

VOLUNTEERS IN POLICING SERVICE

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines and mandates with respect to the use of volunteers to assist the Department in providing for the public safety of the community.

POLICY: It is the policy of this Department to maintain an active group of civic-minded individuals who may serve as volunteers to assist this Department in providing for the public-safety and welfare of the community. This Department shall utilize volunteers in a capacity that diminishes risk to the volunteers and does not place the volunteer in a law enforcement function.

DEFINITIONS:

- I. PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Support Services Commander or his designee, tasked to manage the volunteer services.
- II. VOLUNTEER: A non-salaried individual over the age of eighteen (18) who offers his time for the benefit of this Department, willingly and of his own accord for a limited time and without promise, expectation or receipt of any type of compensation.

PROCEDURES:

- I. CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY ALUMNI (CPAA)
The achievement of the Department goals is best accomplished with the active participation of citizens in the community. The Department provides opportunities for citizen participation through the Citizen Police Academy described in the following:
 - A. Participants are community members and are not sworn police officers. Department staff is encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve. Guidelines for the program and a description of the duties of volunteers are maintained by the Support Services Supervisors.
 1. CPAA Program Coordinator: The productive utilization of volunteers requires a planned and organized effort. The CPAA Program Coordinator provides a central coordination point for effective volunteer management. The CPAA Coordinator will have primary responsibility for volunteer coordination within the Department by assisting staff in identifying productive and creative CPAA roles, recruiting suitable volunteers, and selecting new volunteers once the background process has been completed. The CPA Coordinator provides recordkeeping and tracking of the contribution of volunteers to the Department.
- II. SELECTION PROCESS
 - A. Application: Each person who seeks a position as a volunteer with this Department must complete an application. This application shall include all information as well as confidentiality waivers such that a proper background examination of the individual may be conducted. Each applicant must supply the names of three non-related references who may be interviewed during the background examination. The applicant must also provide an employment history for review.

- B. Background Examination: The Department shall conduct a modified background examination of any person seeking to become a volunteer. This examination will be conducted by a sworn employee of this Department and shall include a criminal history check, traffic records check, employment history check and references interview.
 - 1. Status: Once selected, volunteers must recognize that their status is “at-will” and that they may be dismissed at anytime without cause. Volunteers are non-salaried and have no benefits or labor relation rights. All volunteers receive a handbook that explains their relationship with the Department and volunteers will sign indicating that he did receive the handbook.

III. MAINTAINING GOOD STANDING AS A VOLUNTEER

- A. Confidentiality: Volunteers must maintain confidentiality of the business of this Department. Volunteers shall not release any information concerning any police event or make any public representation of the Department.
 - 1. Non-Disclosure: Each volunteer should not disclose any confidential information coming into the volunteer’s knowledge through their position as a volunteer with this Department.
 - 2. Any request for information from the media or from the public regarding confidential information should be courteously directed to the Office of the Chief of Police or his designee.
 - 3. At no time shall a volunteer appear in the media or in the public as a representative of this Department without the express permission of the Chief of Police or his designee.
- B. Training: Volunteers shall be trained in accordance with the functions they will be expected to fulfill within the Department. The CPAA Coordinator provides a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the Department. The supervisor for each volunteer activity will provide specific training to give members the information and skills necessary to perform any task assigned to them. The time used and method of training will be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the task. Volunteers shall be instructed in applicable Department principles and practices.
- C. Use of Vehicles: Volunteers shall utilize vehicles belonging to this Department only when authorized to do so by the CPAA Coordinator.
 - 1. Volunteers who are authorized to drive a vehicle belonging to this Department are not authorized to drive the vehicle as an “emergency” vehicle as defined under Arkansas law. As such, any volunteer driving a vehicle belonging to this Department shall obey all traffic laws.
 - 2. No volunteer shall drive a vehicle belonging to the Department unless it has been verified that the volunteer has a valid driver’s license. Any volunteer who becomes aware of a change of their license status shall immediately notify the Department.
 - 3. Vehicles that may be used by volunteers will be unmarked. This is necessary to ensure the safety of the volunteers who may be at risk if the public or persons who would harm an officer were to mistake a volunteer for an officer. Additionally, the expectations of the public upon seeing a marked vehicle belonging to this Department may expect certain actions by law enforcement personnel that they would not expect from non-law enforcement personnel.
 - a. Seat belts shall be worn at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
 - b. Department vehicles shall be locked at all times when left unattended.
 - c. Department vehicles shall not be used for any purpose other than an assigned duty without permission of the CPA Coordinator.
- D. At no time is a volunteer authorized to use any type of weapon belonging to this Department.