

**DENVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
INTER-DEPARTMENT
CORRESPONDENCE**

TO: PPA Board

FROM: Matt Murray, Sergeant, Volunteers in Policing Unit

DATE: August 2, 2004

SUBJECT: **Volunteers in Denver**

In March of this year Chief Whitman asked me to develop a program that would enable people who want to volunteer their time and talents to the police department a means of doing so. In the process of development, I have explored what Volunteers in Policing (VIP) really is, and how other police departments utilize volunteers.

I wanted to approach the PPA while we are still at the beginning of this process so that the intention of the volunteer program is clear and that issues relating to labor are both considered and addressed from the start.

The purpose of VIP is to “hire” QUALIFIED non-paid employees (in an at will capacity) to AUGMENT the current staff of the police department (both sworn and civilian). Many departments have used volunteers to accomplish some of the necessary, but seemingly menial tasks, which officers currently have to complete. Some of these tasks have included property invoices, assistance with clerical duties in district stations, and data entry. These “employees” are NOT hired to replace paid staff.

Some employee groups around the country were skeptical when these programs started. They worried that in fact their employers would cease to hire officers or paid civilian staff when certain needs were relieved. These fears never came to fruition. In fact, most labor groups who work in departments that have viable volunteer programs wholeheartedly support the idea as they have made the daily job of their officers so much easier. I will be happy to provide examples of this support. I would also be happy to direct you to some units in the department who have received volunteer help and are thrilled about the relief it has provided (Check/Fraud, Finance, and Records are current examples).

It is my hope that the PPA board will not only accept the Denver VIP program but help to design it within your concerns, with a Denver flavor, and then support it as it grows. I will be happy to meet with the board or provide whatever further explanation and vision you desire.

