

# Friendswood Volunteer Guidebook



City of Friendswood  
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***“The spirit of volunteerism is perhaps Friendswood’s most unique characteristic and its finest asset. From its beginning in 1895, that volunteer spirit has flowed freely through the community. The schools, the churches, the City, the museums, the library, the fire department, the police department, sport programs for youth, the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebrations, animal shelters, etc., are all richer for the gifts of time and money so generously given by Friendswood citizens for over 120 years.”***

***– Joycina Baker - Friendswood’s Official Historian.***

Volunteers serve in many capacities in the City and often interact with the public on the City’s behalf. It can be the first and lasting impression for a citizen dealing with the City. Volunteer-led projects have built parks and facilities that last for many years and serve to make our community unique.

The goal of this Guidebook is to enhance the experience of every volunteer for participation in our City life and establish a comprehensive tool to encourage teamwork.

This Friendswood Volunteer Guidebook should serve as a guide for participation of volunteers, describe the treatment volunteers should expect and explain what is expected of them.

This Guidebook is considered an evolving document with periodic updates anticipated due to new or changing circumstances, needs, programs, fiscal restrictions, etc. Its purpose is to accommodate and incorporate changes necessary to operate programs efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, it is the desire of the City to create an atmosphere that encourages continued participation and ensures that volunteers find success and fulfillment in their contribution time.

This Guidebook does not address every possible volunteer situation or circumstance. If questions arise that are not covered in this Guidebook, volunteers should contact the Volunteer Coordinator for the area of the City in which they are working.

Thank you for your service to our community. By contributing your time and talent, you help Friendswood continue to be recognized as one of the very best cities in the country!

- Roger Roecker – Friendswood City Manager, 2014



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

*“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” - Elizabeth Andrew*

1	Types of Volunteers .....	4
2	All are Welcome.....	5
3	How the City Works.....	5
4	Requirements to Become a Volunteer.....	6
5	What A Friendswood Volunteer Should Expect .....	8
6	What is Expected of Volunteers .....	11
7	Non Profit or Volunteer Organization with Letter Agreements.....	17
9.	Approval of This Handbook.....	18
10.	Appendix .....	18

# 1 TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS

*“Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer.” - Author Unknown*

Unlike employees, volunteers are people who do assigned tasks for the City or as part of a City function and receive no pay or benefits. Volunteers supplement and enhance services for the City of Friendswood in a variety of ways:

ID	Volunteer Type	How Assigned	Examples
1.1	Elected Officials	Elected	City Council
1.2	Established City committees	Appointed by City Council	Planning and Zoning, 4 <sup>th</sup> of July, etc.
1.3	Event Volunteers – Work a specific event	Approved by primary event organization	4 <sup>th</sup> of July, Kid Fish, etc.
1.4	On-Going Volunteers assignments	Approved by primary event organization	Library, Senior Citizens, etc.
1.5	The city may extend exclusive operating agreements to non-profit organizations (where the organization uses volunteers and operates independent of the city but on City owned property and within City rules).	Signed Letter or User Agreement with the City	Little League Baseball, Friendswood Girls Softball, Friendswood Area Swim Team, etc.

With the exception of elected officials, in all the examples listed above, the City of Friendswood maintains the ultimate responsibility for the actions of volunteers and can never completely assign away its accountability. Moreover, any volunteer organizations interested in utilizing a City facility shall first enter into a written User Agreement or Letter Agreement.





## 2 ALL ARE WELCOME

*“All of us do not have equal talents, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talents” – President John F. Kennedy*

### 2.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The City of Friendswood provides equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment and volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran in accordance with applicable federal laws. In addition, the City complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the City has facilities. These same ethics and approach apply to the recruitment and use of volunteers.

### 2.2 ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The City does not tolerate sexual harassment by its employees, volunteers, vendors, contractors or citizens. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, request of sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Nor does the City tolerate a hostile working environment based on protected factors. Any volunteer who has been the victim of such incident should report the incident immediately to the volunteer's supervisor and/or the City Human Resources Department. Alternatively, any volunteer who is reported to have violated this policy may have administrative action taken against them for such violation up to and including permanent removal as a volunteer for the City.

## 3 HOW THE CITY WORKS

*“When the burdens of the presidency seem unusually heavy, I always remind myself it could be worse. I could be a mayor.” – President Lyndon Johnson*

The City of Friendswood is classified as a home rule City. This means that the City is legally able to create its own laws (ordinances) and conduct its own business, so long as they do not conflict with State or federal laws.

City Council and the Mayor determine City policy and can amend the City Ordinances and/or create and approve new ordinances. Council approves the budget and sets the tax rate. It determines the size of the payroll and the extent and cost of municipal services and programs it provides. In short, the



Council is the final authority on all of the many policy decisions that determine the scope and functions of the City government. To implement and maintain them, City Council hires the City Manager. The City Manager has many responsibilities:

- Enforcing all City ordinances, rules, and regulations,
- Issuing policies and procedures that govern the enforcing of ordinances and regulations,
- Supervising all municipal employees and programs,
- Preparing and executing the City’s annual budget pursuant to the revenue and expenditure plans adopted by the Council,
- Managing the City’s funds and preparing periodic reports that advise the Council and the general public of the City’s financial condition,
- Providing information to the Council to facilitate its ability to make informed decisions in the best interest of the community,
- Preparing Council meeting agendas and attending all such meetings to serve as a resource to the Council and the public, and
- Bringing needs to Council’s attention and suggesting or recommending solutions for problems.

The City has a number of departments, each with a paid City employee who manages the department. City departments have many roles that use volunteers. The department assigns City employees to supervise the volunteer activities and the department head is responsible to ensure that the volunteers understand their responsibilities. Therefore, department directors, with discussion with the City Manager, can end any individual volunteers’ or volunteer group’s association with the City that falls under the authority that has been delegated to them by the City Manager. There are a number of established committees of the City. People serving on them are themselves volunteers appointed and approved by City Council. Each committee may also have activities it performs that utilize volunteers. The committee is responsible for recruiting and selecting volunteers, providing training or orientation so that volunteers understand their responsibilities and ensuring that the volunteers are treated in accordance with this Guidebook.

## 4 REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER

*“I became the Dalai Lama not on a volunteer basis.” - Dalai Lama*

### 4.1 AGE REQUIREMENTS

Volunteers under the age of 14 may not participate in volunteer service for the City without a parent or legal guardian present at all times while volunteering. Volunteers aged 14 through 17 must have written consent of a parent or legal guardian prior to volunteering. The volunteer services assigned to a minor should be performed in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of Texas Child Labor laws.



Persons eighteen years of age and older may volunteer their services to the City. Some City volunteer positions may have different age requirements based on inherent safety.

#### **4.2 RESIDENCY**

To be elected to City Council or to volunteer on certain City committees (i.e. Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Construction Board of Adjustment) a person must be a resident of the City.

For all other types of volunteer positions, there is no residency requirement.

#### **4.3 OTHER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO BE A VOLUNTEER**

- Some volunteer assignments may require the ability to read, comprehend and write English in order to perform the volunteer services.
- The ability to physically perform the functions for the services to be volunteered, with or without accommodation.
- The ability to perform the mental and intellectual functioning required to perform the functions for the services to be volunteered, with or without accommodation.
- Ability to meet the minimal requirements of the volunteer duties through knowledge, experience, skills set, etc.
- Be drug and alcohol free during volunteer activities.
- Have no impediments to performing the volunteer services, such as a criminal record or a court order, restraining order or state imposed registration of a felony conviction that would limit a volunteers' ability to be around groups of persons served by the City.

#### **4.4 APPLICATION TO BE A VOLUNTEER**

There are a variety of ways to become a volunteer in Friendswood. Most often people become volunteers through City event publicity, a new or vacant assignment or word of mouth through other volunteers. Typically with these types of positions, a volunteer shows up at the event or service and expresses interest to those in charge. Often there will be a Volunteer Registration sign-up sheet at the event.

Some volunteer positions may require application directly to the City department that conducts the service. It may require criminal background checks and orientation and/or training before beginning volunteer service. Volunteer applications may be found on the City's website ([www.friendswood.com](http://www.friendswood.com)).

Organizations which have a contract or letter agreement with the City and maintain the management of their events or activities often have their own method of recruiting volunteers. These organizations may have additional rules which must meet all the

requirements set out in this Guidebook. Under no circumstance will an organization be allowed to volunteer in a City facility without a written agreement.

## 5 WHAT A FRIENDSWOOD VOLUNTEER SHOULD EXPECT

*“Research has shown that people who volunteer often live longer.” - Allen Klein*



Above all else, it is the goal of the City of Friendswood that all volunteers find the work that they do beneficial, self-fulfilling, rewarding and something to look forward to performing again. Volunteers must be familiar with the policies and procedures outlined in this Guidebook. Volunteers will be treated respectfully, fairly, politely and without harassment, discrimination or retaliation. With that in mind, there are a number of things that volunteers should expect from their assignment:

### 5.1 POSITION DESCRIPTION

Volunteers may expect there to be a written description of the duties and responsibilities they are expected to perform and the name of their Volunteer Supervisor. As a volunteer, a request may be made for a written description of the work duties at any time and if the City department sponsoring the work cannot provide a description, the volunteer is within their rights to elect not to perform the work. If a volunteer is comfortable fulfilling the role without a written description, he/she may continue with the assignment.

### 5.2 TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

Volunteers should expect to receive proper training and orientation to tasks, rules and procedures before beginning an assignment. This is especially true if the duties have inherent safety issues or concerns. A volunteer is within their rights to request training and if the sponsoring department cannot provide it, the volunteer is within their rights to elect to not perform the work.

### 5.3 PLACEMENT

As a volunteer, one should expect that attention was paid to their interests and capabilities to meet the requirements of the volunteer assignment at the time of their placement. No placement shall be made unless the requirements of both the volunteer and supervising staff can be met. No volunteer should be assigned “make-work” duties and no volunteer duties should be given to an unqualified or uninterested volunteer.



Volunteers should never feel obligated to do a task or service that they do not feel capable of performing, that they feel may be unsafe, that proper safety gear or equipment was not provided or for which they don't feel they were properly trained.

#### **5.4 SUPERVISION**

Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments and the right to effective supervision. Supervisors of volunteers should be courteous and accepting of the requirements, inexperience, limitations or restrictions of volunteers ability to perform tasks. No volunteer should be required or expected to perform tasks or work hours that are not outlined in the written volunteer assignment.

Volunteers should feel comfortable with their volunteer experience. Please recognize that City employees supervising volunteer work may be operating under other instructions, priorities, directives or different tasks and requirements (such as budget, or City ordinances, temporary duties, etc.) than the volunteers themselves, or of which the volunteer may be unaware. City employees are not expected to fulfill the volunteer's expectations or purposes if they are different from those of the City.

#### **5.5 EQUIPMENT**

Generally, volunteers are not required to provide necessary equipment in order to conduct a volunteer assignment. The City or the organization sponsoring the volunteer event should provide all needed equipment; supplies, gear and protective clothing, if any are required. Occasionally organizations or City groups may publicize a volunteer event where it would be helpful if volunteers provide some of their own equipment. Typically this is for outdoor events and involves lawn and garden equipment. Volunteers may provide some gear. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to get all their property back. The City will not reimburse a volunteer or provide a replacement if their equipment is lost, stolen or destroyed during the volunteer event.

#### **5.6 USE OF CITY FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

As appropriate, volunteers will be given access to City property, materials and equipment necessary to fulfill their duties and shall receive training in the safe operation of equipment. Property and materials shall be utilized only when directly required for City purposes.

When necessary to perform the assigned duties, a volunteer may operate a City vehicle with the permission of the department director as long as he or she has a valid Texas Driver's License in accordance with State law.

## 5.7 TREATMENT

Volunteers may have interactions with a broad spectrum of the City during a volunteer assignment. This includes interaction with City staff, interaction with City committees, interactions with other volunteers, interactions with vendors or interactions with citizens. Volunteers have the right for these interactions to be free of conflict or harassment. If they perceive, experience or witness any interaction themselves or with another volunteer that they consider to be threatening, harassing or concerning, the volunteer has a responsibility to use the reporting process listed in section 5.8. This same expectation applies to City employees.

There are some specific prohibited behaviors under the City's ordinances, policies and rules that a volunteer should not expect to be subjected to while performing a volunteer assignment. These include:

- ✓ **Bullying** - The City does not tolerate bullying and prohibits such behavior as an extension of its Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy. Neither staff nor volunteers may "bully" anyone; including, but not limited to, other staff, other volunteers, citizens, visitors, contractors, vendors or managers. The City encourages all persons to treat each other with civility and respect.
- ✓ **Workplace Violence** - The City also does not tolerate workplace violence, direct or indirect, by threat or otherwise. No one is allowed to be threatened, intimidated or made in fear of his/her person by any member of the City, volunteers, staff, vendors, contractors or citizens. If a volunteer feels threatened in any way by a City employee, another volunteer or anyone else while performing volunteer duties, they should avoid harm as much as possible, exit the situation and immediately report it to the Volunteer Supervisor or the police.
- ✓ **Ethics** - Ethics refers to principles that define behavior as right, good and proper. Such principles do not always dictate a single "moral" course of action but provide a means of evaluating and deciding among competing options. Governments of all kinds are held to a very high standard of public trust. City employees must make every effort to insure that all activities of the City, as well as all other staff in the City offices, maintain standards of conduct that are above reproach. This policy extends to volunteers and City employees.
- ✓ **Tobacco** - The City of Friendswood intends to provide a safe and healthy environment for workers and citizens alike. Due to the acknowledged hazards of tobacco use and secondhand smoke, it is the City's policy to provide a tobacco-free environment for all employees, volunteers, citizens and visitors. Tobacco use, smoking and smokeless "dip" tobacco in the workplace is prohibited except in outdoor locations specifically designated for tobacco use. Tobacco use is not permitted in any City owned or leased vehicles or equipment.

## 5.8 REPORTING A CONCERN

If a volunteer directly experiences or witnesses an incident involving threatening behavior in their volunteer assignment, contact the Friendswood Police Department immediately by dialing 911 or 281-996-3300.

If a volunteer has a concern about their treatment as a volunteer that is not immediately threatening:

- Contact the applicable Volunteer Supervisor and report the concern.
- If this fails to resolve it or the supervisor is the source of the concern, contact the City of Friendswood Department Director responsible for the volunteer area, and report the concern.
- If this fails to resolve the issue, contact the City Manager's office and file a report.

Unless the steps listed above are followed, the City of Friendswood cannot guarantee the concern will be adequately addressed. When filing a complaint, the complainant has the right to request that their name not be identified with the complaint and the City will keep that information confidential from disclosure to the extent allowed by law.

If the complaint is against a City employee, those employees have rights under the law and under City rules and procedures. The complainant will receive a response to their complaint which should include information whether the City will take any action going forward. Please note that under State law, complaints against peace officers require a written complaint, an investigation and that sufficiency of evidence be present in order to take disciplinary action.

## 5.9 TERMINATING A VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT VOLUNTARILY

At any time, a volunteer can end their volunteer assignment for any reason. Advance communication is not required if a volunteer elects to no longer perform a volunteer assignment. Advance notice would be appreciated in order to allow the staff to cover any unfulfilled duties until a replacement can be assigned. If a volunteer terminates their volunteer status, that individual will be required to reapply for any future volunteer assignments.

## 6 WHAT IS EXPECTED OF VOLUNTEERS

The City of Friendswood is most appreciative of the efforts of volunteers. The behavior and actions of volunteers can have a tremendous impact on other volunteers, City employees, citizens, vendors and surrounding communities.



As a volunteer, please understand that there can be significant negative consequences for committing some of the behaviors outlined. The City hopes and expects to never have to deal with any of this, but it is important that volunteers understand this section.

## **6.1 AUTHORITIES**

The City Manager, or designee, has the authority to terminate any volunteer assignment, other than those appointed by Council, and to place restrictions on future volunteering to any individual who is not in compliance with the expectations for volunteers.

The City Council has the authority to end and to cease funding any volunteer program where consistent and on-going violations of this Guidebook are occurring.

The City Manager or the City Council can revoke, at any time, any contract or letter agreement with a non-profit organization that has activities that include volunteers if consistent and on-going violations of this Guidebook are occurring.

## **6.2 SUPERVISION**

All volunteer programs fall under one of the City of Friendswood Departments. As such, City employees are charged by their managers to coordinate volunteer efforts. Volunteers must follow the direction of supervisors.

The City recognizes that the volunteers may have high levels of passion for their volunteer assignment and significant skills that they bring to their volunteer assignments. The City also recognizes that volunteers have a right to ask supervisors about decisions that have been made or even provide input, if requested. It is the expectation of the City that these discussions be done with respect and open communication by both sides. However, the supervisor has the final say in the planned actions or outcome. If a volunteer disagrees with the ultimate decision, the volunteer should abstain from any disruptive behavior. However, if a volunteer truly cannot live with the supervisor's decision, the volunteer should voluntarily terminate their volunteer status. Disrespect, rudeness, insubordination or disobeying a supervisor will be cause for administrative action, as enumerated later in this Guidebook.

City staff and supervisors are expected to be attentive and supportive to volunteers. However, at times the city employee supervising volunteers may have other more immediate or pressing job matters. Volunteers should work with supervisors to ensure the volunteer gets the information they need for their assignment.

## **6.3 INTERFERING WITH CITY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

In accordance with Chapter 54 of the City's Code of Ordinance, volunteers are strictly prohibited from interfering with an officer or City employee during the performance of their official duties. Doing so may result in disciplinary action and/or termination of their volunteer status.



#### **6.4 HOURS OF SERVICE**

Volunteers are not required to work a certain number of hours or be on duty at specific times; this is the very nature of “volunteering.” However, volunteers should be aware that if they commit to being at a volunteer assignment and don’t show up, or leave early, they may hamper the overall effort. In cases of volunteers being repeatedly unreliable in showing up for assignments, leaving posts unattended or not completing work they have previously accepted, the City or the supervising organization may elect to change the volunteer’s assignment or limit the participation of that volunteer.

#### **6.5 FINANCIAL LIABILITIES OR REPRESENTING THE CITY EXTERNALLY**

No volunteer or volunteer group has authority to bind the City of Friendswood into any financial liability or agreement. In situations involving volunteers that could end up with a financial liability to the City, the volunteer or volunteer group must have approval and clear written authority from the City.

Volunteers are not allowed to conduct City business with external parties such as vendors, suppliers, other volunteer groups, school districts, other municipalities or professional services (doctors, lawyers, veterinarians, engineering firms, etc.) on behalf of the City or organization unless given specific instructions by the supervising City staff. When in doubt on this matter, volunteers should ask before acting.

If given permission to conduct business with external parties, volunteers must be aware that their behavior may reflect on the City in different areas from the one in which they are directly involved. For example, a supplier may deal with a volunteer in one area and provide services to the City in other areas. Therefore, volunteers who have permission to conduct business with external parties must always be professional and courteous and refrain from arguments, demanding language, threats, empty promises or unacceptable business communications.

#### **6.6 MISUSE OF CITY EQUIPMENT OR VEHICLES**

Any volunteer found misusing any City equipment or vehicles will be removed from their volunteer assignment.

#### **6.7 SAFETY AND INJURIES**

Volunteers are expected to use caution when completing their volunteer assignments. Volunteers are required to immediately report any unsafe conditions to their supervisor. Volunteers engaging in unsafe actions (such as not wearing protective gear provided to them) or being reckless face possible administrative action.

Volunteers must report all injuries sustained during their volunteer assignment. There are no exceptions. Volunteers have limited coverage for on-the-job injuries under the City’s Workers’ Compensation coverage. Any injury, accident, occupational illness or disease that occurs during the performance of volunteer duties must be reported to a supervisor

immediately or as soon as possible. The supervisor will provide further instructions for necessary medical care. If emergency medical services or transport are required, the injury report must be made as soon thereafter as feasible.

Failing to report an injury, accident, occupational illness or disease incurred while volunteering is considered a serious violation of policy.

## **6.8 TREATMENT OF OTHERS**

All of the items outlined in Section 5, “What a Friendswood Volunteer should Expect,” are also requirements of a volunteer’s behavior toward others. This includes bullying, harassment, workplace violence, ethics and tobacco usage. This also includes the interactions a volunteer may have with City employees, contractors, vendors citizens or other volunteers.

Volunteers should be especially aware of their behavior toward others during their volunteer hours. Often when volunteering, one may not personally know those with whom they are working with and vice versa. Therefore, actions or comments that one may feel comfortable with around friends, such as joking, making sexual or racial references, rough housing, making political statements, displays of affection, teasing, touching, flirting, etc., are not appropriate.

In particular, volunteers should be mindful of what can be perceived as physical aggression or threatening behavior. This includes shouting at others, physical intimidation, verbal threats, throwing things, destroying surroundings or brandishing weapons. The City of Friendswood has a zero tolerance policy in this area that extends to volunteers as well.

## **6.9 ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE**

The pervasive presence of alcohol and substance abuse in our society, the resultant impact upon the workplace, and the City's obligation to its citizens, require the establishment of a drug and alcohol free workplace. A volunteer shall not be permitted to report to or remain at their assignment while under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances or illegal drugs/prescription or medications. Volunteers in an impaired state from any prohibited substance or alcohol are not allowed on City premises and may not perform any services. A volunteer shall not possess, sell, ingest, manufacture, hold or transfer illegal drugs, illegal use of prescribed medication or alcohol while performing any services for the City. A violation of this policy will result in administrative action up to and including permanent dismissal as a volunteer of the City.

## **6.10 FIREARMS**

The City of Friendswood's facilities are governed by the State of Texas regulations regarding firearms. Firearms are permitted on certain City property only by those holding a valid Concealed Handgun License (CHL governed under Texas Government Code Section 411.172). The City reserves the right to request documentation from CHL holders if they carry a weapon during volunteer service. If a volunteer is observed carrying a firearm and cannot produce a valid CHL, they may be subject to criminal charges and at a minimum; they will be asked to remove the firearm.

If a City sponsored volunteer event takes place on school district property, State law and school district regulations apply.

## **6.11 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Although a City is a public entity subject to the Texas Public Information Act, all documents and property of the City are not "public" and are not to be copied, released, given, secreted, or stolen for a volunteer's own personal use or purposes or those of a third party. The City has its own official process and manner by which all public information is identified and provided to a requester in an orderly and well documented process required by the state. Just because a volunteer may have access to a document does not mean that the document or a copy thereof can be provided to anyone, including the volunteer him/herself by any means, including telephonic transmission, photo, scanning, social media, etc. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all facially confidential, private, personal or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves staff, volunteer, citizen or other persons or involves any aspect of City business. A single incident of failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the City.

## **6.12 GRATUITIES OR FINANCIAL GAIN**

Volunteers may not accept any gift or gratuity, no matter how small, from any firm, contractor, consultant, individual, or others for whom any service is to be or was provided by the City. If a gratuity is offered, the volunteer should kindly reject the offer and report it to their supervisor. Occasionally the City may sponsor celebratory events that rejoice in the efforts of volunteers. These events may include meals or small tokens of appreciation from the City that volunteers are free to accept.

## **6.13 COMPUTER USAGE**

The City of Friendswood's email and internet systems are intended to be used exclusively for official purposes. The City of Friendswood owns the computer and software of email and internet systems and permits their use in the performance of duties, when necessary.

Volunteers, who have computer, email and internet access shall comply with the City's email and internet policy. Official City business sent or received by anyone via electronic

transmission is subject to the Texas Public Information Act and as such is subject to public disclosure upon request. There should be no expectation of privacy on City provided computers or electronic devices. Any violation of this policy or use of the City's computers for any unauthorized purpose such as downloading music, entertainment, offensive jokes or cartoons, pornography, internet dating sites, video gaming, unauthorized software, etc. will result in administrative action or permanent dismissal as a volunteer and could result in possible Federal or State criminal prosecution(s).

#### **6.14 SOCIAL MEDIA**

As Americans, we all enjoy constitutional rights to free speech which includes personal social media. When posting to personal social media, if a volunteer writes about volunteer related activities, readers may perceive the individual to be writing on behalf of or representing the views of the City. If the volunteer is not acting in an official or authorized City capacity, the volunteer must use a disclaimer or make it clear that the views expressed are personal only and not necessarily the views of the City.

Participation in social media, whether by City or non-City internet resources and whether made while volunteering or not, must not violate the privacy rights of other City volunteers, employees, customers, or business partners or any City policy or regulation.

When participating in social media, volunteers are expected to know and follow all City and/or department policies and regulations regarding official information. They are also expected to be respectful, truthful, accurate and not engage in cyber bullying, retaliatory or harassing behavior.

While what people express on social media is governed by constitutional rights and other statutes, the City may consider statements made on private social media as grounds to restrict a person's volunteer activities or access to official information.

#### **6.15 END OF SERVICE AND RETURN OF CITY PROPERTY**

All City property shall be returned at or before the time of separation, including but not limited to: City uniforms or clothing, ID badges, keys, computers, parking permits, radios, tools or other equipment. Failure to return these items can be considered theft and may result in prosecution.

#### **6.16 CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION OF CITY VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

The City recognizes the positive value of its volunteers and hopes that there are not any cases where these consequences need to be applied.

There are volunteer behaviors such as workplace violence, theft, embezzlement, and intoxication, among others, which violate criminal statutes and may result in police action. The person committing the offense may be subject to penalties. Furthermore, some violations, such as confidentiality violations directed at other volunteers, City employees or



external parties or the destruction or falsification of City documents, may also subject a volunteer to civil and/or criminal penalties. This includes slander and defamation from which the individual committing the offense will not be indemnified and may be held personally liable.

Any volunteer who violates guidelines described in this Guidebook may be subject to administrative action including revocation of the privilege of volunteering. The extent of administrative action imposed is based on the severity, frequency and circumstances under which the violation(s) occurred and the period of time and history of the volunteer. Administrative action is not required to be progressive; one instance may be serious enough to warrant removal. Such measures may include verbal or written correction or counseling, permanent or temporary restriction of volunteer duties, reassignment, permanent removal from the volunteer assignment and temporary or permanent banning from volunteering for any City functions.

If the corrective measures taken are administered by City staff or a City supervisor, the volunteer may appeal the matter to the City Manager.

The City of Friendswood considers all matters involving administrative actions of volunteers to be confidential and will not release any information on the matter unless required by law.

## **6.17 INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS**

Upon receipt of a complaint, the applicable department director or their designee will direct that an inquiry be conducted to determine whether or not a sufficiency of evidence exists to warrant disciplinary action.

## **7 NON PROFIT OR VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION WITH USER AGREEMENTS**

*“Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.” -Sherry Anderson*

The City of Friendswood may extend operating privileges to non-profit organizations that will then manage events or provide services on City owned property. In all cases, the City and the organization must have a contract, a Memorandum of Understanding or User Agreement signed by both parties stating the organization's scope and purpose and the City's responsibilities. All such agreements must have stated term limits. The City of Friendswood reserves the right in all circumstances to revoke the agreement if the organization fails to meet agreed obligations. The City further reserves the right to unilaterally direct the organization to remove a volunteer at any time upon request for failure to adhere to these guidelines.

In such cases, the organization may use volunteers and will recruit or manage its own volunteers. Even so, the City expects that all aspects of this Guidebook shall be followed. The organization is expected to be familiar with the requirements in this document. The organization may have a different scope and purpose and additional requirements for volunteers. However, none of those

requirements shall contradict nor relieve any of the requirements in this Guidebook without express written agreement from the City.

Also in such cases, the organization may retain the privilege of determining who can volunteer, consistent with State and Federal law. If the City is not directly involved in supervision of the event, the City may have limited responsibility to review complaints from volunteers who have been disallowed from volunteering. If the City does intercede and provides cause for a volunteer to be removed from an organization's assignment for any reason, the organization has no recourse other than to remove the volunteer.

## **8. USING THIS GUIDEBOOK**

*"Here's to all volunteers, those dedicated people who believe in all work and no pay." - Robert Orben*

All volunteers, except City Council and certain appointed committees, are subject to all of the requirements in this Guidebook. Elected officials are subject to City Charter requirements and State statutes. City departments and organizations sponsoring volunteers should make every effort to ensure that all volunteers have access to this Guidebook. Volunteers are covered by this Guidebook's policies and procedures whether or not they have read it.

The City of Friendswood should make every effort to provide hard copies or electronic copies of the Guidebook to organizations that sponsor volunteers.

## **9. APPROVAL OF THIS HANDBOOK**

Approval, distribution and possible training related to this document are the responsibility of the City Manager, or designee. The City Manager can revise this document at any time.

## **10. APPENDIX**

The items in the Appendix are meant as references or aides to terms used in the body of this Guidebook. If an item in the Appendix appears to contradict an item in the body of this Guidebook, the Guidebook wording should be followed.

## 10.1 Glossary of Terms

- **Bullying** is repeated, unreasonable behavior directed towards a person or group of persons. It includes behavior that could be expected to intimidate, offend, degrade, humiliate, undermine or threaten. Repeated refers to the nature of the behavior, not the specific form of that behavior.
- **Harassment** is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, genetic information. The conduct prohibited is offensive, pervasive, and alters the working environment of the person being harassed.
- **Offensive Conduct** is behavior and actions that may include but are not limited to, off color jokes, slurs, epithets, or name calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, and which interferes with work performance.
- **Procedures or Rules** includes all rules, policies, regulations, directives, ordinances, and instructions of the City whether or not specifically included herein. All are written and available on line or through HR.
- **Retaliation** is prohibited actions and behavior taken against an individual who has filed a discrimination charge, testified or participated in any way in an investigation, proceeding or lawsuit under discrimination laws or opposed employment practices that the person reasonably believes discriminate against individuals in violation of equal opportunity and civil rights laws.
- **Staff** is any compensated employee of the City of Friendswood from the City Manager to the lowest pay-grade employee. Staff is appointed to positions for which each is accountable to the City and the City Manager. Staff is supervised by lower, middle and upper level supervisors and managers. Staff are never supervised, directed nor managed by volunteers.
- **Volunteer** is anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the City. A volunteer has no authority to direct, manage or supervise a paid City employee. A ‘volunteer’ must be officially accepted and enrolled by the City prior to performance of the task. Volunteer services are considered a privilege and serve at the discretion of the City Council and/or City Manager. This privilege may be revoked at any time.

## 10.2 Code of Conduct

Every volunteer is expected to:

- Be respectful to all employees, visitors, vendors, contractors and citizens with which he/she comes in contact in the performance of duties and services for the City. Employees include all staff, supervisors and managers.

- Be cognizant that he/she represents the City in every act, statement and deed performed for the City.
- Report for duty on time and remain in service for the entire shift except for meal and other break times.
- If unable to report for a regular shift or special assignment for any reason including sickness, call in to the supervisor at least 30 minutes before the shift start time to inform of any delay in arriving or inability to report for duty.
- If unable to remain for the entire shift, obtain approval of the supervisor of the shift to leave and make sure that someone will cover the unfinished duties.
- Abide by all policies and procedures of the City. (See Glossary in Appendix)
- Perform assigned duties to the best of his/her ability at all times. If unable to perform any duty for whatever reason, inform a supervisor of any incomplete assignment or inability to complete the assignment.
- Report for a regular shift or duty in uniform or appropriate work clothes. Don all safety gear and equipment as needed to perform assigned duties. Safety gear or protective clothing should be worn at all times while performing duties that require them. All attire and appearance should meet the requirements of the volunteer assignment.
- Volunteers do not supervise or manage programs, worksites or City staff; nor do they direct City employees in the performance of their duties. If employees are not doing as they are supposed to do, inform the supervisor or manager over that area or facility and refrain from any further contact with the employee regarding the issue.
- Refrain from making personal calls during regular shifts in order to maintain full attention to the duties to be performed. This does not include emergency circumstances. Personal calls may be made at break times.
- Refrain from personal use of the City's equipment, computers, office equipment, and/or supplies for any activity or action that does not involve official City business. All City resources may be searched at any time. There is NO expectation of privacy in any city provided resource.
- Every form, entry on a document or notation created on behalf of the City creates a public record subject to disclosure upon request. All entries made or records created should be as complete and accurate as possible. No information or city record may be destroyed, trashed, mutilated, altered or secreted.



- All documents are City records and may not be copied and/or given, in any form, to anyone, including volunteers him/herself, unless it is obtained through the Public Information process of the City Secretary's Office.
- Keep all resources provided to the volunteer in safe and good condition and refrain from destroying any resources by loss, theft, negligence or inattention to its use. Clean up after any use and return it to its appropriate place. Adhere to any sign in or sign out logs for equipment and resources.
- Keep track of all volunteer time by signing in and out on the roster provided by the department.
- Do not discriminate, retaliate, harass, sexually harass or bully anyone, ever. There is no place for such behavior in this City. (See Glossary)
- Report all instances of conduct of others that violates any City policies or procedures to a supervisor, manager or HR.
- Keep the workplace safe and clean; report any instances of actual or potential harm, damage, or injuries to any person in the workplace to the supervisors in the work area. Report all incidents of accidents and/or damage to city property, equipment or facilities to the supervisor immediately.
- Report any instances of violations of City policies and/or this Guidebook to a volunteer supervisor or manager. If unable to do so, report the violation to the City Manager's Office.

### **10.3 City Committees**

- Animal Shelter Advisory Committee
- Construction Board of Adjustment
- Community & Economic Development Committee
- Fourth of July Steering Committee
- Investment Committee
- Keep Friendswood Beautiful
- Library Board
- Parks & Recreation Board

- Planning & Zoning Commission
- Senior Citizens Advisory Board
- Zoning Board of Adjustment

#### **10.4 Ordinances & Resolutions**

- The City Charter and Code of Ordinances can be found online at [www.municode.com](http://www.municode.com)
- City Council Rules of Procedure (Resolution R2014-15, or as amended)
- City of Friendswood Appointment Policy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT  
OF THE  
CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD  
VOLUNTEER GUIDEBOOK

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the City of Friendswood Volunteer Guidebook, and that I am responsible for knowing and following the policies and procedures contained therein. I, also, understand the City of Friendswood Volunteer Guidebook may be modified at any time and I will be responsible staying abreast of those updates when notified.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name