

# Olmsted Township Police Department Volunteers in Police Service Handbook



“Police officers alone cannot control or prevent crime... Their primary mission must be to help communities police themselves... These (the Communities) are America’s primary crime-fighters.”

Patrick Murphy N.Y.C.P.D.



# **Olmsted Township Police Department**

## **VISION**

**AN ORGANIZATION OF VALUE-ORIENTED PEOPLE, REFLECTIVE OF OUR DIVERSITY DEDICATED TO SERVING THE COMMUNITY WITH INTEGRITY, HONOR AND FAIRNESS THAT ALL MAY KNOW JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND FREEDOM UNDER THE LAW.**

## **COMMITMENT**

**OUR COMMITMENT TO THE OLMSTED TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY IS FOUNDED ON BASIC PRINCIPLES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT. THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE, ETHICS, DIVERSITY, ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND FAIRNESS ARE VALUES THAT WE STRIVE TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE UPON IN THE VOLUNTEERS IN POLICING PROGRAM.**

## **MISSION**

**OUR MISSION IS TO ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF POLICE SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH A VARIETY OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY OF THE CITIZENS OF OLMSTED TOWNSHIP.**



## **Program Description**

The Olmsted Township Police Department utilizes the voluntary services of local citizens to enhance existing police services and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

The Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS) Program is a highly structured volunteer program that falls under a para-military hierarchy. The VIPS Program is for interested citizens who wish to volunteer their time as a non-sworn, non-paid member of the department. (Police Volunteers are not sworn members and do not have any authority or duties that would consider them a peace officer). The volunteer commitment for all volunteers lasts for a period of one year with a requirement of thirty hours per year but may vary depending on the needs of the department or the project, which the volunteer is assigned to.

## **Program Administration**

### **Administrator**

The Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS) Administrator will be responsible for implementation, day to day coordination, and management of the program. The VIPS Administrator will survey the department, determine available positions, and develop the recruitment process. The VIPS Administrator will also select volunteers for placement. The VIPS Administrator will establish program goals, operating procedures, projection of staffing needs, and will act as a liaison with public and private partners.

### **Supervision**

Each section that requests the services of a volunteer will be required to establish a Section Supervisor, who monitors the activities of a volunteer, and ensures that the volunteer's assignments are specific and plentiful. The supervisors will be responsible for training and for providing the necessary supplies for the volunteer.

Section Supervisors will be required to attend a planning/training session so that they can supervise a volunteer. Questions and concerns will be addressed so that a strong line of communication can be established. Training, supervision, record-keeping and reporting, evaluation, policies, and the volunteer procedures will be discussed. This session will guide the orientation and training for the volunteers that align with the philosophy of the Olmsted Township Police Department. Volunteers are deployed throughout the department and are utilized in a number of ways. A volunteer in policing may serve as a liaison, community projects Administrator, substation officer, or a number of other positions that fulfill the needs of the community.



## **Volunteer Positions**

All volunteer positions are based on need by the department. Daytime positions will be filled as soon as possible and requests will be taken from units for the coordination of special projects. The following are the current available volunteer positions.

**Neighborhood Action Aide** – Volunteers contact residents of neighborhood associations to provide assistance with community mobilization and community projects. Assist with and conduct senior citizen programs.

**Special Projects Assistant** – Volunteers assist with special departmental projects sponsored by the police department.

**Traffic/Patrol Assistant** – Conduct traffic surveys and speed estimates in areas that have generated complaints from residents or other related activities.

**Fingerprint Technician** – Volunteers perform non-criminal fingerprinting, which may include child ID programs, request from residents for employment purposes, and/or as needed by the department.

**Police Information Assistant** – Volunteers assist the department at headquarters by answering telephones and assisting with other informational needs.

**Investigative Assistant** – Volunteer may assist with case follow-ups and case file organization.

**Executive Assistant** – Volunteer may assist the police chief with duties that relate to various administrative duties.

**School Resource Assistant** – Volunteer may assist the School Resource Officer during school functions.

**First Responder Assistant** - Volunteer will, in case of disaster, assist first responders with perimeter control, evacuation, traffic control, searching, and other duties.

**Bait Vehicle Assistant** - Volunteer will assist auto theft detectives with placing bait vehicles.

**Motorist Service Aide** - Volunteer will use a marked vehicle equipped with necessary supplies in order to respond to stranded motorist or scenes where flares or cones might be.

**Records Assistant** - Volunteer will assist with filing, data entry, scanning documents, posting dispositions, etc.

**Supply/Equipment Assistant** - Volunteer will ensure that all necessary equipment and supplies are available, i.e. patrol cars equipped with blankets, first aid kit, flares, etc.



## **Volunteer Placement**

If the volunteer chooses a vacant daytime position an interview will be arranged between the VIPS's Administrator and the Volunteer.

The VIPS's Administrator will determine whether the police volunteer meets the current needs of the police department and the community. The Administrator will notify the Police Chief of the decision for final approval.

All scheduling and section guidelines will be established and maintained between the Volunteer and the Section Supervisor.

Special issues, problems and concerns will be handled by the Section Supervisor unless a request has been sent to the Volunteer Administrator by either party.

## **Volunteer Assignment**

A police volunteer is part of the team and as such is entitled to certain minimum expectations. Volunteers are non-paid personnel within the Department. Volunteers should expect the following from their supervisor.

- |                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Task description          | 4. Training for the position |
| 2. Purpose of assignment     | 5. Feedback                  |
| 3. Adequate supervision plan |                              |

The task description will coordinate the efforts of the supervisor, staff, and volunteer Administrator. The task description will provide a basis for recruiting, screening and placement of volunteers. In addition, the description provides a definition of duties of the volunteer and lets them know that they have a purpose, and that the organization has a need and can use their time. This enables the supervisor, the staff, and the Administrator to have input into the task description.

A Volunteer must be informed about how their task duties benefit the unit and ultimately, the Department. Identifying the purpose of the assignment is critical to the quality of the completed tasks.

Volunteers are entitled to adequate supervision. This includes communication, the ability to ask questions and the formulation of a volunteer-supervisor relationship. A volunteer that does not regularly receive direction from the assigned supervisor should contact the VIPS Administrator.

Volunteers are entitled to receive adequate training for the assigned tasks. A volunteer should feel confident in the duties that they perform. If they are not provided with training, they should contact the VIPS Administrator.

Volunteers are NON-PAID staff and as such all local, state and federal guidelines must be followed and maintained.



## **Volunteer Rights**

The Volunteer has the right to expect:

- To be treated as a co-worker
- To be given sufficient information, orientation and training for the assignment and how the program operates
- To be involved in a meaningful assignment which utilizes and develops his/her skills?
- Have supervision, a written activity description of services to be performed, and a place to work
- To work in a safe and secure environment

## **Administrator Rights**

The Administrator has the right to expect the volunteer to:

- Fulfill his or her commitment
- To be proactive and seek out possible assignments
- Discuss any problem pertaining to the department
- Request clarification of an assignment
- Keep a record of hours and activities and submit the monthly report
- Maintain information that has been obtained while functioning as a volunteer in strict confidence

## **Unit Supervisor Rights**

The Unit Supervisor has the right to expect the volunteer to:

- Be amenable to the assignment
- Request clarification of the assignment
- Abide by his/her schedule
- Be punctual
- Inform his/her supervisor of absence or illness
- Inform him/her of any problems or concerns

The Unit Supervisor has the right to expect to:

- Be provided with supervisor training
- Be kept informed of any program changes
- Be notified of any issues that affect a volunteer



## **Volunteer Disqualifiers**

The Department will strictly enforce the denial of an individual who cannot meet our minimum requirements.

### **Automatic**

- Failure to properly complete and provide character references, employment information, and other information requested on the application.
- Violation of Olmsted Township Police Department standard operating procedure or accreditation requirement
- Been convicted of a felony or any offense that would be a felony if committed in Ohio
- Been convicted of a class A or class B misdemeanor
- Had excessive traffic violations within the past five years
- Been previously employed as a law enforcement officer and since has committed or violated federal, state, or city laws pertaining to criminal activity
- Lied during any stage of the volunteer acceptance process
- Falsified any portion of his or her questionnaire or application
- The possession, carrying or attempt to carry a firearm on premises to include all Township facilities, vehicles and any other applicable property. **This includes all individuals who possess a permit to carry a concealed handgun**
- Possession of any firearms or other objects considered to be an illegal weapon as defined by the Ohio Revised Code. Examples of some of the items are an expandable baton (ASP), illegal knives, brass knuckles, etc.

### **Discretionary**

The following disqualifiers may, upon review by the Olmsted Township Police Department, make you the applicant ineligible and will be used to release a member from the Volunteer Program at any time.

- A physical or mental disability that would substantially impair an individual's ability to perform his/her duties
- Alcohol misuse and/or abuse prior to and/or during the volunteer term
- Unlawful sexual conduct prior to and/or during the volunteer term
- Commission of a felony prior to and/or during the volunteer term
- Any other conduct or pattern of conduct that would tend to disrupt, diminish, or otherwise jeopardize public trust in the law enforcement profession
- A breach of Confidentiality
- The removal, copying, transmittal or release of any information considered confidential or non-confidential
- Verbal release of any confidential information
- Inappropriate behavior relating to sexual harassment or other types of racial slurs