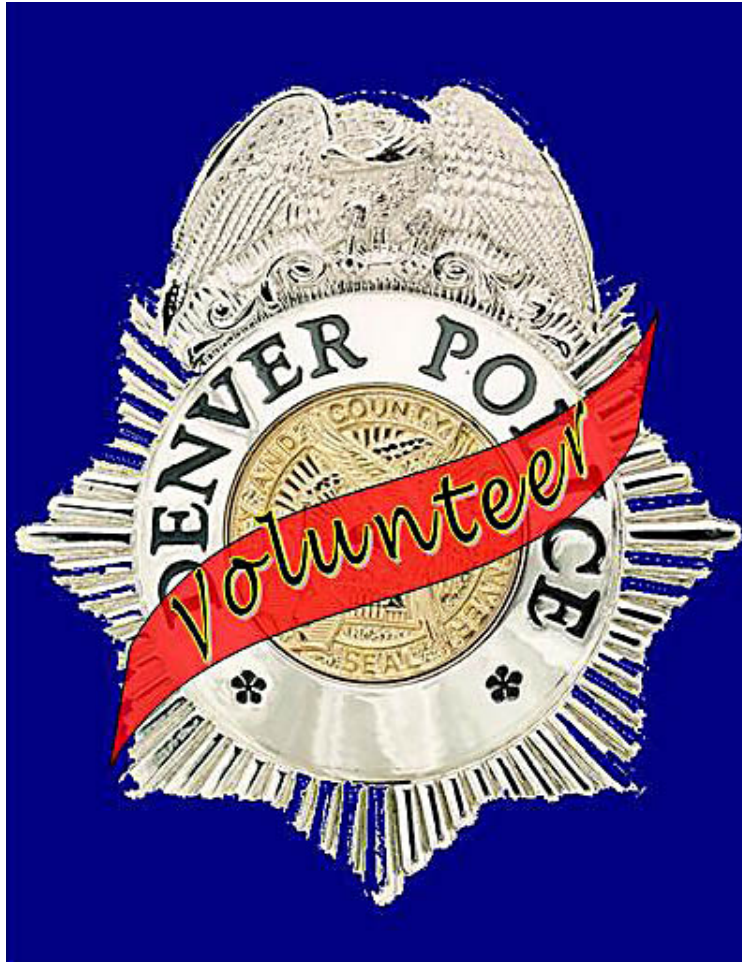




# Denver Police Department

## Volunteers in Policing Policy



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Effective ???



## I. Purpose

This policy establishes the Denver Police Department's position on the utility and management of its volunteer program and provides guidance on its management and administration.

## II. Policy

Volunteers can be an important part of any organization and are proven to be a valuable asset to law enforcement agencies. Volunteers help to increase police responsiveness, service delivery, information input, and they provide new program opportunities. In addition, volunteers can bring new skills and expertise to the job and prompt new enthusiasm.

It is the policy of the Denver Police Department to use qualified volunteers for specified tasks and duties that can create efficiencies for the department and improve services to the community.

Volunteers are intended to *supplement and support*, rather than supplant, sworn officers and career service employees.

## III. Definitions

*Volunteer:* Any person who performs a service for the Denver Police Department without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services rendered. This includes existing volunteers working in Cop Shop assignments, PAL coaches, Citizen Review Boards, unpaid reserve officers, chaplains, interns, and youth involved in Explorer Posts, among others.

## IV. Procedures

### A. Administration

1. The Denver Police Department has established the Volunteers in Policing Unit (VIP), within the Technology and Support Division, and has tasked that unit with the administration of **all** volunteers except: The Denver Police Reserves, The Chaplain Unit, the Explorer Post, and the intern program. Any of these programs may be assigned to the VIP unit in the future at the discretion of the Chief of Police.



2. The volunteer coordinator shall be solely responsible for the following:
  - a. Recruiting, screening, selecting, and providing basic and rules training to all volunteers through orientation
  - b. Maintaining employment records for each volunteer
  - c. Maintaining the volunteer handbook, which outlines expectations, policies, and responsibilities for all volunteers
  - d. Completion and dissemination, as appropriate, of all necessary paperwork and information
  - e. Planning and implementation of recognition events
  - f. Administration of discipline when warranted
  - g. Transferring volunteer between assignments
  - h. Separation of volunteers
  
3. The Division Chief of Technology and Support, through the volunteer coordinator is the final authority and has the final responsibility for all volunteers. A volunteer's assignment supervisor is responsible for day to day direction and assigned work, however, all policy questions and volunteer issues shall be directed to the volunteer coordinator. This is regardless of the volunteer's assignment.

#### B. Recruitment

Volunteers shall be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis consistent with the Denver Police Department's policy on equal opportunity nondiscriminatory employment. The primary qualification in the application process shall be the interest in assisting the Denver Police Department and serving the public.

Although recruitment is a responsibility of the VIP Unit, areas of the department with needs are encouraged to attempt to locate qualified volunteers to fill their needs, and to forward those applicants to the VIP Unit for screening, selection, and basic training.

#### C. Screening

1. All volunteers shall complete the VIP application form, Authorization for Release of Information (for a background check), and Clearance Check and ID Request form. Applications will not be processed or stamped received until all of these documents are received complete.



2. A documented background investigation shall be completed on each volunteer applicant and shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:
  - a. Traffic and criminal record
  - b. References
  - c. Employment

All background checks shall be completed by the VIP Unit's Background Investigations Team.

3. The Volunteer Coordinator and designee of his or her choice shall conduct a face-to-face interview with all applicants who have passed the background investigation. Personnel from the anticipated assignment are also invited to attend this interview.

The result of this interview shall be pass or fail.

#### D. Selection and Placement

1. Upon their selection, applicants shall receive a confirmation letter prior to the start of service. The volunteer will also be scheduled for fingerprinting and the issuance of the official VIP ID.
2. All volunteers are required to attend a VIP orientation at which they will receive a copy of the volunteer handbook.
3. All volunteers are required to sign the following agreements:
  - a. Gender or Sexual Orientation and Racial, National Origin Discrimination and Intimidation Policy
  - b. Computer Use Agreement
  - c. Confidentiality Agreement
  - d. Liability Waiver
  - e. Volunteer Agreement

These signed documents shall be maintained by the VIP administrator in the volunteer's employee file.

4. Volunteers shall be placed only in job assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills, abilities and the needs of the department.



#### E. Training

1. Volunteers shall be provided with an orientation program to acquaint them with the department, personnel, policies, and procedures that have a direct impact on them as a volunteer.
2. Volunteers shall receive position-specific training by their assignment supervisor, or designee, to ensure that they have adequate knowledge and skills to complete the tasks required in their position.
3. Volunteers shall receive periodic ongoing training as required or as deemed necessary by their supervisor or the volunteer coordinator.
4. Orientation shall reinforce to volunteers that they may not intentionally represent themselves as, or by omission infer that they are, sworn officers or other full-time members of the department. They shall always represent themselves as volunteers.
5. All volunteers shall comply with the rules of conduct and with all orders and directives, either oral or written, issued by the department.

#### F. Fitness for Duty

1. No volunteer shall report to work or be on duty when his or her judgment or physical condition has been impaired by alcohol, medication, other substances, illness or injury.
2. Volunteers shall report to the volunteer coordinator any changes in status that may affect their ability to fulfill their duties. This includes but is not limited to, the following:
  - a. Driver's license
  - b. Medical condition
  - c. Arrests
  - d. Criminal investigations
3. Volunteers must notify the Volunteer Coordinator, in writing, of any enforcement action taken by a law enforcement agency (this would not include a warning, but would include a driving citation). The notification of such action will not necessarily result in discipline or dismissal. Any determination of fitness for duty resulting from enforcement action shall be made at the



discretion of the volunteer coordinator, based on the disqualifiers.

#### G. Dress Code

1. Volunteers shall conform to department-approved dress consistent with their duty assignment.
2. Any clothing or uniform shall be readily distinguishable from those worn by sworn officers.
3. Volunteers shall be prohibited from wearing any departmental insignia (to include the use of the Denver Police Badge – regardless of accompanying text around the badge). The only approved insignia embroidery containing a badge, shall be the Denver Police Volunteers in Policing Logo. All other specialized embroidery requests shall be forwarded to the Volunteer Coordinator.
4. No volunteer shall wear his or her uniform or identifiable parts of that uniform while off duty (this shall include embroidered clothing).
5. Volunteers shall be required to return any issued uniform or agency clothing at the termination of service.

#### H. Confidentiality

1. With appropriate security clearance, volunteers may have access to confidential information such as criminal histories or investigative files. Unless otherwise directed by a supervisor or departmental policy, **all** police information shall be considered confidential. Only that information specifically identified and approved by authorized personnel shall be released. Confidential information shall be given only to persons who have a need and a right to know as determined by departmental policy and supervisory personnel.
2. Each volunteer shall sign a Confidentiality Agreement. Subsequent disclosure of any information, verbally, in writing, or by any other means, shall be grounds for immediate dismissal and possible criminal prosecution.
3. Volunteers shall not address public gatherings, appear on radio or television, prepare any article for publication, act as correspondents to a newspaper or other periodical, release or



divulge any information concerning the activities of the agency, or maintain that they represent the agency in such matters without permission from the proper agency personnel.

#### I. Property and Equipment

1. Volunteers shall be issued an official volunteer identification card that must be worn at all times while on duty. No other identification card is authorized and no other may be worn while volunteering for the Denver Police Department.
2. Any fixed and portable equipment issued by the agency shall be for official and authorized use only.
3. Any property or equipment, including the identification card, shall remain the property of the agency and shall be returned at the termination of service. Failure to return departmental policy may result in the filing of criminal charges.
4. Volunteers shall be allowed access to departmental computers and the computer network. This shall be only after the volunteer has signed and agreed to the Computer Use Agreement as provided by the Technology Services and Support (TSS).

#### J. Disciplinary Procedures / Separation

1. A volunteer may be separated from the Denver Police VIP program at the discretion of the volunteer coordinator. Volunteers do not have a job right and thus there is no appeal.

All separations shall be reported to the VIP unit commander, within the Technology and Support Division, for review. When possible, this review should take place *prior* to the separation of the volunteer.

#### K. Evaluation

1. An overall evaluation of the volunteer program shall be conducted on an annual basis in the form of an annual report.
2. The volunteer coordinator shall audit each volunteer (NCIC, etc.) to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements, have completed all required training, and are still actively volunteering.



- a. “Active Volunteer” means any volunteer who has at least twelve hours of volunteer time served in the calendar year (from July 1 – June 30).
- b. Only volunteer time entered in the official volunteer time program will be considered as service.
- c. Any volunteer who does not meet the minimum requirements shall be separated from the program.
- d. Any volunteer who does not meet the requirements to be considered an “active” volunteer, shall be placed on inactive status, and the volunteer coordinator shall make arrangement to recover the volunteer ID card and any other departmental property until the volunteer returns to active status.

## **V. Rule Changes**

- A. This policy is not intended to be all inclusive and rules pertaining to volunteer may be changed at any time.
  1. Any rule changes shall be approved by the Division Chief of Technology and Support.
  2. Volunteers shall be notified of any rule changes in writing, preferably at a quarterly volunteer training meeting.