

SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE GENERAL ORDER	NUMBER: G - 42
	RESCINDS:
SUBJECT: Civilian Volunteer & Internship Program	
EFFECTIVE: May 19, 1995	
REVISED: November 8, 2023	

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I. PURPOSE:

Civilian volunteers are valuable resources during emergency operations and in supplementing day-to-day operations. Therefore, it is Sheriff's Office policy to place volunteers in non-tactical law enforcement related support areas whenever possible.

II. SCOPE:

- A. Civilian volunteers receive no monetary compensation for their assistance in Sheriff's Office activities. Volunteer services are rendered out of a spirit of community pride and teamwork by assisting Sheriff's Office employees in providing quality law enforcement services.
- B. This directive does not address the volunteer programs of the correctional facility (as defined in Corrections Policy and Procedures), Reserve Deputy Sheriffs and Chaplain Corps (defined in General Order 36), or Explorers (defined in General Order 17).

III. VOLUNTEER PROCESS:

- A. All successful civilian volunteer and intern applicants paid, or unpaid, will be required to complete and submit an entire employment application that will be provided to the applicant by the Human Resources Division. The applicant will submit to a drug screening, a thorough background investigation that includes, but is not limited to, FCIC/NCIC, past employment/education and training verification, driver license review, credit history, prior drug use history, arrest/conviction record, drug screen and computerized voice stress analysis (CVSA) testing. A certified examiner administers the CVSA with questions addressing illegal drug use and general questions of honesty and criminal history. Any dishonesty or deception on the Pre-Screen Questionnaire or Employment Application will disqualify a candidate's application.
 - 1. The Human Resources Division is responsible for notifying volunteer and intern applicants of their selection or non-selection to the program.

NOTE: Minors are not subject to a drug screening or CVSA but will adhere to background processing by the Human Resources Division.

- B. It is the responsibility of the Volunteer/Intern liaison designated in Human Resources Division to provide ID badges to all volunteers/interns, and coordinate with Technology Solutions for computer access, if needed.
- C. Volunteer/Intern files will be retained by the Human Resources Division in accordance with the State of Florida Records Retention Schedule.
- D. Community Law Enforcement Academy:
It is recommended for potential volunteers to complete the Sheriff's Office Community Law Enforcement Academy (CLEA). The Community Law Enforcement Academy provides participants with an overview of Sheriff's Office operations, policies, and procedures. The Community Law Enforcement Academy is facilitated and coordinated by the Specialized Services Section and is held throughout the year as necessary to accommodate the number of applicants, but generally two to three times per calendar year. However, to become a Citizen on Patrol it is a requirement that the potential volunteer must successfully complete the Community Law Enforcement Academy.
- E. The Specialized Services Section is the initial point of contact for all CLEA applications and is responsible for:
 - 1. Posting of the Community Law Enforcement Academy application process and application opening/closing dates to the external sheriff's office website,
 - 2. Accepting CLEA applications and screening them for completeness.
 - 3. Reviewing a Sheriff's Office modified background investigation completed by the Human Resources Division which includes, but is not limited to: criminal records review, driving history review and verification, state attorney records review, internet search/social networking site review, fingerprints, and employment verification (as needed).
 - 4. Developing and maintaining appropriate logs/records of applications and participation.
- F. The Specialized Services Section Lieutenant or the Seminole Neighborhood Police Captain may reject a CLEA applicant for participation in the class if:
 - 1. The applicant has prior illegal drug use which is inconsistent with established policy.
 - 2. The applicant has a criminal record that was not disclosed or is inconsistent with the nature of law enforcement work.
 - 3. The applicant has a driving record that was not disclosed or is inconsistent with the nature of law enforcement work.
 - 4. The applicant's background, in its totality is inconsistent with the nature of law enforcement work.
 - 5. The applicant falsifies or misrepresents themselves on their application or any other personnel record.
 - 6. An applicant convicted of a felony will not be permitted to attend CLEA.
 - 7. The applicant's participation in the class would be contrary to the best interest of the Sheriff's

Office.

- G. Upon approval by the Specialized Services Section Lieutenant that the application meets the established requirements, the applicant will be notified by the Specialized Services Section of their acceptance into CLEA.
- H. Citizens on Patrol:
1. Citizens on Patrol volunteers will successfully complete the Citizen's on Patrol Academy.
 2. After completion of the Community Law Enforcement Academy, participants wishing to volunteer as a Citizen on Patrol (COP) will submit a volunteer application provided by the Human Resources Division.
 3. The Human Resources Division will be responsible for notifying Specialized Services when an applicant's file is complete and ready for review.
 4. Applicants selected for the Citizens on Patrol Program will be notified and provided orientation and a class schedule by Specialized Services.
 5. Applicants not selected for the Citizens on Patrol Program will be notified by the Human Resources Division.
 6. Each member is requested to volunteer a minimum number of 8 hours per month, or a quarterly equivalent. Those hours may be a combination of patrol, administrative duties, meetings, trainings, community events, and specialty units. In order to maintain proficiency in all disciplines of COP training, a minimum of 4 hours per month must be in a patrol capacity, hours must not be done exclusively in a specialty unit.
 7. Citizens on Patrol are to refer to the written directive SOP-01, Volunteers Auxiliary Program for clothing, equipment, and operations.
- I. Internship Program:
1. The Sheriff's Office sponsors an internship program for students of state universities and community colleges. The program is designed to offer law enforcement orientation to students pursuing studies in criminal justice or a related field. The Human Resources Division is the initial point of contact for Internships. It is clearly understood that participation in the Internship Program is voluntary, and participants will not be entitled to any wages or benefits for the time spent in the program as the internship is merely an extension of the educational program of the administering college or university unless specifically selected for the Program Internship (Paid Internship Program) in which an offer was distributed. Participants understand that there is no guarantee of employment upon the completion of the program.
 - a. The volunteer liaison within the Human Resources Division will make all assignments. This will be based upon division's need and the intern's course of study and availability.
 - b. Interns will be under the direct supervision of Sheriff's Office employees who are knowledgeable and experienced in the duties the intern will be performing or observing.
 - c. The assigned component liaison will be required to verify intern participation hours and be required to evaluate student performance during the period of the internship as

needed.

2. Unpaid interns are to complete a 15-week volunteer program within an assigned division, and can receive school credit upon successful completion of the program.
 - a. Upon successful completion of an intern's first semester, he/she is eligible to return for a following semester.
 - b. Start and end dates for graduate students may not follow the 15-week timeline due to the student's curriculum or projects assigned.
3. Orientation for interns is held three times a year to welcome students to the agency and to review written directives and expectations.
4. Paid interns (Program Interns) are processed as an employee and reviewed by the hiring manager via NEOGOV's Online Hiring Center (OHC). Upon selection, the Program Intern is eligible to be a temporary employee with the agency up to a six-month period, and are to attend employee orientation.
5. The Human Resources Division will be responsible for notifying applicants of their selection or non-selection for the Internship Program.
6. Selected interns will be assigned to an operational component at the discretion of the Human Resources Division.
7. Interns can be sourced and/or funded through a third-party partnership, however, the Human Resources Division will still complete the background investigation procedures listed in Section III(B). The Human Resources Division will the intern's hours via the agency Web Portal.

J. Administrative and Youth Program Volunteers:

1. To serve as an administrative volunteer, or youth program volunteer (Prosecution Alternatives for Youth Program or Police Athletic League), the potential volunteer must submit a volunteer application online with the Human Resources Division.
2. An administrative volunteer or youth program volunteer (Prosecution Alternatives for Youth Program or Police Athletic League) are not required to attend the Community Law Enforcement Academy.
3. The Human Resources Division will coordinate with the appropriate liaisons within the agency for placement and documentation of hours.

K. Victim Advocates:

1. The volunteer liaison within Human Resources will work directly with the Victim Advocate Supervisor for need and placement of all Victim Advocates.
2. Applicants selected as Victim Advocates by the Victim Advocate Supervisor will attend an orientation program coordinated by the Division. Upon completion of the orientation program, the Victim Advocate Supervisor will make arrangements with the Human Resource Division for an identification card.

IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Civilian volunteers and interns have no law enforcement authority, and no legal standing as Deputy Sheriffs or that of any other law enforcement officer. These individuals are to be assigned to projects that cannot directly affect the outcome of any public citizen or agency employee.
- B. Civilian volunteers and interns are generally assigned to non-tactical law enforcement support services.
- C. Civilian volunteers and interns are issued a Sheriff's Office identification card that will be worn when they are working in the agency. All identification cards contain an expiration date and must be renewed annually. The identification card will be returned to the volunteer/intern liaison with the Human Resources Division when the volunteer or intern withdraws from the program, or is excused from the program by the Human Resources Division Director, or designee.
- D. Civilian volunteers and interns will be indoctrinated in those areas in which he/she will be asked to assist prior to assuming duties in those areas.
 - 1. Volunteers/Interns will be trained for their assigned duties by the division/section supervisor, or his/her designee.
 - 2. If the duties to be performed by the volunteer/intern are governed by an agency written directive, the volunteer/intern will be familiarized with that directive, and may be issued a copy for their reference.
- E. All civilian volunteers and interns are required to submit and/or update their employment status on a Supplemental Employment form.
 - 1. Any time a civilian volunteer/intern has a change in employment or job responsibilities, a Supplemental Employment form will be submitted to the Human Resources Division within 30 days of employment changes.
- F. All volunteers and interns are to submit their volunteer/intern hours via the Web Portal for record keeping so the Sheriff's Office can confirm active and inactive members.
 - 1. Each member is requested to volunteer a minimum of 8 hours per month, or a quarterly equivalent, to be considered an active member with the agency.
- G. All civilian volunteers and interns are permitted to apply to internal job postings and submit a transfer request to the Human Resources Division.

V. VOLUNTEER SERVICES BY RETIRED AND SEPARATED EMPLOYEES

- A. Members who separate from the agency and volunteer their services, and those who retire and volunteer within 12 months of separation, are not to be considered employees of the agency. These members have decided to volunteer of their own volition and not based on any agreement that they would return to the agency as an employee at any time in the future. These members decide the scope of their volunteering, their volunteer activities are not essential to the operation of the agency, and they are not intended to enhance the work force or assume the positions of full-time or part-time personnel who are compensated by the agency.
- B. To maintain their status as volunteers, rather than employees, the following shall apply:

1. Except as otherwise provided for Reserve Deputies, volunteers shall not receive any compensation, including compensation from a third party, for services performed as a volunteer.
2. Volunteers shall not receive benefits that are provided to employees, including group health, life, accidental death and disability, and other group insurance plans, unless they are extended to other retirees. Volunteers are entitled to workers' compensation insurance relating to the performance of their duties as required by law.
3. Any equipment provided to the volunteer, including an agency vehicle, shall be loaned to the volunteer. Take home vehicles shall not be permanently assigned to the volunteer. Rather, a volunteer may obtain a vehicle prior to use and return it as soon as practicable following the conclusion of the services performed.
4. Volunteers shall limit their hours of service. The total hours worked in a year, including training, should not exceed 20% of the number of hours that the volunteer was expected to work during the 36-month period that preceded the separation. For example, a civilian volunteer who worked a 40 – hour week as an employee should average no more than 8 hours weekly as a volunteer (20% of 40 hours.)
5. Volunteers shall control their schedule, and services rendered shall be completely voluntary.
6. Volunteers shall be offered the opportunity to volunteer on an as - needed basis.
7. The division for which the volunteer provides services shall retain a record of those who volunteer their services, the hours worked, and the nature of their services.