

Abington Township Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Chapter:	Allocation and Distribution of Personnel and Personnel Alternatives	General Order:	16.4.4
Section:	Auxiliary Program	Original Date:	050104
Title:	Volunteers in Policing Program	Re-Issue Date:	020818
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CALEA Standard References:	16.4.1, 16.4.2, 16.4.3		
Pennsylvania Accreditation References:			

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this general order is to provide members with guidelines on the Volunteers in Policing Program.

II. POLICY

It is the opinion of the Abington Township Police Department that volunteers are one of the most important assets to the Police Department. Many of our programs would not exist without volunteer participation. Therefore, in an effort to enhance police services, the Volunteers in Policing Program (VIP) has been designed to combine the professionalism and experience of Departmental personnel with the creativity and enthusiasm of community volunteers, by offering volunteer opportunities within the Department to community members.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Application and Selection Requirements

1. The applicant must:
 - a. Be 18 years of age or older.
 - b. Have no felony criminal convictions and no misdemeanors within three years.

- c. Possess a valid driver's license.
- 2. Qualified applicants must pass the following:
 - a. Oral and Personal History Questionnaire interviews.
 - b. Background investigation.

B. Assignment and Training

- 1. The Volunteers in Policing Program shall be the responsibility of the Community Policing Division Commander. The Community Policing Division Commander will designate a V.I.P. Coordinator.
- 2. The VIP Coordinator shall conduct a training program for all new volunteers. The training program will consist of law enforcement related training in those authorized and assigned duties.
- 3. Volunteers classified as Level 3 (Community Service Officer) will be required to undergo additional training, consisting of report writing and police communications.
- 4. Any person interested in becoming a volunteer with the Abington Township Police Department shall be directed to the VIP Coordinator and follow the application process. No one shall be accepted as a volunteer for any unit within the Department without the knowledge of the Community Policing Division Commander.

C. Duties of the Volunteer

- 1. Volunteers are not sworn law enforcement officers. Duties of the volunteer will vary according to their level of clearance and job assignments. There shall be three levels of clearance with increasing requirements.
 - a. Level 1 Volunteer - Community Service Volunteer
 - (1) Shall be required to complete the VIP application and be subject to a reference check. These volunteers may answer telephones, take messages, work as receptionists and perform light administrative tasks. They are not privy to confidential information, nor should they be allowed to enter any data including crime reports and statistics. These volunteers will be distinguished by an identification card.
 - b. Level 2 Volunteer - Community Service Representative

- (1) Shall be required to complete the VIP application and undergo a partial background investigation which consists of reference checks, FBI, DMV, CII, and warrant(s) checks. These volunteers may answer telephones, take messages, shred confidential documents, purge files and complete typing and filing assignments. These volunteers will be distinguished by an identification card.

c. Level 3 Volunteer - Community Service Officer

- (1) Shall be required to complete the VIP application and a modified version of the Personal History Questionnaire that is used for regular employees, undergo a complete background investigation and be subject to all legal checks used when hiring regular employees. These volunteers may enter confidential data, take select crime reports, and do general office duties. These volunteers will be distinguished by an identification card.

D. Organizational Structure

1. The Community Policing Division shall be responsible for the training, overall supervision and assignment of all volunteers.
2. Under the direction of the Community Policing Division Commander the VIP Coordinator shall:
 - a. Perform all administrative tasks related to the program.
 - b. Perform annual program evaluations to ensure that the needs of both the volunteers and the Department are being met.
 - c. Maintain volunteer personnel files.
 - d. Require the immediate supervisor of the volunteer to submit a written performance evaluation annually.

E. Uniform Requirements

1. Level 1 Volunteer - Community Service Volunteer
 - a. When working in an official capacity civilian dress will be worn.
 - b. All volunteers will follow the guidelines set forth in General Order: 41.3.4 - Authorized Personal Equipment and Apparel.
 - c. Any uniforms will clearly distinguish them from sworn officers.

2. Level 2 Volunteer - Community Service Representative

- a. When working in an official capacity the Community Service Representative uniform will be worn:
 - (1) Department Issued Community Service Representative uniform shirt;
 - (2) Khaki Pants;
 - (3) Black Shoes.
- b. All volunteers will follow the guidelines set forth in General Order: 41.3.4 - Authorized Personal Equipment and Apparel.
- c. The uniforms will clearly distinguish them from sworn officers.

3. Level 3 Volunteer - Community Service Officer

- a. When working in an official capacity the Community Service Officer uniform will be worn:
 - (1) Department Issued Community Service Officer tan uniform shirt;
 - (2) Department issues Black Pants;
 - (3) Black Shoes.
- b. All volunteers will follow the guidelines set forth in General Order: 41.3.4 - Authorized Personal Equipment and Apparel.
- c. The uniforms will clearly distinguish them from sworn officers.

F. Procedure for Units Requesting Volunteer Services

- 1. Any Division or unit seeking volunteer assistance shall complete a Request for Volunteer Services form.
- 2. The VIP coordinator shall match a volunteer with the needs of the requesting unit and the appropriate appointment shall be made pending results of the background investigation.

G. Reasons For Dismissal

- 1. The Police Department reserves the right to withdraw appointment of a volunteer at any time with or without cause. The VIP Coordinator shall make recommendations to the Community Policing Division Commander who shall make the final determination.