

# **City of Mukilteo Parks and Recreation Volunteer Policies**

## **Role of the Volunteer Service**

The function of the Volunteer Services Coordinator is to provide a central point for effective management of volunteers within the city and to direct and assist staff and volunteer efforts to jointly provide more productive services. The Volunteer Services Coordinator would assume primary responsibility for planning for effective volunteer utilization, assisting staff in identifying volunteer roles, recruiting volunteers, and tracking and evaluating the contribution of volunteers to the department.

## **Definition of 'Volunteer'**

A 'volunteer' is anyone who performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the city without compensation. A 'volunteer' must be officially accepted and enrolled by the city prior to the performance of the task whether it is a one-time or ongoing basis. Volunteers should not, however, be utilized to displace any paid employees from their positions.

## **Service at the Discretion of the City**

The city accepts the service of the volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the discretion of the city. Volunteers agree that the city may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the city. The volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer's relationship with the city. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

## **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to this city, its staff, and its citizens. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, and the right to effective supervision. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and adhere to the procedures of the city.

# **Volunteer Management Procedures**

## **Maintenance of Records**

A database will be maintained on each volunteer with the city, including necessary demographics, dates and hours of service, duties performed, and evaluation/follow-up. Recreation and Cultural Services Staff shall be responsible for submitting all information in a timely and accurate fashion. Volunteer personal information shall be afforded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

## **Documentation of Volunteer Hours and Reporting**

In Washington, some organizations may choose to purchase workers' compensation coverage for volunteers, which only covers medical costs. Volunteer coverage does not include the other usual benefits of workers' compensation, such as wage replacement, vocational and retraining costs, permanent partial disability payments, or death benefits. Volunteer coverage is also known as "medical aid only" coverage.

The Time Keeping Reports are used to establish pay premiums for actual volunteer hours worked. These auditable records of all volunteers are kept for 3 full calendar years from the date you reported the worker's hours. Records must include:

- Name, address and contact information
- Registration and acceptance of each person as a volunteer for your organization.
- Beginning and end date of volunteer service.
- Applicable risk classifications per WAC 296-17A-6901

#### **Conflict of Interest**

Conflicts of interest between public service of the volunteer and personal gain (including political, financial, and business) must be avoided at all times. (If questions, refer to City Policy.)

#### **Representation of the Agency**

Prior to any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate the agency, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from their "Division Heads". These actions may include but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the agency as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

#### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, client, or other person or involves the city. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the city.

#### **Worksite**

An appropriate worksite shall be established prior to the enrollment of any volunteer. The city will provide necessary facilities, equipment, and materials to enable the volunteer to effectively perform their duties and projects.

#### **Dress Code**

As representatives of the city, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

## **Volunteer Recruitment and Selection**

### **Position Descriptions**

Volunteers require a clear description of the duties and responsibilities of the position which they are expected to fill. All volunteers shall receive a description of the duties of the position, a designated supervisor and worksite, and a timeframe for the performance of the job.

### **Staff Requests for Volunteers**

The volunteer request form shall be completed in full and submitted in writing by interested staff, to the Volunteer Services Coordinator at least 2 months in advance for necessary recruitment.

### **Recruitment**

Volunteers shall be recruited by the city (or departments) on a pro-active basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, handicap, age, race, or other condition. Volunteers may be recruited through either an interest in specific responsibilities or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific job.

### **Recruitment of Minors**

Volunteers under the age of 16 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian before volunteering. The volunteer position assigned to a minor should be performed in a nonhazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

### **Interviewing**

Before being assigned to a position, volunteers (or group leaders) may be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for and interest in that position. The interview should determine the qualifications of the volunteer, and their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the position, and should answer any questions that the volunteer might have about the position. Interviews may be conducted either in person or by telephone.

### **Acceptance and Appointment**

No volunteer shall begin the performance of any position until they have been accepted for that position and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork. Volunteers who will be working more than one day or working unsupervised with children for any length of time will be required to complete the "City of Mukilteo Investigative Background Check Form" and a volunteer application. Have the volunteer complete the appropriate portions of the application and note "Volunteer" at the top of the application and background check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background check or meet the city's standards will not be accepted.

An individual who volunteers for a special event or activity in recreation, etc needs to complete the appropriate Release and Indemnity form before the event. An individual who volunteers at a park/greenway needs to complete the appropriate Release and Indemnity form before beginning the task.

Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts interested in completing Eagle Scout projects or Gold Awards must contact Recreation and Cultural Services. Approval of the project and all necessary paperwork must be received before starting on project. At the time of acceptance, each volunteer shall complete any necessary paperwork and shall receive a copy of their agreement of service with the city.

#### **Court-Appointed Community Service Hours**

Court-appointed community service volunteers are NOT ALLOWED to assist with programs, classes, events, athletic leagues, or at any site where children or patrons are present. Individuals with 24 or fewer court-appointed hours can volunteer. All interested individuals must contact Recreation and Cultural Services to set up a time to volunteer. *Please note: court-appointed hours do include ANY volunteer hours that are suggested by a lawyer to take in front of a judge.*

#### **Length of Service**

All volunteer positions shall have a set term of duration. All Adopt-A-Park and Adopt-A-Trail terms shall be at least one year, with an option for renewal at the discretion of both parties and an opportunity to seek a different volunteer assignment within the city if requested.

### **Volunteer Positions, Training, and Development**

#### **On-the-Job Training**

Volunteers will receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignments.

#### **Staff Involvement in Orientation and Training**

Those staff that will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for planning and implementing on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

#### **Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Volunteer Opportunities**

##### **Tasks in the Parks Department**

The Parks Division offers an Adopt-a-Park and Adopt-A-Trail Program that utilizes volunteers to enhance City parks and facilities. The following are some of the park projects available:

*Litter and debris removal	*removal of invasives
*Mulching	*Planting annuals & perennials
*Gardening/Landscaping	*Trail Maintenance
*Tree plantings and maintenance	*Painting
*Facility upgrades	*Playground rehabilitation

##### **Tasks in the Recreation/Cultural Services Department**

The Recreation and Cultural Services Department offers various classes, programs, and special events that utilize volunteers' skills and experiences. The following activities are available:

- Sports & Tournaments - Youth athletic coaches are needed for baseball, basketball, football, lacrosse, in-line hockey, softball, cheerleading & more. Those interested in coaching must complete the Coaches Application and Background Check.
- Special Events - Assist with registration, set-up, and activities at various citywide events such as Egg Hunts, Merry Mukilteo, Lighthouse Festival, Movies in the Park, concerts and more.
- Programs & Classes - Assist with instruction of programs, registration and activities in Art, Active Adults, Adventure, Aquatics, Fitness, Nature, Sports and more.
- Specialized Recreation Services - Assist individuals with developmental and/or physical disabilities in diverse events and activities including Special Olympics WA State.
- ESL (English as Second Language) Program - Assist with instruction and interpretation.
- Outdoor Education - Assist with various community projects at a nature park, from trail maintenance and signage to gardening and marine science, etc.
- Historic Sites/Museums— Assist with instruction of programs, special events, exhibits, and tour opportunities.

### **Volunteer Projects**

All volunteer groups or individuals who may be interested in specific projects in the City Parks must have prior approval before the initiation of a project, including funding sources and other resources. Projects will be determined based on the Mukilteo Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Arts Plan and the Master Plan for each Park. Interested individuals must complete and submit the group project interest form to Volunteer Services in order to coordinate a project.

### **Insurance**

Volunteers who are individually recruited for and placed in specific positions, which are designated as “volunteer positions”, have the same coverage as full-time employees for covered workplace injuries and occupational illnesses. They are to follow established Standard Operating Procedures for the reporting of accidents, injuries, and illnesses.

Volunteers are not authorized to operate City-owned vehicles nor any non-City-owned vehicles on City business.

Volunteers who are not individually recruited, and who are acting as members of a Community-based group while doing a group volunteer project, do not have any accident or health coverage from a City-based source. They may wish to consult with their personal insurance agents regarding Community Volunteer work.

## **Volunteer Supervision and Evaluation**

### **Requirement of a Supervisor**

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the city must have a supervisor who is responsible for the direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer.

### **Acceptance of Volunteers by Staff**

Since individual staff are in a better position to determine the requirements of their work and their own abilities, no volunteer will be assigned to work with a staff person without the consent of that staff person. Since volunteers are considered a valuable resource in performing the agency's work, staff are encouraged to seriously consider creative ways in which volunteers might be of service and to contact the Recreation Programmer (Volunteer Services Coordinator) if they need assistance.

### **Staff Involvement in Volunteer Evaluation**

The appropriate staff should be involved in work assignments and evaluations of volunteers with whom they are connected.

### **Volunteer Schedules**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular scheduled and timely basis. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. In the event of inclement weather, projects will be rescheduled at the mutual convenience of the volunteers and the department staff.

### **Accident and Injuries**

All injuries and accidents, regardless of how slight, should be reported to a supervisor. Give first aid attention as needed and call 911 if necessary. The supervisor on site must complete an Employee Accident Report (Make a note at the top that it is a Volunteer), Supervisor Investigation of the Accident Report and send two copies to the Department Head within 24 hours of the accident. The Safety office should receive copies of the three forms within 3 working days.

### **Evaluations**

Volunteers shall receive evaluations to review their work. The evaluation session is utilized to review the performance of the volunteer, to suggest any changes in work style, to seek suggestions from the volunteer, to convey appreciation to the volunteer, and to ascertain the continued interest of the volunteer in continuing to serve in that position. Evaluations should include both an examination of the volunteer's performance of position responsibilities and a discussion of any suggestions that the volunteer may have concerning the position or project with which the volunteer is connected. A written record should be kept of each evaluation session.

### **Dismissal of a Volunteer**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the agency or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff. Prior to the dismissal of a volunteer, staff should seek assistance from their supervisor.

Possible grounds for dismissal may include but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers, failure to abide by agency policies and procedures and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

### **Resignation**

It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision. Volunteers under the Adopt-A-Park or Adopt-A-Trail Agreement shall comply with the terms specified in the agreement.

### **Communication with the Volunteer Services Program Coordinator**

Staff who are supervising volunteers are responsible for maintaining regular communication with the Volunteer Services Program Coordinator on the status of volunteers and are responsible for the timely provision of all necessary paperwork. All volunteer release forms and volunteer applications are to be maintained for a duration of 3 years for record purposes. The Program Coordinator should be informed immediately of any substantial change in the work or status of a volunteer and may be consulted in advance before any corrective action is taken.

## **Volunteer Support and Recognition**

### **Informal Recognition**

All staff and volunteers responsible for volunteer supervision are encouraged to undertake ongoing methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from simple "Thank You" letters /emails to certificates of appreciation, photographs, "give-aways" and recognition at meetings.

### **Recognition**

An annual volunteer recognition event will be conducted to highlight and reward the contribution of volunteers to the city. The event should include as many volunteers as possible. Volunteers will be involved in order to develop an appropriate format for the event. Staff are asked to nominate individual volunteers and groups each year to recognize outstanding volunteer service in the city.

## **Staff Recognition**

The Volunteer Program will recognize and acknowledge staff who work with volunteers.

## **Additional Resources**

### **Documents**

1. Volunteer Application with Background Form
2. Coaches Application
3. Volunteer Request Form
4. Volunteer Release Form for Special Events and Recreation with photo-release
5. Volunteer Release Form for Park Volunteers with photo-release
6. Record of Volunteer Hours Form
7. Tips for Working with Volunteers
8. Volunteer Guideline for Recreation Programs
9. Group Project Request Form
10. Volunteer Experience Survey
11. Adopt-A-Park Procedures
12. Adopt-A-Trail Procedures
13. Process for Boy Scout and Girl Scout Projects
14. City of Mukilteo Volunteer Services Policies & Procedures

Questions? Contact Volunteer Program staff: