



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 321 – Volunteer In Policing Program

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Office(s) with Secondary Responsibilities:	TSC, FTC, IDC, SSO	Number of Pages:	3
Forms Referenced in Procedure:	SAPD FORM #37 VIP SAPD FORM #37 VIP 1 SAPD FORM #37 VIP 2 SAPD FORM #37 VIP 3 SAPD FORM #37 VIP 4	Related Procedures:	None

.01 INTRODUCTION

This procedure establishes guidelines for a program which allow citizen volunteers who are not certified peace officers the opportunity to view and help the San Antonio Police Department in the delivery of police services to the community.

.02 VOLUNTEERS IN POLICING PROGRAM

- A. The Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program is a program that utilizes the voluntary services of local citizens to enhance existing police services and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department.
- B. Citizens, who are interested in volunteering with the San Antonio Police Department, must submit an application to the VIP Program for consideration and approval to participate in any volunteer activities.
- C. Any citizen who satisfactorily completes the application process is eligible for acceptance to the VIP Program.
- D. Citizens who have graduated from the Cellular on Patrol Program or the Citizen Police Academy Program who engage in service to the San Antonio Police Department within a police facility, other than attending or supporting non-profit meetings or training classes, or conducting non-profit recruiting efforts must apply to the V.I.P. VIP Program and complete the VIP Program orientation.

.03 APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. Citizens wishing to volunteer their time to the VIP Program must obtain an application packet from the VIP Coordinator in the Volunteers in Policing Office. Packets may be sent by mail, upon request. Included in the application packets are the following forms:
 1. SAPD Form #37 VIP, *Volunteers in Policing Application*; and
 2. SAPD Form #37 VIP 1, *Authorization For Release of Personal Information*.
- B. Upon receipt of completed application packets, the VIP coordinator verifies the information on the applications and makes an initial assessment of the citizen volunteers.
- C. Citizen volunteers who are selected shall be scheduled for an interview with the VIP coordinator. The interview is designed to determine the citizen volunteers' reasons for volunteering, their time availability, and their identification with departmental goals.
- D. Citizen volunteers passing the interview are asked to sign the following forms;
 1. SAPD Form #37 VIP 2, *Agreement Including Release and Indemnification*; and
 2. SAPD Form #37 VIP 3, *Agreement and Confidentiality Statement*.
- E. Applicants must attend and successfully complete the VIP Orientation Training.
- F. Citizen volunteers completing the application process are placed in a volunteer pool which will match the volunteers' expertise and interests with the task requests received from various departmental units.



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G. Citizen volunteers who are not accepted for the VIP Program are notified in writing by the VIP Coordinator.

.04 VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT AREAS and DUTIES

- A. Community Outreach Assistant - Volunteers seek out organizations, neighborhood associations and church groups to schedule tours of the Department.
- B. Fingerprint Technician - Volunteers perform non-criminal fingerprinting.
- C. Neighborhood Action Aide - Volunteers contact residents of neighborhood associations to provide assistance with community mobilization and community projects.
- D. Police Information Assistant - Volunteers assist the Police Media Services Detail at Headquarters by answering telephones and assisting the office with required tasks.
- E. Special Projects Assistant - Volunteers assist with special departmental projects sponsored by the police department or projects that are approved by the volunteer group.
- F. Unit Assistant - Volunteers assist a unit with general office work to include basic filing, light typing, and answering telephones.
- G. Photo Lab Assistant – Volunteers assist with customer service, answering phones, release of supplies, picking up and delivering equipment/materials, filing, computer data entry of inventory, photo assignment printouts, stock inventory, and other required tasks.

.05 CITIZEN VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Dress Code
 - 1. The citizen volunteers wear their VIP shirts or comfortable, casual, and conservative clothing (i.e., pants and shirt for men, skirt / pants and blouse for women).
 - 2. Citizen volunteers dressed in inappropriate clothing will not be allowed to volunteer their time until they comply with the proper dress code for the unit where they are assigned.
- B. Restrictions on Firearms
 - 1. Citizen volunteers will not carry firearms or any other types of weapons while on city property. This includes volunteers who have a concealed handgun permit. City property means the buildings where the volunteers are assigned and the city parking lots where volunteers are authorized to park their personal vehicles.

.06 VIP COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The VIP Coordinator, assigned by the Central SAFFE Sergeant(s), shall be responsible for administering the VIP Program.
- B. The VIP Coordinator's responsibilities include:
 - 1. Implementation of the VIP Program by determining program goals, developing standard operating procedures, and assisting unit/shift directors with volunteer task descriptions;
 - 2. Recruitment of volunteers;
 - 3. Placement of volunteers;
 - 4. Projection of future volunteer staffing needs; and
 - 5. Periodic evaluation of the VIP Program.



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.07 UNIT/SHIFT DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Unit/shift directors determine the need for volunteers from the VIP Program for their individual units/shifts using such criteria as:
 - 1. Type of work that could be performed by volunteers (filing, typing, answering telephones, etc.);
 - 2. Shortage of full time sworn and non-sworn employees due to vacations, sick leave, injured leave, etc.; and
 - 3. Backlog of work.
- B. Submit SAPD Form #37 VIP 4, *Volunteers in Policing Request Form*, to the Volunteers in Policing Office when a citizen volunteer is needed and can provide a service to the unit.
- C. Provide the citizen volunteer with proper training, parking for personal vehicle, and necessary supplies to perform the assigned tasks. The type of training provided will be documented in a written report to the Volunteers in Policing Office.

.08 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

- A. Citizen volunteers provide an invaluable service to the Department and the City of San Antonio. In recognition of this service, all members, sworn and non-sworn, should take time to recognize citizen volunteers and express their appreciation at every opportunity.
- B. Informal recognition of citizen volunteers for the services they provide should be demonstrated within the unit the volunteer is assigned by appreciation gestures such as birthdays, unit accomplishments, and inclusion in office social events.
- C. Formal recognition of citizen volunteers for the services they provide is demonstrated department-wide by the following events:
 - 1. An annual lunch or dinner with the Chief of Police;
 - 2. Celebration during National Volunteer Week;
 - 3. Quarterly accomplishment meetings;
 - 4. Publicity through newsletters, media, and speaking engagements; and
 - 5. Ride-a-longs with police officers.