



## **CITY OF LAKE FOREST VOLUNTEER PROGRAM VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

### **I. OVERVIEW**

The volunteer program is designed to coordinate and manage all volunteer efforts, which support existing services provided to the community. The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and direction to staff and volunteers alike. This handbook is intended to give you the information necessary to help make your time spent volunteering a positive experience.

### **II. MISSION**

The City of Lake Forest's volunteer program is committed to encouraging community participation and the comprehensive coordination of volunteers to enhance municipal services.

The volunteer program objectives are:

- A. To develop a reliable and varied skilled network of human resources to support the delivery of services to the community.
- B. To provide opportunities for all segments of the community to participate in local government.

### **III. COORDINATION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

Human Resources is responsible for coordination of staff and volunteers so that their combined efforts jointly enrich and expand opportunities for the delivery of quality services to the community.

#### **A. What Volunteers Can Expect from the City**

Volunteers are individuals who contribute time, energy, and service to the City of Lake Forest, which the City acknowledges and supports as valuable resources.

#### **Volunteers can expect the City to:**

1. Provide a clear understanding of the assignment.
2. Provide orientation, training, and supervision for the task(s) assigned.
3. Provide an appropriate workspace.

4. Provide necessary information about the workplace and program goals needed to carry out assignments.
5. Treat volunteers with courtesy and respect.
6. Respect the value of a volunteer's time by providing tasks that best match the volunteer's interests, talents, and skills.
7. Be receptive to suggestions and comments from volunteers.
8. Respond promptly to any complaints that are brought to the attention of the supervisor or Human Resources.
9. Be treated as a valued member of the City's team.

#### B. What the City Expects from Volunteers

Volunteers who make a commitment to the City are accountable to City supervisor(s), coworkers, and the people they serve.

#### **The City expects volunteers to:**

1. Read and follow the City's Volunteer Handbook.
2. Perform assigned responsibilities and duties to the best of one's ability.
3. Report to an assignment on time and as scheduled.
4. Keep confidential or sensitive information confidential.
5. Accept the authority of the assigned supervisor.
6. Work cooperatively with fellow volunteers, City employees, and others.
7. Practice safety at all times and immediately report all on-the-job accidents, injuries, and unsafe procedures or conditions to the supervisor.
8. Provide adequate notice before terminating the volunteer relationship.
9. Return all City property in a timely fashion.
10. Share ideas and suggestions with City staff.

#### **IV. BECOMING A VOLUNTEER**

Each volunteer must complete an initial information form, liability waiver form and acknowledgment of Workers' Compensation coverage. It is important for us to know of any limitations based on medical conditions which may affect your volunteering. If you are a minor, your parents must also sign these forms. No one may volunteer unless a completed liability waiver form is on file with Human Resources.

All volunteers go through a formal screening process and must be accepted by the City as a volunteer. The level of screening will depend upon the type of volunteer opportunity you choose. Upon completion of the screening process, you will receive an orientation from Human Resources and your home department.

## V. BEING A VOLUNTEER

### A. City Policies

Several City policies apply to volunteers. Please refer to Section VI for highlighted information regarding these policies. Complete copies of these policies are available from Human Resources.

### B. Insurance

Liability insurance is provided for you as a volunteer for the City. As a volunteer, you are covered by the City's general liability policy so long as you are acting within the scope and course of your assigned duties.

Automobile insurance follows the automobile. If you are driving a City vehicle, City insurance will be in effect. Likewise, if you are driving your own vehicle, even while on City business, your automobile insurance will be applicable on a primary basis per the California Vehicle Code, CVC 17152.

We conduct a motor vehicle driving record check for all volunteers who drive as part of their volunteer assignment, so we ask that you provide proof of insurance and a copy of your driver's license to Human Resources if this applies to you.

### C. Volunteer Hours

The City must keep track of the hours you volunteer to assure coverage under our general liability and Workers' Compensation programs. Timesheets are to be filled out each time a volunteer works.

### D. Placement and Schedules

Volunteer assignment schedules are diverse and varied depending on the department, program and or location of volunteers. Volunteers should work with their supervisor to set a schedule that is mutually acceptable. If a volunteer cannot make it to his or her assignment on a scheduled day, the volunteer should notify his or her job supervisor as soon as possible.

### E. Volunteer Duties

A description of your assignment will be developed prior to your volunteer placement so that you are provided a clear, complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of your assignment.

You may not perform professional services for which certification is required, unless you already hold the appropriate certificate or license, and have received approval from Human Resources. Upon seeking

approval, please make sure to provide copies of any certificates or licenses, including any special driving licenses, first aid or CPR certification.

#### F. Problem Solving

If a problem should arise concerning any condition of your volunteering with the City, you should attempt to reconcile the matter with your supervisor. However, if you feel that a satisfactory solution to your problem has not been reached from discussion within the department, then notify Human Resources.

If you have questions about any of this information, you should speak with your supervisor or Human Resources.

### **VI. CITY POLICIES**

#### A. Risk Management

Human Resources and the Risk Manager work together to minimize any potential risks to the volunteer or City. This means that before volunteers begin their service, the supervisor is responsible for informing the volunteer of safe work practices as required for all employees and volunteers. Any injury to the volunteer or losses to any third party which involve a volunteer must be reported and processed in accordance with existing City policies on matters of this nature.

#### B. Accidents in City Vehicles

In the event of an accident involving a City vehicle or your own vehicle, you are responsible for immediately notifying your supervisor, who will help you complete an accident investigation form.

Any volunteer, during the course of volunteering, who is involved in a reportable motor vehicle accident may be required to take a urine, blood or breath test to determine whether or not that volunteer's ability to drive was impaired by alcohol or a controlled substance as defined by federal law.

For purposes of this policy, a reportable accident is defined as one that injures someone, or where the damage to a vehicle is extensive enough that the vehicle must be towed from the scene of the accident (this definition does not include damage that can be repaired at the scene such as a flat tire or broken headlight) or property damage exceeds \$750.

#### C. Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all City facilities, including all City vehicles.

#### D. Alcohol

Volunteers shall not consume, possess, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages while conducting City business. Volunteers who violate this policy are subject to immediate dismissal. Volunteers are required to follow the City's Substance Abuse Policy.

#### E. Drugs

Any volunteer who uses, brings, possesses or is suspected of being under the influence of any form of controlled substance, except legally prescribed drugs taken as directed, is subject to immediate removal from the volunteer program. In addition, any volunteer who transfers, sells, or attempts to sell a controlled substance on City property or while on City business, at any time, is subject to immediate removal. Volunteers who are taking legally prescribed controlled substances or over-the-counter medications which may affect their ability to safely perform their volunteer duties must notify the supervisor of their volunteer assignment. Volunteers are required to comply with the City's Substance Abuse Policy.

#### F. Attendance and Punctuality

Volunteers are expected to report on time to their assignments. The supervisor should be notified of any absence in a timely manner. Unexcused absences may lead to removal from the program. For those times when a volunteer is ill and unable to complete their assignment, a volunteer is responsible for notifying the supervisor as soon as possible.

#### G. City Equipment

Volunteers may use City equipment (i.e., telephones, computers, printers, copiers, etc.) per the City's Computer and Telecommunications Equipment Use Policy.

#### H. Confidentiality

Private, sensitive, or confidential information discussed or handled within the course of a volunteer assignment must be kept strictly confidential. Any questions about what information is appropriate to release or discuss should be communicated between the volunteer and the supervisor.

I. Customer Relations

A volunteer is a City ambassador, and should conduct City business with staff and the public in a customer-friendly manner.

J. Dress Policy

Volunteers are expected to dress and groom in accordance with accepted business standards as defined in the City's Dress Code Policy, particularly if the assignment involves dealing with the public. Volunteer attire must be clean and non-offensive, and may not interfere with safety in the work environment.

K. Driving Record and Insurance

Volunteers whose service requires operation of a motor vehicle must maintain a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Any change in either must be reported to the supervisor immediately.

Automobile insurance follows the automobile. If driving one's own vehicle, even while on City business, the volunteer's insurance will be applicable on a primary basis per the California Vehicle Code, CVC 17152. 3. Liability insurance is provided to a City volunteer under the City's general liability policy, so long as the volunteer is acting within the scope and course of assigned duties.

L. Harassment

In accordance with City policies, all City workers and volunteers have a right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive. Consistent with the City's respect for the rights and dignity of each employee and volunteer, discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy status), gender, gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age (over 40 years), genetic information, mental or physical disability (whether perceived or actual), ancestry, citizenship status, uniformed service member status, medical condition, and/or national origin, or any characteristic protected by law, will not be sanctioned or tolerated.

M. Record-Keeping and Reporting

Accurate records of time and attendance must be kept for all volunteers, and ensures coverage under the City's liability and Workers' Compensation programs. One-time volunteers should sign a sign-in sheet. Regular volunteers should fill out a timesheet each time they work.

#### N. Reporting Emergencies

In case of a medical emergency, accident, or injury, a volunteer is required to report it immediately to the assigned supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for completing any related forms and reports required by Human Resources. Though the volunteer is not an employee of the City, a volunteer is covered under the City's worker's compensation program while acting within the scope and course of assigned duties.

#### O. Safety

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Volunteers are to be trained to be alert at all times to safety precautions and hazards. Unsafe conditions should be reported to a supervisor immediately.

#### P. Software, Internet, Email Policy

1. The City requires computer-using volunteers to read, sign, and adhere to the City's Computer and Telecommunications Equipment Use Policy.
2. Volunteers acknowledge that all computers, software, and computer information or data is City property. There is no expectation of personal privacy in the use of the City's computer resources.
3. Volunteers are prohibited from unauthorized copying of software from City computers, or downloading or installing software of any kind. Volunteers are expected to adhere to all City policies involving computers and electronic devices, which includes prohibiting the use of unauthorized copies of software on City computers.
4. Volunteers must adhere to the City's policy governing appropriate use of the Internet per the City's Computer and Telecommunications Equipment Use Policy.
5. Volunteers acknowledge that use of City email is a public record and that there should be no expectation of privacy in such use.

#### Q. Theft/Property Loss

Theft of any kind will not be tolerated and is grounds for removal and prosecution.

#### R. Volunteers Serving Minors and Elderly Populations

The City will exercise appropriate care in the placement of volunteers into positions serving populations that include minors, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Depending on the nature of the assignment, volunteers may be required to be fingerprinted and submit to a background check. You will be informed if fingerprinting is required for

your position. Volunteers who do not agree to the required screening may be refused an assignment.

#### S. Removal from Volunteer Program

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules, policies and regulations of the City, or fail to perform their assignments satisfactorily, are subject to removal from the Volunteer Program. A volunteer may be removed at any time with or without reason.

### **VII. CODE OF ETHICS**

We encourage you to read and practice the following code of ethics for volunteers:

As a volunteer, I realize that I am subject to a code of ethics similar to that which binds the professionals in the fields in which I am volunteering. Like them, I assume certain responsibilities and expect to account for the activities I perform as a volunteer.

- A. I understand 'volunteer' to mean that I have agreed to work without compensation, but having been accepted as a worker, I expect to do my work according to standards.
- B. I promise to work with an attitude of open-mindedness; to be willing to be trained for the assignment; to bring to the assignment interest and attention.
- C. I understand that I am expected to live up to my work commitment, and I will give ample notice if I cannot fulfill it.
- D. I will keep confidential matters confidential.
- E. I believe that I have an obligation to my work, to those who direct it, to my colleagues, to those for whom it is done, and to the public.

### **VIII. VOLUNTEER RIGHTS**

Each volunteer in the City is viewed as an important part of the organization's ability to get the job done. As a volunteer you are accorded rights as individuals and volunteers. Below are some of the rights volunteers may expect during their tenure with the City. In addition, please refer to Attachment A, the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997.

- A. Volunteers are to be treated with respect and courtesy and valued for their contribution.



- B. Volunteers are to receive proper training for the job to be done.
- C. Volunteers are not to be discriminated against because of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, handicap, marital status, family, or sexual orientation or any other protected category.
- D. Volunteers will receive information on issues regarding legal protection, liability and other concerns.
- E. Volunteers will be recognized for their efforts in providing program services.
- F. Volunteers will know as much about the organization as possible.