



Volunteer Manual

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CITY OF NORFOLK RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
501 Boush Street Norfolk, Virginia 23510



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WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with Recreation, Parks and Open Space. We value your time and are glad you have chosen to use your talents to provide valuable services to residents and visitors of our department.

Recreation, Parks and Open Space provides a variety of high quality recreational and leisure programs to enhance the quality of life. The department is responsible for managing over 100 acres of open space, three beach parks, two festival parks, six community parks, 37 neighborhood parks (active and passive), 12 dog parks, 20 community centers with active park amenities, 27 athletic fields, 23 recreational and specialized facilities, three senior centers, six pools, a skate park, and the Norfolk Emerging Leader's Program.

Recreation, Parks and Open Space employees to make Norfolk a better place to live, work, and play. Our volunteers are an essential part of our operation. We are committed to working with each volunteer to build a mutually beneficial relationship, in which you will use your strengths, passions, and dedication to benefit the Recreation, Parks and Open Space and enhance your own life.

As a member of our team, it is important that you have an understanding of our policies and procedures. In addition to this manual, volunteers are also required to read the Recreation, Parks and Open Space Volunteer Program Policy.

If we can ever do more to make your experience more successful, please let us know. Thank you again for choosing us, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrell R. Crittendon', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Darrell R. Crittendon

Director

Recreation, Parks and Open Space

MISSION

The mission of the Recreation Parks and Open Space Volunteer Program is to improve the level and quality of services delivered to residents and visitors by encouraging volunteerism and allowing citizens to participate in local government and positively contribute to its effectiveness.

BENEFITS

Volunteering or completing an internship with Recreation Parks and Open Space will allow you to:

- Gain valuable work experience.
- Develop new skills.
- Explore new careers.
- Get involved in your community.
- Use your professional skills and network.
- Understand city government and positively influence its effectiveness.
- Service to Others
- Have fun!

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In order to ensure the program will be consistent and mutually beneficial, the Volunteer Program will:

- Work with departments to post and publicize volunteer opportunities.
- Conduct background checks and provide orientations for program participants.
- Maintain a database that will track the hours and special projects performed by program participants.
- Offer recognition and continuing training/education for program participants.
- Provide trainings and orientations for staff and volunteers.
- Encourage feedback from staff and volunteers regarding the Volunteer Program.

OVERVIEW

Becoming a Volunteer with RPOS

- All volunteer applicants are considered for assignment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, covered veteran's status, marital status, or the presence of a non-job-related medical condition or disability.
- An orientation is provided to all regular service volunteers. A departmental orientation and job specific training is provided to all volunteers by their supervisor.
- Volunteers are asked to notify their supervisor of any changes in name, address, phone number, or email address.
- Volunteer and internship assignments vary based on placement. Work schedule and expectations will be discussed by the supervisor.
- Program participants are expected to report to their assigned work site as scheduled. If unable to report as scheduled, the program participant should notify their supervisor as soon as possible.
- All volunteers eighteen (18) years of age or older are subject to a criminal background check. A background check is mandatory for all regular service volunteers including non-paid interns eighteen (18) years of age or older that work in a position with the potential to be left alone with children, the elderly, or disabled or that work in a position with access to highly sensitive or confidential information. A processing fee will be paid by the volunteer unless otherwise specified.
- Length of volunteer service or internships varies based on the placement, assignment, and needs and commitment of the volunteer. All volunteers are encouraged to honor their commitment. Any change in commitment should be discussed with the supervisor.

Volunteer Rules of Conduct

- Volunteers are expected to follow the policies, guidelines, and procedures outlined in this manual and the City of Norfolk Volunteer Program Policy. Volunteers must abide by the same rules of conduct and professional standards that govern staff. Details are found in the City of Norfolk Workplace Violence Prevention Policy.
- Use of alcohol, drugs, or underage use of tobacco are strictly prohibited. Any suspected violations should be reported to the Volunteer Program Administrator.
- Harassment of any type by employees or volunteers will not be tolerated. Details are found in the City of Norfolk Workplace Harassment Policy.
- Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information obtained while working with the City of Norfolk. This privileged information may involve staff, other volunteers and city business.
- Every volunteer will sign in and out each and every time they report for assignment. Supervisors will record the number of hours and submit volunteer hours every month.
- Volunteers are prohibited from using their position with the City in order to influence; use inside information for gaining purposes; compete with the City of Norfolk in business practices or otherwise; acting on behalf of the City of Norfolk politically or associate his/her own personal beliefs with the City of Norfolk; use City stationary or email to express his/her opinion.

- Volunteers should maintain a neat, clean and professional appearance, appropriate for the volunteer assignment. Details are found in the City of Norfolk Dress Code Policy.
- Volunteers will wear identification badges that identify the worker as a volunteer or intern. These are for official City of Norfolk use only and must be worn in an appropriate, visible location. Lost or stolen badges must be reported immediately to the Volunteer Program Administrator. Volunteers are obligated to return the badges upon termination or resignation.
- Volunteers should not offer any information or comments to media. All questions from media should be directed to a supervisor or the Division Head of Public Information.
- Volunteers must seek prior consultation and approval from the appropriate staff prior to any action or statement which might affect or obligate the city. These actions may include, but are not limited to, lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreement involving contractual or other financial obligations.
- Volunteers are not able to provide professional services for which certification/licensing is required unless they possess the proper documentation to do so. A copy of the required certification is required.
- Volunteers are not authorized to make purchases on behalf of the City of Norfolk and are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Volunteers will tune into local television and radio stations to learn about closings and delays.

City of Norfolk Property

- City of Norfolk equipment may not be used for personal use. Volunteers should receive approval from their Volunteer Supervisor prior to using city owned equipment. Volunteers, with an exception given to those in Public Safety, are not permitted to drive City vehicles.
- City of Norfolk telephones, email, voice mail, faxes, and Internet are for official city business only. Personal use is limited to emergencies. All electronic data is the property of the City of Norfolk and may be considered public record.

Volunteer Safety

- The supervisor will properly train the volunteer in applicable safety and risk management procedures. Volunteers will report unsafe working conditions to their supervisor.
- Volunteers that are acting on behalf of the City of Norfolk, and are authorized and supervised by the City, are not covered under the City of Norfolk Workers Compensation Coverage; therefore, if injured, there is no worker's compensation.
- All accidents and injuries should be reported to the supervisor immediately. The incident will be documented and reported to the Volunteer Supervisor.
- Volunteers who are under the care of a physician may be asked to provide documentation from their physician as to their ability to perform their duties safely. Written verification from a physician is required for all volunteers who are under a course of treatment which might affect their work.

Volunteer Records

- All regular service volunteers receive an evaluation at the end of the first 200 hours. Periodic surveys are given to the volunteers and supervisors in order to assess the Volunteer Program.
- Volunteers will be recognized by the City of Norfolk based on hours of service.
- Volunteers are encouraged to discuss any problems, concerns, or suggestions with their supervisor. Volunteers are not eligible to use the City's Grievance Procedure.

Reassignment/Exiting the Volunteer Program

- Volunteers may be re-assigned due to completion of duties, request of the volunteer or Volunteer Supervisor, or corrective action. Volunteers who are re-assigned to a new position will be given position specific orientation and training for the new assignment.
- Volunteers are asked to notify their supervisor at least two weeks prior to resigning. Volunteers will complete an exit interview upon resigning from a placement.
- The volunteer/department relationship may be terminated at any time by either party and the City is not required to provide a reason for dismissal. The Volunteer Program Administrator should be consulted prior to dismissal of a volunteer.

Staff Positions and Role Classification

Volunteer Supervisor – The person who coordinates details of volunteer assignments. This is the departmental representative within each division responsible for volunteer oversight.

Volunteer – Any individual or group of individuals who, of their own free will, provide services to the City of Norfolk without the expectation or receipt of compensation from the City of Norfolk or its Departments and, who performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the City. This classification includes individuals participating in a third party community service program.

Volunteer Classifications

Non-Paid Intern – A regular service volunteer currently enrolled in college and may or may not receive course credit for the completion of their internship assignment. All internships with the City of Norfolk that are unpaid are considered volunteer assignments and will follow the policy guidelines of the Volunteer Program.

Volunteer Group – A group of volunteers that volunteer as part of a group outside of the City.

Youth Volunteer – Any volunteer between the ages of fourteen (14) and seventeen (17). Minimum age for volunteers will be specific to the volunteer position.

Episodic Volunteer – Any volunteer that provides services on a one-time, or infrequent, basis. The minimum age for episodic volunteers is eighteen (18) and they participate in programs for those eighteen (18) and over. Background checks will not be required.

VOLUNTEER CHECKLIST

Application:

- All volunteers (with the exception of episodic volunteers) are required to submit a completed *Volunteer Application* to the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers that are applying for a specific position should write the position title on the line provided and select the corresponding department on the application.

Interview:

- Volunteers (with the exception of episodic volunteers) will complete an interview with the desired department to determine the position is a good fit and learn more about the assignment.

Background Check:

All volunteers may be subject to a criminal background check. A processing fee may apply.

A criminal background check is mandatory for all regular service volunteers including interns eighteen (18) years of age and older that:

- a. Work in a position with the potential to be left alone with children, the elderly or disabled.
 - b. Work in a position with access to highly sensitive or confidential information.
- Volunteer has successfully passed a criminal background check.

Volunteer Program Orientation:

- All regular service volunteers are required to attend a scheduled orientation. Occasional service volunteers will receive an orientation given by the Volunteer's Supervisor.
- All regular service volunteers will sign the *Volunteer Agreement* included in the application.

Training, Support and Supervision:

- The volunteer's supervisor will train the volunteer and provide a department orientation.

Recording Hours:

- All volunteers are required to submit a time sheet to their supervisor.

Volunteer Departure:

- Volunteers (with the exception of episodic volunteers) are encouraged to provide two weeks' notice to their supervisor when resigning from their duties.