

DURHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

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POLICY #: 16.4.1

SUBJECT: Volunteer Program

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Durham Police Department, and as provided by RSA 516:36, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the department's position on the utility and management of its volunteer program and provides guidance on its management and administration.

POLICY

Volunteers can be an important part of any organization and are proven to be a valuable asset to law enforcement agencies. Volunteers help to increase police responsiveness, service delivery, information input, and they provide new program opportunities. In addition, volunteers can bring new skills and expertise to the job and prompt new enthusiasm. It is the policy of this police department to use qualified volunteers for specified tasks and duties that can create efficiencies for the department and improve services to the community. **Volunteers are not sworn officers. They are intended to supplement and support, rather than supplant sworn officers and civilian personnel.**

DEFINITIONS

Volunteer: Someone who performs service for the department without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services rendered. Volunteers are considered an auxiliary of the Durham Police Department.

Volunteer Coordinator: The Volunteer Coordinator is a paid member of the agency that manages the volunteer services for the department.

PROCEDURE

A. Administration

1. The Captain shall be designated as the volunteer coordinator. The Captain, or his/her designee shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Recruiting, selecting and training qualified volunteers for various positions.
- b. Maintaining employment records for each volunteer.
- c. Maintaining a record of volunteer schedules and work hours.
- d. Complete and disseminate necessary paperwork and information as appropriate.
- e. Planning periodic recognition events.
- f. Administering discipline when warranted.

B. Recruitment

Although not an employment opportunity, volunteers shall be recruited on a continuous basis consistent with this department's policy on equal opportunity non-discriminatory employment. A primary qualification for participation in the application process shall be an interest in and an ability to assist the agency in serving the public.

C. Screening

1. All prospective volunteers shall complete the volunteer application and waiver form.
2. The volunteer coordinator, or designee, shall conduct a face to face interview with an applicant under consideration.
3. 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 record
 - b. References

D. Selection and Placement

1. Upon their selection, applicants shall be notified of their acceptance prior to the start of service. Notification methods will be at the discretion of the Captain.
2. All volunteers shall be required to sign a volunteer agreement.
3. All volunteers shall receive a copy of the volunteer policy.
4. Volunteers shall be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills, abilities and the needs of the agency.

E. Position Description, Functions and Responsibilities

1. Volunteers shall be provided with a comprehensive written position description detailing their duties.
2. Volunteers shall be used only in accordance with this description. Volunteers shall not work without a written task description or outside the limits of task responsibilities specified in the task description.
3. Position descriptions shall be reviewed periodically to ensure that they accurately reflect the volunteer's duties and responsibilities.
4. Volunteers serve in many capacities within the department. Depending upon the assignment, volunteers may be required to perform the following duties;

- A. Establish telephone contact with prior victims of crime in an effort to determine whether additional information about the crime has been discovered. Report the information back to the investigating officer.
- B. Establish phone contact with the owners of found property that has come into the possession of the police department. Arrange for the return of the property and communicate the information to the property officer.
- C. Answer in-coming telephone calls. Place out-going telephone calls. Transfer calls and take messages for department staff.
- D. Assist with records filing and processing of agency records. Assist with the copying of records.
- E. Assist in other agency functions/operations where the skills and abilities of the volunteer would be of assistance.

F. Training

- 1. Volunteers shall be provided with an orientation program to acquaint them with the department policies and procedures that have a direct impact on their task assignment.
- 2. Volunteers shall receive position specific training to ensure they have adequate knowledge and skills to complete tasks required by the position.
- 3. Volunteers shall receive periodic ongoing training as deemed appropriate by their supervisor or volunteer coordinator.
- 4. Training shall reinforce to volunteers that they may not intentionally represent themselves as, or by omission infer that they are sworn officers or other full time members of the department. They shall always represent themselves as volunteers.
- 5. All volunteers shall comply with the rules of conduct and with all orders and directives, either oral or written, issued by the department.

G. Fitness for Duty

- 1. No volunteer shall report to the Durham Police Department when his or her judgment or physical condition has been impaired by alcohol, medication, drugs, illness or injury.
- 2. Volunteers shall not report to work within 8 hours of consuming an alcoholic beverage.
- 3. Any volunteer who becomes aware that they are the subject of an investigation or arrest shall immediately report the facts to their supervisor.
- 4. 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. Driver's license status
 - b. Medical condition
 - c. Arrests
 - d. Criminal Investigations

H. Dress Code

1. Volunteers shall conform to department approved dress consistent with their duty assignment.
2. If the Chief of Police authorizes an article of clothing for volunteers to wear, it shall be readily distinguishable from those worn by sworn officers.
3. The Durham Police Department may request a volunteer to return any issued uniform or agency clothing at the termination of service.

I. Confidentiality

1. After the completion of the screening process, volunteers may have access to confidential information such as criminal histories or investigative files. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor or departmental policy, all police 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 departmental policy and supervisory personnel.
2. Each volunteer shall sign a non-disclosure agreement. Subsequent disclosure of any confidential information, verbally, in writing, or by any other means shall be grounds for immediate dismissal and possible criminal prosecution.
3. Volunteers shall not address public gatherings, appear on the radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as correspondents to a newspaper or other periodical, release or divulge any information concerning the activities of the agency, or maintain that they represent the agency in such matters without permission from the proper agency personnel.

J. Property and Equipment

1. Volunteers may be issued an identification card and if instructed they must be worn at all times while volunteering.
2. Any fixed and portable equipment issued by the agency shall be for official and authorized use only.
3. Any property or equipment issued to a volunteer shall remain the property of the agency and shall be returned at the termination of service.

K. Disciplinary Procedures/Termination

1. A volunteer may be removed from the volunteer program at the discretion of the Chief of Police. Termination of volunteers shall not be subject to due process considerations and volunteers shall have no property interests in their continued volunteering assignment.

L. Evaluation

1. An evaluation of the overall volunteer program shall be conducted on an annual basis.

M. Weapons

1. Volunteers shall not be in possession of any weapon when acting in their capacity as a volunteer.