



TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS

 Proudly Policing Since 1841	SUBJECT Volunteer Program		 Nationally Accredited 1986
	CHIEF OF POLICE <i>Signature on File</i>		
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AUTHORITY/RELATED REFERENCES

COT Administrative Policy 705, Alcohol and Drugs
 General Order 2, Chain of Command – General Management
 General Order 4, Appearance and Uniform Regulations
 General Order 46, Rules of Conduct
 General Order 77, Computer and Data Utilization

ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

CALEA Chapter 16

KEY WORD INDEX

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POLICY

In an effort to improve efficiency and services to the community, the Department has established a volunteer program which utilizes qualified persons in support of the Department's mission. Volunteers perform specified tasks and duties which supplement and support the work of Department employees. Members are responsible for adhering to the protocols of this written directive in support of the Volunteer Program.

DEFINITIONS

Member: Any employee or volunteer of the Department.

Volunteer: A person who performs services for the Department without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services rendered.

Volunteer Coordinator: A member (employee or volunteer) who serves as a central coordinating point (Background & Recruiting supervisor)

PROCEDURES

I. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

- A. The objective of the volunteer program is to provide the Department with assistance from those looking to gain knowledge in a particular field of interest and contribute to the needs of the department.
 - 1. Volunteers can be an important part of any organization and are proven to be a valuable asset to law enforcement agencies.
 - 2. Volunteers can bring new skills and expertise to the job and prompt new enthusiasm.
 - 3. Volunteers are involved in a wide range of administrative, clerical, and technical duties throughout the Department.
- B. This written directive establishes the Department's utility and management of the volunteer program and provides guidance on the program's management and administration.
- C. Volunteers supplement the efforts of Department employees but are not sworn officers.

II. QUALIFICATIONS

- A. A person's primary qualification for participation in the volunteer program is an interest in, and an ability to assist the agency.
- B. Persons interested in becoming a volunteer are required to contact the volunteer coordinator and if there is availability then complete an application and submit it to the Volunteer Coordinator (VC) along with a Personal History Statement (PHS)

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- C. Persons who apply for a volunteer assignment in order to fulfill a court-mandated community service requirement, or hours for a school requirement, will not be accepted into the volunteer program.
- D. Persons interested in becoming a volunteer must commit to a minimum of 16 hours of volunteer service per year.
- E. In order to be selected, a volunteer must meet the following qualifications and submit to a background investigation:
 - 1. Be a citizen of the United States,
 - 2. Be eighteen (18) years of age or older,
 - 3. Have at least a high school diploma or GED,
 - 4. Be of good moral character,
 - 5. Not have been dishonorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces,
 - 6. Not have been convicted or pled no contest, or had adjudication withheld to a felony or any offense that would be a felony if committed in Florida,
 - 7. Not have used or possessed marijuana in the past one (1) year.
 - 8. Not have illegally used or possessed any controlled substance within the past 7 years and NO sale of controlled substance history is permitted.
 - 9. Have on file with the Department a completed, processed application, and
 - 10. Be able to perform the essential functions required of assigned duties.
- F. The background investigation may include, but is not necessarily limited to:
 - 1. Employment and/or military history and status,
 - 2. State and national criminal history records (FCIC/NCIC),
 - 3. Local criminal history records (JIS),

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4. Department intelligence records,
- G. Notwithstanding the mandate of subsection E 6 above, any criminal history revealed in the background investigation will be reviewed and taken into consideration in the selection decision of the prospective volunteer.
- H. The Department reserves the right to deny a person participation in the volunteer program if it is determined the person's participation in the program will, or will likely:
 1. Bring discredit or harm to the City of Tallahassee, the Department, members, or the policing profession, or
 2. Adversely affect the harmony among members in the workplace.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. A person wanting to become a volunteer with the Department should contact the Volunteer Coordinator (VC).
- B. After conducting a brief initial screening (telephone or in-person), and there is availability in the field the person is interested in, the VC will provide the applicant the volunteer application along with the PHS.
- C. The potential volunteer must complete the application and PHS and return it to the VC.
- D. After receipt of the application and PHS, the VC will assign the application to a background investigator for a background check.
- E. If the applicant successfully completes the background process, they will be notified of a date to report to the department to meet their supervisor and discuss what work will be expected.
- F. Contemporaneous to the volunteer's start of service, the VC or their designee, is responsible for providing the person with:
 1. Copies of general orders applicable to their volunteer service, such as:
 - a. GO-4 (Appearance and Uniform Regulations),
 - b. GO-41 (Citizen and Policing Program),

- c. GO-46 (Rules of Conduct), and
 - d. GO-77 (Computer and Data Utilization).
- G. The VC will ensure the new volunteer receives an ID/access card with the appropriate level of access based on where the volunteer is assigned.

IV. PLACEMENT, TRAINING, AND RETENTION

- A. The success of the volunteer program is directly related to the supervision of the volunteers.
- B. Unit supervisors are responsible for ensuring a planned, specific job is ready and waiting for each volunteer when they arrive at their workstation.
- C. PLACEMENT –
 - 1. Volunteers will be placed in assignments based upon the needs of the department and availability at the time of request.
 - 2. Volunteers will be placed in assignments based on their interest and availability.
- D. TRAINING –
 - 1. The unit supervisor, or designee, shall provide orientation and policy training specific to the volunteer's assignment.
 - 2. Volunteers shall receive periodic training as deemed appropriate by their unit supervisor.
- E. RETENTION –
 - 1. The Department accepts the service of volunteers with the understanding such service may be terminated at any time, for any reason.
 - 2. A volunteer may resign at any time but should provide advance notice whenever possible.
 - 3. Volunteers shall not be placed into any job assignment without first consulting the VC.

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4. Volunteers shall be supervised by the sworn or civilian supervisor of the unit to which they are assigned.
5. The affected unit supervisor is responsible for promptly notifying the VC in any of the following situations involving a volunteer:
 - a. Excessive absences, or no notification in advance of absences,
 - b. Poor/concerning work performance,
 - c. Inability to perform their assignment(s) after reasonable training,
 - d. An on-the-job injury or accident,
 - e. Personality conflicts with supervisor or coworkers,
 - f. Any improper conduct, language, or behavior, or
 - g. A request is made for a leave of absence.
6. An affected unit supervisor seeking the transfer or dismissal of a volunteer is required to contact the VC with the request.

V. VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Volunteer Coordinator (VC) is responsible for the overall management of the volunteer program.
- B. In conducting prospective volunteer interviews, the VC is responsible for:
 1. Ensuring the applicant meets the qualifications of a volunteer as outlined in subsection II B above,
 2. Addressing any questions the applicant may have about being a volunteer or the CAPP.
 3. Reviewing all volunteer applications,

VI. UNIT SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Unit supervisors who utilize volunteers in their work unit play a vital role in the success of the volunteer program and are responsible for adhering to the protocols in this section.

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- A. Unit supervisors shall ensure each volunteer under their supervision is:
 - 1. Properly trained and qualified to perform assigned tasks,
 - 2. Adequately supervised,
 - 3. Readily identifiable as a volunteer (i.e., wearing their proximity/ID card at all times),
 - 4. Completing tasks within the parameters of their assignment description,
 - 5. Keeping a record of their attendance, and submitting it to the VC on a monthly,
 - 6. Appropriately attired for the assignment, and
 - 7. Recognized for their work and thanked often.
- B. Unit supervisors with volunteers assigned to their work unit are responsible for:
 - 1. Establishing and implementing each volunteer's work schedule,
 - 2. Assigning each volunteer job duties (unit supervisors may delegate authority regarding a volunteer assignment to one of their sworn or civilian subordinates, but not to another volunteer),
 - 3. Approving each volunteer's monthly hours, and
 - 4. Promptly notifying the VC about situations as described in subsection IV E 6 above.

VII. VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Participants in the volunteer program are responsible for many of the policies and procedures applicable to Department employees, most notably the following:

- A. Volunteers, in the course of carrying out their duties, are responsible for complying with the applicable sections of General Order 46, and shall:
 - 1. Adhere to the written directives applicable to their volunteer assignment, and

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2. Obey orders and directions issued by a Department supervisor.
- B. Volunteers shall not work outside the limits of job responsibilities specified by their unit supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator (VC).
- C. Volunteers shall report to their supervisor any changes in status which may affect their ability to fulfill their duties. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. Medical condition,
 2. Being arrested, or
 3. Identified as a suspect in a crime or under criminal investigation.
- D. Volunteers shall report for duty in a state of physical and mental readiness to perform their assigned duties.
- E. Maintain a record of their attendance/volunteer work hours.
- F. DRESS CODE –
 1. While carrying out their duties, volunteers shall adhere to the applicable attire protocols of General Order 4, to include:
 - a. A neat, clean, and orderly appearance, and
 - b. Presenting themselves in a manner which does not bring discredit to the Department, the City of Tallahassee, or the policing profession.
 2. Volunteers are required to display their proximity/ID card at all times when performing volunteer services inside or outside the Department building.
 3. Volunteers are permitted to dress in business professional clothing for their work assignments.
 4. No volunteer shall wear their ID/access card while off duty.
 5. Volunteers are not permitted to carry any weapons or firearms while engaged in the performance of their duties (common pocketknives are excluded from this prohibition).

G. INTERACTION WITH OTHERS –

1. Volunteers report directly to one supervisor and the VC; however, in matters directly related to a law enforcement function or situation, volunteers shall accept the direction and guidance of any sworn member.
2. As a representative of the Department, volunteers shall conduct themselves in a manner expected of all members, demonstrating the highest standards of professionalism in order to earn the public trust.
3. Volunteers shall, at all times, be respectful, courteous, and civil to members and the general public.
4. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the Department only within the parameters of their volunteer duties.
5. Without the express permission from the Chief of Police or designee, volunteers shall not state or otherwise maintain they represent the Department in any matter, to include doing so by:
 - a. Addressing public gatherings,
 - b. Appearing on radio, television, or Internet blogs,
 - c. Preparing any article for publication, or
 - d. Acting as a correspondent to a newspaper, television, radio, periodical, or Internet news source.
6. Without the express permission from the Chief of Police or designee, volunteers shall not release or divulge any information concerning the activities of the Department.
7. Volunteers shall not identify or represent themselves, with or without their proximity/ID card, as a police officer or Department employee.

H. CONFIDENTIALITY –

1. With appropriate security clearance, volunteers may have access to confidential information such as criminal histories or investigative files.

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2. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor or Department policy, all police information shall be considered confidential.
3. Only information specifically identified and approved by authorized members shall be released.
4. Confidential information shall be given only to persons who have a need and a right to know as determined by Department policy and supervisory members.
5. Volunteers shall not release the following Department information to anyone, orally or in writing, without the express permission of their unit supervisor:
 - a. Personnel information (except their own),
 - b. Investigations (traffic or criminal),
 - c. Reports (traffic or offense),
 - d. Criminal records, or
 - e. Any other Department business deemed confidential in nature.
6. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information, verbally, in writing, or by any other means, subjects a volunteer to immediate dismissal and possible criminal prosecution.

I. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT –

1. Volunteers are authorized to utilize Department equipment only as it relates to their assignment and/or as directed by a supervisor.
2. Upon separation from the Department, volunteers shall return their ID/access card to the VC.

VIII. DISCIPLINE/SEPARATION FROM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- A. A volunteer may be dismissed from the volunteer program at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator.
 1. Dismissal of a volunteer is not subject to due process considerations, and

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2. Volunteers have no property interests in their continued volunteer service.
- B. Volunteers are subject to dismissal for non-adherence to Department written directives, violations of local ordinances, state statutes and federal laws, and/or failure to satisfactorily perform a requirement of the volunteer program or their volunteer assignment.

History: original title (*photographic lineups*) – issued 01/15/1986, retired 11/15/2001. second title (*volunteer program*) – issued 05/15/2003, revised 09/10/2010, 09/01/2016 (*change of title*), and 11/15/2024 (*change of title*).