



Ramsey County Guidelines for Volunteers



Working with You
to Enhance Our Quality of Life

Office of the County Manager

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Dear Volunteer:

Welcome to Ramsey County! On behalf of the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, department heads and staff, I am pleased that you have chosen to join us in serving the people of Ramsey County. We look forward to having you as part of our team.

Ramsey County government has over 3,000 volunteers across many departments who serve in a variety of capacities. This partnering between citizens and Ramsey County contributes to building a stronger community. A number of County programs and services, as well as community partnerships, would not be possible without your efforts.

The Guidelines for Volunteers contain information that pertains to all volunteers who work for Ramsey County. The department that you volunteer in will conduct an orientation and may have additional information for you that is specific to that department.

As a Ramsey County volunteer, you are now an ambassador for local government. I trust you will take that role seriously and be proud of the volunteer services you perform. As you embark on what we hope will be a long and productive volunteer experience, I challenge you to work hard for the citizens and residents of Ramsey County.

If you have any questions about the information in these Guidelines, please contact your supervisor.

Thank you for volunteering!

Regards,

Julie Kleinschmidt
Ramsey County Manager

Excellence • Respect • Diversity

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RAMSEY COUNTY GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Topics Covered

Ramsey County Mission, Values and Operating Principles

Ramsey County Volunteer Role

Policies and Procedures Volunteers Should Know

- Standards of Conduct
- Drug and Alcohol Use
- Confidentiality/Data Practices
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Non-Discrimination
- Sexual Harassment
- Violence Prevention & Respectful Workplace Environment
- Firearms
- Social Media
- Volunteer Accidents and Injuries
- Resignation/Dismissal

Other

- IRS Deductions – Charitable Contributions

Ramsey County Organizational Chart

RAMSEY COUNTY GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

RAMSEY COUNTY MISSION, VALUES AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES

MISSION

Ramsey County -
Working With You to Enhance Our Quality of Life

VALUES

Ramsey County is community centered and serves the citizens with integrity, honesty, respect, innovation, and responsibility.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide our daily work:

- **Service Comes First** – ensuring the public’s health and safety is our top priority.
- **Excellence** – carry out the work of the County with professionalism and high standards.
- **Valuing Employees** – treat employees in our diverse workplace with respect and dignity so they can achieve excellence in their work.
- **Fiscal Accountability** – practice good stewardship of public funds and maximize resources.
- **Communication** – seek and encourage citizen input and feedback, and inform and educate citizens about the County’s needs and services.
- **Responsiveness** – understand the urgency of our work and do what it takes to get the job done.
- **Collaboration** – work together to build strong communities.
- **Results Focused** – be proactive about community issues with an emphasis on prevention and outcomes.

RAMSEY COUNTY GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Ramsey County Volunteer Role

A volunteer is a person who has been officially selected by Ramsey County, who chooses to perform services without the expectation of compensation (beyond approved, reimbursable expenses) under the direction of Ramsey County staff. The volunteer's role is to supplement the service of professional staff as defined by the description for the volunteer assignment. The volunteer's supervisor can address any questions about the limits of the role of the volunteer.

Policies and Procedures Volunteers Should Know

Standards of Conduct

- Volunteers are expected to follow County and specific departmental rules, regulations and ordinances as well as these Guidelines. Volunteers may not act independently outside of these parameters.
- Volunteers do not have special privileges and must not use their volunteer status for personal gain.
- Volunteers may not proselytize (try to convert someone to a religious faith or political doctrine) while on their volunteer assignment.
- Volunteers are required to disclose any relationships or activities that may represent a conflict of interest with the volunteer opportunity being pursued.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Volunteers cannot be under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs while performing their volunteer duties. No volunteer shall use, possess, manufacture, sell or transfer drugs or drug paraphernalia while performing their volunteer duties (except medications prescribed by a physician which do not impair the volunteer's performance).

Confidentiality/Data Practices

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any information they are exposed to while serving as a volunteer.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Ramsey County programs, services and activities will be accessible to persons with disabilities as defined under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Non-Discrimination

Volunteers are expected to provide services to all persons without regard to race, gender, color, religion, creed, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or age. This means volunteers should treat all people equally.

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Sexual Harassment

Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in sexual harassment, which is a form of discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation. Unwelcome behaviors that can constitute sexual harassment include but are not limited to:

- Sexual comments, jokes, suggestions, or invitations
- Comments about someone's clothing, body, or sexual activity
- Touching, brushing against, patting, or pinching
- Displaying sexually explicit material
- Requests or demands for sexual activity
- Pressure for dates
- Memos, notes, e-mail, or phone calls of a sexual nature
- Verbal or physical behavior that degrades someone based on their gender
- Forced sexual contact

Violence Prevention & Respectful Workplace Environment

Volunteers must be committed to prevention of violence on County property. Ramsey County will strive to provide an environment where volunteers, employees, customers and others doing business with the County are treated with dignity and respect.

Violence is defined as words and actions that hurt or attempt to hurt or threaten people. It is any action involving the use of physical force, harassment, intimidation, disrespect, or misuse of power and authority where the impact is to cause pain, fear or injury.

Firearms

No volunteer may carry or possess a firearm while volunteering, other than law enforcement personnel properly licensed to carry firearms as part of their volunteer assignment with Ramsey County. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to:

- Driving on County business;
- Riding as a passenger in a car or any kind of public transportation while on County business;
- Volunteering in any County-owned or leased building, facility, or space;
- Performing services in private homes or businesses on behalf of the County (other than in a volunteer's own home); and
- Attending training or conferences of any kind on behalf of, or as part of, your volunteer services for the County.

Social Media

- Volunteers may not act as spokespeople for the County on official or policy-related matters or post comments as an official representative of the County.

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- Volunteers must not post or link to material that may harm or tarnish the image, reputation and/or goodwill of the County, including, but not limited to, racist or sexually explicit material; material that violates local, state or federal laws; or material that violates Respectful Workplace policies.
- Volunteers must not disclose or use any private information collected or maintained by Ramsey County in any online social computing platform. Never discuss confidential details regarding clients. Know and follow all applicable data privacy laws.

Volunteer Accidents and Injuries

Volunteer Injuries

Only specific classifications of volunteers are covered under Minnesota Workers Compensation law. These classifications are identified under Minnesota Statutes. In most cases, this means if a volunteer is injured while serving as a volunteer, they are responsible for their own medical bills.

Driving Requirements

If a volunteer's position includes driving, then they must have a valid drivers' license and carry automobile insurance in the amounts specified by the department in which they volunteer. This may vary depending on the responsibilities and tasks performed.

Vehicle Accidents

If a volunteer is involved in a motor vehicle accident while volunteering for Ramsey County, they must contact the insurance agent or company covering the vehicle. The volunteer should report any injuries, damage to the vehicle, and/or other property damaged in the accident. Ramsey County does not pay any out-of-pocket or deductible expenses that might be incurred as a result of the auto accident.

Reporting Incidents

Volunteers are expected to report and complete (or assist supervisors in completing) necessary documentation for accidents, injuries or incidents that volunteers witness or are involved in while volunteering. Examples include automobile accidents, injuries that the public incurs, or damage to citizen or Ramsey County property.

Legal Action

If a volunteer is involved in a legal action as a result of their volunteer activities, the County will represent and indemnify them, based on applicable law. Generally, this means that if a volunteer is performing the duties of their volunteer position and is not guilty of bad faith, willful neglect or malfeasance, the County will defend and indemnify them.

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If volunteers receive any notices or correspondence related to an accident which occurs while performing their volunteer duties, they should notify their department's volunteer contact or coordinator immediately.

Resignation/Dismissal

If a volunteer decides to discontinue volunteering with Ramsey County, they should inform their supervisor. Ramsey County reserves the right to discontinue the volunteer relationship with any individual at any time.

OTHER

IRS Deductions – Charitable Contributions

As a volunteer, you may be able to deduct certain expenses relating to your volunteer activity. Please consult with a tax professional or seek guidance from the IRS at www.irs.gov.

Ramsey County Organization Chart

