

## POLICY/ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE/ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCES	REFERENCE NUMBER: 107.06
SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND SERVICES	INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/01/17
TITLE: EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER IMPACT PROGRAM (VIP)	LAST REVISION DATE: 11/19/18

### POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Denton recognizes that volunteer programs provide a number of benefits to both volunteers and the community. The City encourages employees to interact with citizens directly as often as possible. Working directly with citizens allows employees to interact with and appreciate the community they serve on a more personal level, which results in a higher quality of service. The needs of the community can be better seen, evaluated, and served by employees after direct contact through programs like the Volunteer Impact Program (“VIP” or “the Program”). The Program, which was approved by Council in September of 2017, is also expected to result in higher levels of education and transparency for the public; citizens can learn more about the organization that serves them, and the services that are available to them, through direct contact with our employees.

The City encourages employees from all departments to volunteer and seeks to provide a positive experience for volunteers, the City, citizens, and the community overall. The Program is based on the fact that many City employees choose to give back to their community by sharing their time and talents. At the same time, the City recognizes that participating in these opportunities will also support and encourage higher levels of employee retention, collaboration, engagement, and overall performance as well as personal and professional growth.

This policy establishes standard employee volunteer guidelines to enable all regular staff to effectively volunteer through established non-profit organizations, or for non-profit causes, that benefit the community and citizens of the city of Denton, Texas.

The Program will be administered by a Program Administrator within the Human Resources Department.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

#### I. Volunteer Leave Allowance

All regular full-time, regular three-quarter time, and regular part-time employees are eligible to participate in the Program, subject to the conditions described in this policy.

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Employment Schedule	Volunteer Leave Allowance per Calendar Year
Full-time (40 or more hours per week)	24 hours
Three quarter-time (32 – 39 hours per week)	18 hours
Half-time (20 – 31 hours per week)	12 hours

There are no guarantees made about the availability of the time off requested by each employee.

Unused hours will expire at midnight on December 31 each year and will not rollover to the following year. Unused hours will not be paid out if an employee leaves the City.

Volunteer hours are not considered time worked for the purposes of calculating overtime. All volunteer hours are paid at the employees' regular rate of pay. Participating in the Program does not affect the accrual of vacation or sick time, or other forms of paid time.

Volunteer time must be taken in .25 hour increments, with a minimum of one (1) hour.

**II. Conditions for Employee Participation**

If an employee wishes to request volunteer time off to participate in the Program, they must satisfy all of the requirements listed below:

1. The employee must be a current, active employee that has been employed as a regular City employee for at least twelve (12) consecutive months.
2. The employee must be meeting (and continue to meet) all attendance and performance standards established by the City and their Department/Division.
3. The employee must not have any active disciplinary action of any kind, including a Managed Action Plan, or have had any action for a period of not less than six (6) months prior to their participation. This condition can be extended to as long as twelve (12) months at the discretion of their immediate supervisor.
4. Time under this Program may not be used concurrently with any other leave benefits or while on unpaid leave.
5. The employee must provide any documentation to the Program Administrator as required or requested.
6. The employee must obtain approval to participate in the Program from their immediate supervisor. Approval is required for each activity. Requests to participate must be made in advance so as to

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- grant the supervisor a reasonable amount of time to prepare for the employee's absence.
7. The employee understands that participation in this Program is voluntary; they will not be working within the scope of their employment with the City; and they must sign a release/waiver form before participating in the Program.
  8. Employee participation must be in compliance with the Ethics policy (#10.00)

**III. Conditions for Outside Organization Participation**

If an outside organization wishes to utilize the Program, that organization must satisfy all of the requirements listed below:

1. The organization, event, or activity must be within City of Denton city limits and show proof of legal City of Denton occupancy. This might include a current Certificate of Occupancy or a City permit authorizing the event to take place, if one is required.
2. The organization must register with the Program Administrator. Registration includes:
  - the organization's name,
  - address,
  - volunteer coordinator and contact information,
  - the nature/purpose of the organization, and
  - how the event/activity will benefit the community, and the general nature of the activities volunteers might be asked to perform.
3. The organization must be in full compliance with all applicable laws and codes.
4. The organization must address a community need. A community need is a need that, if satisfied, will positively impact the quality of life for a group of Denton citizens.
5. The organization must be non-profit, or a business coordinating an event to support a non-profit organization or cause.
6. The organization must have an evaluation process, approved by the City, to measure the effectiveness of their participation in the Program.
7. The organization must maintain complete and accurate records of City staff volunteer activities, as well as a responsive level of communication with the Program Administrator. Complete and accurate records include, at a minimum, the name of the volunteer, the activity they performed, the date of the activity, and the start and end time of the activity.

**IV. Conditions for Citizen Participation**

If a Denton citizen is in personal need and wishes to seek assistance from the Program, that citizen must satisfy all of the requirements established by, and register with, an outside organization participating in the Program.

The outside organization will become the citizen's point of contact, and the outside organization will coordinate with the Program Administrator to arrange assistance for the citizen, if possible.

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**V. Conditions for City Department/Division Participation**

City departments/divisions may utilize volunteers from this Program, as long as the following conditions are met:

- The volunteer services benefit the community and/or the services are typically supplemented by volunteers. Examples of departments/divisions who could qualify to participate in the Program include Animal Services, Keep Denton Beautiful, Library, Parks and Recreation, and Environmental Services;
- The employee does not already work in the department/division for which the volunteer services are offered; and
- The employee does not work in a job with duties similar to the duties of the volunteer opportunity.

**VI. General Process for Employee Participation**

1. A City employee wishing to participate in an approved Program activity through an approved Program organization must complete a VIP Request Form and VIP Release and Waiver Form and submit it to their immediate supervisor at least two (2) weeks before the activity is to take place. Supervisors may waive the two (2) week requirement. Pre-approval of certain organizations and/or activities can expedite this process.
2. Upon approval, notice is given to the Program Administrator as to the date, time, location, duration, and nature of volunteer activities to be performed.
3. On the approved date and time, the employee will participate in the volunteer activity. The volunteer coordinator at the outside organization or with the qualifying City department/division must confirm the volunteer's completion of the activity by signing the VIP Request Form.
4. After the volunteer activity, the employee will submit the VIP Request Form signed by the volunteer coordinator to the Program Administrator.
5. The Program Administrator will verify the employee performed the activities that were approved by the City (completely or randomly) and document that verification, keeping it for at least three (3) calendar years.

The employee's supervisor should consult with Program Administrator and/or the Director of Human Resources or designee on any questions or concerns before approving or denying a request. Approval is at the discretion of the employee's immediate supervisor.

**VI. Use of City and Personal Equipment and Resources**

Participation in the Program and the use of volunteer time is restricted to an employee's scheduled work time. Employees cannot utilize volunteer time under this Program outside of their normal work schedule.

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City employees may utilize their own personal tools, equipment, or supplies during volunteer activities. The City will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items. Employees use their own items at their own risk.

Under no circumstances will City of Denton tools, equipment, or supplies be utilized for any volunteer activities with outside organizations under this Program.

**VII. Additional Information**

The City of Denton reserves the right to modify, amend, suspend or discontinue this Program at any time without prior notice. The City of Denton also reserves the right to revoke participation approval if it is felt that an employee, organization, qualifying City department/division, or citizen is misusing the Program.

Appropriate forms of participation in the Program might include, but are not limited to:

- Participating in a Habitat for Humanity build
- Volunteering at a food bank
- Cleaning up a pond, park, or trail in coordination with the Parks Department
- Becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister
- Volunteering at a local hospital or school
- Serving on a non-profit board
- Volunteering to walk dogs or clean kennels with Animal Services

Inappropriate forms of Program participation include, but are not limited to:

- Taking a ski vacation and charitably giving ski lessons
- Attending your child's PTA conference
- Judging a beauty pageant
- Serving as your child's scout leader
- Volunteering at a place of worship for a program that only benefits that place of worship
- Attending a professional, religious, or personal interest conference

*The Program can not be used as a means to discriminate based on an individual's race, color, age, gender, religious creed, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition or genetic information, or political affiliation.*

**VIII. Violations**

Any violation of this policy subjects the employee to disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension of Program participation and hours charged against vacation time. Intentional violations

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will result in termination.