
**STOREY COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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AUTHORITY: BOC
COUNTY MANAGER: PAW

SUBJECT: VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

I. Purpose:

The employer recognizes that there are benefits to members of the community to become involved in the delivery of the employer's programs and services on a volunteer basis. Being a volunteer is a privilege for the volunteer and for the organization s/he serves. Individuals have an interest in assisting public agencies by applying their knowledge, skills, and experience to a worthwhile endeavor. Also, the community and the employer receive enhanced services because of the individual's specialized skills and commitment. Using volunteers is a true win-win situation for those willing to volunteer for the employer and for the community.

II. Policy:

This policy covers the essential elements of an effective volunteer program which is compliant with applicable state and federal regulations pertaining to the employer's volunteers. As this policy is broad in scope, individual departments should establish additional specific requirements consistent with this policy to guide the use of volunteers within the specific program areas.

2.1 Definition of Volunteer

County volunteers are uncompensated individuals who perform services directly related to the business of the county for the benefit of the volunteer, to support the humanitarian, charitable, or public service activities of the county, or to gain experience in specific endeavors. To qualify as a county volunteer, an individual must be willing to provide service according to the procedures of the county administrative policy and the policies of the respective department.

In order to maximize the effectiveness of volunteers and minimize risk exposure to both volunteers and the county, this policy will apply to all county departments and volunteers. Exceptions to the conditions of this policy may be brought to the Administrative Officer and/or Personnel Director, and the county's risk management officer, for review and approval on a case-by-case basis.

2.2 Types of Volunteers

- a. **General Volunteer:** One who is not assigned to sensitive areas or situations and does not require particular licensing or certification. Examples of departments using such volunteers might be, but are not limited to, building and planning, public works, and general administrative offices.
- b. **Public Safety Volunteer:** One who perform services related to law enforcement and public safety. Placement of volunteers in these areas may require the full law enforcement background check including complete physical, psychological, polygraph and drug screenings, or a background investigation similar to that of law enforcement personnel. Reserve Deputy Sheriff's shall not lose the status of volunteer if or when on an occasional basis they might receive a flat stipend for special events or where a private company, entity, or individual provides compensation for such activity to offset costs to the Sheriff by contract or other written agreement.
- c. **Internal Volunteer:** one who is an employee of Storey County, Storey County Sheriff's Office, Virginia City Tourism Commission, or the Storey County Fire Protection District, and who is volunteering for a job distinctly different from their job classification. Current public officers and employees may act in a volunteer capacity, but are not permitted to voluntarily perform services which are the same or in any way similar to the duties for which they are paid to perform by the same agency. The duties of the internal volunteer shall in no way conflict with the mission, objectives, or activities of the employer.

2.3 Program Planning and Implementation

Prior to implementing a volunteer program, the subject department must develop and maintain a written plan and procedures to supplement this policy that address specific methods to recruit, interview, select, orientate, train, supervise, track, and recognize volunteers. Department heads will designate an employee within the department to be responsible for the volunteer program and who will serve as the primary contact person for the volunteer.

The program will be reviewed by the Administrative Officer and/or Personnel Director for validation that it conforms to the county administrative policies before the program is implemented.

- a. The plan may include:
 - i. A program to recognize and award volunteer services is encouraged.
 - ii. A program for opportunity to advance or assume greater responsibility in the volunteer position or program.
- b. The plan must include:
 - i. A statement that the program will conform to administrative policies of the county and department.
 - ii. A statement describing how and by which department employee the volunteers will be overseen, and to whom the volunteer will report.

- iii. Job assignment descriptions for each volunteer position.
 - iv. A position statement for the designated volunteer coordinator which must be included with the employee's job description in accordance with county policy.
 - v. Absenteeism standards and procedures.
 - vi. A needs assessment and a statement outlining how volunteers will be used to meet these needs.
 - vii. A budget for any personnel costs for overseeing the program, operating costs, and direct and indirect costs.
- c. In addition to the above items, the Personnel Director/Administrative Officer and/or the County Manager may require the department head to submit comprehensive written sub-policies that address unique circumstances and needs of the volunteer program, such as for example, those particular to the Virginia City Tourism Commission's "Living Legends", "Gunfighter Liaison Program", and the Sheriff's Office's "Citizen Emergency Response Team". The department sub-policies shall be assessed by the Administrative Officer and/or Personnel Director, the County Manager, and other applicable agencies (e.g., Storey County Fire Protection District or Sheriff's Office) for conformance with the provisions of the Storey County administrative policies and other applicable federal, state, and county regulations and policies.

2.4 Recruiting, Screening, Interviewing, and Selecting Volunteers

As with employees, the employer's ability to meet its goals and objectives is directly related to the skills and abilities of volunteers selected. Criteria for selecting volunteers will be developed in the same manner as used for selecting new employees.

The employer prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation directed at volunteers on the basis of their race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, pregnancy, genetic information, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, membership in the Nevada National Guard or United States armed services, or domestic partnership similarly as it does with its regular employees.

The recruitment, screening, and interviewing process should be planned and sufficiently thorough to result in selecting the best volunteer possible for departmental needs.

Volunteer applicants engaged in activities for the employer on a regular basis shall complete the employer's volunteer application, including an acknowledgment that the function to be performed is not a paid position and the person is truly volunteering his/her services at the pleasure of the county, as well as complete new-member workplace orientation and training.

The employer will solve problems associated with the volunteer's performance or behavior. However, if problems cannot be corrected, the volunteer should be dismissed from volunteer service.

Specific requirements that apply to employees in certain occupations such as fingerprinting, detailed background checks, and screening for drug use apply to volunteers performing similar occupations.

2.5 Managing Volunteers

- a. **Supervision.** Volunteers shall receive appropriate oversight for the functions performed including an orientation to the employer's policies and procedures, departmental operating procedures, safety practices, and other relevant information. Day-to-day oversight of volunteers shall be conducted as with employees.

Adequate equipment and supplies, as well as a safe working environment, will be provided for volunteers.

The employer will maintain detailed and accurate records of volunteer activities including a roster of active volunteers. The date, time, and duration of each volunteer activity session must be recorded, along with the work performed. The employer will remove volunteers from the roster whenever volunteers are inactive for more than 30 days, except under certain circumstances as approved by the employer.

Annual performance evaluations may be completed for each volunteer. However, volunteers serve at the pleasure of the employer and are subject to dismissal at any time with or without cause.

- b. **Safety Sensitive Positions and Vehicle Use.** Volunteers serving in safety sensitive positions pursuant to county policies or operating county vehicles shall be subject to licensing, physical and other examinations, drug and alcohol testing, and other requirements as regular employees pursuant to county policy.
- c. **Conflict of Interest.** Volunteers, like employees, are required to disclose any business, commercial or financial interest that they may have, where such interest might be construed by a reasonable person as being in real, potential, or apparent conflict with their official duties for the organization. A determination may be made by the organization to terminate or modify a volunteer assignment if a serious conflict of interest exists, including if the volunteer assignment causes conflict with the scheduling and performance of the employee with the employer, if the volunteer cannot or chooses not to modify or end such conflict on his/her own accord.
- d. **Use of Organization Affiliation.** A volunteer shall not use his/her affiliation as a volunteer with the county in connection with partisan politics, religious matters, or community issues contrary to the position taken by the county.
- e. **Speaking on Behalf of the County.** A volunteer shall not represent themselves as anything other than a volunteer while performing duties as a volunteer, unless specifically authorized and to the extent specified in writing for a special purpose.

- f. **Confidentiality.** The county is committed to maintaining client's and customer's rights to protection of their personal information as allowed by law. Employees and volunteers in the county must be committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality customers and clients, particularly their personal and personal health related information subject to HIPAA. Breaches of privacy that put the county at risk of legal consequences may result in immediate dismissal of the volunteer.
- g. **Open Door Policy.** Should a volunteer have concerns about his/her work environment, s/he should report it promptly to the department designated volunteer coordinator or the department head. If the volunteer is not satisfied with the response of the volunteer coordinator and the department head, s/he may raise the issue with the Administrative Officer and/or Personnel Director. Every effort will be made to achieve expedient and effective resolution in a manner consistent with county policy.

2.6 Risk of Injury and Property Damage:

- a. **Workers' Compensation.** Volunteer must be covered by the employer's workers' compensation plan.
- b. **Remuneration and reimbursement.** Volunteers may be reimbursed for expenses incurred. In addition, the employer may provide limited and reasonable benefits and/or nominal remuneration to volunteers. The benefits provided must not, however, be in an amount or of a type that implies that the volunteer is being paid a wage or salary for time spent as a volunteer, or for the quantity or quality of the work performed. All such benefits must be approved, in advance, by the Personnel Director and/or Administrative Officer.
- c. **Damage to Volunteer's Property.** In the event the personal property of the volunteer is damaged while the volunteer is serving in authorized or unauthorized volunteer status, the county nor any designated volunteer management agency under contract with the county will be responsible to reimburse for the damage. Members of the Storey County Sheriff's Office volunteer and Reserve programs are covered under the same conditions as Sheriff's employees.
- d. **Damage to Private Property.** In the event private property is damaged by a volunteer serving in only an authorized volunteer status, provisions of the administrative policies will apply.

III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW: The County Personnel Director and/or Administrative Officer will review this policy every 5 years or sooner as necessary.