

**Lowell Police Department**  
**Standard Operating Procedures**  
**for Volunteers**

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## **Mission Statement**

Complementary to the Department mission, "to work with the community to reduce crime, the fear of crime, and improve the quality of life in the City of Lowell", the Volunteer Program was designed to increase citizen participation and integration into the community policing model allowing for community members, as well as students seeking practicum experiences, to contribute to the betterment of their community

## **Confidentiality**

The success of any policing agency is vitally dependent upon the security of its confidential information however insignificant it may appear. The security and survival of the officers and volunteers of the department require a constant and personal commitment by every volunteer and intern to adhere to this policy.

1. Information, be it personal, police business or other, should always be considered confidential. Only that information specifically identified and authorized by designated police personnel may be released. All other information shall be considered privileged and not for release or transfer.
2. Volunteers shall not copy, remove, alter or electronically transfer information or records of the Lowell Police Department without specific authorization by designated personnel.

## **Dress Code**

As with any public service organization, professionalism in both attitude and physical appearance is critical. As a volunteer, you are in some ways an ambassador for the Lowell Police Department. The manner in which you present yourself reflects upon the department as a whole. Make note of the following recommendations.

1. Casual dress recommended for precinct volunteers and those positions located at the Eliot Center.
2. Assignments located at Department Headquarters, 50 Arcand Drive, require a more formalized attire, such as you would expect to see in an office environment.
3. Absolutely no cut-offs, half-skirts, or tight restrictive clothing.
4. Other dress codes may be specified by assignment.

## **Evaluation**

An integral part of the development, maintenance, and quality assurance of both a newly developed or existing program is an evaluation process. The evaluation of both the program and the individuals working with the particular program are of vital importance.

1. The evaluation of the overall program will be conducted on an annual basis. Data will be gathered from volunteers as well as LPD staff and community members.
2. A written evaluation of community volunteers will be completed on an annual basis and placed in the volunteer's file which can be found in the Volunteer Coordinator's office.
3. Students volunteering as interns and receiving credit for time spent at the LPD, require a separate evaluation which will be sent to participating colleges/universities. The Volunteer Coordinator and student's immediate supervisor will be responsible for the completion of any and all paperwork associated with internship requirements.

### **Gaining Access to the Work Site**

It is necessary to provide a standard protocol for volunteers to gain access to work sites. With the exception of the Main station and the Eliot Center which have 24-hour staffing patterns, the following procedures are required.

1. Those volunteers working at any of the 7 neighborhood precincts should call the precinct 15-20 minutes before the start of their shift and let the officer or volunteer answering the phone know that you are on your way in for your shift.
2. If there is no answer at the precinct, the next step is to call the front desk (937-3232), inform the person answering the phone that you are the volunteer for the \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct, and you are on your way there. Ask this individual to send an officer to the Precinct to let you in.
3. If an officer is unable to meet you, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator (937-3210). If no one answers, please leave a message.

## **Protection of LPD Assets**

Each police precinct, as well as the Main station and Eliot Center, has its own fixed, portable, and personal assets. The responsibility of protecting these assets belongs to each of us.

1. LPD telephones are for official police business. Personal local calls of short duration for emergencies are permitted. However, it should be remembered that telephones lines must be available to the public for incoming police-related inquiries.
1. Copy machines are for official police business only.
3. Lap-top and desk-top computers are for official police and authorized use only. Volunteers are not allowed to download, delete, enter, access, transfer, or request data of any sort unless specifically authorized. (See city's computer policies).



## **Public Contact**

A majority of the volunteer positions require direct contact with the public. Greeting and assisting the public requires the use of good interpersonal communication skills. Please keep the following in mind:

1. Always be polite and courteous.
2. Always remember to identify yourself as a volunteer both on the phone and in person.
3. If you are unable to answer an inquiry or feel that your response to an inquiry is perceived as unacceptable, please reach out to other department personnel for assistance.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

A position description is the best way to understand the job you are doing, realize your role as a community volunteer/intern and understand what is expected of you.

1. Specific roles and responsibilities are outlined in the position descriptions manual.
2. It is your responsibility, before signing your service contract, to read and understand the roles and responsibilities you will be performing.
3. If you have any questions regarding your role you may contact your direct on-site supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Scheduling and Reporting Time**

An important component in the efficient operation of a precinct or department is the dependence on the volunteers to meet the requirements of their shift schedules. The Police Department records and maintains the number of hours worked by all volunteers. Please report your hours properly using the enclosed time sheets. Please photocopy blank time sheets as needed.

1. Volunteer shift schedules will be established between the volunteer and the Volunteer Coordinator. All changes or revisions must be approved by the volunteer's Supervisor and Volunteer Coordinator.
2. Volunteers are expected to be punctual.
3. If an emergency makes it impossible for you to meet your schedule, volunteers are asked to contact their site supervisor as well as the Volunteer Coordinator (937-3210) so that a replacement for the shift may be found.
4. Volunteers should provide their immediate supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator with at least one week's notice of your intention to take a vacation.
5. If a situation requires an extended period away from a volunteer's site and shift, this site and shift may not be available to the volunteer upon their return to the LPD. Every effort will be made to find a compatible replacement.

## **Telephone Etiquette**

The way a volunteer answers a police department telephone will set the tone for the conversation and can determine the success or failure of that conversation. The way the community perceives they are being treated may very well depend on the way a volunteer responds to a call. Every call is of great importance to a citizen seeking assistance.

1. A suggested method of answering the phone is: Acre Precinct, (name), volunteer speaking, how may I help you.
2. Volunteers are not allowed to give out information regarding the whereabouts of on or off duty policemen. Simply advise the caller that the officer will call them back as soon as possible.
3. If an emergency call comes into the precinct and an officer is in the precinct at the time of the call, the volunteer should notify the officer immediately, otherwise, the volunteer should attempt to get the caller's name, address and telephone number. The caller then needs to be advised to hang up and call 911. The volunteer should then wait a few minutes, dial 3200 and advise the dispatcher of the situation.
4. For non-emergency calls, include date, time, name of caller, telephone number and specific message. Please sign your name to message in case further information is required at a later date.
5. Important resource phone numbers both in the community and within the police department are posted at every workstation. If you cannot locate the necessary information, please dial 3232, identify yourself as a volunteer and obtain the necessary information.

## **Volunteer Service Procedures**

- It is the policy of the Lowell Police Department (LPD) that all volunteers shall comply with the rules of conduct and with all orders and directives, either oral or written, which may be issued by the LPD.
- Any volunteer unable to report for duty due to sickness or any other causes shall report to his/her supervisor as soon as possible. If supervisor is not available, volunteer shall report to Volunteer Coordinator.
- All official business of the LPD is CONFIDENTIAL. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended. A volunteer may not remove or copy records or reports from any section of the LPD, except under the direct and specific order of his/her supervisor. A violation, through improper use of confidential records, may call for possible criminal penalties.
- A volunteer shall not address a public gathering, appear on radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as correspondent to a newspaper or periodical or release or divulge information or any other matters pertaining to the LPD, either in an official or unofficial capacity, unless he/she has been directly authorized to do so by the Chief of Police.
- All volunteers shall conduct themselves while on duty in a manner which reflects most favorably on the LPD. The phrase “most favorably” refers to citizens, co-workers, other volunteers and police personnel. Volunteers shall be tactful, control their temper, and exercise patience. Volunteers shall not, even in the face of extreme provocation, engage in argumentative discussions. While on duty or in the performance of their duties, volunteers shall not use insolent language toward the public or fellow workers. Volunteers shall not express any prejudice or use language demeaning to the public or fellow workers concerning race, sex, religion, politics, national origin, lifestyle or similar personal characteristics. The LPD will also not tolerate sexual harassment of any kind.
- All volunteers shall maintain a neat, well groomed appearance.
- Volunteers shall not drink intoxicating beverages while on duty or prior to reporting for duty, or use any controlled substance, narcotics or hallucinogen.
- Volunteers shall not receive, seek, solicit or share in any fee, reward, or other reimbursement for the performance of their duties or for failure to perform

duties. Volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any offer of money, gift or other gratuity, made in an effort to influence their conduct or offered in gratitude.

- A volunteer may be removed from this volunteer program at any time if the Volunteer Coordinator determines, for whatever reason, that the volunteer is not suitable to continue to participate in the program.
- Volunteers may be accepted into the Volunteer Program without reference to an eligibility list and can be terminated without a hearing or other formality.

I have read and understand all of the information contained in the Lowell Police Department Standard Operating Procedures for Volunteers Manual. I also understand that if I am a student working for the Lowell Police Department for credit as an intern, I am still considered a volunteer. I further understand that failure to comply with any and all of the stated procedures could result in my termination from the Lowell Police Department Volunteer Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Volunteer/Intern (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer/Intern

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date