

# City of Boise



## Volunteer Handbook

October 2009

# City of Boise Volunteer Handbook

## **Welcome to the City of Boise!**

We are glad to have you be a part of our organization. Your service is greatly appreciated and benefits our community immensely. This handbook is designed to provide information and support to City of Boise volunteers, and summarizes topics that you may encounter during your service with the City.

The intent of the goals and policies listed in this handbook is to maximize the effectiveness of our Volunteer Program, and assist department personnel and volunteers in understanding their roles and responsibilities within the framework of the Volunteer Program. As a potential City of Boise volunteer, we request that you review the information in this booklet.

## **City of Boise Vision:**

Making Boise the Most Livable City in the Country!

## **Volunteer Roles and Program Philosophy:**

Local citizens, volunteering their time and energy to the City, provide public awareness and support to the City, and foster a quality of life and well-being in our community. The role of a volunteer is to augment, not replace, paid staff positions. Our goal is to utilize the skills and interests of volunteers to enhance the services provided to the community in support of the City's vision, while giving the volunteers a meaningful work experience.

As City of Boise volunteers, you will represent the City of Boise at all times during your volunteer service. It is your responsibility to be courteous in your contacts with the public, and perform your duties promptly and in a safe, reliable manner.

Volunteers are individuals who perform services without pay i.e. voluntary service." Voluntary service shall include service performed by any "authorized volunteer." Volunteers serve "at will" and are not considered employees of the City. In order to be "authorized" the volunteer must complete a Volunteer Services Agreement.

## **Orientation and Volunteer Duties:**

As a new volunteer you should receive a program overview with the Volunteer Coordinator or Supervisor, prior to placement. The program overview will provide you with the information you will need to integrate you as a valuable team member. Your program overview and orientation will include the following information:

- A. Signing the City's Volunteer Services Agreement.
- B. The Organizational Structure - relationship of the Department to the total City Government.

- C. The services the Department provides.
- D. Reviewing the job duties and risks associated with the project or program you are volunteering with.
- E. Introducing you to staff you may be working with.
- F. Supplying personal protective equipment, if needed.
- G. Reviewing work schedule, lunch period and breaks, restrooms, parking and transportation.

### **Background Checks:**

Due to the sensitive nature of some volunteer positions, you may be required to undergo a criminal history background check to volunteer. These positions include, but are not limited to, positions where volunteers will have unsupervised accessibility to minors or persons with cognitive disabilities, as well as sensitive and/or confidential information. The background check may consist of a Criminal History Records Check, Fingerprinting Check, Reference Check, and/or Polygraph Examination. Individuals that are interested in volunteering for sensitive positions that refuse to comply with this request or fail any one of the background checks will not be permitted to volunteer.

### **Hours of Service and Break Periods:**

Because the nature of volunteer service varies across the City, starting, quitting, and meal and break times vary according to the needs of a particular department.

Some departments track of the efforts and time that volunteers contribute throughout the year. Volunteers are expected to report to their assignments on time each service day and shall be available until their designated ending time. Your Volunteer Coordinator or Supervisor will inform you on the preferred method of tracking your service contribution. This may include giving you a hand written or electronic timecard, on which it is your responsibility to write down your hours and submit them to your supervisor. Your hours can be mailed, e-mailed, hand-delivered, or telephoned in at the end of each month. Your cooperation in this effort is appreciated.

### **Volunteer Identification:**

Volunteers may be required to wear a badge, vest, name pin, hat or other volunteer identification when representing the City of Boise, unless otherwise approved by the Volunteer Coordinator/Supervisor. In addition to identifying the wearer as a City Volunteer, the card may also serve as an access card for volunteers into designated areas.

Any exemptions from wearing identification during certain situations require Departmental and Security Services approval.

## **City Policies, Procedures, Rules, and Regulations:**

As a volunteer you are expected to follow certain City policies, procedures, regulations and rules unless otherwise directed by a proper authority. These include:

### **SAFETY**

The safety of volunteers, employees and the general public is of primary importance to the City. The City complies with all applicable laws related to safety. Volunteers are not only expected to adhere to safe operating instructions, but are encouraged to provide their ideas and expertise to help the City make safety a part of the job. All volunteers shall continuously promote safety awareness and maintain property and equipment in a safe operating condition.

For detailed information regarding the City of Boise's safety requirements, specifications and procedures, volunteers are to refer to the City of Boise Employees' Occupational Safety and Health Policy Manual found on the City's Intranet, or contact your Volunteer Coordinator/Supervisor.

### **PHONE USAGE**

While at work, volunteers are to exercise discretion in making or receiving personal phone calls. Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of the phone used, interfere with productivity and can be distracting to others. Therefore, excessive personal calls during a volunteer's service are prohibited. Flexibility may be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention.

Volunteers whose service responsibilities may include regular or occasional driving and who use a personal or business cell phone are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving in the course and scope of their volunteer assignment. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, volunteers are expected to safely pull off to the side of the road and stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not an option, volunteers are expected to keep the call short, use hands-free options if available, refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional issues and keep their eyes on the road. Special care should be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the volunteer is driving in an unfamiliar area.

### **TOBACCO USE**

The City is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to promoting the health and well-being of its volunteers and employees. As required by the Idaho Clean Indoor Act and also motivated by the City's desire to provide a healthy work environment, the use of tobacco products including, but not limited to cigarettes,

cigars, pipes, and smokeless tobacco, is prohibited inside City facilities or vehicles. The use of tobacco products will be allowed in designated areas outside any facility. The management of each facility will designate areas outside the building away from the entrances where the use of tobacco products will be allowed. All tobacco products should be disposed of properly.

### **GROOMING**

While it is the intent of the City that all volunteers dress for their own comfort during work hours, the professional image of the City is maintained, in part, by the professional appearance that our employees and volunteers present to customers, vendors, and other visitors.

All volunteers should practice common sense rules of neatness, cleanliness, and comfort. Professional appearance also means that the City expects volunteers to maintain good hygiene and grooming while working.

The decision of whether dress or grooming is appropriate to the City's business operations shall be left to the reasonable discretion of the event or volunteer coordinator. Certain positions require specific clothing requirements, which will be explained to volunteers upon placement into those positions.

### **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

The City expects and encourages a work environment of respect and professionalism. All City employees and volunteers are required to conduct themselves in a courteous manner that is appropriate for the workplace.

While it is impossible to list every type of conduct that is unacceptable, the following are examples of conduct that is not acceptable.

1. A violation of City policies and/or regulations.
2. Any conduct violating any federal, state, or local law or regulation.
3. Threat of harm (direct or indirect) to any City employee or representative, member of the public, City government, or City property.
4. Physical violence against persons or property.
5. Damage or threat of damage, to City property, regardless of location, or other property that the City controls.
6. Intentional or negligent misuse or destruction of City property, including tools, equipment, vehicles, records, or other material. Sabotage of City property or processes.
7. Possession or carrying of deadly weapons, explosives, or similar items on City time, property, or at City sponsored

events, unless it is in accordance with applicable City policies and regulations.

8. Forceful or unauthorized entry to or occupation of City facilities, including buildings and grounds.
9. Use of City property and/or assets including but not limited to tools, equipment, vehicles, records, and/or material, for anything other than official City business unless otherwise permitted by the policies and regulations contained within the City's Employee Policy Handbook.
10. Theft or unauthorized removal or possession of the City's property or another person's property from a City premise or worksite.
11. Admission of guilt or conviction of a crime that reflects negatively on the volunteer's ability to perform his/her job or on the City as an organization.
12. Refusal or failure to carry out assignments or comply with policies, regulations, rules, procedures, and/or directives including oral instructions.
13. Failure to keep management informed on matters that pertain to and/or affect work related duties, or City business.
14. Conduct or speech that violates commonly accepted standards of a professional workplace and that, under present circumstances, has no redeeming social value, including the use of profane, indecent, or abusive language.
15. Any speech or conduct deemed disrespectful, irresponsible or otherwise inappropriate when acting as or identified as a City volunteer, including but not limited to all times while driving a City vehicle, or wearing a City badge/uniform, or other sign/symbol that identifies the user as a City volunteer.
16. Making malicious, vindictive, false, and/or harmful statements about others or engaging in verbal abuse, altercations or outbursts, including the use of profanity, name-calling, threats, or ridicule.
17. Intimidating or bullying others.
18. Inability or refusal to work cohesively with others.
19. Exhibiting retaliatory behavior toward City volunteers, employees, customers or vendors.
20. Any conduct that obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with City business, service, work environment or administrative functions, including City sponsored events and/or behavior that has an adverse impact on productivity and/or morale.
21. Material falsification of written documents relating to obtaining and/or maintaining the volunteer position.
22. Falsification of time or work records or falsification of City reports.
23. Untruthfulness related to the job which could hinder or jeopardize the City's interests.

24. Untruthfulness or withholding information relevant to an administrative investigation.
25. Tardiness or failure to exercise due care for punctuality or attendance in regard to the scheduled hours set by the City.
26. Harassing, discriminating, or engaging in inappropriate conduct towards another based upon that individual's protected class status as outlined in applicable laws or City policy or regulation.
27. Failure to report to the Volunteer Coordinator/Supervisor or Human Resources Department within forty-eight (48) hours, or in accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act, a felony or misdemeanor conviction, excluding minor traffic violations.
28. Use, possession, distribution, or sale of illegal drugs, paraphernalia, or controlled substances not prescribed to the user by a physician, on City property or at City sponsored events.
29. Reporting to work or working under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances.
30. Violating any safety rules or practices or engaging in any conduct on the job that causes a safety hazard.
31. Failure to report an accident or injury or making false claims or inaccurate statements in the reporting of a job injury or accident.
32. Failure to obtain and maintain licensure requirements lawfully required as a condition of the volunteer position.
33. Accessing another volunteer's or employee's e-mail, voice mail, files, computer documents, desk, or office without authorization from the employee or department administration.
34. Monitoring or intercepting the files or electronic communications of other employees or third parties without appropriate authorization.
35. Use of camera equipped devices in restroom/shower/lactation areas or any other place a person has a reasonable expectation of privacy.
36. Using City equipment and/or time to view pornography or other images and/or websites that are considered inappropriate for the workplace.
37. Storing personally owned property on City premises.
38. Using personally owned property/equipment for City business without authorization from the Department Director.
39. Conduct or speech that is not a matter of public concern and disturbs or hinders the efficiencies of the day-to-day operations of the City.

*The above restrictions are not intended to be all-inclusive of the proper standards of conduct or obligations that volunteers shall observe at all times. When a situation arises in which the proper course of conduct is unclear, the volunteer involved should request direction from their supervisor.*

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

Any volunteer who has reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) has been abused, abandoned, or neglected, or who observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse, abandonment or neglect shall report or cause to be reported within twenty-four (24) hours such conditions or circumstances to the proper law enforcement agency, a supervisor, or the Department Director.

Any person who has reason to believe that a child has been abused, abandoned or neglected and, acting upon that belief, makes a report of abuse, abandonment or neglect as required by law shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

Any such participant shall have the same immunity with respect to participation in any such judicial proceeding resulting from such report. Any person who reports in bad faith or with malice shall not be protected.

Any person who makes a report or allegation of child abuse, abandonment or neglect knowing the same to be false or who reports or alleges the same in bad faith or with malice shall be liable to the party or parties against whom the report was made for the amount of actual damages sustained or statutory damages of five hundred dollars (\$500), whichever is greater, plus attorney's fees and costs of suit. If the court finds that the defendant acted with malice or oppression, the court may award treble actual damages or treble statutory damages, whichever is greater.

## **CODE OF ETHICS AND FIDUCIARY DUTY**

The proper operation of a democratic government requires that public officials and employees be independent, impartial, and responsible to the people; that government decisions and policy be made in the best interest of all; that public office not be used for personal benefit or gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government. To help ensure that these standards are met the City of Boise created a Code of Ethics.

The City's Code of Ethics are rules of conduct for City officials, officers, employees, and volunteers. The Code of Ethics is codified at Title 1, Chapter 21 of the Boise City Code.

The City also adopted the Ethics Handbook, which is a comprehensive tool for City officials, officers, employees, and volunteers to consult when they have questions, concerns, or complaints related to ethics. Violations of the City Code of Ethics are misdemeanors and can carry

criminal penalties. Any violation of the Code of Ethics or Ethics Handbook may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **VEHICLE USAGE**

City vehicles are intended for use in the course and scope of City business. Some volunteers need to travel in a vehicle to perform their job duties either because it has special equipment, is a special type of vehicle, or they only occasionally need to travel. All drivers need to be aware that they are representing the City when they use City vehicles. They shall act accordingly and drive defensively and responsibly. Any volunteer driving a City vehicle or driving a personal vehicle for City business shall have a current and valid driver's license.

### Using Personal Vehicles for Business

If a personal vehicle is used, liability insurance in the amount required by I.C. § 49-117(16) shall be in place. The volunteer's insurance is considered by Idaho statute to be primary before the City's insurance.

### Representing the City of Boise

All drivers need to be aware that they are representing the City when they use City vehicles or their personal cars for City business. They shall act accordingly and drive defensively, responsibly and courteously. Drivers:

- A. Shall be City employees or volunteers with a valid driver's license and current proof of insurance.
- B. Shall observe all traffic laws and speed limits.
- C. Shall be personally responsible for all moving violation and for all parking tickets.
- D. Shall not smoke in City vehicles.
- E. Shall keep vehicles locked when not in use or view of the driver.
- F. Shall immediately report to the supervisor any traffic citation received on or off the job that will result in a change of the motor vehicle operator's driver's license status.
- G. Shall immediately report from the scene to the supervisor any traffic accident.

### Safety Belts

Safety belts shall be worn by drivers and passengers in all vehicles equipped with safety belts and used for City business in accordance with State law. Lap belts shall be properly secured in those vehicles equipped with automatic safety systems that require the lap portion of the belt to be manually secured. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for ensuring compliance by all vehicle occupants. Any City-owned vehicle in which a safety belt is inoperable shall not be used until the seat belt is repaired. Employees or volunteers who discover

an inoperable restraint system shall immediately report the defect to the appropriate supervisor.

#### Accidents

A printed card titled "In Case of Accident" will be kept in the glove compartment of each City-owned vehicle to provide employees and volunteers with easy access to guidance on what to do when accidents occur. In general, a volunteer's responsibilities when involved in a vehicle accident are as follows:

- A. Volunteers shall immediately report all traffic accidents involving a City vehicle to the local police and request them to respond.
- B. Volunteers are prohibited from signing or making any statements regarding their (or other volunteer or employee) responsibility or fault for a traffic accident that occurs while they are driving a City-owned vehicle.
- C. The police will file a police report and complete an exchange of information slip. The volunteer shall retain a copy of this slip to attach to the vehicle accident report. If the information exchange slip is not available, volunteers shall obtain names, addresses, telephone numbers, and license numbers of the other drivers involved. Volunteers shall also collect insurance company contact information and the address and telephone number of the police office where the accident report will be prepared.
- D. Volunteers are to immediately report all accidents to their supervisor regardless of lack of injury or property damage, shall report where it occurred and who was responsible, and supervisors are expected to submit a Vehicle Accident Report form to the Risk Manager within 48 hours.

#### Vehicle Repair and Towing

If the City vehicle is damaged, needs towing, or is inoperable, the volunteer shall contact their supervisor.

#### **Separation and Return of City Property**

All City property shall be returned at or before the time of separation, including but not limited to:

- A. City credit or purchasing cards
- B. City uniforms or clothing
- C. Cell phones and/or pagers
- D. Volunteer identification badges
- E. Keys to City vehicles and buildings
- F. Computers, laptops, PDA's etc.
- G. Tools or other equipment
- H. City issued parking permit
- I. Any other City property in possession of the volunteer

- J. In-home City phone service shall be terminated and City equipment returned

Failure to return items may result in criminal charges.

### **Exit Surveys**

When separating, volunteers may be asked to complete an electronic exit survey. The purpose of the survey is to get a departing volunteer's opinions about volunteering for the City of Boise, including what the City does well and what needs improvement. All volunteers are encouraged to be honest, candid, and forthright in completing the survey and providing feedback to the City.

### **Thank You!**

We would like to thank you for your volunteer service to the City of Boise and hope you have a rewarding experience. Your service is critical in making Boise the most livable city in the country!