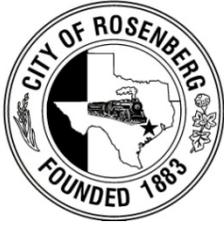


VOLUNTEER PROGRAM HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEERS



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CITY OF *Rosenberg*
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HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEERS

Rosenberg Encourages Vital Volunteerism (R.E.V.V.)

MISSION STATEMENT

Building our community through vital volunteerism

I. OBJECTIVES:

As the name of our volunteer program suggests, volunteering is a vital component of community engagement and a tool to address many challenges our City faces. The City of Rosenberg is dedicated to providing a volunteer program that will:

- ◆ Bring together volunteer resources and City staff to enhance the delivery of municipal services through a vibrant and vital volunteer program that is beneficial both to the volunteer and City staff.
- ◆ Develop a network of concerned and involved volunteers who will make a significant positive impact in the life of their community and gain a greater understanding of how the City functions.
- ◆ Present a variety of mutually-beneficial opportunities to provide rewarding experiences that will increase pride and ownership in this community, while improving the City's effectiveness and image.

Regardless of your schedule or the amount of time you are able to make yourself available for volunteer opportunities, there is a place for you at the City of Rosenberg and a need for your skills and experience.

As you begin volunteering for the City, you will have questions. These guidelines are intended to help answer some of those questions and to give you the information necessary to ensure that your time spent volunteering for the City of Rosenberg will be a satisfactory and rewarding experience.

II. BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

We are happy that you are interested in becoming a volunteer at the City of Rosenberg.

As the volunteer program of the City of Rosenberg grows, opportunities for volunteering will also increase. Whether you are interested in long-term volunteer service or in helping out a few hours with special events and projects, your desire to participate is important, and we will work with you to accommodate the hours you have available.

The volunteer program is dedicated to citizen involvement that will provide personal fulfillment and serve to strengthen the community's bond. Your ideas are important to us, and we welcome input from anyone who desires to help this program be successful.

Each prospective volunteer is required to complete/sign the following forms:

- ◆ Volunteer Program Application
- ◆ Release to Conduct a Criminal-history Check
- ◆ Confirmation of Handbook Receipt
- ◆ Waiver of Liability

(Note: If you are a minor, your parents must also sign the forms mentioned above.)

Once the completed forms are received and on file in the City office, you will be contacted and interviewed to determine placement for service, and you will receive orientation and training from the City Department to which you are assigned.

III. GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

A. Placement and Schedules

Work schedules of volunteers are varied, depending on the department, program and/or location of the assignment. Volunteers should work with their supervisor to set a work schedule that is mutually acceptable. If a volunteer cannot make it to his or her assignment on a scheduled day, the volunteer should notify his or her job supervisor as soon as possible, in case a substitute is needed.

B. Volunteer Duties

A description for each assignment or position will be developed prior to volunteer placement, and each volunteer will receive a clear, complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of his or her assignment.

A volunteer applying to perform professional services for which certification is required will only be eligible if a copy of the appropriate certificate or license is presented, and prior approval is obtained from the designated supervisor.

C. Customer Service

As a volunteer, you are also an ambassador for the City of Rosenberg and will give an impression of the City to all with whom you come in contact. Bearing that in mind, there are several things you can do to help project a positive public image of Rosenberg and the volunteer program:

- ◆ Remember, you are a public servant; interact with citizens and co-workers in a courteous and respectful manner.
- ◆ Be professional at all times as you communicate appropriately with the public, City staff and other volunteers.
- ◆ Follow up promptly on requests, provide businesslike replies to inquiries, and perform all duties in an orderly manner.
- ◆ Do your very best at all times; if you cannot answer a question, refer the individual to your supervisor or a co-worker.

D. Volunteer Hours

All volunteers must keep track of the approved hours spent volunteering for the City. Timesheets will be maintained by the volunteer's supervisor; each volunteer is responsible for making sure his/her hours are entered appropriately on the time record. The supervisor will submit the time records by the 10th of each month for the previous month. The timesheet records are required for insurance purposes, as well as for recognition levels established for the program. Volunteers are also encouraged to maintain a personal record of their hours to document their experience and commitment.

E. Insurance

Volunteers are covered by the City's Workers' Compensation policy during the hours they are acting within the scope and course of assigned duties. The Personnel Office may be contacted with any questions concerning the scope of the policy.

F. Problem Solving

All volunteers are encouraged to attempt to settle problems or issues requiring attention through their immediate supervisor and within the department to which they are assigned. If, however, a workable agreement or satisfactory solution has not been reached through discussion or action within the department, the volunteer should notify the Personnel Department of the City.

G. Other Responsibilities

The success of a good volunteer program depends greatly on the quality and commitment of its volunteers. Please give attention to the following expectations when you commit to a volunteer assignment:

- ◆ Keep your work commitment and give adequate notification of absence.
- ◆ Treat citizens and co-workers with respect, as you desire to be treated.
- ◆ Be cooperative by accepting training, guidance, instruction, and suggestions from staff.
- ◆ Adhere to all confidentiality requirements in the course of carrying out duties and responsibilities.
- ◆ Follow good personal hygiene and grooming habits, and dress in a manner that allows you to safely and appropriately conduct assigned volunteer duties.
- ◆ Be aware of procedures and rules, including safety rules, and follow them.
- ◆ Obtain and wear/use any specialized safety clothing or equipment that may be required or recommended for the job assignment.
- ◆ Report to your supervisor any unsafe practices or procedures you might observe.
- ◆ Immediately report any on-the-job accidents or injuries to your supervisor; cooperate fully and assist cooperatively in the investigation of any such accident.
- ◆ Be proactive in offering suggestions or ideas for improving the volunteer program.
- ◆ Never use job knowledge or contacts for personal gain.

Speak with your immediate supervisor or the Personnel Department if you have questions about any of this information.

H. Minimum Age Requirement for Volunteers

Volunteers with the City of Rosenberg must be a minimum of 18 years of age, unless volunteering as part of a group with adult sponsors and supervision. When volunteering as part of a group, the parents and minor must both sign the Waiver of Liability form.

IV. City Policies and Procedures

City of Rosenberg's Mission: "To provide the community an enhanced quality of life through public service that ensures the continuance of our small town values while maintaining ethical standards."

Our Values Statement: "As elected officials and employees of the City of Rosenberg, our charge is to provide the highest quality of municipal service to the community. To accomplish this purpose effectively, we hold these values as a personal and professional commitment to ourselves, to each other, and to the community we serve."

In general, the policies established by City Council for City employees are also applicable to volunteers. A full copy of the Policies and Procedures and Safety Manual are available through the Personnel Office; however, the following will summarize these policies as they relate to volunteers.

A. Attendance and Punctuality

As a volunteer, you are expected to be prompt and on time in reporting for your assignment. Being late may inconvenience those who are counting on you. If unforeseen circumstances make you late, please notify your supervisor in advance, in order to arrange for someone else to cover your position until your arrival. For those times when you are ill and unable to work, call your supervisor or department as early in the day as possible. Failure to appear for your assignment without notifying your supervisor can result in separation from the volunteer program.

B. Probationary Period

Newly-engaged long-term or ongoing volunteers will generally serve a probation period, not to exceed sixty (60) days, allowing time for the supervisor to fully explain the duties and expectations of the position and allowing the volunteer to learn and exhibit the skills and competencies required. An evaluation will be performed during or at the end of the probation period, and at regular intervals thereafter. Frequency of assessment and/or evaluation will be determined by the Personnel Department and responsible Department Head for the type of position a volunteer is filling.

C. Computer and City Equipment Use

Volunteers will be instructed in the proper usage of communications services and other City equipment, and are expected to adhere to the City's policy. E-mails, facsimiles, or any other communication system should not be used for personal purposes. If a personal password is authorized for operation of a City computer, the password must be disclosed to the volunteer's immediate supervisor. City equipment is not for personal use.

It is important to remember that all City computers and other equipment, including the messages transmitted or stored by them, are the sole property of the City, and the City may access and monitor employee communications and files as it considers

appropriate. All communications records, including e-mails, are subject to the Public Information Act, and as such, may be shared or reviewed.

No item purchased by the City of Rosenberg should ever be removed from City premises.

D. Standards of Conduct

By accepting a volunteer assignment with the City of Rosenberg, you accept the responsibility of adhering to certain rules of behavior and conduct that are expected of all City workers.

- ◆ Have a professional attitude toward your volunteer work.
- ◆ Dress appropriately and in a professional manner.
- ◆ Recognize that you have an obligation to your work, to those who direct it, to your colleagues, and to those for whom it is done.
- ◆ As a volunteer you will be expected to be reliable in the performance of your volunteer duties and know how to do them properly, correctly and pleasantly.
- ◆ How you accept direction, receive and carry out instructions will directly affect the success of your efforts as a volunteer.
- ◆ Having a good team attitude toward other City employees, your fellow volunteers, and the general public is an important building block for the continued success of the program.
- ◆ Treat everyone - the general public, fellow volunteers, and paid City staff - in a courteous and respectful manner to ensure harmony and a pleasant work environment.
- ◆ Keep confidential matters confidential; do not discuss them with anyone.
- ◆ Expect to work according to the standards of your assigned workplace.
- ◆ Use your personal and educational qualities and experience to enrich the projects to which you are assigned.

E. Tobacco Products, Alcohol and Drugs

- ◆ Smoking is prohibited in all City facilities and enclosed public spaces. Like employees, volunteers who wish to use tobacco products must do so outside any City building or facility.
- ◆ Volunteers shall not possess or consume alcoholic beverages on any City premises or while conducting any City business. Any volunteer who violates this policy is subject to immediate separation from the volunteer program.
- ◆ Any volunteer who uses, brings, possesses or is suspected of being under the influence of any form of narcotic, drug, or hallucinogen, except prescribed drugs and under the direction of a physician, is subject to separation from the volunteer program. In addition, any volunteer who transfers, sells, buys, or attempts to sell or buy same on City property or while on City business, at any time, is subject to separation and prosecution.

F. Harassment

All City workers have a right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive. Consistent with the City's respect for the rights and dignity of each employee and volunteer, harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any characteristic protected by law, will not be sanctioned or tolerated.

Any volunteer who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, must immediately report it to his or her direct supervisor or to the Personnel Office.

G. Separation From the Volunteer Program

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules, policies and regulations of the City, or fail to perform their assignments satisfactorily, are subject to separation from the volunteer program, and may be separated from the program at any time; the City reserves the right to request that a volunteer leave immediately, if circumstances warrant such action; however, in most instances, the volunteer would have the opportunity to discuss with supervisory staff the reasons for possible separation.

Grounds for separation may include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Failure to abide by City Policies and Procedures
- ◆ Any acts unbecoming to the City and/or its mission and values
- ◆ Gross misconduct or insubordination
- ◆ Failure to appear for assignment without notifying immediate supervisor
- ◆ Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing volunteer assignments, or failure to comply with the tobacco products, alcohol and drugs policies as outlined in City Policies – "E" above
- ◆ Theft of property or misuse of City funds, equipment, or materials
- ◆ Lies or falsification of records
- ◆ Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts
- ◆ Abuse, harassment, or mistreatment of public persons or co-workers
- ◆ Unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of the organization and/or the objectives of the City's Volunteer Program
- ◆ Unacceptable behavior that does not lead to immediate separation may be dealt with by way of verbal warning or disciplinary suspension. The volunteer would have the opportunity to explain his/her actions at the time the warning is issued.

V. CITY'S COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERS

Each individual who volunteers at the City of Rosenberg is viewed as a vital part of the City's ability to get the job done and can expect the following:

- ◆ ...to be treated with respect, courtesy, and consideration.
- ◆ ...to receive a clear, specific job description.

- ◆ ...to be given appropriate assignments according to skill, interests, availability, and training, and to be assigned a suitable place to work.
- ◆ ...to receive adequate orientation, training, supervision, and evaluation for the jobs they accept, and will know why they are being asked to do a particular task. They will be involved in continuing education on the job, and receive guidance and direction as needed.
- ◆ ...to be informed as much as possible about the City and how it works.
- ◆ ...to be treated without regard to race, national origin, religion, disability, pregnancy, age, military status, sex, color or genetic information, in accordance with applicable federal law, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal or state law.
- ◆ ...to be accountable for accurate record keeping and reporting of hours worked.
- ◆ ...to have a part in planning, when possible, and when evaluated, to have opportunity to voice their opinions, make suggestions, or present new ideas for improvement of the volunteer program.
- ◆ ...to have the opportunity to evaluate the program and their participation as a volunteer with the City.
- ◆ ...to be recognized for their efforts with appropriate formal and informal expressions of appreciation and recognition.
- ◆ ...to be provided a list of the Recognition Levels according to hours contributed; a special recognition event for volunteers will be held periodically.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Volunteer Coordinator, your Departmental supervisor, and the R.E.V.V. Program staff hope your volunteer experience is pleasant and rewarding. Our desire is to provide a volunteer program that is meaningful and worthwhile; therefore, feedback is encouraged and appreciated.

All questions, concerns and comments may be addressed through your Departmental Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator by calling 832-595-3323.

The statements contained in this Handbook are guidelines and summaries of the City's volunteer program and do not bind the City of Rosenberg. The City of Rosenberg reserves the right to amend, revoke, or modify any existing City policies, or adopt new policies at any time, with or without notice, and at its sole discretion.