Volunteer Toolbox

A Publication of the Research Division of NACo's County Services Department

About the National Association of Counties

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation's 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit *www.naco.org*.

About the National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government

NAVPLG is the leading international association of directors, managers, and administrators of volunteer programs in local city and county governments. Their purpose is to strengthen volunteer programs through leadership, education, advocacy, net-working and information exchange. For more information about NAVPLG, visit *www.navplg.org*.

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I. Introduction

The National Association of Counties (NACo), along with its affiliate, The National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government (NAVPLG) promotes volunteerism in local government and assists counties in their efforts to organize and expand volunteer programs. Working in almost every area of county government operations, volunteers enable local governments to provide more services to residents.

With the current national economic outlook, the call for volunteers has recently taken on a new sense of urgency. The use of volunteers provides an opportunity for county government leaders to address local needs by engaging citizens through action and collaboration. By getting citizens involved, leaders can build more innovative, cost-effective volunteer programs.

Today, many counties in the United States operate volunteer programs that residents depend on. Committed and talented volunteers have joined with dedicated public staff to forge ongoing partnerships in virtually every public endeavor all across the United States. Counties throughout the United States have built strong programs that have enhanced county operations through cooperation between citizens and paid employees. These partnerships are even more critical today, as county leaders seek cost-effective strategies to meet rising service demands.

This revised edition of The Volunteer Toolbox is part of NACo's effort to provide local governments with information and resources to establish and expand volunteer programs. More than a practical guide, The Volunteer Toolbox is a recipe for creating energized and healthy communities that build on the strength of volunteer service. Given the opportunity, citizens will heed your call to public service, and your community will benefit immeasurably from their volunteerism.

Volunteerism at the Local Level

Even though the need for volunteers has been greater in recent years, volunteerism has a long tradition in American history, and is one of our most common activities. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, about 62.8 million people volunteered through or for an organization between September 2009 and September 2010. According to these statistics, approximately 26.3% of the population volunteered during this time period. Since local government is the closest form of government to the people, many are drawn to the types of service that local volunteer programs offer.

What Can Volunteers Do?

For many years, volunteers have served on advisory task forces, staffed volunteer fire departments, or filled a variety of roles at the county fair. Today, counties are expanding volunteer programs to include many services that have never been provided before. Volunteers enable counties to either expand or create new services for residents, helping to meet the rising service demand. Many volunteer programs have partnered with paid staff and departments to create successful programs that foster collaboration between paid staff and volunteers.

The variety of roles in which volunteers can participate is limitless. Imagination and creativity can result in an effective and successful volunteer initiative that involves volunteers in a broad range of county activities. Listed below are examples from across the nation of strong, innovative volunteer programs.

● **Los Angeles County, California**
The staff of Los Angeles County's Northeast Wellness Center, in response to County and State budget cuts, was challenged to provide more mental health services with fewer resources. As a solution, 54 consumer/volunteers were recruited from the community to work side-by-side with the Northeast staff, averaging a total of 437.5 volunteer hours/per week (roughly the equivalent of 11 full-time employees), and saving the County Department of Mental Health an average of $513,030/year. This win-win situation integrated consumer/volunteers into the community as self-assured, confident, and empowered individuals

● **Orange County, California**
The Professional Services Responders (PSRs) work alongside sworn and non-sworn personnel by being a readily deployable resource, that donates their time and expertise. Generally, PSRs are used in public areas, where they are in continual proximity to the public and passengers for direct interaction. They provide assistance and guidance to travelers who have illustrated a tendency to approach a clearly identified law enforcement representative for assistance or inquiries. Currently, 50 Professional Service Responders are assigned to Airport Operations. This 50-member PSR team donated a total of 3,338 hours in 2009.

● **Palm Beach County, Florida**
To increase oyster habitat while simultaneously increasing public awareness, Palm Beach County Florida, the Town of Latana and West Palm Beach Fishing Club implemented a Volunteer Oyster Reef Restoration Project. More than 160 volunteers filled 1,400 netted bags with 24 tons of fossilized shell and placed them along the shoreline. The results of this successful project are being shared with local municipalities to encourage additional volunteer oyster reef restoration projects in Lake Worth Lagoon.

● **Oakland County, Michigan**
Oakland County NetVolunteers is a technology-based community outreach program that enables trained volunteers to perform citizen-to-citizen customer service. Volunteers use social media and other web-based public forums to share information about county programs and services, to promote accurate and up-to-date information about Oakland County government, and to assist in the growth of social networking as a viable tool for local community building. Benefits to Oakland County include reduced support costs through increased opportunities for citizen self-service and peer-to-peer support.

● **Henderson County, North Carolina**
While many animal shelters have volunteer programs, this program utilizes its volunteers more than most programs. Volunteers complete a broad range of services in the organization. Compassionate volunteers assist at adoption events, advertise special events, take pictures, and help with community outreach at local schools. Included in the volunteer roster are professional trainers that do written evaluations on adoptable animals and hold free obedience classes at the shelter. Their involvement enhances the level of service to the community and the care given to animals being sheltered by the county at minimal cost to tax payers.

● **Chesterfield County, Virginia**
The Chesterfield County Volunteer Sign Removal Program's goal is to harness the public concern and outrage over the blight, safety, and litter problems caused by illegal signage along public roadways into an effective volunteer force which can cost-effectively abate the issue. Furthermore, the program gathers information from volunteers and uses it to educate violators of the state and county laws in order to effectively reduce future problems of the same nature. The success of the program is made possible by a two-pronged approach in which volunteers remove illegal signage shortly after its placement, thereby rendering them unproductive and then county staff contacts the violators to educate them on why their signs have been removed.

II. Establishing a Volunteer Program

Establishing a county volunteer program can have countless benefits for both the county and its residents. Volunteer programs offer a way for the county to extend or expand services to residents at a relatively low cost. Even though volunteer programs do have some costs, the time that is donated by volunteers can be extremely valuable and usually significantly outweighs the costs. In addition to benefiting residents, volunteer programs enable community members to actively get involved in the community in which they live. Finally, county volunteer programs improve the image of the county as a whole, and its leaders, as more residents are able to interact with the county for the benefit of the community.

Benefits of Establishing a Volunteer Program

● **Cost effective government**
There are numerous benefits in establishing a volunteer program. The first and most obvious benefit is that volunteer programs provide more services to the community at a reduced cost. Paid county staff provide necessary continuity to programs, while trained volunteers help fill gaps in service. In fact, Independent Sector estimated that in 2010, the average dollar value of volunteer time in the United States was $21.36 per hour. However, it is important to keep in mind that volunteer programs do not eliminate all costs, and there are various costs associated with establishing and maintaining a program.

● **Perception of government operations**
Volunteers are able to see firsthand how the county government operates and functions. By being involved in positive programs that are organized and operate well, a positive image is promoted to the volunteers, as well as to the citizens of the county.

● **Additional resources**
Volunteers active in county government become advocates for programs and help seek donations of time, money, and material to meet the goals of a specific program. In addition, as exposure to county programs increases, programs are better able to reach their target audience of potential clients.

● **Knowledge of elected officials**
Volunteers often become personally acquainted with top public officials and learn the goals and purposes of county policies. Volunteers can relate a sincere story of trust and understanding much better than any paid public relations campaign.

● **Professional skills and education**
Volunteers from all walks of life and educational backgrounds lend their expertise to county operations. The skills and knowledge that volunteers bring add to the quality of the services that they provide.

● **Strong democracy and citizen participation**
Volunteer programs enable a diverse group of county residents to come together and collectively work to improve communities. Volunteer programs give residents the opportunity to participate in their local government and to have a voice in the development of their community.

Support from the Top

Support from the top leadership of the county is necessary to effectively create, plan, fund, implement, execute, and sustain a volunteer program. Elected officials must demonstrate their commitment to a volunteer program publicly and should seek the support of the entire elected board and high level appointed officials. County government employees that wish to establish a volunteer program should be prepared to respond to any concerns or questions elected officials may ask. Some examples may be: Will the county be liable if a volunteer is hurt while doing the job? What are the costs associated with a volunteer program?

A few tips in obtaining support from elected and appointed officials include:

- Demonstrating how the volunteer program will benefit county government and the community
- Addressing important issues such as costs and liabilities
- Establishing goals and procedures by which the volunteer program's success can be measured
- Outlining successful efforts by other county government volunteer programs

Maintaining the support of elected officials during the development phase of a volunteer program is essential. While planning the volunteer program, the program administrator should consider the following guidelines in order to better maintain support:

- Have an approved, written policy, on the development of the volunteer program
- Present a budget to cover volunteer program expenses
- Reserve space that will be designated for the volunteer program operation; for volunteers to perform their work; and for storage
- Provide a recognition plan for volunteers and paid staff involved with the program
- Give training to volunteers and paid staff involved in the program
- Start a public relations campaign to promote the volunteer program
- Ask elected officials to promote volunteerism to their constituency

Volunteer Program Planning

In order for a volunteer program to be successful, it must be carefully planned. The process involves a variety of management functions, including needs assessment, volunteer position development, recruitment, supervision, evaluation, risk management, and recognition. In addition, funds need to be acquired and budgeted for the program, and a comprehensive set of policies must be developed. A new volunteer program may completely change the nature of a certain department, so these changes must be anticipated and planned for. With proper planning, the volunteer program will be destined for success. Here are some suggested steps to follow during the planning process:

● **Goals**
Establish realistic goals for the program that will be obtainable over a reasonable time period. In the beginning, do not set out to accomplish too many goals, which will allow the program flexibility when dealing with unanticipated problems that may arise.

● **Obstacles**

Identify potential obstacles that may prevent the program from meeting its goals. Obstacles can include legal issues, financial difficulties, or attitudinal challenges. Failure to identify obstacles early on, such as paid staff resistance or problems obtaining funds, could lead to a failure of the program. The more planning that is done for problems that may arise will ensure a higher rate of success for the program.

● **Opportunities**

Identify the opportunities that will aid in meeting the program's goals. In addition, devise a strategy of how the program's leaders will pursue the resources that are available to them.

● **Objectives**

Set specific objectives that outline steps, which will help in attaining the goals that the program has set forth.

● **Tasks**

Identify the tasks that are necessary to meet the objectives of the program. The volunteer program plan should have an action orientation.

● **Standards**

Determine in advance how success or failure will be measured.

● **Policies**

Set all financial, legal, ethical, political, and administrative limits on the manner in which the tasks will be conducted. While establishing policies, consider obstacles to ensure that your policies either avoid problematic areas or address them with a plan.

● **Budget**

Determine what the costs of operation will be and identify the source(s) of funding.

● **Personnel**

Identify county staff who will be responsible for volunteer activities and determine if additional training is required.

● **Timing**

Determine the appropriate time frame for each task. Set measurable milestones for periodic evaluation and reevaluate future plans.

Planning Checklist:

☐ Does the county's elected body publicly support a volunteer program?
☐ Do administrative personnel/managers support the involvement of volunteers?
☐ Is there a budget or available funds to support a volunteer program?
☐ Who will supervise volunteers?
☐ Has a needs assessment been performed to determine volunteer jobs?
☐ Are there policies and procedures in place to guide paid staff and volunteers?
☐ Have the responsibilities of the volunteer manager been formalized into a job description or at least a work plan?

Assessing the County's Need for Volunteers

One of the first steps in planning a volunteer program involves conducting a needs assessment of agencies or departments that will be affected by the volunteer program. To best assess the needs of the county, survey each department, agency, or separate organizational entity to determine the current involvement of volunteers and the unmet needs or desires of each department or agency that may be assisted by volunteer programming. A complete analysis should be done to determine what potential volunteer activity should be undertaken. In addition, the assessment will help in determining the nature and extent of volunteer efforts that could best meet the needs of the agencies or departments.

Sample questions of a needs assessment survey:
1. What is the vision and mission for the intended volunteer program?
2. How do volunteers fit into the program's mission, strategies, and goals?
3. Are there areas of work that the staff does not want to do?
4. Are there areas of work that the staff is unable to complete because there is too much work to do?
5. Are there areas where services should be extended, but the amount of staff does not make these extra services available?
6. How many hours will volunteers work and how will their hours be tracked?
7. What cost will be incurred by the department or agency for volunteer involvement and how is that determined?
8. Estimate the number of volunteers that the department/agency could involve and manage?
9. What percentage of the department agency budget will be assigned to support volunteer programming?
10. Who will supervise volunteers?
11. How will volunteers be trained?
12. How will volunteers be recruited?
13. How will volunteers be recognized for their work?
14. How will the volunteer program be evaluated?
15. How will individual volunteers be evaluated?
16. What benefits or privileges will be offered to volunteers?
17. What documents or forms will be used (e.g. volunteer position description, application, time sheet) and will the forms be paper or electronic?
18. What support services could a central volunteer coordinating office offer the department or agency?

The needs assessment should include all individuals who may be affected by a volunteer program. Staff, community organizations, advisory groups, potential volunteers, clients, and any other group that the program will involve should be surveyed. In addition, several methods can be used to conduct the needs assessment, which include interviews, surveys (paper, mail, email, or web-based), or focus groups. The information collected will help improve the development of the volunteer program, ensuring that those who will be involved in the program will be able to help shape it, ultimately making it more successful.

Improving an Existing Volunteer Program

If an existing volunteer program is already in place, much of the needs assessment is not needed. However, numerous questions still need to be asked in order to ensure that the program is running effectively and efficiently. If any changes need to be made, these questions can aid in focusing on areas that could be improved upon.

Some sample questions are:

1. What are the current volunteer job roles and functions?
2. How many hours do volunteers currently work and how are their hours tracked?
3. How much does the department/agency currently spend on the volunteer program?
4. How are volunteers trained and is the training effective?
5. What methods are used for volunteer recruitment?
6. Are volunteers recognized for their devotion to the organization/agency?
7. Are the volunteers evaluated? Are these evaluations effective?
8. What benefits or privileges are offered to volunteers?
9. What support or services could a volunteer coordinating office offer the department or agency?
10. Is the volunteer program currently achieving the goals set forth in the mission/ vision statement?
11. What changes to the program could make it more effective?

After Completion of the Needs Assessment

Once the needs assessment is completed, a purpose statement should be developed that explains the objective(s) of the program. The purpose statement should simply be one to two sentences and will set out the intentions of the newly created program. If a program is already in existence, the purpose statement may be revised as needed. Using the results from the needs assessment, the program can begin to be developed or previously existing programs can be reorganized. The following are a list of tasks to complete after the needs assessment has been done:

- Make a list of benefits that the program will provide to the community.
- Share the results of the assessment with those that took part in it. In the case of an already existing program, present the results to those who will be able to influence change.
- Draft goals and objectives for the program and plans to achieve them.
- Decide what positions are necessary in the program and draft position descriptions for volunteers.
- Develop techniques for recruiting volunteers who will benefit the program.
- Develop a track for volunteers so that opportunities for advancement are provided, which will encourage continued and increased involvement.

Once these tasks have been completed, the agency should develop the purpose statement. Now, the details of the program will be ready to be developed.

Countywide or Departmental Volunteer?

There are a variety of options on how to organize a county volunteer program. Some counties have created volunteer offices to establish countywide policies, budgeting, training, management tools, public relations, recognition events, tracking, evaluation, and reporting of programs. Other counties have created separate volunteer programs in specific agencies or departments, with each department, division, or agency responsible for managing its own volunteer efforts. There are also variations on the coordination of volunteers, depending upon the situation. The organizational form that a county selects should reflect the needs and resources that the county possesses. Larger counties with more resources and that operate many different volunteer programs may prefer having a central volunteer office, so that all programs can be easily maintained and observed. In contrast, smaller counties may prefer to individually run programs from the agency or department level because there are relatively few other volunteer programs that the county operates. Other issues to consider while deciding on an organizational structure are budget, expertise, and political and managerial

commitments. For counties that decide on a countywide volunteer program office, usually they are housed in the Human Resources/Personnel Department, Community/Citizen Services Department, or the Office of the County Manager/Executive/Administrator.

Counties with a central volunteer office have several benefits, which include:
- Central point of contact for citizens
- Service needs prioritized
- Coordinated recruitment and public relations campaigns
- Uniform application and orientation process
- Oversight for adherence to county policies and procedures.

Volunteer Manager

One of the most important positions of any volunteer program is the Volunteer Manager. The Volunteer Manager is responsible for managing all aspects of the program and is crucial to its success. A good Volunteer Manager should take an active role in the program and must possess excellent leadership skills. In order to recruit volunteers, the manager must show enthusiasm for the program, as well as provide proper motivation for volunteers to continue their work with the program. Some functions that the Volunteer Manager may coordinate are:

- Develop, plan, and administer programs utilizing volunteers
- Develop program policies and procedures
- Communicate county policies and procedures regarding the program to volunteers and paid staff
- Generate, prepare, and maintain program reports and statistics
- Recruit and select volunteers
- Lead the orientation process of volunteers and their placement in the program
- Supervise all volunteers and ensure that the program is operating efficiently
- Develop work plans, timelines, and resource allocations for assigned projects
- Prepare grant applications and properly administer grants if they are received
- Serve as a liaison between the volunteers and county staff
- Prepare all publicity to local media to promote the program and its accomplishments
- Prepare a budget and ensure that proper funds are obtained to keep the program viable
- Serve as a resource for volunteers who may have questions about the program
- Promote and support diversity in the programming
- Evaluate the volunteer program

III. Volunteer Liability / Legal Issues

In recent years, a number of lawsuits have deterred many citizens from volunteering in programs due to a fear of potential legal action against them. Numerous state governments, as well as the Federal government have recognized the decrease of volunteers due to this fear, and have passed laws addressing the issue. In addition, many companies now offer insurance for volunteer programs and volunteers that are involved with them. By combining these measures with risk reduction techniques, county volunteer programs can drastically decrease the risk of a lawsuit.

One of the most important, yet overlooked roles of the volunteer manager is risk management and decreasing the risk of liability in a program. Many volunteer programs do not have or have less than adequate liability insurance that will protect the county from lawsuits brought against volunteers. In addition to the need for proper insurance policies, risk management procedures must be put in place to reduce the likelihood that a volunteer will be the source of a lawsuit. By reducing the risk of county volunteer programs, as well as being aware of state, federal, and local laws that govern these programs, the county will greatly reduce the likelihood of any legal problems and challenges.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are an extremely important part of the volunteer program, and provide overall guidance and direction to program participants. The policies that are adopted must adhere to all federal, state, and local laws and provide formal written policies and procedures governing the involvement and treatment of volunteers. In addition, program policies and procedures should describe steps that must be adhered to when there is a problem within the program concerning volunteer issues. By establishing procedures at the beginning, a volunteer manager can be proactive in tending to possible problems and issues that the program may face in the future. A county ordinance or policy, approved by the county's elected board, will provide the framework for a volunteer program. The ordinance should include:

- Preamble or general policy statement endorsing the concept of the volunteer effort in the provision of public services
- Definition of a volunteer and any classifications of volunteers
- Description of how a person becomes a volunteer and reasons and procedures for dismissing a volunteer (These procedures might include completing an application form, receiving a job description, signing a contract or agreement concerning services and confidentiality requirements, maintaining records concerning service, conducting periodic evaluations, completing a medical examination, or other similar requirements).
- Description of the benefits available to volunteers and how they differ among classifications of volunteers.
- Description of worker's compensation or liability insurance offered to volunteers, and any insurance deviation between classes of volunteers.
- Conflict of interest or financial disclosure policies that may be applicable to volunteers.
- Risk management procedures and techniques that will be used to limit liability.

Risk Management

Risk management is one of the best ways to reduce the likelihood that the program or volunteer will be held liable for a wrongful action or accident. By working to prevent any of these acts, risk management aids in awareness, education, and problem solving when dealing with these issues. The best way to reduce risk is to identify and limit the sources and exposure to the risk. The risk management process should include, but is not limited to, an analysis of insurance, work safety, health liability, legal liability, and inherent organizational risks. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that risk management is an ongoing process, and the volunteer program administrator and/or supervisors should consistently reevaluate methods, procedures, training techniques, and any other factors that may cause a problem or concern.

If there is no risk management strategy in place for the volunteer program, the first thing that leaders of the program should do is conduct a risk and liability assessment. Any potential risks should be evaluated in order to determine if changes need to be made to reduce or eliminate the risk. Topics such as confidentiality, sexual harassment training, and liability insurance are just a few examples of issues that are commonly raised during risk management assessments. One example of a possible solution to a problem could be to conduct a training program for volunteers that teaches techniques on how to properly address an identified problem area. Involving volunteers in the risk management process will also add creativity and ideas to possible solutions, while also receiving their input on whether or not possible solutions will be effective for volunteers.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) *Voluntary Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines* prescribes four essential elements of a risk management program, which are:

- management commitment and employee involvement
- worksite examinations to identify existing hazards as well as conditions and operations where changes might occur to create hazards
- hazard prevention control
- safety and health training.

Not only do these policies reduce the risks of liability, but they also aid in improving morale and productivity of volunteers.

In order to limit liability, there are a number of requirements that the county volunteer program can mandate. One of the most common techniques is to require volunteers to sign a waiver, permission form, and/or an informed consent form, which can shield the county from any legal action that the volunteer may bring against the program and/or county. Another method that the volunteer program can employ is to perform background checks on volunteers before they start to work for the program, especially if volunteers will be working with children. Obviously background checks cannot be used for one-day volunteer events, and other methods can be done for events similar to this, like signing a waiver and a brief training, in order to minimize risk to the program.

Volunteer Accidents

Accidents that involve volunteers or program participants are inevitable, so every volunteer program should have a policy in place that describes the proper procedures to follow after an accident has occurred. Particular attention should be paid to accidents that involve injuries. Volunteer managers should work with supervisors and county legal advisors when developing injury policies and procedures. These policies should resemble those that are already in place for employees who are injured at the workplace. Whenever an accident happens, the safety of the volunteer and program participants should be of utmost concern and proper medical personnel should be contacted immediately if needed. If the accident does not require immediate medical attention, the supervisor of the program should be notified immediately and an accident report should be filed within 24 hours of the incident. Even if the volunteer or program participant does not think that medical treatment is needed; a report should still be filed. Therefore, if medical treatment is sought later, there is documentation of the accident. In addition, many counties require those that are injured to receive medical care from an authorized provider, or it may not be covered under the county's insurance policy.

A standard for all county volunteer programs is liability insurance that covers the costs associated with the injury of a volunteer. There are different types and costs of this insurance, but most provide coverage for all medical bills related to the injury. In addition, most liability insurance plans provide disability, death, and dismemberment benefits up to a pre-set limit. More information about volunteer insurance is described below.

Volunteer Insurance

Due to the increasing risk from lawsuits, many volunteer programs have turned to volunteer insurance programs, which protect counties from having to pay the exorbitant costs of lawsuits and settlements. According to CIMA World, one of the leading companies that provides volunteer insurance, liabilities to programs can

include a volunteer getting injured, a volunteer hurting someone else, or automobile accidents. The county may be held liable for any of these situations. CIMA World and other companies provide relatively inexpensive insurance programs so that all volunteers are covered in a program and the county is not put in financial risk. For the all-encompassing volunteer liability insurance, which includes medical expense reimbursement, personal liability insurance, and automobile liability insurance, many companies currently offer protection as low as $10.50 per volunteer per year. In addition, all of these insurance protections are offered as individual programs if the volunteer program does not require all types of insurance. Insurance for volunteers not only aids the county, but makes the county volunteer program more attractive to potential volunteers, because it eliminates the threat of being held personally liable for damages done while volunteering.

Insurance companies offer a whole host of volunteer protections in addition to those that simply cover volunteer liability. These protections can be individualized to meet the needs of each program. For example, such things as volunteer dishonesty coverage can protect a county if a volunteer steals funds or supplies from a program. All county volunteer programs are encouraged to have some sort of insurance protection so that the program can remain sustainable if an accident or incident occurs.

The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997

The most comprehensive piece of legislation that has addressed volunteer liability is The *Volunteer Protection Act of 1997*. Beginning in the mid-1980s, lawsuits against volunteers became commonplace and many citizens were discouraged from volunteering due to the risk of being held liable for his or her actions. Although every state has laws pertaining specifically to the legal liability of volunteers, the statutes lack uniformity and consistency. Some state laws protect volunteer program directors and managers, while others only protect the county. In addition, insurance premiums had risen drastically for volunteer programs, while at the same time benefits have been cut. As a result, many volunteer programs were forced to either cut services offered or cease operations. In addition, some volunteer programs simply were unable to pay the insurance costs and chose to operate without insurance, putting the program and its volunteers at grave risk for lawsuits.

Recognizing the importance of volunteer programs, Congress enacted *The Volunteer Protection Act*, citing the fact that volunteers need to be protected from potential liability actions against them, and that volunteer liability reform was needed to ensure the continued success of volunteer programs throughout the nation. The Act relieves volunteers from liability for negligent acts or omissions that are committed while performing duties as a volunteer. However, the Act does not protect governmental entities with respect to harm caused by volunteer actions, still making counties liable for any damages caused by a volunteer.

The Act sets out four guidelines that must be met in order for the volunteer to claim that he or she is exempt from liability:

1. The volunteer was acting within the scope of his or her position
2. The volunteer was properly licensed, certified, or authorized if required
3. The harm was not caused willfully
4. The harm was not caused while the volunteer was operating a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle.

The law preempts the laws of any state, with the only exception being laws that provide additional liability protection to volunteers.

The Act does not relieve a volunteer from all responsibility for his or her actions. Specifically, the Act does not protect volunteers from accidents that consist of any misconduct that: constitutes a crime of violence, constitutes a hate crime, involves a sexual offense, involves misconduct for which the defendant has been found to have violated a Federal or State civil rights law; or where the defendant was under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug at the time of the misconduct.

Finally, in regard to volunteers, the *Volunteer Protection Act* prevents punitive damages from being awarded against a volunteer. As stated earlier, the harm cannot be a result of any misconduct, and has to have occurred while the volunteer was performing acts within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities in order to claim immunity from punitive damages. However, volunteers may be held liable for the amount of noneconomic loss allocated to the volunteer in direct proportion to the percentage responsibility that the volunteer is found to have in the incident. Nonetheless, the *Volunteer Protection Act* is very specific in its scope and only protects volunteers in certain situations. Many volunteers still remain fully liable for any harm they cause.

While the *Volunteer Protection Act* does limit the liability of volunteers, it is not comprehensive, nor is the full scope of its protections clear. In addition, the Act does not protect organizations in any way; therefore, the *Volunteer Protection Act* does not protect counties that have volunteer programs. Since the passage of the *Volunteer Protection Act*, many states have passed their own legislation dealing with the liability of volunteers. The volunteer manager should research state laws to be better able to determine if insurance is needed and what risk is involved with a volunteer program.

Sovereign Immunity

Sovereign immunity or governmental immunity is a concept that can potentially protect a county from lawsuits. By utilizing governmental immunity, the county reduces its susceptibility to legal action. The policies regarding immunity have changed throughout the years and each state has differing laws regarding immunity. Some states have completely abolished the concept of sovereign immunity, while others continue to hold on to the theory, which can protect all parts of the government from legal action.

Depending on the state, sovereign immunity may also have restrictions and may not provide an entire blanket immunity to the county. As long as there is no wrongdoing by officials, counties in states that have sovereign immunity will not experience the risk of lawsuits. County officials and program planners/managers must keep in mind that sovereign immunity laws differ in each state, and some local governments may even have the power to determine sovereign immunity policies. In cases involving a federal cause of action, the United States Supreme Court ruled in the case of *US v. Georgia* that sovereign immunity may be waived. The Supreme Court's ruling reflects a nationwide trend to move away from the policy of sovereign immunity. Even if sovereign immunity may exist, it is still wise to invest in volunteer insurance for a program.

County Employees

A significant group of volunteers for county volunteer programs are persons who are employed by the county. The *Federal Fair Labor Standards Act* (FLSA) sets out specific instructions for county employees who wish to volunteer in a county volunteer program. In order to donate his or her time, the volunteer activity must be outside of the scope and not related to the regular job that the employee does for the county. For example, it would be permissible for an employee who works in a county tax office to volunteer at a local park clean up because a

park clean up would be outside of the scope of regular job duties. However, the FLSA would prevent a county parks employee whose job it is to maintain county parks from volunteering for a park clean up day because those duties fall within the employee's own job duties, and therefore he or she would be entitled to regular pay/compensation. The FLSA places no restrictions upon volunteers who are not county employees.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation laws provide a means of recovery for those who have been injured on the job. Although the majority of these claims are reserved for paid employees, some states allow volunteers to utilize workers' compensation, while other states recognize certain volunteers as employees, enabling them to receive the benefits. Due to the variability of laws in each state, it is important that the county volunteer program administrator and policy makers familiarize themselves with the state laws regarding workers' compensation.

Due to the expensive cost of workers' compensation, the county may want to invest in workers' compensation insurance. Although this insurance is expensive, it does offer the volunteer program some advantages. In most states, individuals who receive workers' compensation benefits cannot attempt to recover damages through personal injury litigation against their employer. In these states, workers have a decision to either receive workers' compensation or file a lawsuit. Workers' compensation does not promise the same level of damages compared to litigation to the injured employee/volunteer, but enables the employee to receive benefits without needing to prove the employer's fault in the accident.

Volunteer Compensation

The issue of compensation is a much more ambiguous issue than other legal issues dealing with volunteers. The U.S. Department of Labor sets out guidelines for volunteer programs, giving examples of proper volunteer compensation so that volunteers will not be considered employees. The Department of Labor considers acceptable compensation to include: uniform allowance or reimbursement, reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses necessary to the volunteer program, reimbursement for tuition, transportation and meal costs associated with the program, reimbursement for books, supplies and other materials essential to volunteer training, reasonable benefits including inclusion in group liability, health, life, disability, and workers' compensation insurance plans and pension plans, and awards such as "length of service" awards. Acceptable forms of compensation can also include other types of reimbursements, or small payments in the form of stipends. However, following all of these guidelines does not automatically ensure that the volunteer can keep that status, and the exemption, from the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

The US Department of Labor suggests a full review of the compensation that a volunteer receives in order to determine the volunteer's employment status. Since each case is different, with very different levels of compensation, each case must be looked at individually. Volunteers can be considered employees if compensation levels are too high, or if the volunteer is not employed and depends on the compensation that is received from the volunteer program as a sole income.

The Supreme Court has recently ruled that a worker may not waive FLSA rights to conduct volunteer work. The Court stated that the employer cannot escape paying a worker wages, and it must abide by all hourly and child labor provisions that the FLSA sets forth. The Supreme Court's reasoning for this ruling was the fear that employers would coerce employees to state that they worked voluntarily, thus waiving all of the employees' rights.

Davis-Bacon Act and Volunteer Exemptions

The federal Davis-Bacon Act establishes payment standards for laborers involved in federally funded public construction projects. The Act and further federal statutes addressing the Act exempt volunteer workers in most cases from these wage requirements. In 1994, Congress passed the *Community Improvement Volunteer Act*, and stated that the purpose of the Act was "to promote and provide opportunities for people who wish to volunteer their services to State or local governments, public agencies, or nonprofit charitable organizations in the construction, repair or alteration (including painting and decorating) of public buildings and public works that are funded, in whole or in part, with Federal financial assistance authorized under certain Federal

programs and that might not otherwise be possible without the use of volunteers." In order to obtain the volunteer exemption, volunteers must:

- volunteer their services for charitable or humanitarian causes
- serve with no expectation of compensation besides expenses
- provide services freely and without coercion
- offer their services solely for personal reasons.

Volunteer work may not be done to benefit any contractor that has been assigned to the project, nor can any volunteer be employed by either the contractor working on the project or the public agency that has hired the volunteer to perform the same services for which he or she is volunteering.

Employee/Labor Union Issues

County volunteer programs should never have the intentions of replacing paid employees and the work that they do. Employees are usually very wary of programs that may try to do this, and the county risks the alienation of employees and labor unions that employees may be a part of if officials exude this attitude. In addition, by allowing volunteers to work on projects that may replace employees, the county risks a violation of the *Federal Fair Labor Standards Act* and loss of volunteer program protections. If the program will work in conjunction with an area of county government that has unionized employees, county officials should first meet with union officials and counsel to ensure that no collective bargaining agreements will be violated.

Anti-Discrimination Laws

Federal, state, and local governments all have laws that prohibit discrimination against volunteers. Many of these laws are the same or very similar to employment discrimination laws. County volunteer programs must adhere to the strict standards set forth by all of these laws, since county volunteer programs are government sponsored. County volunteer program administrators and other county officials should ensure that all volunteer programs adhere to the strictest standards regarding anti-discrimination laws.

IV. Managing a Volunteer Program

After the process of organizing a county volunteer program has been completed, building the infrastructure of the program can begin. From the hiring of volunteers to publicity for the program, there is much work that needs to be done. After the program has begun, other issues such as volunteer management and evaluation must be undertaken to ensure that the volunteer program runs smoothly and with few problems. It is inevitable that problems will arise, and volunteer managers and supervisors must then deal with issues using the procedures that have been established during the planning stages of the program. Managing a county volunteer program may be a very difficult task, but the benefits of these programs greatly outweigh the costs.

Key elements of volunteer program management:
- Volunteer program budget
- Paid staff/volunteer relations
- Volunteer position descriptions
- Benefits
- Recruitment
- Screening and interviewing volunteers
- Placing volunteers/ matching interests
- Training volunteers
- Supervision
- Recordkeeping and reporting volunteer contributions
- Evaluation
- Volunteer recognition
- Dismissing a Volunteer

Volunteer Program Budget

Volunteer programs provide the opportunity for county governments to enhance mandated or essential county services. In order to have a successful volunteer program, the program must be properly funded and budgeted. However, it is important to keep in mind that no volunteer program should be implemented as an "other duties as assigned" function.

A volunteer budget serves as a management tool for counties. The budget signifies that the program has been formally approved by elected officials and ensures that allocated expenditures will be spent specifically for planned items and events. A line item budget for each program should be developed, including staff and operating costs, as well as a narrative of planned expenditures. Special items, such as benefits and recognition costs, should be itemized. The budget should also be accompanied by a statement of work to be accomplished that can be used to help measure the program's effectiveness after a defined period of time. While developing a budget, the following should be considered:

- Staff time to manage the program and coordinate volunteers
- Operating costs including supplies, phone, work space, and furniture
- Recruitment costs
- Benefits provided to volunteers
- Recognition costs
- Marketing and promotional costs
- Any other costs that are relevant to the program

Paid Staff/Volunteer Relationships

Relationships between paid staff and volunteers are critical to the success of any volunteer program. Disconnect between the two groups can be prevented if targeted measures are taken that ensure trust and open communication. Unconscious harboring of false stereotypes, misguided assumptions, and unrealistic expectations about

working relationships may produce strained relations between volunteers and paid staff. Paid staff, for example, may "talk down" to volunteers, limit volunteer participation in the decision-making process, overwork a volunteer, or ignore why a volunteer is donating his or her time in the first place. If these things occur, not only will the volunteer suffer, but also the program. Some ways to avoid conflicts with paid staff and volunteers are:

- Involve paid staff in the program planning process
- Establish defined roles
- Provide training and incentives for paid staff who will work closely with volunteers
- Address any negative feelings or stereotypes directly

One of the main conflicts that can arise between paid staff and volunteer staff is that paid staff may feel that volunteers threaten their job security. The volunteer manager and other planners of the program should make sure that the paid staff understands the role of volunteers, which is simply to enhance the services that currently provided.

Volunteer Position Description

Volunteer job descriptions are one of the most important management tools to ensure an effective volunteer program. A job description should be written for each volunteer position, and the descriptions should be used in the recruitment, assignment, and evaluation of volunteers. The descriptions can also serve as a written agreement between the volunteer, the supervisor, the volunteer manager, and the county.

The description should detail the work that needs to be done by the volunteer, as well as define the qualifications that are necessary for the volunteer, such as abilities, skills, and interests. A good job description serves several purposes:

- involves paid staff in describing the tasks to be performed by volunteers;
- communicates the county's expectation of the volunteer;
- sets forth the experience, skills, and extent of the effort required for the position; and
- outlines the benefits that accompany the position and any particular requirement or limitation imposed by county or state law.

Paid staff participation is crucial in developing volunteer position descriptions. Paid staff are experts in their field, and know what tasks need to be performed, and the obstacles and limitations that will affect the volunteers' ability to perform the desired tasks. Paid staff involvement will also offer the volunteer manager an opportunity to discuss training, supervision, and recognition issues.

The following should be included in a volunteer position description:

● **Job Title**
The title should be specific so that the volunteer clearly understands what the nature of the job will be. In addition, a good job title will help paid staff in recognizing volunteers and understanding the role that they play in the program.

● **Purpose of Position**
Defining the purpose of the position not only shows volunteers what to expect and look forward to, but illustrates what a difference they are making by volunteering. A well-written purpose statement makes volunteers aware of how important their work is in the program.

● **Tasks and Duties**
All tasks and duties that the volunteer will conduct should be detailed and clearly defined.

● **Required/Desired Qualifications**
All qualifications required for the position should be listed. Qualifications could include, but are not limited to, education, skills, abilities, interests, and experience.

● **Training**
Describe the training process that the volunteer must go through.

● **Commitment Required**
Detail the minimum commitment that the volunteer must make to the program, which include length of service and hours per week/month.

● **Work Location**
Detail the location where the volunteer will complete his or her work. Make sure to include directions and information about public transportation if it is available.

● **Volunteer Supervisor**
Provide contact information to the volunteer supervisor or manager in case of any questions that potential volunteers may have about the program.

Benefits for Volunteers

Citizens volunteer for a variety of reasons. Many factors influence a person to donate their time, such as, community involvement, enhanced self-worth, passion for a chosen cause, and a desire to interact and help others. With these motivations come other external benefits that volunteers may receive. In general, these benefits can be grouped into three categories: **financial**, **recognition**, and **personal development**. Many of these benefits have little cost to the county, while others may make up the majority of the program budget. Most of the benefits are within the discretion of the county, but some may be mandated by state or federal law. Legal counsel should be consulted, along with personnel and financial officials, as a county develops its volunteer benefits. By offering a range of benefits, programs will be more successful in recruiting, recognizing, and maintaining a volunteer force.

Financial benefits:
- Stipend
- Reimbursement of expenses
- Liability insurance
- Worker's compensation
- Health insurance
- Reduced rates for county services (such as admission to parks, fairs, and recreation centers)
- Child care
- Uniforms
- Eligibility for credit union
- Tax forms to assist volunteer-related tax information

Recognition benefits:
- Dinners/parties/galas
- Letters of appreciation or recommendation
- Pins noting years of service
- Certificates or plaques
- Discounts on local events

Personal improvement benefits:
- Training
- Academic credit
- Personal advancement

- Employment experience
- Exchange between similar programs/agencies
- Leadership development
- Access to information about in-house job openings

Recruitment

Once the volunteer description is complete, and the department and agency have properly planned the program, recruitment of volunteers can begin. Recruitment of volunteers for a program is crucial to its success. The volunteer manager, along with personnel staff, must search for volunteers who match the qualifications set out in the volunteer description. When trying to determine who should be recruited, the following questions should be asked:

- Who will be interested in volunteering?
- Who will be able to meet the requirements of volunteering (i.e. time)?
- What would motivate people to volunteer?
- What and where is the best way to let people know about their volunteer options?
- When will screening, selecting, and training volunteers take place?

In order to be more successful in the recruitment of volunteers, strategies may need to be adjusted depending on the audience. Especially in the case where a highly skilled group of volunteers is required, a targeted approach is needed in order to obtain these volunteers. However, in cases where no special training is needed, a more broad based recruitment may be sufficient.

Recruiting citizens to volunteer has elements of both employment recruitment and commercial advertising campaigns. In addition, recruiting volunteers to work in county government can be different from recruiting volunteers to work in a nonprofit agency. Assess what degree each of the following issues exists in the county before beginning your recruitment efforts:

- The general public may not perceive local government as a place to volunteer. When people consider volunteering, they often think of a local nonprofit organization, rather than their county government.
- Some volunteer jobs in county government may be different from those in traditional volunteer fields. While most people are familiar with volunteer opportunities available at hospitals or in human services, they may not be aware of the unique opportunities that await them in public works, sheriff's departments, the court system, and other areas.
- In some counties, the public may view their local government as a bureaucracy that is both intimidating and difficult to understand. This view may prevent them from inquiring about volunteer opportunities, or they simply may not know where to look and call.
- Compared to some nonprofit groups, many counties do not have a well-established "culture" of volunteerism. Elected and appointed officials, as well as paid employees may not promote citizen involvement or be accustomed to working with volunteers in direct service roles.
- Residents may not consider themselves stakeholders in the county. However, county government operations that are cost-effective and meet community needs benefit everyone.

Ideas for Recruiting Volunteers:

- Brochures and mail inserts in utility bills
- Bulletin board notices
- Public service announcements
- Newspaper ads
- Public speaking
- Networking
- Volunteer fairs
- Volunteer Center
- Volunteer Clearinghouse
- Retired and senior volunteer programs
- Professional and civic organizations
- Private agency partnerships
- Schools and libraries
- Churches
- Neighborhood festivals
- Local corporations
- Social media

Recruitment, although difficult, is an essential task for every volunteer organization. Recruitment of volunteers is a year-round task, and attempts at recruitment should always be made. From word of mouth, to maintaining media coverage, having a large network of volunteers will only make the program stronger. In addition, having a diverse group of volunteers also strengthens the program by providing different perspectives in whatever tasks the volunteers must complete.

Screening, Interviewing, and Placing Volunteers

Screening and interviewing volunteer applicants helps to ensure that the placement of a volunteer meets the needs of that volunteer, as well as the county. Volunteer managers should have a knowledge of other county agencies' volunteer opportunities so that candidates can be referred to the program that most suits their skills and needs. In many instances, applicants seeking a particular position or activity can be redirected to a position where their skills and background are in greater demand, or where the volunteer would be a better fit based on interest, qualifications, and desires.

Civil rights, affirmative action, and privacy requirements of state and federal law can impact the screening of volunteer applicants. All screening must be conducted in a manner consistent with all civil rights and affirmative action requirements. Legal counsel, the personnel office, and the county EEO or affirmative action officer should also review the entire volunteer selection process.

Screening can be done in a variety of ways. Some sample screening tools can be: a phone conversation, an application form, an interview, references, orientation/training, motor vehicle/license check, and a criminal records check. Interviews are a very popular way to screen applicants. The interview is a face-to-face opportunity to gather information that can assist staff in selecting the best candidate for the position.

Although the interview is similar to that of a job interview, there are important differences that the interviewer should target in order to build a more successful volunteer corps. The main difference between a volunteer interview and a job interview is that the applicant is not being evaluated on how well he or she can do a certain job, but rather how well the potential volunteer fits into the program, and whether or not the volunteer has the motivation and ability to make the program better. Two main goals of the interview are: determining whether or not the candidate "fits" into the program and to answer any questions or comments that the applicant may have about the program.

Before the interview begins, some preparation is needed to ensure that the applicant is comfortable, which will help in building a rapport with potential volunteers. In addition, the interviewer should be extremely knowledgeable about the program, and look for the "fit" of the candidate. Being prepared for the interview will show candidates how organized the program is, and will help in making them want to be a part of it.

The interview is not only focused on evaluating the applicant, but also on selling the program to the candidate. During the interview, it is important to remember that volunteers are donating their time to the program, and that the interviewer should promote the position and consider the interview as a time for recruitment. The interviewer should ensure that background is given on the county and the program, as well as describe the structure of the program. Major points that should be discussed are:

- the requirements of the volunteer position;
- the different possibilities of how the candidate can get involved in the county or with a particular program;
- the importance of each role in the program;
- the candidate's abilities and interests
- where the volunteer would like to be placed; and
- whether or not the candidate can meet the requirements to be a volunteer.

After the interview, a successful candidate's background should be screened. Many firms offer employment screening, and it is recommended that a complete screening be done on all applicants, especially for those who will be working with children. These screenings are relatively cheap and allow the county to ensure that

all volunteers are law-abiding citizens. The screening process is extremely important, and if not done properly, can put both the program and the county at high risk for litigation.

Reference checking is another popular way to screen candidates. Most reference checks are done over the phone, as this is the easiest and quickest way to do them. First, it is important to keep in mind that the applicant most likely selected the reference because he or she believed that the reference would give a positive impression of the candidate. However, questions should be targeted in order to better find the true character of the applicant. References sometimes reveal critical information about applicants that can be very useful in determining where the applicant fits into the volunteer program. When contacting references, make sure to explain to the reference what the volunteer program does and what position the candidate has applied for. While asking questions, leading questions should be avoided to provide a more candid discussion of the applicant. An example would be asking a former employer, "John Doe worked for you for five years," instead of, "How long has John Doe worked for you?" Open-ended questions like the second one are highly suggested, as well as specific questions that can attest to the character of the applicant.

Summary of suggestions for screening and interviewing potential volunteers:

- Prepare and use an application form that asks for information regarding the candidate's work experience, volunteer experience, interest, talents and skills, reasons for volunteering, and any other information that may be relevant to the volunteer program.
- Determine which positions require motor vehicle or criminal record checks.
- Make sure all applicants understand the need for a background check and obtain their written consent. Keep a record of applicants' permission to do the checks, reports, and the decision based on the information obtained in the records.
- Review with other staff the requirements for civil rights and affirmative action compliance.
- Screen each candidate with a number of volunteer opportunities in mind that reflect the interest and skills shown in the application.
- Interview for a specific volunteer position.
- Conduct the interview in a quiet place. Prepare basic interview questions in advance, generally using open-ended questions to facilitate discussion. Always use active listening skills during the interview.
- Give the applicant an opportunity to ask questions about the program and the county, and be prepared to answer these questions.
- Explain the policies and procedures of the county regarding volunteers and describe the benefits generally afforded to volunteers.
- Utilize references (usually by telephone) by asking non-leading, specific, and open-ended questions.

Checklist for Hiring Volunteers:

☐ Check references
☐ Check for a valid license where required (driver's, medical, personnel)
☐ Obtain written consent to do a background check
☐ Review application form
☐ Maintain a file on each volunteer at the worksite
☐ Review the job description with the volunteer
☐ Use interviews to evaluate candidates and to promote the volunteer program
☐ Create a written agreement about hours of work, worksite, supervision, and training that is required
☐ Give the volunteer a copy of this agreement and retain the original for your records

Training Volunteers

One way in which the vitality of an organization, service, or volunteer program is determined is by the level of training offered. In the context of a county volunteer program, training is the information given to volunteers so that they may adequately and more comfortably perform their assigned duties. In some instances, specific training or certification may be required before a volunteer can begin service.

Many volunteer programs have created orientation sessions to supplement training programs for new volunteers, so that they are better able to learn about the organization before starting work. Orientation gives volunteers a background of the agency, how it operates, and what its procedures are. Volunteer orientations are important because they give volunteers a full understanding of the county program and the services that they will be providing. In addition, orientation programs have allowed new volunteers to get to know each other better, which fosters a more healthy and productive working environment. During the orientation, a representative from the executive office of the county should be available to meet with or answer any questions that new volunteers may have. Usually, orientation sessions are held before volunteers have undergone training, which allows time for volunteers to reconsider their decision about working in the department or volunteer position.

Volunteer training should be comprehensive and give detailed descriptions to volunteers of what their job positions will be and how they should perform their jobs. Volunteers should be educated on what to do if any problems arise during the program, and all of the legal risks that are involved with being a volunteer on behalf of the county. Training should be practical, engaging, and tailored to the needs of the volunteer group.

Specialized training for paid staff working with volunteers is also important. Staff will be more effective if they know the principles of the volunteer program and the extent of the commitment and training of the volunteers. Since the paid staff are often training and supervising the volunteers, seminars or discussions in basic leadership skills will help them carry out their responsibilities more effectively.

Checklist for Training Volunteers

☐ Orient volunteers to the mission of the county and the department or agency in which they will work
☐ Demonstrate how volunteers assist in meeting the goals of the county program
☐ Discuss the organizational structure of the county and the department
☐ Ensure that volunteers understand county policies and procedures relating to their responsibilities
☐ Familiarize volunteers to their roles within the department or agency where they will work
☐ Describe any additional formal training required for the position
☐ Give volunteers a tour of where they will be working, instructions on how to get there, and other information, like parking

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Supervision

There are few differences that exist between managing a volunteer program and a paid staff in a county agency. All supervisors are encouraged to view volunteers as part of a professional team of workers, made up of paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers should be treated with the same rights and requirements that paid staff members enjoy, and all staff should work as a single team in order to encourage a more successful program. The supervisor should ensure that volunteers are included in planning, organizing, training, and carrying out the shared tasks of the program.

One difference for the supervisor of a volunteer program is the range of interests and motivations that make up the volunteer force. The supervisor must determine these motivations and try to place volunteers where they will be most productive. For example, if someone is volunteering to gain a certain type of experience, they should be placed in a position that will meet their needs, as well as the county's needs. In addition, the supervisor must be flexible with volunteer staff, and must deal with situations that do not arise with paid staff, such as the volunteer position having a lower priority than other things in the volunteer's life.

The volunteer supervisor should be available to meet with volunteers when needed, as well as maintain a good working relationship with all of the volunteers in the program. The supervisor must allocate their own time in accordance with the program and the duties that the supervisor must fulfill. Supervisors may even delegate certain powers to experienced volunteers who show dedication to the program. A good supervisor is the keystone of a successful volunteer program, and is necessary for the program to achieve its goals.

Checklist for Supervising Volunteers

☐ Treat volunteers fairly
☐ Get to know the volunteers with whom you work
☐ Recognize the volunteers' accomplishments frequently. An informal "thank you," even on a daily basis, is as important as a formal certificate.
☐ Coach to success; use positive reinforcement, focusing on the accomplishments of volunteers; make your criticism constructive
☐ Offer opportunities for growth
☐ Identify, handle, and solve problems immediately
☐ Show respect
☐ Provide ongoing training opportunities

Recordkeeping and Reporting Volunteer Contributions

Statistical information about volunteer contributions is an important evaluation tool. While making budget allotments, elected officials and administrators will be more apt to support programs that present impressive statistics regarding volunteer hours and program participants. Reporting volunteer activities is as important as performing the duty itself. On an individual basis, documented volunteer service is recognized and counted as work experience in many county personnel offices across the United States. Private businesses often acknowledge and count volunteer activity when assessing a person's background for employment eligibility.

When reporting volunteer contributions, use consistent language and a basis for determining the monetary value of services. Include in these calculations hours for training and orientation, as well as actual time donated. The advantages of good volunteer recordkeeping include:

- Determining the cost-effectiveness of county programs;
- Availability of information to evaluate individual performance;
- Assessment of county programs, volunteer and otherwise;
- Information for development and implementation of existing county programs and the potential for additional efforts; and
- Impact of volunteer services on the community.

When reporting statistical information about volunteers, it is also important to note the following:

- Volunteers expand and enhance the work of paid staff.
- Volunteerism gives citizens an opportunity to learn about and experience county programs first-hand.
- A dollar value does not take into account the immeasurable contributions made by volunteers.
- Volunteers do not necessarily save the county "x" dollars; they add services valued at "x" dollars.
- Reference the formula used to determine the dollar value of volunteer service.

Checklist for Recording Volunteer Contributions

☐ Document volunteer participation by job type. This effects planning for future space, use of equipment, and hours of staff time needed to actually accomplish the job Log the volunteer hours, dates of service and function performed with a system similar to the one utilized by paid staff

☐ Utilize time cards, sign-in sheets, or personal computer programs, and keep the method simple

☐ Save the time records in the personnel file for evaluations. Make sure that the format is self-explanatory.

☐ Designate a space to file the records. The records should be for agency use only, paying close attention to the volunteer's right to privacy

Selection of Database System

As technology has increased, it has become standard practice for counties to use a database system to track volunteer contributions. Many systems provide comprehensive tracking and reporting capabilities as well as a user-friendly interface for both volunteer managers and volunteers. Online services and tools can also assist with volunteer event registration, e-communication and volunteer scheduling. When making decisions about what systems and programs to use, counties should consider making a county-wide, centralized decision in order for information to be easily transmitted and reported.

Checklist for Volunteer Database / Information System

☐ Decide on an enterprise-wide solution (central volunteer office), departmental, or individual program specific tool

☐ Acquire a general understanding of volunteer business processes, policies and procedures you are seeking to capture

☐ Evaluate how robust the tool's reporting capabilities are. Have an understanding of metrics or measures you seek to validate

☐ Assess how customizable the tool is to adjust for changing business needs. Does the system reflect recent advances in technology?

☐ Establish the number of licenses or logins to acquire in order to ensure the system is utilized efficiently and cost-effectively.

☐ Find out if there is an opportunity to experience the tool, such as a demo, training or user guide, prior to committing to specific technology solution.

☐ Verify what the technology includes. Does it conduct background checks? Is customer service or support provided and how?

☐ Determine how and when to implement the database. Decide how training and ongoing support will be provided to users

Social Media

As technology increases, more and more counties are utilizing a variety of social media tools for various governmental operations, including their volunteer programs. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube can be used as a communication tool as well as a way to inform the public about what services volunteers are providing. Facebook and Twitter are good platforms for communication between volunteers and Volunteer Managers. Utilizing these tools in tandem with emails and volunteer calendars are a good way to invite volunteers to events as well as remind them about activities they have committed to attending. Additionally, YouTube can successfully be used to showcase to the general public what county volunteer programs have accomplished in the community.

Evaluation

The goal of an evaluation is to highlight the accomplishments and to acknowledge the progress of volunteers. The evaluation is an opportunity for the county to reward top performers and to encourage improvement among paid staff and volunteers who have not met established goals. If there is no evaluation, volunteers may think that the tasks they have been asked to perform are not essential to the organization or that they are not accountable to the county agency. Take the following steps to ensure that all volunteers receive the feedback they deserve:

- Gather information periodically about job performance and maintain a volunteer file;
- Compare work results with established goals;
- Evaluate only when there is sufficient information to do a fair job;
- Keep a written record of all volunteer evaluations;
- Use active listening skills during the evaluation;
- Praise volunteer accomplishments; and
- Encourage the volunteer to decide on how to improve performance.

The effectiveness of the volunteer program must also be measured by comparing program results with previously established goals and objectives. Highlight what would not have been accomplished if the volunteer program did not exist and ask volunteers to share their insights about the program.

Checklist for Evaluating Volunteer Programs In County Government

☐ Distribute a questionnaire to clients (when applicable) and volunteers
☐ Ask community leaders about its impact
☐ Measure financial costs and benefits
☐ Assess whether the structure fits the agency mission

Volunteer Recognition

Volunteers perform services for no monetary compensation, donating time and effort to numerous programs. So what holds their interest and why do they return, year after year? There are a variety of reasons, which include job satisfaction, recognition for a job-well done, and a passion for the program. In this sense, volunteer recognition becomes an important motivational device, as well as a public means to honor individual and group contributions.

Recognition of volunteers can come in many different forms and may be formal or informal. Both types of recognition are essential in the management of volunteer staff. Portions of the volunteer program budget should be allotted for volunteer recognition activities and presentations. Some events could include county-wide or regional gatherings of volunteers, with the participation of elected and appointed leadership of the county. Such things as certifications, pins, plaques, newspaper articles, banquets, or ceremonies are just a few examples that constitute formal recognition of volunteers. Some forms of informal recognition include praise of work, recognizing volunteers in staff meetings, and including volunteers in planning sessions. Volunteers who feel a sense of belonging and accomplishment will be motivated to remain with the county for a longer period of time, thereby reducing staff time needed to recruit volunteers, as well as costs associated with training and supervision.

Volunteer managers, supervisors, and paid staff must keep in mind that informal recognition is just as important as formal recognition. Informal recognition reinforces positive relations between volunteers and paid staff, and gives volunteers a sense of purpose and a feeling that they are making a difference. Volunteers will also relay positive messages about the effectiveness of county government staff and services to the community-at-large. Both formal and informal recognition then become part of an effective public relations plan.

Ideas for Volunteer Recognition:
- Assign a parking place to the 'Volunteer of the Month'
- A phone call just to say thank you to the volunteer
- Designated levels of achievement
- Arrange a paid staff/volunteer lunch
- Give a monthly award for contributions
- Give tickets to an event
- Provide special training opportunities
- Offer discounts to movies, sporting, or cultural events
- Celebrate anniversaries of volunteer's years with the county
- Name an award for an outstanding volunteer
- Promote a volunteer to a higher level of responsibility
- Give a letter of recommendation or certificate
- Ask experienced volunteers to help train new volunteers

Dismissing a Volunteer

A common misconception about volunteers is that they cannot be fired. However, dismissing or firing a volunteer is sometimes necessary in order to maintain the integrity of the program and a high level of service. The staff and other volunteers deserve to be part of a program that has a high level of integrity and results, as well as one that has a pleasant work environment. Whenever one volunteer disrupts these tasks, everyone involved in the program is affected. When a volunteer needs to be dismissed, the proper process should be established beforehand in order to make the process easier and to prevent further problems.

There are a variety of reasons and countless possibilities as to why a volunteer may be dismissed from a program. From poor work performance to conduct problems, problematic volunteers that do not aid the organization work to discredit the program and all those involved. Three main categories can be considered in the termination of a volunteer: performance problems, conduct problems, and economic problems. Performance problems are related to the actual job that the volunteer does. Reasons for dismissal may include poor quality of work, tardiness or absence from work, and failure to improve after consultation. Conduct problems can include a wide range of activities relating to the volunteer's actions. Some examples may include poor attendance, poor reliability, and inappropriate behavior or actions in dealing with clients and/or staff. Economic problems could result from a cut in funding to the program, or a county eliminating paid staff that supervises a volunteer program.

In order to properly address all of these issues, guidelines for dismissal from the program need to be included in the guidelines that govern the volunteer program. The volunteer program's policies and procedures document should have behaviors that will not be tolerated, as well as behaviors that could cause immediate dismissal from the program. If the program has a volunteer handbook, these behaviors should be specifically addressed in it, as well as stressed during orientations and training. In addition, the disciplinary process should also be outlined in the guidelines of the volunteer program.

Many county volunteer programs have chosen to establish a policy that includes verbal and written warnings before a volunteer is dismissed from the program. Some actions do constitute immediate dismissal of a volunteer. Included are: actions that threaten the safety of clients, volunteers, or staff, breach of confidentiality, misrepresentation of county services or authority, or criminal conduct. The county human resources office will be able to help in creating a disciplinary system for the volunteer program, and it should be modeled after the one that is currently in place for county employees.

If the situation does deteriorate, and a volunteer does need to be removed, the actual act of firing the volunteer can be a very difficult one. However, dismissing a volunteer usually will be less confrontational than dismissing an employee. In order to prevent conflict, the supervisor should employ a few tactics that will keep the situation under control. First, the meeting should be held in a private setting, should be documented, and a third person should be in the room to serve as a witness to the termination. The supervisor should remain calm and in control of the situation, as well as keep discussion brief and to the point. The reasons for dismissal should be given verbally and in a written document, which should be signed by the terminated volunteer, and comments should be focused simply on the performance of the individual. The supervisor should not allow the volunteer to refute any comments to previous actions, which could escalate the situation. The decision to terminate is a final decision and cannot be reversed. Finally, the volunteer should return anything related to the volunteer program, such as identification badges, parking passes etc. and should be escorted from the building. Handling the situation with responsibility and reverence will help in making the difficult situation much easier.

Checklist for Dismissing a Volunteer:

☐ Discuss reasons for volunteer dismissal with appropriate paid staff
☐ Meet with the volunteer in a quiet, private setting
☐ State the purpose of the meeting
☐ Identify the volunteer's expected behavior (from job description, evaluations, etc.)
☐ Describe observed behavior; cite specific examples of inappropriate behavior
☐ Compliment the volunteer on positive aspects of performance
☐ Release the volunteer from duty without reprimand or apology
☐ Document the conversation in writing and have a witness if possible

V. Volunteer Roles

Volunteers in Policy Roles

In addition to citizen boards and task forces, many county departments, agencies, and programs have advisory committees that give guidance on county services. Paid staff work with these volunteer groups to receive input on a wide range of issues, including program development, community resources, and management. In order to form a dedicated citizen board that contributes positively to the democratic process, it is important that board members receive an orientation so that they will understand and carry out their duties in an appropriate and effective matter. A board that is ineffective or does not receive adequate support will reflect poorly on the county government. Members may become disillusioned and community support will dwindle. Additionally, If not properly informed of their mission, a board may begin to address issues outside of their authority.

An Effective Board:
- Understands the county's long-term goals
- Is aware of and adheres to the direction in which the county is headed
- Understands it own organizational mission
- Decides what rules it will follow to conduct meetings
- Implements a plan for setting goals
- Determines how it will evaluate its work each year
- Knows who its assigned staff persons are, what functions they perform, and how much of their time is allocated to supporting the board
- Has support of local officials

The appointment of talented, diverse, and dedicated citizens is a key ingredient to board success. Citizens contribute to government boards by bringing:

- Diverse talents
- A variety of experiences
- Important perspectives
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Resources

Definitions for an Effective Board:
Character- the reason for the board's existence, why it was created, and whether it is ad hoc or standing
Hierarchy - the relationships among the board members, the board's place in the local government hierarchy, the relationship with policy makers and with citizens
Accountability - the board's legal obligations and constraints, including conflict of interest and responsibility to the public
Responsibility - the understanding, delegating, and sharing of board tasks and the need to cooperate as a team to accomplish board objectives
Goals - statements of the board's desired outcomes
Evaluation - checking progress and performance and making appropriate adjustments

Court-Referred Volunteers

Instead of incarceration and/or a fine, some judges require that first time offenders or misdemeanants repay the community by "volunteering" a certain number of hours. Supervising court-referred volunteers may require additional time to screen and place the volunteers in an appropriate position and complete paperwork for the courts. A positive aspect of such a program is that many people who successfully complete it do not recommit criminal offenses. The court benefits by keeping these minor criminals out of jail, and the county benefits from individuals who assist in providing needed services.

Checklist for Court-Referred Program
- ☐ Who is the contact person at the court?
- ☐ What screening procedures will be necessary and how will they be done?
- ☐ Who will supervise the community service worker(s) and how will his/her hours be tracked?

Volunteers from Welfare Programs

Many welfare reform initiatives include a service requirement for recipients who do not secure employment after a certain period of time. Under these plans, counties may be required to place welfare recipients in a public or nonprofit agency to perform a predetermined number of hours of service.

Student Internships

An intern is usually a high school or college student who has the ability to earn course credit for on-site work experience with a county agency while attending school. However, some interns choose to simply volunteer their time for no credit. In addition, a number of counties provide monetary compensation to interns. Student interns often bring a new perspective and youthful energy to county government programs, and have the ability to motivate other young citizens to volunteer. In most cases, the internship results in a beneficial relationship for students, the local university or college, and the county government.

Checklist for Student Internship Program
- ☐ Identify suitable work for the intern. Keep in mind that interns will become bored with mundane tasks, and need challenging tasks that engage them.
- ☐ Will the student learn something that is appropriate to his or her course of study?
- ☐ What is the time frame? Does the work/project fit with the school calendar?
- ☐ Establish screening and training guidelines
- ☐ Coordinate the program with the school's intern/volunteer service office
- ☐ What obligations does the county have in recording hours, completing reports, and contacting the student's advisor?
- ☐ Will the university provide insurance coverage for the student?

Volunteer Service Events

There has been a growing trend in the field of volunteerism for large-scale activities that involve a group of volunteers for one day service projects, such as clean-ups, playground building, or painting. Projects like these attract people who are unable to make a long-term commitment and/or want to see immediate results. Such projects lend themselves to "family volunteering," or groups of volunteers from churches, schools, or civic organizations that can commit many people during one day or over a weekend. Widely recognized national days of service, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day or September 11, can cause an increase in event volunteers. Almost every month of the year has national service days, such as Make a Difference Day, National Family Volunteer Day, Global Youth Service Day, and even National Volunteer Week in April.

Checklist for Volunteer Service Events
- ☐ Determine the optimal number of people for the planned activities
- ☐ Identify necessary supplies or equipment for all of the volunteers
- ☐ Designate a coordinator of the project who will supervise the activities
- ☐ Establish screening and training guidelines
- ☐ Contact the group leader. If there is a group, such as a church, school, or civic organization volunteering, who is the coordinating person for that group?
- ☐ Recognize volunteers for their efforts

Transitional Volunteers

Another group that can be considered "nontraditional" volunteers, but can bring great mutual rewards to the county are transitional volunteers. Transitional volunteers are people with some type of mental illness or disability who want to gain work experience. Working with programs such as The ARC or Mental Health Centers provides an opportunity to recruit and train volunteers who may be looking to contribute their time and special talents. Specialized training is often required in order to ensure that the program benefits both the volunteer and the county.

Volunteer Leaders

A recent trend for engaging and empowering volunteers is the creation and development of volunteer leaders. Volunteer Leaders are those volunteers who are responsible for training and leading other volunteers. They may also take on leadership responsibilities in planning volunteer activities and events. Additionally, they can be used for guiding future volunteer programming and direction.

Disaster Volunteers

In many county governments, volunteer managers work with their Department of Emergency Management to design and administer a disaster preparedness plan for the most effective coordination of volunteers in the event of a local disaster. Managers also work very closely with local and state support agencies and volunteer groups with local, state, and national affiliations, such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Their expertise and in-place administrative structure, volunteer networks, and resources will enable volunteer managers in county government to rapidly meet many of the local requirements identified after a disaster event.

Many counties have developed a Citizen Corps program to better prepare their communities for a disaster. Volunteer participants are trained in basic disaster response skills, fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. One popular Citizen Corps program, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) is designed so that members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event where professional responders are not immediately available to help. In addition to their role during a disaster, CERT members assist in emergency preparedness projects in their workplaces and/or communities to better prepare residents for disasters.

Volunteer managers work with county staff to determine appropriate volunteer roles during a disaster and how they will be managed. This work includes recruiting and training "disaster" volunteers, staging mock disasters, and identifying volunteers with special skills, vehicles, or other equipment the county may need during a disaster. There are two distinctive types of disaster volunteers, pre-affiliated disaster volunteers and spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers. Pre-affiliated disaster volunteers are connected to a program in advance or a program within the county that is aligned with an Emergency Support Function (ESF) as outlined in the county's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Spontaneous disaster volunteers are those who just show up when an emergency or disaster occurs. Counties often set up Volunteer Reception Centers (VRC) as a physical gathering location to process and manage spontaneous volunteers. Some counties are even moving toward virtual VRCs as a way to manage increased volunteer interest and redirect it to be most useful during a disaster. This prevents volunteers from just showing up to disaster sites and better addresses the needs of the community.

VI. Resources

Numerous local, state, and national groups provide resources, training, advice, and networking opportunities for people who work in the field of volunteer management. Below are lists of the many resources available to volunteer program planners, managers, and coordinators.

National Organizations

● **National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government (NAVPLG)**
NAVPLG is the leading international association of directors, managers, and administrators of volunteer programs in local city and county governments. Their purpose is to strengthen volunteer programs through leadership, education, advocacy, net-working and information exchange.

www.navplg.org

● **Points of Light Institute**
The Points of Light Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, dedicated to engaging more people in volunteer service. The Institute provides support to volunteer centers and other agencies through a variety of training and consulting services, numerous publications, and many other services designed to help volunteer organizations and programs.

www.pointsoflight.org

● **HandsOn Network**
HandsOn Network, the volunteer-focused arm of Points of Light Institute, is the largest volunteer network in the nation and includes more than 250 HandsOn Action Centers in 16 countries. HandsOn includes a network of more than 70,000 corporate, faith and nonprofit organizations.

www.handsonnetwork.org

● **Corporation for National and Community Service**
The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.

www.nationalservice.gov

● **Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (AL!VE)**
AL!VE is a national membership organization of leaders and professionals in volunteer engagement. AL!VE serves to enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteering in America by fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy for leaders in community engagement.

www.associationofleadersinvolunteerengagement.org

● **Citizen Corps**
Citizen Corps programs build on the successful efforts that are in place in many communities around the country to prevent crime and respond to emergencies. Programs that started through local innovation are the foundation for Citizen Corps and this national approach to citizen participation in community safety. Citizen Corps is coordinated nationally by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency.

www.citizencorps.gov/cert/

● **Nonprofit Risk Management Center**
The Nonprofit Risk Management Center is a nonprofit resource center that conducts research, education and advocacy on issues pertaining to risk management and insurance need of community-serving organizations. The Center offers numerous services to organizations, like publications, educational programs, and advising on risk management or related issues.

www.nonprofitrisk.org

● **Energize Inc.**
Energize Inc. is an international training, publishing, and consulting firm that specializes in volunteerism. Energize Inc. offers a wide array of resources that are available for all types of volunteer programs.

www.energizeinc.com

● **Volunteering in America**
Volunteering in America is a website that provides national, state, and local volunteering trends, statistics, tools, resources, and information.

www.volunteeringinamerica.gov

● **Independent Sector**
Independent Sector is a leadership network for nonprofits, foundations, and corporate giving programs that provides research and serves as a resource for annual dollar value of volunteer time.

www.independentsector.org

● **ServiceLeader.org**
ServiceLeader.org is a project of the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs of the University of Texas at Austin. Numerous resources are offered to both volunteers and volunteer managers, many of which focus on volunteer programs in the public sector.

www.serviceleader.org

State Offices/Organizations on Volunteerism

Alabama
Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
www.servealabama.gov/2010/default.aspx

Alaska
Serve Alaska
www.commerce.state.ak.us/serve/home.htm

Arizona
Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism
gocyf.az.gov/CYD/BRD_AGCSV.asp

Arkansas
Arkansas Health and Human Services, Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support
humanservices.arkansas.gov/dcsns/Pages/default.aspx

California
California Volunteers
www.californiavolunteers.org/index.php

Colorado
Serve Colorado
www.colorado.gov/servecolorado/

Connecticut
Connecticut Commission on Community Service
www.ctohe.org/cccs/

Delaware
State Office on Volunteerism
www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dssc/sov/volopps.html

District of Columbia
Serve DC
www.cncs.dc.gov/cncs/site/default.asp

Florida
Volunteer Florida
www.volunteerflorida.org/

Georgia
Department of Community Affairs
www.dca.state.ga.us/communities/Volunteerism/

Hawaii
Volunteer Resource Center of Hawaii
www.vrchawaii.org/

Idaho
Serve Idaho
www.serveidaho.gov

Illinois
Serve Illinois
serve.illinois.gov

Indiana
Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives
www.in.gov/ofbci/

Iowa
Volunteer Iowa
www.volunteeriowa.org/

Kansas
Kansas Volunteer Commission
www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4527

Kentucky
Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism
and Service
chfs.ky.gov/dfrcvs/kccvs/

Louisiana
Volunteer Louisiana
www.volunteerlouisiana.gov

Maine
Maine Commission for Community Service
www.maineservicecommission.gov

Maryland
Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism
www.gosv.state.md.us

Massachusetts
Massachusetts Service Alliance
www.mass-service.org

Michigan
Michigan Community Service Commission
www.michigan.gov/mcsc

Minnesota
Serve Minnesota
www.serveminnesota.org

Mississippi
Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service
www.mcvs.org

Missouri
Missouri Community Service Commission
www.movolunteers.org

Montana
Serve Montana
serve.mt.gov

Nebraska
Serve Nebraska
www.serve.nebraska.gov

Nevada
Nevada Volunteers
www.nevadavolunteers.org

New Hampshire
Volunteer NH
www.volunteernh.org

New Jersey
New Jersey Commission on National and Community
Service
nj.gov/state/programs/dos_program_community_
service.html

New Mexico
New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism
www.newmexserve.org

New York
New York Commission for National and Community
Service
www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/youth/nyscncs/

North Carolina
North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and
Community Service
www.volunteernc.org

North Dakota
North Dakota Commission on National and
Community Service
www.workforce.nd.gov/councils/state-commission-
on-national-and-community-service/

Ohio
Serve Ohio
www.serveohio.org

Oklahoma
Oklahoma Community Service Commission
www.okamericorps.com

Oregon
Oregon Volunteers
www.oregonvolunteers.org

Pennsylvania
PennSERVE
www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/
pennserve/10382

Rhode Island
Serve Rhode Island
www.serverhodeisland.org

South Carolina
South Carolina Commission on National and
Community Service
sccncs.org

South Dakota
South Dakota Commission for National and
Community Service
www.sdnonprofit.org

Tennessee
Volunteer Tennessee
www.tn.gov/finance/rds/vt/

Texas
Onestar Foundation
www.onestarfoundation.org

Utah
Commission on Volunteers
volunteers.utah.gov

Vermont
Vermont Commission on National and Community
Service
vtcncs.vermont.gov

Virginia
Virginia Service
www.vaservice.org

Washington
Serve Washington
www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa

West Virginia
Volunteer West Virginia
www.volunteerwv.org

Wisconsin
Serve Wisconsin
www.servewisconsin.org

Wyoming
Serve Wyoming
www.servewyoming.org/index.php

Local Groups/Organizations

Volunteer Centers are located in many cities and counties. A Volunteer Center is a resource organization that serves as a one-stop center for individuals or groups that wish to volunteer in government or nonprofit agencies. Volunteer Centers mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions to community problems.

Many areas also have professional volunteer groups that operate under a variety of names such as, "network," "DOVIA," "AVA," and "roundtable." These are excellent places to meet other volunteer managers and to share information. Contact your local Volunteer Center, United Way, or state office to find out if there is a group in your area.

Model County Volunteer Initiatives

Arapahoe County, Colorado
Volunteer Connections
www.co.arapahoe.co.us/Departments/CS/VolunteerConnections.asp

Leon County, Florida
Volunteer Leon
www.volunteerleon.org

Arlington County, Virginia
Volunteer Arlington
www.arlingtonva.us/volunteer

Model County Volunteer Application Forms

Maricopa County, Arizona Animal Care and Control
www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/ap?AP=151762452

San Diego County, California
www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cob/docs/volunteer/Application.pdf

Lee County, Florida Parks and Recreation
www.volsoft.com/WebAssistant/cgi1/WebAssistant.dbw?CustomerId=576259&DataSet=01&Action=4&LastAction=4

Pinellas County, Florida
www.pinellascounty.org/volserv/pdf/Application.pdf

Marathon County, Wisconsin
www.mcpl.us/about/volunteer/VolunteerApplication.pdf

Model County Volunteer Policies

Los Angeles County, California ceo.lacounty.gov/wpp/pdf/Volunteer%20Program%20Policy%20Manual.pdf

Hernando County, Florida
www.hernandocounty.us/bocc/BoardPolicy/28-01new.pdf

Warren County, North Carolina
www.warrencountync.com/_fileUploads/forms/173_Volunteer%20Policy-Signed.pdf

Douglas County, Oregon
www.co.douglas.or.us/hr/hr_services/volunteer_policy.asp

Salt Lake County, Utah
humanresources.slco.org/coPolicies/4005.pdf