



**PER.02.03**

**Issued: 10/2015**

**Reviewed: 06/2016**

# **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**City of Soap Lake**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE	3
MISSION STATEMENT	3
FUNDAMENTALS OF VOLUNTEERING	4
VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS	4
VOLUNTEER BEHAVIORS	5
COMMUNITY SERVICE	6
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	7
ACCIDENT REPORTING	7
ALCOHOL AND DRUG FREE WORKPLACE	7
ANTI-HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION	8
BACKGROUND CHECKS/APPLICANT SCREENING	9
COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET USE	9
CONFIDENTIALITY	9
DRESS AND APPEARANCE	10
GIFTS AND FAVORS/ ETHICS	10
LYSTEDT LAW	10
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE GEAR	10
SAFETY	11
SMOKING/TOBACCO USE	11
USE OF VEHICLES	11
VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE	12
VOLUNTEER HOURS	14
IDENTIFICATION	14
RESIGNATION/TERMINATION	14
RECEIPT OF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK	15

## **INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

The City of Soap Lake (COSL) welcomes you as a volunteer and hopes your association with the COSL will be a satisfying experience. Regardless of your contribution, you are making a dramatic difference in the lives of others by volunteering your time. By taking the time to participate in our programs, volunteers influence the future of the COSL. In assisting staff with both daily tasks and new programs, volunteers enhance the levels of quality services the COSL provides. We thank you for the time, devotion, and caring you are willing to share, and welcome each of you to the COSL.

The purpose of the volunteer handbook is to provide overall guidance and direction so that you will be an effective, well-informed volunteer.

The policies outlined in the handbook are intended for guidance only, and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The COSL reserves the right, at any time, to change/revise terms and conditions of voluntary service. As such, the contents of this handbook are subject to change in order to reflect those changes. Areas not specifically covered by the policies will be addressed by management.

Copies of the COSL Personnel Policies are located in the Human Resources Department (HR) as well as in all other departments. Ask your Supervisor if you want to refer to these policies.

The COSL also reserves the right to utilize, or not utilize, services of volunteers. Volunteers are not considered to be COSL employees and being a volunteer is not a guarantee of later employment with the COSL.

Please feel free to contact management and/or the Volunteer Coordinator for additional information.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The COSL Volunteer Program is designed to promote the spirit of partnership and increase interaction with citizens, community organizations and local business. In doing so, the COSL wants to enhance its existing service offerings and/or expand them through the use of volunteer expertise as well as bring the many diverse populations of the community together to achieve a stronger, more connected community.

# FUNDAMENTALS OF VOLUNTEERING

## **Attitude**

A volunteer needs to be open minded, willing to be trained, and able to accept direction and supervision. At the same time, the COSL encourages volunteers to ask questions regarding policies, practices, or procedures.

## **Dependability and Reliability**

The dependability of a volunteer is extremely important. It is the volunteer's responsibility to notify their Volunteer Supervisor if unable to volunteer at an appointed time, or if there are other factors that may affect the volunteer's performance.

## **Communication**

A volunteer not only serves the needs of the COSL and the public in an important way, but also provides a vital link between the organization and the community.

Communication is an essential element to a successful program. Both volunteers and the Volunteer Supervisor are encouraged to share questions, comments, and concerns that may arise in a positive, constructive manner.

## **Responsibility**

Volunteers represent the COSL to the citizens. As a volunteer affiliated with the COSL, you will be seen as a visible extension of our paid staff to citizens we serve. While most COSL business is considered public information, certain information is confidential. Volunteers will not discuss or disseminate any confidential information that the volunteer may have knowledge of. It is vital that volunteers uphold the high professional standard that the public expects in order to maintain the (Member's) reputation of integrity, professionalism, and trust.

# VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

## **The following rules must be followed while volunteering for the COSL**

1. Volunteers shall obey all applicable City, County, State and Federal laws.
2. Volunteers shall sign a volunteer agreement
3. Volunteers shall not commit any acts nor fail to perform any acts which constitute a violation of any of the policies, procedures, guidelines or directives of the COSL, whether stated in this volunteer handbook and/or in the COSL Personnel Policies.
4. Volunteers shall promptly comply with any lawful orders of supervisors.

5. Volunteers shall conduct themselves in a manner as to reflect most favorably on the COSL. Volunteers shall not engage in any conduct which is unbecoming of persons associated with the COSL.
6. While on duty, the volunteer will not use his or her volunteer status to obtain any goods, products or services.
7. Volunteers shall not solicit or accept any gift or gratuity from any person, business or organization for the benefit of the volunteer, COSL or others if it may reasonably be inferred that the person, business or organization: (a) seeks to influence action of an official nature; (b) seeks to affect the performance or non-performance of an official duty (c) has an interest which may be affected directly or indirectly by the performance of the volunteer's duty; or (d) creates an appearance of fairness issue.
8. Volunteers shall not use their official position or official identification for personal or financial gain to obtain privileges not otherwise available to them, or to avoid consequences of illegal acts. Volunteer identification should only be used in the performance of volunteer duties.
9. Volunteers acting in an official capacity shall not recommend or suggest in any manner the employment or procurement of any particular product, or private, professional or commercial service.
10. Volunteers shall not possess or store alcoholic beverages or prescription drugs or substances in any COSL vehicle or facility that affect one's ability to function in the volunteer's capacity. Volunteers shall not report for duty while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including medications that may cause drowsiness or affect one's ability to perform assigned duties.

## **VOLUNTEER BEHAVIORS**

**Volunteers are governed by the same rules of behavior that govern paid COSL staff.**

**Inappropriate behavior may be cause for termination from the COSL's volunteer program.**

Inappropriate behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. Unauthorized absence and/or repeated tardiness
2. Intoxication and/or drinking alcoholic beverages or use or under the influence of narcotics or drugs on the premises or at any time while providing volunteer service
3. Dishonesty or theft
4. Unprofessional behavior towards customers, employees, or other volunteers
5. Unwillingness to comply with COSL or departmental standards or volunteer position expectations
6. Falsification of records

7. Insubordination
8. Divulging confidential information
9. Damaging, defacing, or deliberately mishandling COSL equipment, property or supplies
10. Sleeping while on duty
11. Failing to report an injury, incident, or accident concerning an employee, customer, volunteer or any person within the Agency or on COSL property
12. Carrying prohibited weapons on COSL property
13. Willful violation of COSL policies, rules or regulations

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Serving our community is the number one priority of all COSL volunteers and regular employees. Volunteers will be called upon to provide residents with the high quality customer service they have come to expect. It is important to keep in mind that ‘customer’ includes everyone the volunteer come in contact with while representing the COSL, including citizens, patrons, COSL and contract employees, and representatives from other agencies and organizations. The COSL is dedicated to providing quality community service and as part of our commitment to community service, it is important to keep the following points in mind when serving the community:

1. Listen actively to determine the customer’s needs.
2. Always remain courteous, calm and professional.
3. Make an extra effort to help the customer solve his/her problem.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

*Volunteers will follow COSL employee policies on topics including, but not limited to, the following:*

---

## ACCIDENT REPORTING

In case of an accident involving a personal injury, regardless of how serious, employees shall immediately notify the Volunteer Coordinator.

---

## ALCOHOL AND DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The City is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment, free from drugs or alcohol that may cause volunteers to present a danger to themselves or others, and/or that adversely impact job performance.

### Prohibited Substances

On-duty Volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence, or in possession of:

- Any illegal controlled substance.
- Any prescription drug not approved for the employee's use by a physician.

### Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is prohibited:

- Use of or impairment by any illegal drug; use of or impairment by illegally obtained prescription drugs; use of prescription or non-prescription drugs that hinder the volunteer's ability to do the job effectively and/or that jeopardizes the safety of the volunteer or others.
- The manufacture, possession, distribution, or use of alcohol and prohibited substances at any City worksite, in a City vehicle, or while on duty. Note: This policy does not prohibit a volunteer from possessing a gift of unopened alcohol (e.g., giving or receiving a bottle of wine as a holiday gift) at the worksite.
- Being on duty while under the influence of marijuana, alcohol (including medication containing alcohol), or controlled substances.

---

## ANTI-HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Harassment, particularly sexual harassment, and discrimination can be difficult to define. For this reason, the City strongly urges volunteers to use this harassment and discrimination reporting procedure without worrying about whether the conduct involved would be considered harassment or discrimination in a legal sense. This policy is intended to assist the City in addressing not only illegal harassment and discrimination, but also any conduct that is offensive and inappropriate.

If, at any time, you believe that you are being subjected to harassment or discrimination, if you become aware of such conduct being directed at someone else, or if you believe another volunteer has received more favorable treatment because of discrimination, you must promptly notify the volunteer coordinator, or a City employee or elected official with whom you feel comfortable. This applies to harassment or discrimination caused by anyone with whom an volunteer comes into contact with as part of the volunteer job, such as supervisors, co-workers, citizens, vendors or others.

Supervisors and managers have an obligation to immediately report to Human Resources and the Mayor any harassment or discrimination that they observe or become aware of during the course of volunteering.

All reported incidents will be investigated under the following guidelines:

1. All complaints will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible. This means they will be disclosed only to management, witnesses, and others as necessary to allow the City to investigate and respond to the complaint and as may be required by law. However, the City will not allow the goal of confidentiality to be a deterrent to an effective investigation.
2. A resolution of each complaint will be reached and communicated to the complaining volunteer.
3. Anyone who the City concludes has violated the anti-harassment or anti-discrimination policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Disciplinary action will depend on the gravity of the offense. The City will take whatever disciplinary action deemed necessary to prevent an offense from being repeated.
4. The City will not permit retaliation against anyone who makes a good-faith complaint or who cooperates in good faith in an investigation. Retaliatory conduct will subject the individuals involved to discipline, up to and including discharge from volunteer service.
5. If, after investigating a complaint of harassment or discrimination, the City finds that the complaining volunteer or other witness has deliberately provided false information,



disciplinary action will be taken against the individual who gave the false information. However, a volunteer will not be disciplined for reporting a complaint in good faith, or for cooperating in the investigation of such claims.

The City strongly urges volunteers to report all incidents of harassment, discrimination or other inappropriate behavior as soon as possible. The City wants to provide volunteers with a pleasant and productive working environment, and can only do so if these issues are brought to our attention. Please join the City in our efforts to make the City an enjoyable place to work for all volunteers.

---

## BACKGROUND CHECKS/APPLICANT SCREENING

The City may administer pre-employment examinations to test the qualifications and ability of applicants, as determined necessary by the City. The City may contract with any competent agency or individual to prepare and/or administer examinations.

Background checks should be performed in accordance with RCW 43.43.830–839 for all volunteers who have regularly scheduled unsupervised access to children under sixteen years of age, developmentally disabled persons or vulnerable adults. Volunteer applicants should be provided a copy of their background check if one is performed.

---

## COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET USE

If the volunteer position requires the use of City internet, computers, or mobile devices, the volunteer must read the City's technology use policy and sign the associated acknowledgement form.

---

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteer records are confidential and accessible only to the volunteer, the Mayor or designee and the volunteer coordinator. A volunteer has the right to review her/his personnel file. A volunteer has the right to obtain copies of documents therein at the employee's own expense. A volunteer may request removal of irrelevant or erroneous information in her/his personnel file. If

the City denies the volunteer's request to remove information the volunteer may file a written rebuttal statement to be placed in the file.

Personnel files are kept confidential to the maximum extent permitted by law. Except for routine verifications of volunteer background, no information from an volunteer's personnel file will be released to the public, including the press, without a written request for specific information. The City will endeavor to provide written notice of a public records request to the volunteer prior to the date the information is released.

---

## DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Volunteer appearance or dress must be appropriate for the volunteers's work area, and will not create a potential safety hazard, violates common decency standards, or otherwise significantly distract from the volunteers's job responsibilities.

---

## GIFTS AND FAVORS/ ETHICS

Soliciting and/or accepting payment, gifts or any item of value for services performed during the regular workday is prohibited.

---

## LYSTEDT LAW

A youth volunteer with a head injury or suspected of sustaining a concussion will be removed form volunteer activity and must receive medical clearance prior to returning to volunteer work from a licensed healthcare provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion.

---

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE GEAR

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is protective clothing, helmets, goggles, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection. Protective equipment must be worn for job-related occupational safety and health purposes.

---

## SAFETY

Every volunteer is responsible for maintaining a safe work environment and following the City's safety rules. Each volunteer shall promptly report all unsafe or potentially hazardous conditions to the volunteer coordinator. The City will make every effort to remedy problems as quickly as possible.

---

## SMOKING/TOBACCO USE

For health and safety considerations, the City prohibits use of tobacco and vapor products by volunteers in all City facilities, including City-owned buildings, vehicles, and offices or other facilities rented or leased by the City. "Tobacco" includes any lit or unlit cigarette, cigar, pipe, blunt, bidi, clove cigarette and any other tobacco product, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless tobacco, dip, chew and snuff, in any form. "Use" means the chewing, lighting, smoking, vaping, and any other usage of any tobacco or vapor product. "Vapor product" shall have the meaning set forth in RCW Chapter 70.155.

If a volunteer chooses to smoke or vape, it must be done outside at least 25 feet from entrances, exits, windows that open and ventilation air intakes.

---

## USE OF VEHICLES

Only qualified volunteers holding valid Washington State Driver's License will be allowed to operate city vehicles.

Before approving a driver, the City should check the volunteers's driving record, with the volunteer's consent, and verify the existence of a valid driver's license. Volunteers approved to drive on city business are required to immediately inform their supervisor of any changes that may affect either their legal or physical ability to drive or their continued insurability.

Volunteers who drive a vehicle on city business must, in addition to meeting the approval requirements of their supervisor, exercise due diligence to drive safely and to maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents. Volunteers are also responsible for any driving infractions or fines as a result of their driving. Should any volunteer be involved in an accident, he/she shall

cooperate fully with the authorities but should make no voluntary statement other than in reply to questions of the investigating officer. Volunteers should collect the names of witnesses and other data required for completion of accident reports. No vehicle shall be moved from the scene until after the police arrive, unless a greater hazard is created by the failure to remove the vehicle(s) from the scene.

Volunteers must report any accident, theft, or malicious damage involving a city vehicle to their supervisor and the appropriate personnel within the city police department, regardless of the extent of damage or lack of injuries. Such reports must be made as soon as possible but no later than forty-eight hours after the incident.

No City vehicle may be used outside a thirty (30) mile radius of the City without prior approval of the Mayor. Permission must be in writing.

Prior to operating any city vehicle, the driver will be responsible for checking the vehicle to make sure it is in safe operating condition. The safety check shall include at least the following:

1. Tires for inflation and road worthy condition;
2. Brakes, lights, horn, wipers, turn signals, and rear view mirrors to see that they are in operating condition;
3. All windows shall be clean and free of frost for unrestricted vision;
4. Make certain that the vehicle is loaded properly and that the load is secure before moving.

Per Washington law anyone operating or riding in City vehicles must wear seat belts at all times. City vehicles shall be legally parked at all times.

---

## VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The City is committed to providing a safe workplace for its volunteers, employees, contractors, vendors, and the public.

The City strictly prohibits threatened or actual workplace violence. This includes, but is not limited to, and of any of the following conduct associated with or around the workplace, or otherwise related to volunteer work:

1. Threatening injury or damage against personal property;
2. Fighting or threatening to fight with another person;
3. Threatening to use a weapon on City premises;
4. Abusing or damaging property;

5. Using obscene or abusive language or gestures in a threatening manner; and
6. Raising voices in a threatening manner.

Volunteers shall report any workplace violence incidents or incidents indicating a potential violence to the volunteer coordinator or supervisor as soon as possible. If the City determines that an volunteer has violated this policy, the volunteer will be subject to immediate discipline up to and including termination.

Any volunteer who reasonably believes he or she is involved in a situation with an aggressive volunteer, employee, contractor, vendor, or other party who may immediately become violent (e.g., any person who uses abusive language or gestures, makes threats or acts in a threatening manner) and puts the volunteer or others in imminent danger, the volunteer should leave the work area and immediately call 911 to request officer contact. The City shall take no disciplinary action against any volunteer who leaves his or her work area when the volunteer has a reasonable belief that a situation with an aggressive person is likely to turn violent at that time. The volunteer should coordinate the timing and circumstances of possible return by the volunteer to the area with police and/or with their supervisor.

To prevent inappropriate outsider access, volunteers must adhere to the City's security policies and rules at all time. It is especially important that built-in security rules and procedures are specifically enforced at all-times (e.g. doors locked after hours).

## **VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Each department will have additional policies, procedures, and guidelines to follow depending upon individual assignments. Volunteer Assignment Coordinators will cover information specific to the particular assignment with the volunteer. Any questions related to policies, procedures, or volunteer assignments should be discussed with the Volunteer Supervisor or the Volunteer & Events Superintendent.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

The Human Resources Department (HR) will issue each volunteer a photo identification badge. While performing duties for the COSL volunteers must wear the volunteer identification badge. There are no exceptions to this rule. The identification badge must be worn on the outermost garment, in an easily visible manner. Volunteers shall protect their badge and not reproduce or give it to anyone for any purpose. If the identification badge is lost, immediately report the loss to the volunteer supervisor.

Volunteers shall furnish their name and show their identification badge to any person requesting this information when on duty or while representing the COSL in any capacity.

Volunteers are responsible for returning ID cards and/or card-key to the volunteer supervisor when ending volunteer status with the COSL.

## **RESIGNATION/TERMINATION**

Volunteer placements are made on a conditional basis. Either the COSL or the volunteer may terminate the arrangement, at any time, if it is not agreeable or acceptable to either party and/or when the assignment has been completed.

Volunteers are requested to give as much notice as possible if resigning from or interrupting the volunteer assignment for an extended period of time. Should a volunteer desire reassignment, he/she should notify his/her volunteer supervisor.

## RECEIPT OF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the Volunteer Handbook, which outlines the policies and procedures of the COSL. I have read and understand the information in it and agree to abide by the policies while volunteering.

*The handbook does not constitute a contractual arrangement or agreement between the COSL and its volunteers of any kind including, but not limited to, the terms and conditions of volunteering. The COSL reserves the right to utilize, or not utilize, the services of volunteers.*

I understand that it is my responsibility to secure information from my supervisor if I have questions or concerns about any of the information outlined in this Volunteer Handbook. I understand that these policies and procedures are continually evaluated and may be amended, modified or terminated at any time and at the sole discretion of the COSL with or without notice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Assigned Department

Volunteer Program for COSL