a volunteer assignment requires the use of information technology, its use must be in compliance with all City policies, including but not limited to, prohibiting the use of unauthorized copies of software on City computers; prohibiting the installation of software on City computers that was not purchased through appropriate City policies; and understanding that all computers, software and computer information are City property.

- **Computer Use**

Notify the Citywide Volunteer Coordinator if you have a volunteer who requires computer network access for their assignment. The CVC will approve and send a Volunteer Onboarding Request to IT. Volunteers need to sign three forms: City Confidentiality Oath, City Administrative Access to Electronic Files and City Non-Disclosure Agreement. These forms are available on the intranet: [popular documents/human resources/volunteer information](#)

- **Emergency Procedures**

Emergency exits in all City buildings should be identified as part of the Volunteer Orientation. In the event of an emergency, volunteers should immediately report to their staff supervisor or Department Volunteer Coordinator and follow his or her instructions. The emergency number for outside Police, Fire, or medical services is 9-1-1.

- **Telephone Use**

Telephones are to be used only for City business. Long distance calls for personal use are prohibited. Flexibility may be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention.

CITYWIDE CONDUCT POLICIES

Policy and Procedures Manual are available at: <http://intranet/dept/city-wide/index.html>

- **Conduct**

Volunteers will treat staff, fellow volunteers, and customers with respect. Volunteers are encouraged to work to settle problems or issues by contacting their Department Volunteer Coordinator. If they feel unsatisfied with the results, then they should notify the Citywide Volunteer Coordinator who will attempt to work with all parties to solve any problems and issues. See [City Policy III.E.9 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

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- **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The City is committed to providing equal opportunity for all volunteers. The City’s policy is to provide a safe and inviting work environment for all, free from discrimination and harassment. The City will attempt to make reasonable accommodations for all volunteers with disabilities. Please contact the Department Volunteer Coordinator to discuss these arrangements beforehand. *See [City Policy III.G.5 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).*

- **Motor Vehicle Use**

City vehicles are intended for use in the course and scope of City activity. Some volunteers may need vehicles to perform their volunteer duties. No volunteer shall drive any vehicle in the performance of their duties as a volunteer without prior, written approval by the Department Head of the department for whom they are assigned. Before authorizing a volunteer to drive, the Department Head shall verify the volunteer is properly licensed, and has supplied proof of insurance.

- All drivers need to be aware that they are representing the City and will drive in compliance with all traffic laws, including but not limited to, the prohibition of using a cellular phone and/or texting.
- Vehicles will be locked when not in use or view of the driver.
- Any traffic citation or accident will be immediately reported to the supervisor or DVC.
- Seat belts must be worn by all drivers and at all times while in the vehicle.

See City 2012 Motor Vehicle Use Policy and Procedures Manual Update - pending

- **Safety**

Safety is of primary importance in every aspect of volunteer activities. Volunteers are expected to obey safety rules, follow safe work practices and procedures, and exercise caution in all activities. Volunteers must immediately report any injury, unsafe conditions and any equipment or situation that may pose a safety hazard immediately to their supervisor. *See [City Policy III.E.1 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).*

- **Political Activity**

All volunteer activities will be free from political affiliations, i.e. no volunteer shall solicit money, influence, service, or any other thing of value; no volunteer shall promote or oppose any political committee, nomination or candidate, nor gather signatures. *See [City Policy III.G.6 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).*

- **Harassment**

All volunteers have a right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination, coercive or disruptive activity, and harassment of any kind. Any form of harassment or discrimination based on, but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic will not be tolerated. Harassment may also

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include written or graphic material delivered via email, or displayed on City premises, or circulated around that shows hostility or distaste towards an individual or group on the basis of a protected category. Refer to [City's Harassment Policy, City Policy III.G.5 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

- **Sexual Harassment**

Volunteers will be free from any kind of sexual harassment. If a volunteer feels like he/she has been sexually harassed please contact the Department Volunteer Coordinator or the Human Resource Department right away. Sexual harassment includes but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is also the use of such conduct for the basis of employment decisions. Refer to [City's Harassment Policy, City Policy III.G.5 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

- **Workplace Violence**

Violence or the threat of violence against or by any volunteer is unacceptable. Volunteers should report any incident of violence to the Department Volunteer Coordinator or the Citywide Volunteer Coordinator. See [City Policy III.E.9 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

- **Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

Alcohol and drug use is prohibited. This includes anyone who brings, possesses or is suspected of being under the influence of any form of narcotic, drug, or alcohol; or anyone who transfers, sells, or attempts to sell. See [City Policy III.G.3 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

- **Smoking**

The City of San Mateo prohibits all volunteers and employees from smoking in all public places of employment including, but not limited to: offices, public buildings, enclosed parking garages, elevators, restrooms, and City vehicles and machinery. Smoking is also prohibited in City parks, and 20 feet of the entrance or exit to an enclosed public place. See [City Policy III.G.4 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

- **Workers Compensation**

Volunteers are covered for workers' compensation benefits through the City's self-insured program. Injuries or illnesses that are related to volunteer work should be reported to supervisor immediately. See [City Policy III.E.2 in the Policy and Procedures Manual](#).