

TITLE: Volunteers

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for recruitment, placement, and evaluation of volunteers within the City to help provide a consistent means for obtaining and using volunteers.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Avondale encourages the use of volunteers by any department that can provide a positive experience for both the volunteer and the City. Many citizens choose to give back to their community by sharing their time and talents.

The City of Avondale offers various opportunities for citizens to help make our community an even better place to live. Volunteers are utilized in libraries, parks, fire department, court and many other areas. Department managers or their designee have the authority to approve placement of volunteers for their departmental needs.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Volunteer: Anyone who works out of free-will and without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation, performs a task(s) at the direction of and/or on behalf of the City of Avondale.
- B. Site Supervisor: This supervisor may be a City staff person or other volunteer that oversees the volunteers in a specific department or unit.
- C. Special Case Volunteer: A person participating in student community service activities, student learning programs, corporate volunteer programs, and other volunteer referral programs.
- D. Special Event Volunteer: A volunteer who gives one-time service working at a special event.

IV. POLICY PROVISIONS

A. Volunteer Program

1. Utilization of Volunteers

- a. The City of Avondale accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers within all appropriate programs and activities. Staff is encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve.
- b. Volunteers may be utilized in all programs and activities of the City. However, volunteers should never be utilized to displace (supplant) paid staff from their positions. The volunteer's role is to assist staff and to expand and enhance staff activities.

2. Employees as Volunteers

- a. The City of Avondale accepts the service of its staff as volunteers. This service is accepted provided that it is offered without coercion, involves work outside the scope of the employee's normal duties and is provided outside of the employee's usual working hours. Volunteer work too similar to paid work is in conflict with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). If you have any questions or concerns, contact Human Resources.

3. Service at the Discretion of the City of Avondale

- a. The City of Avondale accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the City of Avondale.

4. Volunteers Privileges and Responsibilities

- a. Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to the City of Avondale, its staff, and its clients. Volunteers should be extended the following privileges:
 - 1) To be provided adequate orientation and training to prepare them for a successful, safe service experience
 - 2) To receive effective supervision, including proper supplies and work space
 - 3) To be treated as a respected member of the work team
 - 4) To be kept informed of any changes in policies or procedures that affect their work
 - 5) To be recognized and shown appreciation for their contributions on an on-going basis
- b. In return, volunteers are expected to:
 - 1) Adhere to the same rules, regulations and standards as paid staff

- 2) Be prompt and reliable in reporting for duty
- 3) Work a determined number of hours according to a mutually agreed upon schedule
- 4) Report hours, as requested, in order to keep an accurate record of hours served
- 5) Attend orientation and training, as provided
- 6) Treat the public and fellow workers honestly and politely at all times
- 7) Protect confidential information and exercise good judgment remembering that they are seen as a representative of the City of Avondale within their volunteer role

5. Title VII Civil Rights Act and Americans with Disabilities Act

- a. While volunteers are not specifically mentioned as covered under these laws, the City of Avondale encourages compliance with those laws. Title VII prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, religion, national origin, age and disability. ADA prohibits discrimination against the disabled and requires *reasonable accommodation* for volunteers with special needs.

6. Federal Volunteer Protection Act

- a. Volunteers are protected from certain liabilities during volunteer service as long as they are:
 - 1) Acting in good faith and within their defined duties
 - 2) There is no willful, wanton or criminal misconduct
 - 3) An accident occurs while volunteer is driving without appropriate license.
 - 4) Alcohol or illegal drugs are not involved

V. PROCEDURES

A. Volunteer Management Procedures

1. Volunteer Files

- a. A system of records must be maintained on each volunteer, including dates of service, position(s) held, duties performed and hours served. A copy of the volunteer's application (with current emergency contact information), completed time sheets, copies of any awards, reports of any problems, evaluation forms, correspondence, accident reports, and other relevant documents must be kept on file. This information should be kept in a volunteer personnel file.
 - 1) If Human Resources handles the recruitment, they will also maintain the volunteer's personnel file.

- 2) If a department handles the recruitment, the department will maintain the volunteer's personnel file. After the individual ceases volunteering with the city, the department will forward the volunteer's personnel file to HR for destruction.
 - a) The Police Department will handle their own volunteer's personnel files, from creation through destruction.
 - b. Volunteer personnel records should be afforded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records pursuant to the laws of Arizona. Volunteer files should be kept for at least five years after the volunteer has left in keeping with City of Avondale Human Resource policy. However, if an incident involving a volunteer and a minor participant occurs, documentation of the incident and the volunteer's file should be retained for as long as Arizona law gives minors the right to sue. In Arizona, the "clock" on the statute of limitations does not even start "ticking" until the minor reaches the age of 18. All records compiled for City of Avondale businesses are subject to disclosure.
2. Timesheets
 - a. It is important for volunteers to record their hours each time they report for duty, as requested. The designated department will keep track of the volunteers hours. Accurate and up-to-date records are important to both the City and the volunteer. This information is used for volunteer recognition, verification of service, budget and risk management purposes, and program promotion. Volunteers also often use copies of signed time sheets as proof of service, for tax deduction and other purposes.
3. Scheduling
 - a. The volunteer and his/her supervisor should discuss and set a mutually agreed upon schedule. Such scheduling provides a structure so that work can be prepared and staff and volunteer time can be used to its full potential.
 - b. Volunteers should not be allowed to volunteer without prior supervisor approval in on their own accord and should not be in work areas when not on duty.
 - c. Volunteers are not authorized to bring their family members with them while they are performing volunteer duties, unless prior supervisor approval.
 - 1) This does not apply to sports coaches if their children are on the team they are volunteering to coach.

4. Breaks

- a. Volunteers are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act with regard to breaks, overtime or other rules. However, in keeping with City staff policy, supervisors may want to allow volunteers at least one 15-minute break per four-hour shift. Volunteers should schedule breaks with their Site Supervisor's approval.

5. Representation of the City of Avondale

- a. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the City only as specifically indicated within their job descriptions. Volunteers should not present themselves as representatives of the City in any public statement to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations without prior approval of staff.
- b. Use of the City logo or name is for City purposes only. Clothing bearing the City of Avondale name or logo shall be worn only for official City purposes or business and shall not be worn while consuming alcoholic beverages.

6. Identification/Security

- a. All volunteers should be issued identification, whether permanent or temporary, that should be worn while on duty.
 - 1) Shirt issued to volunteers to identify them must also be worn while on duty. (i.e. sports coaches)
- b. Volunteers should not be in staff work areas when not on duty. Site Supervisors will use a volunteer check list to advise volunteers on which entrance to use; which bathrooms, phones, and staff rooms they may use; and any emergency exits or procedures.

7. Confidentiality

- a. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they may be exposed while serving as a volunteer. The supervisor is responsible for identifying and communicating what information is considered confidential.

8. Dress Code

- a. As representatives of the City, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to the community. Volunteers should dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. The supervisor should advise the volunteer of any special dress requirements.

9. Working with Special Event Volunteers

- a. Special Event volunteer opportunities are those jobs or assignments that allow for service of a short duration – a "one-timer"—the volunteer who gives one time service working at a special event. Basic volunteer and risk management policies still apply, even if on a foreshortened basis.
- b. Often Special Event volunteers are members of a larger group, such as a scout troop or school organization, contact may only have been made with the group leader or advisor, not each individual. Still, good risk management requires that a record be kept of all volunteers and the dates and times that they worked on behalf of the City. A one-time volunteer form is one way to collect this information. Orientation and training might be accomplished with an information sheet emailed to each volunteer prior to the event. This information sheet might include the date, time and location of the project; the purpose and/or goal of the project; tasks to be performed and procedures; what task they will be performing and time of their shift; and any other pertinent information.
- c. Even though Special Event volunteers may be present for only a few hours, recognition of their contribution is still important. Some recognition ideas are providing refreshments or a small gift item, picture and acknowledgement in the City newsletter, opportunity to win a gift certificate; or a "thank you" letter listing results accomplished.

10. Working with Youth Volunteers

- a. The City of Avondale has potential liability arising from working with volunteers, with additional considerations being present when working with youth volunteers. The policies and procedures set forth below are to be followed when working with youth.
- b. Policies and Procedures
 - 1) In general, all policies and procedures that apply to adult volunteers also apply to youth volunteers, as well as the restrictions presented by Federal Child Labor Laws.
 - 2) In addition, because of their minor status, the following additional procedures should be followed:
 - a) Application Form
 - i. Any youth volunteer application form should include a statement to be signed by the parent/guardian granting permission for their son/daughter to participate as a volunteer.

b) Scheduling

- i. Youth volunteers and their parents should be given a written confirmation of their schedule. In addition, state guidelines for child labor laws should be followed; see A.R.S. § 23-233 for further details on permissible hours of labor for persons under sixteen years of age.

c) Absences

- i. Youth volunteers should be requested to call and advise their volunteer supervisor of any absence as soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes after the scheduled shift. Because we are responsible for the youth volunteer during their scheduled shift, if a volunteer has not reported for his or her assignment and has not called in, the volunteer should be called immediately. If the volunteer cannot be reached, their parent or guardian should be called and the absence reported.

d) Transporting Youth Volunteers

- i. The City of Avondale does not provide transportation to or from a volunteer's site or assignment. Transportation to a volunteer site or assignment is strictly the responsibility of the volunteer.
- ii. City of Avondale employees and/or agents should not be transporting youth volunteers unless it is on city business, in a city vehicle, as a group of at least two staff members, and with written permission from parent/guardian.

e) Out of Program Contact Between Staff & Youth Volunteers

- i. The City of Avondale does not support out-of-program contact between staff and youth volunteers.

f) Discipline

- i. If a youth volunteer is misbehaving, their behavior should be corrected away from other volunteers and service recipients. Further misbehavior should be reported to the parent/guardian. If problem behavior continues, the youth may be terminated from the program. If a youth is terminated, their parent/guardian must be notified by the site supervisor either verbally or in writing. If verbal, the site supervisor shall document the details in the volunteer's personnel file.

B. Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

1. Needs Assessment

- a. Staff new to the volunteer program should develop a needs assessment inventory to determine the true need for volunteers in their area. Volunteer position descriptions are then developed from this information.

2. Volunteer Position Descriptions

- a. Volunteers, like paid staff, require a clear, complete and current description of their duties and responsibilities. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a position description should be developed for each volunteer position.
- b. Descriptions should include the purpose and duties of the position, worksite location, time frame for performance of the job, and a listing of qualifications and requirements including any that may be required for compliance with ADA. HR works with site staff in the development of volunteer jobs and position descriptions.
- c. The volunteer job description provides the basic guidance for volunteers to do their jobs. Each volunteer should receive a copy of their job description and/or a copy should be kept on file at the volunteer site for further reference. The Site Supervisor should periodically review volunteer job description(s) to ensure that they accurately reflect the current nature of the job.

3. Staff Requests for Volunteers

- a. Requests for volunteers should be submitted in writing by staff, if possible, complete with a draft position description if it is a new position, and a requested time frame. Understand that recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by creative and interesting jobs and sufficient advance notice. HR reserves the right to refuse to recruit or place any volunteers until staff is prepared to make effective use of volunteers.

4. Recruitment

- a. The City's Human Resources Department will be responsible for the recruitment of volunteers. The City's volunteer program is promoted on a continuous basis through city publications such as City webpage; agency fairs; and other ways. In addition, targeted recruitments are conducted for specific programs and positions through press releases, direct mailings, newsletters, and other media. Departments may request that HR conduct recruitment or they may conduct their own recruitment.

- 1) Special event volunteers are the exception; they will fill out the one-time form and do not need to go through the recruitment process.

5. Application Form

- a. All volunteers must complete an application form which gathers basic information. A basic form is available in the HR Department, but some positions may require a customized application. For example, volunteer positions requiring a criminal history background check will need to include a statement to be signed by the potential volunteer allowing the background check to be conducted.

6. Interviewing

- a. Prior to being placed in a position, all volunteers for internal positions should be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for and interest in a particular position. The interview should determine the volunteer's qualifications, their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position and should answer any questions the volunteer might have about the position.
- b. Departments will be responsible for interviewing volunteers specific to their department.
- c. An exception to the interview requirement would be for one-time special event volunteers. In those instances, internal interviews shall be conducted within the Department.

7. Reference Checks

- a. All prospective volunteers are asked to submit two references, other than family members. Telephone or mail reference checks may be conducted by HR or the Department.

- 1) Not applicable to special event volunteers.

8. Criminal History Background Checks

- a. As appropriate for the protection of clients and confidential information, all volunteers will be asked to submit to a criminal history background check.
- b. Such volunteers must sign a release on the Volunteer Pledge form granting permission to conduct the background check. Staff is responsible for ensuring that volunteers are fingerprinted and for submitting all required forms and fingerprint cards to the appropriate agency (i.e., DPS, FBI). To protect the privacy of our volunteers, completed background checks are returned to Human Resource Department or to the hiring department, for temporary positions, such as sports

coaches. Results of the check are not revealed unless a potential problem is identified.

- c. Volunteers who do not agree to a background check will be refused assignment.

9. Placement

- a. In placing a volunteer in a position, attention is paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the position. No placement will be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and supervising staff can be met.

10. Reassignment

- a. Volunteers may request reassignment at any time. Any volunteer requesting reassignment should be referred back to HR to be re-interviewed for the new position. They should also receive all appropriate orientation and training for the new position before they begin work.

C. Volunteer Training and Development

1. Training

- a. Volunteers should receive specific training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment successfully, safely and in accordance with City and department policies. Training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the volunteer position. The design and delivery of training is the responsibility of the Site Supervisor. Training should include information on the nature and purpose of the particular department and division, on the nature and operation of the program or activity for which they were recruited, and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position they are accepting.

D. Volunteer Supervision and Evaluation

1. Role of the Site Supervisor

- a. Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the City of Avondale must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor is 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.
- b. Generally, Site Supervisors are responsible for orientation and training, scheduling, record keeping, management and direction, evaluation and recognition.

2. Volunteers as Team Leaders

- a. A volunteer may act as a Leader of other volunteers, providing that the Team Leader is under the direct supervision of a paid staff member.

3. Volunteer/Staff Relations

- a. Volunteers and staff are to be considered partners in implementing the mission and programs of the City, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is important that each understand and respect the needs and abilities of the other.

4. Acceptance and Use of Volunteers by Staff

- a. Since volunteers are considered a valuable resource in performing the City's work, staff is encouraged to consider ways in which volunteers might be of service. However, no volunteer will be assigned without staff's prior consent.

5. Lines of Communication

- a. Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate memos, materials, meetings, and other information relevant to their work assignment. The Site Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that volunteers receive such information and may want to establish a bulletin board, mail box or other means to accomplish this goal.
- b. It is also the responsibility of the Site Supervisor to keep HR apprised of any changes or problems that may arise with a volunteer or the volunteer program.

6. Absenteeism

- a. Volunteers are asked to inform their Site Supervisor of an absence as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. Continual absence may be reason for reassignment or dismissal of a volunteer.

7. Performance Problems

- a. Any problems with a volunteer's performance need to be addressed, resolved and documented as they occur.
- b. A written record of any problems and their resolution must be kept in the volunteer file and a copy should be put in the volunteer's personnel file. This documentation is vital should a volunteer later need to be dismissed.

8. Dismissal of a Volunteer

- a. Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the City and/or division or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. Unless there are grounds for immediate dismissal, the volunteer should be given a warning and an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with their Site Supervisor. Prior to dismissal of a volunteer, staff shall advise HR.

9. Reasons for Dismissal

- a. Volunteers may be dismissed at the discretion of the site supervisor or HR at any time with or without cause. .

10. Resignation

- a. Volunteers may resign at any time. It is requested that the volunteer provide as much advance notice as possible. Site staff should notify HR immediately of all volunteer resignations.
- b. Volunteers will return all city-issued property on their last day of volunteer service to the city.

E. Volunteer Support and Recognition

1. Insurance Coverage

- a. Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, all volunteers are covered by Worker's Compensation.

2. Access to City of Avondale Property and Materials

- a. Volunteers will only use City-owned equipment for City-related purposes. City equipment is not available for personal/private use by volunteers. Volunteers will be fully trained in the use of all City equipment that pertains both directly and indirectly to the performance of their duties.

3. Volunteer Use of City Vehicles and Transporting Volunteers

- a. Whether volunteers may drive City vehicles is decided by the Risk Manager. Please verify department policy with Risk Management before requesting a volunteer to drive a City vehicle. Staff members may transport volunteers in City vehicles. Staff members transporting volunteers in their personal automobile are assuming full *personal* liability. The same is true for volunteers transporting other volunteers in their personal vehicle.

4. Providing References for Volunteers

- a. Volunteers may list their volunteer service on employment and other applications and staff may be contacted by outside agencies for a reference check. The release of reference information should follow the format used by the City for its employees: dates of volunteer service, position title and description of duties, and the number of hours served.
- b. In special situations additional information may be released on a need-to-know basis where the volunteer may present a danger to others or a danger to property. Such instances should be referred to HR for handling.
- c. **Criminal history background check information is confidential and cannot be released to other organizations.**

5. Discounts

- a. Volunteers are eligible to participate in the discounted activities and events offered through the Human Resources Department. Site supervisors are encouraged to assist volunteers in obtaining these discounts.

6. Training

- a. Volunteers are eligible to participate in training offered by the City of Avondale at the discretion of the site supervisor.

7. Employment

- a. There is no obligation to place, interview or hire a volunteer for any paid position with the City of Avondale. Volunteers are given no preference when it comes to hiring. Never make the statement that volunteering can lead to employment with the City.

8. Tax Deductions for Volunteer Service

- a. Some expenses related to volunteering *may* be deductible; however, tax laws change yearly. Any inquiries from volunteers should be directed to their own accountant or IRS Publication 526 – *Charitable Contributions* for current information.

VI. APPROVAL



David Fitzhugh, City Manager

November 17, 2014

Date of City Manager's Approval