

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy and Procedure Manual

VOLUNTEERS

Approved By: Geoffrey Jones Chief of Police

CALEA 6th Edition Standard: 45.3.1; 45.3.2; 45.3.3

384 VOLUNTEERS

384.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This written directive provides guidelines for the Columbia Police Departments Volunteer Program to include:

- a. Eligibility guidelines;
- b. Application process;
- c. Recruitment, screening, selection and placement of police volunteers;
- d. Volunteer management, supervision, and discipline/termination
- e. Volunteer training; fitness for duty, and dress code/uniforms;
- f. Vehicle, equipment, and radio/MCT use;
- g. Confidentiality agreements; and
- h. Emergency call-out plan for volunteers.

384.2 POLICY (45.3.1)

It is the policy of this department to use qualified volunteers for specified tasks and duties in order to create efficiencies for the Department and improve services to the community. Volunteers are intended to supplement and support, rather than supplant, licensed officers and civilian personnel. Volunteers can be an important part of any organization and have proven to be a valuable asset to law enforcement agencies. Volunteers help to increase department responsiveness, delivery of services, information input, and provide new program opportunities. In addition, volunteers bring new skills and expertise to the Department and prompt new enthusiasm.

384.3 DEFINITIONS (45.3.1)

Volunteer – A non-sworn individual who performs a service for the Department without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered. This may include retired police officers, unpaid chaplains, interns, persons providing administrative support and youth involved in the Columbia Police Explorer Program.

384.4 VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY

Individuals wanting to serve as a Columbia Police Department volunteer must complete an online application located on the como.gov website. Individuals with questions regarding volunteer activities with the police department may contact the Volunteer Program Coordinator at 573-817-5015 to request additional information. To be eligible applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements to include:

- a. At least 18 years of age for all positions other than Police Explorer;

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- b. At least 14 years of age for Police Explorers only;
- c. A valid driver license if the position requires vehicle operation;
- d. Liability insurance for any personally owned equipment, or vehicles used during volunteer work;
- e. No conviction of a felony, any crime of a sexual nature, any crime related to assault, any crime related to moral turpitude or any crime related to impersonating a peace officer;
- f. No conviction of a misdemeanor crime within the past 10 years, excluding minor traffic offenses;
- g. No condition of mental illness or chemical dependency that may adversely affect the person's ability to serve in the position;
- h. Physical requirements reasonably appropriate to the assignment; and
- i. A personal background history and character suitable for a person representing the Department, as validated by a background investigation.

The Chief of Police may apply exceptions for eligibility based on organizational needs and the qualification of the individual.

384.5 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

384.5.1 VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR (45.3.2)

The function of the Columbia Police Department Volunteer Coordinator is to provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer management within the Department, and to direct and assist staff and volunteer efforts to provide more productive services. The duties of the Volunteer Coordinator or the authorized designee shall include:

- a. Recruiting, selecting and training qualified volunteers for various positions.
- b. Maintaining records for each volunteer.
- c. Tracking and evaluating the contribution of volunteers.
- d. Maintaining the volunteer handbook and outlining expectations, policies and responsibilities for all volunteers.
- e. Maintaining a record of volunteer schedules and work hours (may be done electronically online via the City of Columbia Volunteer Information Center portal).
- f. Completion and dissemination as appropriate of all necessary paperwork and information.
- g. Administering discipline when warranted.
- h. Maintaining liaison with other community volunteer programs and assisting in community-wide efforts to recognize and promote volunteering.

384.5.2 RECRUITMENT (45.3.1)

Volunteers should be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis in accordance with City of Columbia policies. A primary qualification for participation in the application process should be an interest in, and an ability to assist the Department in serving the public.

Requests for volunteers should be submitted in writing by interested staff to the Volunteer Coordinator through the chain of command. A complete position description and a requested time frame should be

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included in the request. All parties should understand that the recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by creative and interesting assignments. The Volunteer Coordinator may withhold assignment of any volunteer until such time as the requesting unit is prepared to make effective use of volunteer resources.

384.5.3 SCREENING

All prospective volunteers will undergo screening and a background investigation to determine suitability to work in the police environment and have access and be in proximity to criminal justice information and other sensitive information. The Volunteer Coordinator or the authorized designee should conduct a face-to-face interview with the applicant.

A documented background investigation shall be completed on each volunteer applicant and shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- a. Traffic and criminal background check;
- b. Employment;
- c. References;
- d. Fingerprint check processed through the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP); and

A truth verification exam may be required of each applicant depending on the type of assignment.

A volunteer whose assignment requires the use of, access to or places him/her in the vicinity of criminal justice information, investigative files or information portals shall require submission of prints and clearance through MSHP and the FBI.

384.5.4 SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

Service as a volunteer shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer position. Notice may only be given by an authorized representative of the Department, who will normally be the Volunteer Coordinator. No volunteer should begin performance of any position until he/she has been officially accepted for that position and completed all necessary screening and documentation.

At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer should complete all necessary enrollment documentation and will receive a copy of the job description and agreement of service with the Department. All volunteers shall receive a copy of the volunteer handbook and shall be required to sign a volunteer agreement.

Volunteers should be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills, and abilities and with the needs of the Department.

384.5.6 TRAINING (45.3.1) (45.3.2)

Volunteers will be provided with an orientation program to acquaint them with the department, personnel, policies and procedures that have a direct impact on their work assignment.

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Volunteers should receive position-specific training to ensure they have adequate knowledge and skills to complete tasks required by the position and should receive periodic ongoing training as deemed appropriate by their supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers, with approval of the Chief of Police or designee, may be allowed to attend and participate in the in-service training provided to Columbia Police Department employees/officers as space and resources allow.

Depending on the assignment, training may include the following:

- a. Role of the volunteer;
- b. Department policies and procedures specific to the volunteer position;
- c. Discrimination and harassment training;
- d. CPR/first aid;
- e. CERT/Citizens Emergency Response Training;
- f. Search and rescue techniques;
- g. Scenario-based searching methods;
- h. Evidence preservation;
- i. Basic traffic direction and control;
- j. Community policing philosophy, cultural competency, bias-free policing, implicit bias, customer service, Columbia history and culture; and
- k. Vehicle operations, including specialized vehicles.

Training should reinforce to volunteers that they should not intentionally represent themselves as, or by omission infer, that they are licensed officers or other full-time members of the Department. They shall always represent themselves as volunteers.

All volunteers shall comply with the rules of conduct and with all orders and directives, either oral or written, issued by the Department. Whenever a rule, regulation or guideline in this manual refers to a licensed officer, it shall also apply to a volunteer, unless by its nature it is inapplicable.

384.5.7 FITNESS FOR DUTY

No volunteer shall report to work or be on-duty when his/her judgment or physical condition has been impaired by alcohol, medication other substances, illness or injury.

Volunteers shall report to their supervisor any changes in status that may affect their ability to fulfill their duties. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Loss of Driver's license or operator status change;
- b. Medical condition;
- c. Arrests;
- d. Criminal investigations;

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- e. All law enforcement contacts

All volunteers shall adhere to the guidelines set forth by this department regarding drug and alcohol use.

384.5.8 DRESS CODE (45.3.3)

As representatives of the Department, volunteers are responsible for presenting a professional image to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

Volunteers shall conform to approved dress consistent with their duty assignment. Depending on the assignment, volunteers may be issued a uniform garment identifying them as a police volunteer. Uniforms authorized for volunteers should be readily distinguishable from those worn by licensed officers. No volunteer shall wear his/her uniform or identifiable parts of that uniform while off-duty.

Volunteers shall be required to return any issued uniform or department property at the termination of service.

384.6 SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the Department must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor will be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and should be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. The supervisor should ensure that the workplace supports a volunteer as a valued team member.

A volunteer may be assigned as, and act as, a supervisor of other volunteers, provided the supervising volunteer is under the direct supervision of a paid staff member.

Functional supervision of volunteers is the responsibility of the supervisor in charge of the unit where the volunteer is assigned. Considerations to keep in mind while supervising volunteers include:

- a. Take the time to introduce volunteers to employees on all levels.
- b. Ensure volunteers have work space and the necessary office supplies.
- c. Make sure the work is challenging. Do not hesitate to give them an assignment or task that will tap these valuable resources.

384.7 CONFIDENTIALITY

With appropriate security clearance, volunteers may have access to private and confidential information, such as criminal histories or investigative files. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, the duties of the position or department policy, all information shall be considered confidential. Only that information specifically identified and approved by authorized personnel shall be released. Confidential information shall be given only to persons who have a need and a right to know as determined by department policy and supervisory personnel.

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Each volunteer will receive training in data practices and be required to sign a nondisclosure agreement before being given an assignment with the Department. Subsequent unauthorized disclosure of any private or confidential information, verbally, in writing or by any other means, by the volunteer is grounds for immediate dismissal and possible criminal prosecution.

Volunteers shall not address public gatherings, appear on radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as a resources for any news outlets or social media platforms, release or divulge any information concerning the activities of the Department, or maintain that they represent the Department in such matters without permission from the proper department personnel.

384.8 PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Volunteers will be issued an identification card that must be worn and visible at all times while on-duty or in side Department facilities. Any fixed and portable equipment issued by the Department shall be for official and authorized use only. Any property or equipment issued to a volunteer shall remain the property of the Department and shall be returned at the termination of service.

384.8.1 VEHICLE USE

Volunteers assigned to duties or assignments that require the use of a CPD vehicle must first complete:

- a. A driving safety briefing.
- b. Verification that the volunteer possesses a valid driver license.
- c. Verification that the volunteer carries current vehicle insurance.

The Volunteer Coordinator should ensure that all volunteers who are authorized to operate Department vehicles receive safety briefing updates and license and insurance verification at least once a year.

When operating a department vehicle, volunteers shall obey all rules of the road, including seat belt requirements.

Volunteers should not operate a marked patrol car unless it is being operated for maintenance purposes; is being used to transport equipment; or is being used to provide supplementary assistance under the direction of an on-duty licensed officer. Volunteers are not authorized to operate a department vehicle for enforcement patrol operations or under emergency conditions (lights and siren).

384.8.2 RADIO AND MDT USAGE

Volunteers shall successfully complete state and federal database access training and radio procedures training prior to using the law enforcement radio or MDT and shall comply with all related provisions. The Volunteer Coordinator should ensure that radio and database access training is provided for volunteers whenever necessary.

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384.9 EMERGENCY CALL-OUT FOR VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL

The Volunteer Coordinator shall develop a plan outlining an emergency call-out procedure for volunteer personnel.

384.10 VOLUNTEER RECORDS

The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain a file on each CPD volunteer to include the supervising employee, current assignment, description of duties, Security Tracker of authorized access, evaluations, number of volunteer hours worked, and any other information deemed necessary by the volunteer coordinator.

Monthly, volunteers will submit the number of volunteer hours worked to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Annually, the CPD volunteer coordinator will provide a summary of CPD volunteers to include the number of hours worked by each to the City of Columbia Volunteer Coordinator.

384.11 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES/TERMINATION

A volunteer may be removed from the volunteer program at any time at the discretion of the Chief of Police or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers may resign from volunteer service with this department at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision.

384.12 EXIT INTERVIEWS

Exit interviews, when possible, should be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving and solicit the volunteer's suggestions on improving the position. When appropriate, the interview should also include a discussion on the possibility of involvement in some other capacity with the Department.