



ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES MANUAL

SUBJECT: UNPAID VOLUTEERS

1. PURPOSE

Dane County recognizes the vital role volunteers play to enhance County services, programs, and community outreach. This policy provides a consistent and structured approach to how volunteers are selected, managed, and supported in alignment with the County's mission to deliver high-quality services to all residents.

Nothing stated in this policy creates an employment contract between the County and its volunteers; be it an individual or group.

2. DEFINITIONS

Volunteer – An individual who freely offers time and services to Dane County without expectation or receipt of compensation, both tangible and non-tangible in nature, benefits, or future employment opportunity. Although Unpaid Interns receive intangible benefits by freely offering time and services to Dane County temporarily to gain supervised practical experience in a specific field, they shall be considered a Volunteer for the purposes of this policy and shall not expect compensation or benefits.

Volunteer Agreement – The document that outlines the expectations, responsibilities, confidentiality requirements, and conditions of volunteer service between Dane County and the volunteer or group.

Volunteer Assignment – A defined role or set of responsibilities established by the Volunteer Lead that outlines the work a volunteer will perform, expected time commitment, supervision, and any required qualifications or training.

Volunteer Lead – The Dane County employee (may be an M-class employee or a non-manager) responsible for directing, supporting, and overseeing a volunteer throughout their service.

Volunteer Service – The period during which an approved Volunteer performs authorized activities on behalf of Dane County under the supervision of the Volunteer Lead.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals serving in an unpaid volunteer capacity for the benefit of the County.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Volunteers must:

- Be at least 18 years of age (or at least 13 years old with parent/guardian consent);
- Complete the applicable Department Volunteer Application;
- Pass applicable background checks, including criminal, when applicable;
- Sign the Volunteer Request and Waiver.



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Volunteers are **not employees** of the County for any purpose under state or federal law, including wage and hour, unemployment, and workers' compensation laws (in accordance with FLSA regulations).

Volunteers are not eligible for workers' compensation benefits.

5. POLICY

A Department, through its Volunteer Lead, is responsible for managing volunteers. The Department identifies a need for volunteer support and determines that the work is appropriate for a volunteer assignment. The volunteer role should support Department's goals while also providing the volunteer with a meaningful service opportunity.

The Department shall complete the Volunteer Request Form identifying the proposed volunteer role, anticipated duties, supervision plan, expected duration, and any special qualifications or requirements. The request is reviewed by the Department Manager to ensure Manager-level and Director-level awareness and approval, that the assignment aligns with County priorities, follows County/Department policies, and includes appropriate supervision and onboarding requirements.

Once approved, The Department shall identify a Volunteer Lead. This can occur prior to or after Volunteers have been identified. The Department or Volunteer Lead recruits volunteers and works with the Department to review interested volunteers. Volunteers who best meet the needs of the assignment are selected. Interviews or reference checks may be conducted when appropriate for the role.

The Volunteer Lead keeps Volunteer Request Form and any applicable volunteer-specific paperwork within the Department in a centralized location.

Volunteers must attend all required training or orientation sessions before performing assigned tasks as designated by the Volunteer Lead.

At the conclusion of the volunteer assignment, the Volunteer Lead completes the offboarding process, which includes collecting any agency-issued materials and removing access to agency systems or facilities as appropriate.

Departments are encouraged to recognize volunteers for their contributions and gather feedback to support continuous improvement of the volunteer program.

6. USE OF COUNTY VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

Volunteers are **prohibited from operating County-owned vehicles and equipment**, including passenger cars, trucks, power tools, and/or emergency vehicles.

7. CONDUCT



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Volunteers are expected to maintain a respectful and professional demeanor while volunteering for the County.

8. TERMINATION OF SERVICE

Volunteer service may be terminated at any time by either the County or the volunteer with or without cause.

9. ASSOCIATED FORMS

All forms associated with this policy can be found DCINet.

- Volunteer Request and Waiver

10. LEGAL & STATUTORY AUTHORITY

- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- 29 U.S.C. § 203(e)(4)(A) and 29 C.F.R. §§ 553.101–106

END OF POLICY