

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #46	MENDOCINO COUNTY VOLUNTEER POLICY
ADOPTED: April 10, 2012	ADOPTED BY: Board Resolution #12-063

Volunteers are a valuable resource in enhancing and improving the County’s ability to provide efficient and effective services to the community. The Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino recognizes and supports the use of volunteers to assist County government in providing services and programs. Volunteer service can enhance the County's ability to deliver services in a cost effective manner, provide a meaningful and positive impact on County Programs and the community, and may provide greater diversity in the workforce; as well as bring a fresh perspective and expanded skill set to County services and programs. In addition, volunteers can improve or promote the quality of their own lives as well as the lives of those people they interact with in course of their volunteering. Volunteering allows the volunteer to enhance his or her own skills, make contacts for possible employment and community involvement and could be considered self-satisfying and may fulfill the volunteer’s altruistic desires.

PURPOSE

Except as set forth herein, the Mendocino County volunteer policy applies to all persons who perform voluntary service for the County of Mendocino, and provides such persons with the terms and conditions of their voluntary service to the County of Mendocino. This policy formalizes the volunteer program and establishes standards of volunteer service. This policy defines the responsibilities of the County and volunteers. Written policies and procedures assure volunteers are suitably selected, oriented and trained, written assignments and job duties are developed, supervision is appropriate to assigned duties and discussion with volunteers regarding safety, liability to the County and accident and property damage coverage is conducted. This policy is designed to enable the County to accept volunteers, reduce volunteer risk and protect the interests of the County, its volunteers, and the community it serves.

This policy also provides the County, through its various departments, with the necessary supervision and control over the provision of such voluntary services so as to protect the volunteer and the County of Mendocino from unnecessary exposure to liability or other problems in connection with such service.

All volunteers are expected to abide by County policies and regulations that govern their actions, including but not limited to those of ethical behavior, confidentiality, financial responsibility, and drug and alcohol use.

APPLICATION

Advisory boards and commissions and members of the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Reserve Deputy Program, the Mendocino Search and Rescue Organization, individuals who are engaged in Internships and/or work experience programs that are covered by external agencies and/or educational institutions, and volunteers that are provided from other organizations through a MOU or contract with the County, are not covered by this policy but are expected to comply with all polices relating to prohibited activities and general conduct as set forth herein.

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #46	MENDOCINO COUNTY VOLUNTEER POLICY
ADOPTED: April 10, 2012	ADOPTED BY: Board Resolution #12-063

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Generally, administration of volunteers and a volunteer program will be the responsibility of the department for which the volunteer works. Overall program coordination, will be under direction of the Human Resources department, or as delegated to a volunteer management agency by contract with the County. Departments are responsible to create their specific department procedures to coordinate their volunteer program and to meet expectations outlined in this policy.

SCOPE

Definition of Volunteer: County volunteers are uncompensated individuals who perform services directly related to the business of the County for their benefit, to support the humanitarian, charitable or public service activities of the County, or to gain experience in specific endeavors. To qualify as a County volunteer, an individual must be willing to provide service according to the procedures in this policy.

In order to maximize the effectiveness of volunteers, yet limit risk exposure to both volunteers and the County, this policy will apply to all County departments and volunteers. Exceptions to the conditions of the policy may be brought to Human Resources and/or Risk Management for review and approval on a case-by-case basis.

Types of Volunteers: There are five broad classes of volunteers:

- A. General Volunteer: Defined as one who is not assigned to sensitive areas or situations and does not require particular licensing or certification. Examples of departments using such volunteers might be, but not limited to: Planning, Transportation, General Services, Library, Animal Control, Environmental Health. Placement of these volunteers will require only a basic background such as reference checks and verifying information from application.
- B. Special Volunteer: Defined as one who is assigned to sensitive areas or to work with children or other vulnerable populations such as in the Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA). Placement of these volunteers may require a Livescan (fingerprinting) or extensive background check and drug screenings.
- C. Public Safety Volunteer: Defined as one who perform services related to law enforcement and public safety. Placement of volunteers in these areas may require the full law enforcement background check including complete physical, psychological, polygraph and drug screenings, or a background investigation similar to that of law enforcement personnel. Reserve Deputy Sheriff's shall not lose the status of volunteer if/when on an occasional basis they might receive compensation for their time related to extra law enforcement services at special events where a private company/entity/individual provides compensation for such activity to offset costs to the Sheriff, by contract or agreement.
- D. Internal Volunteer: Defined as one who is currently an employee of County of Mendocino and is volunteering for a job distinctly different from their classification or working in a different

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #46	MENDOCINO COUNTY VOLUNTEER POLICY
ADOPTED: April 10, 2012	ADOPTED BY: Board Resolution #12-063

department. Current public officers/employees may act in a volunteer capacity, but are not permitted to voluntarily perform services which are the same as, or are similar to, the duties for which they are paid to perform by the same public agency. The duties of the internal volunteer shall not, in any way, conflict with the provisions of Government Code Section relating to inconsistent, incompatible or conflicting activity by a local officer or employee.

E. External Volunteer is defined as one who does not work for the County of Mendocino.

All screening activities related to volunteer placement are the responsibility of the department.

Prohibited Activities: County volunteers are not intended to, and cannot replace employee positions or impair the employment of a County position. Volunteer services are generally limited to humanitarian, charitable or public services.

County volunteers are also prohibited from performing the following activities:

- Working with stored energy (e.g. steam, electricity, hydraulics)
- Participating in an activity considered inappropriate for any employee
- Entering into any contract on behalf of the County
- Cash handling without the direct supervision of County employee
- Working with infectious or potentially infectious agents, including human blood
- Operating a County function without supervision of a County employee
- Participating in media interviews without permission of volunteer supervisor
- Working as a Disaster Service Worker Volunteer without permission and appropriate certification from County Authority
- Any exception to the above, as long as properly supervised and trained, must be identified by an individual service level agreement approved by Risk Management.

Recruitment: Potential volunteers will be required to submit a written application form provided by Human Resources or a designated volunteer management agency under contract with the County. Submission of an application shall not be construed as, nor implied as, acceptance of any individual into the volunteer program.

Selection: A selection process shall be established where potential volunteers are interviewed, references verified, and in sensitive placements, consistent with type of volunteer (A, B, C, D, E) a

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #46	MENDOCINO COUNTY VOLUNTEER POLICY
ADOPTED: April 10, 2012	ADOPTED BY: Board Resolution #12-063

security or Cash Handling Authorization Form (this will be a form internal to the volunteer's department) and/or Livescan Background Authorization Form shall be completed. If the volunteer performs duties requiring driving, the volunteer will be subject to Policy 18 and 26, and as such, the volunteer's driver license shall be provided to Risk Management. A driver evaluation shall also be conducted prior to the volunteer driving. If volunteer will be driving their personal vehicle, a certificate of vehicle liability insurance must be provided to Risk Management.

Volunteers may be subject to a pre-volunteer physical similar to that of an employee performing similar duties.

Public Safety Volunteers, Reserves and other volunteers that are considered working in a law enforcement/peace officer capacity shall be subject to a complete background investigation including fingerprinting, as well as any Physical & Psychological examinations, polygraph and drug screening similar to that which employees performing law enforcement duties are subject.

If the selection process discloses any information which indicates a potential volunteer is precluded from working in certain situations or fulfilling department requirements, the County is under no obligation to accept or retain that volunteer.

Orientation: In order for both the County and volunteers to have a complete understanding of the conditions of volunteership, volunteers must complete an orientation; this orientation will discuss County policies to which volunteers are subject to adhere, such as, but not limited to, Sexual Harassment, Drug Free Workplace, Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Internet Usage Policy 22, etc. Departments are responsible for conducting orientation for volunteers that work in their department within the first week of work. An Orientation Checklist is required of all departments.

- A. **Policy and Procedure:** Policy and procedures regulating volunteer duties must be discussed. Specific emphasis must be given to working safely, conditions of driving while as a volunteer and risk exposure to the County. This policy should be furnished to and discussed with volunteers.
- B. **Training:** Volunteers will receive an overview of their volunteer assignment and, as appropriate, a written list of duties and expectations, hours of service, supervision, necessary forms, approved financial expenditures and reimbursement procedures, accident reporting procedures, confidentiality, call in, dress code, etc. Volunteers will also receive safety training as appropriate.
- C. **Supervision:** Volunteers will be supervised by permanent County employees as to assignments, performance, activity, use of equipment, etc. Performance problems will be corrected or the volunteer service terminated. Supervisors are to consult with Human Resources or its designated volunteer management agency under contract with the County if

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #46	MENDOCINO COUNTY VOLUNTEER POLICY
ADOPTED: April 10, 2012	ADOPTED BY: Board Resolution #12-063

they experience issues with the volunteer. Supervision or designee is responsible for making sure volunteer hours are tracked and reported.

- D. **Separation:** Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the County. Accordingly a volunteer can be terminated without notice or cause.
- E. **Computer Usage:** Volunteers are subject to the Internet and Email usage policy as outlined in County Policy #22
- F. **Telephone Usage:** Volunteers may be contacted by phone at the assigned department for important personal matters that can not wait. Outgoing calls must be limited to County business or emergencies. Pay phones for personal calls may be available at some locations.
- G. **Drugs and Alcohol:** Volunteers are expected to adhere to County Policy # 24, Drug Free Workplace to which employees are subject. Possession, use, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty in a volunteer capacity is strictly prohibited.
- H. **Smoking:** Smoking is not permitted inside any County building or within 20 feet of a County building (MCC §9.20.030).
- I. **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual Harassment is against the law; the County of Mendocino takes this very seriously and enforces a Sexual Harassment Policy. Volunteers and employees are expected to contribute positively to a work environment that is free from unwelcome overtures, advances, or coercion, by or to any volunteer, employee, or a member of the public using County facilities. Any matter of this nature must be brought to the attention of the supervisor, so immediate corrective action can be taken.
- J. **Conflict of Interest:** Volunteers, like employees, are required to disclose any business, commercial or financial interest they may have, where such interest might be construed by a reasonable person as being in real, potential or apparent conflict with their official duties for the organization. A determination may be made by the organization to end or modify a volunteer assignment if a serious conflict of interest exists, if the volunteer cannot or chooses not to modify or end such conflict of their own accord.
- K. **Use of Organizational Affiliation:** A volunteer may not use his/her affiliation as a volunteer with the County in connection with partisan politics, religious matters, or community issues contrary to positions taken by the County.
- L. **Speaking on Behalf of the County:** Volunteers may not represent themselves as anything other than a volunteer while performing duties as a volunteer, unless specifically authorized and to the extent specified in writing for a specific purpose.

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #46	MENDOCINO COUNTY VOLUNTEER POLICY
ADOPTED: April 10, 2012	ADOPTED BY: Board Resolution #12-063

M. **Confidentiality Statement:** The County is committed to maintaining client’s and customer’s right to protection of their personal information. Staff and volunteers in the County must be committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality customers/clients; particularly their personal and personal health information subject to HIPAA. Breaches of privacy put the County at risk of legal consequences.

RISKS OF INJURY TO VOLUNTEERS or PROPERTY DAMAGE

Personal Injury: Workers Compensation coverage will be provided by the County of Mendocino or as designated with a volunteer management agency under contract with the County. Time loss benefits are not available.

Damage To Volunteer’s Property: In the event the personal property of a volunteer is damaged while the volunteer is serving in either authorized or unauthorized volunteer status, the County nor any designated volunteer management agency under contract with the County will be responsible to reimburse for the damage. Members of the Mendocino County Search and Rescue Organization and Sheriff’s Reserve Deputy Program are covered under the same conditions as the Sheriff personnel.

Damage To Private Property: In the event private property is damaged by a volunteer serving in only an authorized volunteer status, provisions of the County Risk Management policy and procedures will be observed.

PROCEDURES

Each department will develop and maintain written procedures to supplement this policy to address specific methods to recruit, interview, select, orient, train, supervise, track and recognize volunteers. Department heads will designate an employee within the department to be responsible for the volunteer program and who will serve as the contact person.

NOTIFICATION TO RISK MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Departments utilizing volunteers must notify Risk Management and Human Resources or its designated volunteer management agency under contract with the County of their volunteer roster and volunteer service hours on a monthly basis and upon any subsequent changes to the volunteer roster.