



TITLE	POLICY NUMBER	
Volunteer Management	DCS 04-24	
RESPONSIBLE AREA	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION
Human Resources	August 31, 2017	1

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Child Safety's (DCS) duty to protect vulnerable children is enhanced by the participation of community members who are dedicated to ensuring that children are free from abuse and neglect. Volunteers who share the Department's goals of strengthening families and achieving permanency for children are an invaluable resource. Accordingly, the Department establishes this policy regarding volunteer recruitment, selection, training, assignment, supervision, and conduct. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer management and activities.

The Department shall establish stringent volunteer standards that ensure child safety and protection. All prospective volunteers shall undergo a DCS Central Registry check, and shall be required to obtain a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card. Criminal history record information will disqualify an individual from serving as a volunteer with the Department of Child Safety. Any individual with a substantiated Central Registry report, in any state or jurisdiction, or who is the alleged perpetrator in a pending investigation or appeal of a report of child abuse or neglect, will also be automatically disqualified from consideration as a volunteer within the Department.

The Department's work is improved by the active involvement of citizens. The Department encourages community involvement at all levels and within all appropriate programs and activities. Department staff is encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve, and to aid in their recruitment from the community.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to volunteers who donate their time or services to the Department.

When groups offer to donate their time or services en masse, each and every individual within that group must first undergo a Central Registry check, and obtain a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card prior to their volunteer endeavor if their tasks will entail contact with children, clients or access to client information. If their volunteer tasks will not include contact with children or access to client information, individuals may still serve as volunteers pursuant to Section V.A.1.a., but only with the approval of a Deputy Director or Program Administrator.

Changes or exceptions to this policy may only be granted by a Deputy Director and must be obtained in advance and in writing.

Unless specifically stated, this policy applies to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken for or on behalf of the Department, and applies at all sites of operation of the Department, and at any other sites at which Department-sponsored activities may be held.

III. AUTHORITY

A.R.S. § 8-453	Powers and Duties
A.R.S. § 8-201	Definitions
A.R.S. § 8-804	Central registry; notification
A.R.S. § 38-592	Public service orientation programs; implementation
A.R.S. § 41-1701	Definitions
A.R.S. § 41-2011	Definitions
A.R.S. § 41-1758.07	Level I fingerprint clearance cards; definitions
A.R.S. § 46-141	Criminal record information checks; fingerprinting employees and applicants; definition
A.A.C. R2-5A-501	Standards of Conduct

IV. DEFINITIONS

Central Registry - The automated database of substantiated reports of child abuse and neglect that is contained within the CHILDS Case Management Information System.

Child - An individual who is under 18 years of age.

Criminal History Record Information - Information collected by criminal justice agencies on individuals consisting of identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, informations, or other formal criminal charges, and any disposition arising therefrom, sentencing, correctional supervision and release. ([A.R.S. § 41-1701](#))

Department - The Department of Child Safety or DCS.

Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card - A card issued by the Department of Public Safety to persons who, through a fingerprint background check, are found to be qualified for a clearance card as defined in [A.R.S. § 41-1758.07](#).

Substantiated Report - An allegation of abuse or neglect found to be true by a probable cause standard of the evidence.

Volunteer - An individual, firm, society, partnership, association, company, civic or religious group, or corporation who is accepted to perform duties for the Department without compensation.

A volunteer must be officially accepted by the DCS Volunteer Program Manager prior to the performance of any volunteer tasks. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as employees of the agency. DCS interns are not considered volunteers, and are monitored by Human Resources, in accordance with the DCS Intern Policy.

Volunteer Program Manager - A DCS employee who is assigned to oversee the volunteer processes, including recruitment and selection of volunteers, and maintenance of volunteer records.

V. POLICY

A. Eligibility and Supervision

1. It is the policy of the Department of Child Safety (DCS) that volunteers shall have a fingerprint clearance card that is issued pursuant to [A.R.S. § 41-1758.07](#). Volunteers are required to inform their supervisors immediately if their fingerprint clearance cards are suspended, revoked, or have expired.
 - a. Upon approval of a Deputy Director or Program Administrator, volunteers who have no contact with children or access to client information are permitted to serve as volunteers without obtaining a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card.
2. Anyone over the age of 18 may apply to volunteer.
3. DCS prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities, and employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetics, and retaliation.
4. If family members of Department employees are accepted as volunteers, they will not be placed under the direct supervision of their family members who are employees.
5. Volunteers are not paid and shall work under the direction and supervision of an authorized DCS employee who has accepted responsibility for supervising the volunteer.
6. Acceptance as a volunteer by DCS does not obligate the Department to make any subsequent offer of employment.
7. DCS staff may require a volunteer to leave a location or an activity in order to ensure the safety of the volunteer, child, or DCS staff, or to preserve confidentiality.

B. Insurance and Liability

1. Volunteers are not covered by the State of Arizona's worker's compensation plan if injured while performing their duties. Volunteers are encouraged to obtain their own medical insurance.

2. Liability coverage is extended to volunteers acting at the direction of an authorized DCS staff member and within the course and scope of their authorized activities. Volunteers of the State of Arizona are provided the same liability protection afforded employees.
- C. Department Volunteers
1. DCS employees may volunteer within the Department in adherence to this policy and only if their volunteer assignment is different from their paid job in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.
 2. DCS employees must obtain a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card if their volunteer duties include contact with children.
- D. Termination of Volunteer Status
1. Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the Department and may be dismissed at any time for any reason, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Fraud or misrepresentation in securing their volunteer opportunity.
 - b. Incompetency or inefficiency.
 - c. Neglect of duty.
 - d. Insubordination.
 - e. Dishonesty.
 - f. Being impaired by alcohol or drugs while volunteering.
 - g. Illegal use or illegal possession of a narcotic or habit-forming drug.
 - h. Unauthorized absence or absence without leave.
 - i. Commission of any crime classified as a felony or involving moral turpitude.
 - j. Discourteous treatment of the public or other employees.
 - k. Improper political activity.
 - l. Willful disobedience.
 - m. Misuse or unauthorized use of state property.
 - n. Breach of confidentiality.
 - o. Any other causes deemed appropriate by the volunteer's supervisor or DCS management.
- E. Conduct and Training
1. Volunteers shall:
 - a. Comply with federal and state laws and rules, statewide policies and employee handbook, and agency policies and directives.
 - b. Maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, and impartiality, free from personal considerations, or favoritism.
 - c. Be courteous, considerate, and prompt in interactions with the public, DCS employees and other volunteers.

- d. Conduct themselves in a manner that will not bring discredit or embarrassment to the Department.
 - e. Report immediately to their supervisor any arrest, indictment, or citation for criminal conduct.
2. Volunteers shall not:
- a. Use their volunteer status for personal gain.
 - b. Use or attempt to use confidential information for personal advantage.
 - c. Permit themselves to be placed under any kind of personal obligation that could lead a person to expect official favors.
 - d. Perform an act in a private capacity that may be construed to be an official Department act.
 - e. Accept or solicit, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, or loan that is, or may appear to be, designed to influence the volunteer's official conduct. This provision shall not prohibit acceptance by the volunteer of food, refreshments, or unsolicited advertising or promotional material of nominal value.
 - f. Directly or indirectly use or allow the use of state equipment or property of any kind, including equipment and property leased to the state, for other than official activities unless authorized by written agency policy or as otherwise allowed by these rules.
 - g. Inhibit a state employee, intern, or another volunteer from joining or refraining from joining an employee organization.
 - h. Take disciplinary or punitive action against another volunteer, intern, or state employee that impedes or interferes with that individual's exercise of any right granted under the law or these rules.
 - i. Transport parents, children, or other case participants.
3. Volunteers shall receive information and training on topics relevant to their assignment from their Volunteer Supervisor. Volunteers must complete and pass all required training prior to starting their volunteer service.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Volunteer Application and Forms

Prospective volunteers must submit a *Volunteer Application*, a notarized *Certification of Criminal Offense*, and a *Confidentiality Agreement*. Applicants will also receive instructions on utilizing Fieldprint® to obtain a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card. Volunteer forms can be requested by email at: Volunteer@AZDCS.gov.

B. Processing *Volunteer Application*, *Certification of Criminal Offense* and *Acknowledgment of Confidentiality* forms; Verification of Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card; Check of Central Registry.

1. Volunteer Application – After receipt of completed Volunteer documents, the Volunteer Program Manager will review the *Volunteer Application*. Key areas to check are: Statement of Certification section, which includes Date of Birth and Social Security Number, and signature. The application should be filled out completely, and signed by the applicant.
2. Certification of Criminal Offense – The *Certification of Criminal Offense* form must be notarized and will be reviewed for any information that is of concern. If any box is checked “YES,” the Volunteer Program Manager will inquire with the applicant for details, such as the date and nature of the offense, as well as any other pertinent details. The Volunteer Program Manager will determine whether or not the offense and surrounding details warrant denial of the application, or if the application process can proceed.
3. Acknowledgment of Confidentiality – The *Acknowledgment of Confidentiality* form must be signed by the applicant who is making an agreement to keep DCS information confidential. Any breach of confidentiality is classified as a Class 2 misdemeanor in accordance with [A.R.S. § 8-807](#), and is cause for immediate dismissal of the volunteer.
4. Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card – All applicants are required to obtain a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card. If the tasks do not involve contact with children, clients or access to client information, volunteers can serve without a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card, but only with the approval of a Deputy Director or Program Administrator (pursuant to Section V.A.1.a.).
 - a. If an applicant already possesses a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card, a copy of the card must be provided. The Volunteer Program Manager will verify that the card is valid through the Arizona Department of Public Safety.
 - b. If an applicant does not possess a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card, the applicant will be provided with instructions to obtain the card through Fieldprint®. The instructions will include a code that the applicant will use to ensure that the Department will cover the cost of the card. Once obtained, the applicant must submit a copy of the card for final verification.
5. Central Registry Check – All volunteers will be subject to a search of the DCS Central Registry for any entries of child abuse or neglect. Any entry found in the Central Registry is grounds for disqualification of the volunteer applicant.
6. Volunteer Approval – After the *Volunteer Application*, *Certification of Criminal Offense*, *Acknowledgment of Confidentiality*, Level 1 Fingerprint Card and Central Registry check requirements have been met successfully, the prospective volunteer will be deemed eligible to serve as a volunteer.

C. Volunteer Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Training volunteers for ongoing projects and events
2. Scheduling volunteers
3. Overseeing and managing volunteers

D. Disclosure of Child Abuse or Neglect Allegations

Volunteers must notify their immediate supervisor if they have been identified as an alleged perpetrator in any report of child abuse or neglect. Volunteers who fail to do so will be immediately dismissed from their positions.

E. Reimbursement of Expenses

Generally the Department will not reimburse volunteers for any expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. However, volunteers may apply for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses such as meals, admission costs, or items of nominal value purchased for children in the care, custody, and control of the Department. These purchases must be approved by the volunteer's supervisor and shall be one-time, unrepeated events that serve a valid public purpose, i.e. consistent with relevant statutes, rules, and policies and in a way that does not promote the purely private or personal interests of any individual.

VII. Forms

[*Acknowledgment of Confidentiality \(DCS-1258A\)*](#)

[*Certification of Criminal Offense \(DCS-1078A\)*](#)

[*Volunteer Application \(DCS-1252A\)*](#)