



Serving Others
Building Community
Taking Action

Volunteer Guidelines

OVERVIEW

Each department has their own requirements for volunteering based on their user groups and what the volunteers may be doing. You may be asked to complete a background check or provide references. Once you decide what department you would like to volunteer in, or which event you would like to volunteer for, please contact that volunteer coordinator directly to fulfill any requirements needed for the task you are interested in.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- **Attitude is Everything.** Not all volunteer tasks are fun and exciting, but having a good attitude no matter where you are assigned is going to make it a better experience for you and for attendees, so put a smile on your face and show that you want to be there.
- **Find your 'Why'.** Why are you volunteering? Use that as your motivation to do well, no matter what task you are assigned to. Volunteering is such a great learning opportunity, ask questions, look around, try to help with several things- you never know when you will learn something new and be able to use that as a helpful skill in other areas of your life.
- **Communicate.** Communication is the best asset you can have.
 - ◇ **Before:** get all the details for the event; confirm when you will be there and when you need to leave; find out who you need to ask for when you arrive; and find out where to meet at the event or program site.
 - ◇ **During:** If you need to leave your task for any reason, make sure you communicate to someone in charge so they can make sure your spot is covered. It's okay to take a restroom break, or get something to drink, but you need to communicate to make sure there is not a spot left empty.
 - ◇ **After:** Make sure the event or program director knows when you are leaving so they don't end up looking around for you after you have left.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

NEW SKILLS

STRONG RESUME

NEW FRIENDS

BETTER COMMUNITY

DIFFERENT

PERSPECTIVE

SENSE OF WELLBEING

GOOD PRACTICES

GET RELIABLE CONTACT INFO

After establishing contact with the event or activity coordinator, make sure you have a good phone number and email address to ensure you are able to ask questions or get updates in case of cancellations or changes in schedule.

BE KNOWLEDGEABLE

Don't be afraid to ask questions! The more you know, the better time you and the attendees will have.

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- **Arriving Early and Staying Late (30 minutes) on assigned shifts.** This will allow you time to find parking, locate the event director, get any supplies and information for your task, and get started! Allowing time after the program or event for clean up is extremely helpful. It takes a lot of work to set up an event, but it also takes a lot of work to tear down an event, and having a few extra hands goes a long way to get it all done much faster so everyone can go home.
- **Leave your cell phone in your pocket or your car.** When you are volunteering at a COLC event or program, you are representing the City as well as yourself (and your private organization if applicable). Interacting with the public and being fully present in the task you are assigned is why you are volunteering, not only do cell phones distract you from the task at hand, it looks very unprofessional to the public who are attending the event or program.
- **Encourage Interaction.** One of the goals of hosting events and programs is to interact with the public, make them feel comfortable, help them to have fun! Encourage interaction wherever you are assigned.
- **Dress Appropriately.** When you get the details of the event, and get the contact information for the event director, ask what you need to wear. Will you be inside or outside? Shorts or Pants? Will an event t-shirt be provided? Close toed shoes or are sandals okay? Being comfortable yet professional is what we require of all our employees and volunteers. Each event and program differ, so it's important to ask if that information is not already provided.
- **Be Flexible.** Not everything goes to plan every time an event or program is held. Please come in with an open mind, and ready to be flexible in case you are needed for a different task than originally assigned.

