

STATE OF VERMONT
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy: 376

Subject: Volunteer Services
Effective Date: May 2, 1996 **Review and Re-Issue Date:**
Supersedes: 351 & 352 **APA Rule Number:**
5/21/90

Recommended for approval by:		Authorized By:	
_____	_____	_____	_____
Signature	Date	Signature	Date

1. Authority:

1.1. Pursuant to 3, V.S.A., Section 3052, and Title 28, V.S.A. Chapters 1, 3, 5, 9 and 11, the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Corrections shall determine, establish, and administer the policies for the Vermont Department of Corrections.

2. Purpose:

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to state the principles that guide the incorporation of community members as volunteers in the Department of Corrections and to identify directives which will guide implementation of volunteer services in the Department. In addition, this policy lists definitions associated with the volunteer services program.

3. Applicability/Accessibility

3.1. This policy statement applies to all individuals and groups affected by the operations of the Department of Corrections. Anyone may have a copy of this policy.

4. Policy

4.1. The Department of Corrections believes that community participation and support is essential or the successful delivery of correctional services. The organized effort that incorporates the community into all on-going services and programs is the Volunteer Services Program.

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- 4.2.** The use of volunteer services is an integral part of the community corrections philosophy. The presence of volunteers demonstrates a shared responsibility between the community, the offender and the Department.
- 4.3.** Volunteers will be treated as corrections professionals consistent with other departmental policies and directives, and will be integrated into on-going operations at all sites. Upon final approval and registration, registered volunteers will be considered Department personnel under Department of Corrections policies and procedures, unless specifically stated otherwise.
- 4.4.** Volunteers are considered "employees" under state law as well, which gives them several automatic benefits: (1) they are covered by the state's workers' compensation law, (2) they are entitled to be represented by state-paid counsel if they are sued for conduct arising out of their volunteer work, and (3) they will be indemnified by the state if a civil judgment is brought against them for conduct arising out of their volunteer work. However, there are some limitations to these protections (see Volunteer Services Manual, 1996).
- 4.5.** The development of volunteer services is an on-going responsibility of all departmental personnel. However, in order to facilitate this effort, a professional staff member will assume responsibility for volunteer services management. The Coordinator of Volunteer Services (CVS) has primary responsibility for volunteer services and assists other Department staff in. planning, recruiting, screening, supervising, evaluating and managing a continuum of correctional volunteer programs in an area.
- 4.6.** The Department values volunteers for the following reasons:
 - 4.6.1** Volunteers offer a wide variety of services to both offenders and staff that otherwise would not be available.
 - 4.6.2** Volunteers can introduce the offender to new people, interests and positive life styles.
 - 4.6.3** Volunteers offer important community perspectives to correctional programs in reviewing 'regulations, procedures and methods of delivery.
 - 4.6.4** Volunteers increase public awareness and understanding and, therefore, involvement in corrections.
 - 4.6.5** Volunteers are an important resource which can be integrated into overall treatment goals for offenders and thus serve Department goals. They are valuable links to community and agency resources to assist offenders in successful rehabilitation.
 - 4.6.6** Volunteers expand and enrich the resources of staff.
 - 4.6.7** Volunteers provide encouragement and support to offenders for change.

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4.6.8 Volunteers provide the opportunity to implement restorative justice for the offender and the community.

4.7. Volunteer Roles/Categories of Service

4.7.1 Volunteers can be assigned to a variety of roles within the Department. Department of Corrections managers will be responsible for developing a process that ensures volunteers are placed in roles that meet Department of Corrections needs and those of volunteer groups and/or individuals.

4.7.2 The Department prioritizes need for services according to overall program goals established centrally. Volunteer roles have been developed within both the Risk Management Track and Court and Reparative Track for services in the facilities and the field sites.

4.7.3 Within these tracks volunteers are needed to provide services in five major areas to support Department program goals in both facility and field sites: education, leisure skills, substance abuse, restorative justice and staff supportive services (see attached Appendix A and B, Statewide Volunteer Roles and generic Volunteer Job Description outline.) They also provide religious programs and can provide other activities as determined by individual sites as a need.

5. Training Method

5.1.

6. Quality Assurance Processes

6.1.

7. Financial Impact:

8. References

3 V.S.A. Section 1(a), 3 V.S.A., Chapter 25. Supersedes Policies 351 and 352.

9. Responsible Director and Draft Participants