



# Volunteer Guidelines and Criteria for Excluding Applicants

## **Volunteer Program Overview**

North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District (District) Volunteer Program work with residents and community stakeholders who offer their talents, skills, and time to offer programming and activities in conjunction with the District Vision and Mission.

## **Definition of "Volunteer"**

Washington Department of Labor and Industries defines a "volunteer" as "a person who donates labor to another by their own free choice."

## **Purpose of Volunteer Policies**

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance, structure, and direction to staff and volunteers throughout the volunteer experience.

These policies do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District reserves the right to change any of these policies at any time and to require adherence to the changed policy as a condition of continued service and placement.

## **Scope of Volunteer Policies**

Unless expressly stated, these guidelines apply to all non-elected, appointed, and non-appointed volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken on behalf of the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District and to all sites of operation throughout the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District.

## **Role of North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District Staff**

Assigned staff in specific service delivery areas (parks, recreation, community center, pool) are responsible for supervising the volunteer programs. Staff provides contact and coordinated management under the District guidelines to benefit the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District and volunteers in their efforts to provide volunteer services.

## **Employees as Volunteers**

District Employees may not volunteer their jobs. In some instances, employees may volunteer when the volunteer position's duties in no way resemble their job duties as a District employee. Employee volunteers will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **Scope of Volunteer Involvement**

The District may utilize volunteers in programs and activities of North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District and serve at appropriate skill levels as determined by District staff. The scope of volunteer service will

be provided, outlining the policies and procedures for volunteering. Some volunteer positions will have an additional form attached outlining specific duties for that particular job, such as an Ad Hoc Committee Member or Coach. Each general description can include:

- a. The general responsibilities of volunteers
- b. Volunteer project hours worked
- c. Reporting and supervision responsibilities
- d. Training and orientation before performing work
- e. Personal protective equipment to be provided

### **Safety and Welfare of Volunteers**

The safety and welfare of volunteers are paramount. Accepted standards of behavior will be outlined prior to the performance of volunteer tasks/assignments. In the event of an injury, appropriate first aid is administered, and if needed, emergency services are contacted. The supervisor immediately completes an accident report and submits a copy to the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District Business Manager and Director. All minors are to be directly supervised by an adult. No power tools or vehicles are to be used by minor volunteers under the age of eighteen.

### **Screening of Volunteers**

If a volunteer is to interact with at-risk clients, such as those working with children under 18 years of age, developmentally disabled persons, the frail, or the elderly, additional screening procedures may be instituted. These procedures may include reference checks, credit checks, direct background investigation, criminal investigation (which may include fingerprint checks) to check for a history of abuse, sexually deviant behavior, or other crimes of violence and/or dishonesty. These checks will be renewed every year for those ongoing volunteers whose assigned roles require these types of checks. All volunteers to be placed with at-risk clients shall submit adequate information to allow the District to conduct these checks. Volunteers who refuse permission to conduct these checks or do not submit the preliminary information will not be accepted for placement. The District shall provide a copy of the response from the various checks performed on the prospective volunteer upon request.

### **Evaluation of Volunteer Program**

An annual evaluation of the utilization of volunteers is conducted by District staff. Evaluation information gathered over the year will consist of the number of volunteers used, the number of volunteer hours served, projects, events, and programs where volunteers were used.

### **Maintenance of Records**

Records are maintained on each volunteer, including but not limited to dates and hours of service, positions held, and awards received. Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District personnel.

### **Timesheets**

Some programs will have an expected amount of volunteer time. For example, basketball coaches may have practice one hour per week and one hour of games per week plus one hour of team administration per week for eight weeks for a total of 24 hours of expected volunteering per season. For volunteers who are required to account for their time to a school or other organization which requires a timesheet, individual volunteers are responsible for the accurate completion and timely submission of timesheets. Volunteers working in the community, in the parks, or at a District facility for a special event may also need to sign in when beginning service and sign out when service is completed for that day on the appropriate forms.

### **Confidentiality**

Access to confidential records is restricted to designated North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District staff. All District related business or recreation program participant information overheard or entrusted to a volunteer must be kept confidential. Such information shall not be disclosed to other volunteers, participants, friends, family, journalists, reporters or the general public except as otherwise permitted at law.

### **Work Site**

North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District staff shall establish an appropriate worksite for all volunteers. This worksite shall contain the necessary facilities, equipment, and space to enable the volunteer to effectively and comfortably perform his or her duties. Volunteer work sites are subject to the same safety requirements as are all District work sites.

### **Dress Code**

As representatives of the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting an excellent image to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers are to be identified as such through wearing nametags or other methods provided by the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District.

### **Absenteeism**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regularly scheduled and timely basis. If a volunteer expects to be absent from a scheduled duty, the volunteer shall inform the supervising staff member as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made.

### **Right to Reject Services/Termination**

A volunteer position is “at will” and the District reserves the right to limit the use of volunteers, adjust the hours of any volunteer, or to reject or terminate services as it, in its sole discretion, deems fit in order to achieve its public purpose and policy best. These policies create no employment or any other contractual right. Participation in any volunteer position of the District shall be open to any individual, and no individual shall be discriminated against based upon race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin or physical, mental, or sensory handicap, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by law.

Grounds for rejecting services may include, but are not limited to, the following: unsatisfactory background check, gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property, misuse of District equipment or materials, mistreatment of clients or co-workers, failure to abide by District policies and procedures, failure to meet the standards of performance relating to the essential functions of the volunteer position, failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties and/or the elimination of the particular volunteer position for any reason. The foregoing list is not exhaustive and the District reserves its right to adjust, limit, reject or terminate volunteer service for any reason at its sole discretion.

### **Resignation**

Volunteers may resign from volunteer service at any time. We request that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of departure and a reason for this decision to the assigned staff contact. Volunteers who volunteer to earn hours for their command or school, we request that if you volunteer for a sports season or program that you commit for the entirety of that program or activity.

## **Requests for Volunteers**

The North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District will accept requests for volunteers in writing, complete with a description of duties needed to be performed and a requested timeframe. The recruitment of volunteers provides the volunteers with an experience that is personally rewarding and challenging.

## **Recruitment**

Volunteers shall be recruited by the District on a pro-active basis, with the intent of expanding volunteer involvement in the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual preference, and/or disability. Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. Volunteers who have not reached the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or legal guardian prior to volunteering and will under no circumstances be allowed to operate power tools.

## **Placement**

In placing a volunteer, consideration shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and the requirements of the volunteer position. No placement shall be made unless the needs of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met. No volunteer will be assigned to work with a staff person without the consent of that staff person. Volunteers should be provided with a description of general volunteer duties and, when needed, the scope of work description so there is a complete understanding of the expectations of their service. This document should identify the essential job functions the volunteer is authorized to perform. Since volunteers are considered a valuable resource in performing the District's work, the staff is encouraged to seriously consider creative ways in which volunteers can be of service and consult with the Volunteer Coordinator if in need of assistance or additional training.

## **Acceptance and Appointment**

Service as a volunteer with the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District shall begin with an official notification of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer position by the Department Head. No volunteer shall begin the performance of any position until he or she has been officially accepted for volunteer work and has completed all the necessary screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer shall complete all necessary enrollment paperwork and receive a copy of the volunteer manual.

## **Re-Assignment**

A volunteer who is re-assigned to new responsibilities shall receive appropriate orientation and training for that position before he or she begins work. In addition, any screening procedures appropriate for the specific position must be completed, even if the volunteer has already been working with the District.

## **Professional Services**

Volunteers shall not perform professional services for which certification or licensing is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. A copy of all appropriate certificate(s) or license(s) must be on file with the Business Manager.

## **Orientation**

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and operation of the volunteer program and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the volunteer work that they are accepting in that effort.

## **On-the-Job Training**

The District will provide adequate instruction and, where necessary, training to ensure all workers perform a task correctly and safely and provide individual volunteers with adequate knowledge of District rules and requirements. The timing and methods for delivering such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the positions and the capabilities of the volunteers. Experienced volunteers may be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training. Those staff that will be in a supervisory capacity District for volunteers shall have primary responsibility for the design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

## **Continuing Education**

Volunteers are encouraged to improve their levels of skill during their terms of service. Additional training and educational opportunities may be made available to volunteers during their service with the North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation District. This continuing education may include additional information on the performance of their current volunteer assignment and more general information. It may be provided either by the Department or by assisting the volunteer in participating in educational programs provided by other entities.

## **Supervision of Volunteers**

Each volunteer must have an identified supervisor who is responsible for the direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor may be a staff person, a trained adult volunteer, or another designated District employee. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. An adult must supervise minors under the age of eighteen.

## **The Volunteer as Volunteer Supervisor**

After consulting with District staff, a volunteer may be assigned to act as a supervisor of other volunteers. The supervising volunteer is under the direction of the District staff.

## **Volunteer/Staff Relationships**

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the Department, with each having a complementary role to play. It is essential for the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

## **Staff Involvement in Volunteer Evaluation**

Supervising staff shall be involved in all evaluation and work assignments of volunteers with whom they are connected.

## **Lines of Communication**

Volunteers are entitled to all information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments.

## **Criteria for Exclusion (internal)**

A person is disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer if the person has been found guilty of the following crimes: Guilty means that a person was found guilty following a trial, entered a guilty plea, entered a

no-contest plea accompanied by a court finding of guilty, regardless of whether there was an adjudication of guilt (conviction) or withholding of guilt. The criteria for such mandatory exclusion does not apply if criminal charges resulted in acquittal, nolle prossed, or dismissal.

### **SEX OFFENSES**

- All Sex Offenses as defined in RCW 9.94A.030, *regardless of the amount of time since the finding of guilt.*  
Examples include, but are not limited to, child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.

### **FELONIES**

- All Serious Violent Felonies and Violent Felonies, as defined in RCW 9.94A.030, *regardless of the amount of time since the finding of guilt.*  
Examples include, but are not limited to, murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated Burglary, etc.
- All Felony offenses, other than **violent offenses** or **sex offenses**, for which guilt was found within the past 10 years.  
Examples include drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.

### **MISDEMEANORS**

- All misdemeanor violent offenses for which guilt was found within the past 7 years  
Examples include assault, battery, domestic violence, hit & run, etc.
- All misdemeanor drug & alcohol offenses for which guilt was found within the past 5 years or multiple offenses for which guilt was found in the past 10 years.  
Examples include driving under the influence, simple drug possession, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.
- Any other misdemeanor for which guilt was found within the past 5 years that would be considered a potential danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.
- Examples include contributing to the delinquency of a minor, providing alcohol to a minor, theft if the person is handling monies, etc.

**PENDING CASES** Anyone who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court is not permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case. The Background Screening Process is an ongoing process and should be subject to review and changes at any time.

These guidelines are based upon industry practices in private, public, and non-profit areas.