

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) Program

2009 Survey of IACP Membership Summary Results

In July 2009, the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) Program surveyed random selected IACP members via the program Web site. The IACP maintains a roster of more than 20,000 members from law enforcement agencies around the world. This survey was sent to 3,000 randomly selected members, 1,000 of which represent smaller departments and the remaining representing larger departments. Three hundred and six representatives from IACP member agencies responded. The information immediately below provides an overview of their impressions and experiences using volunteers. A more detailed analysis follows.

Part I of the survey asked for the agency's profile.

- 10 percent of those targeted completed the survey.
- 92 percent of those targeted responded to the survey themselves.
- Eight percent of respondents oversee the volunteer program directly.

- 90 percent of respondents represented municipal departments.
- Five percent of respondents represented county-wide departments.
- Two percent of respondents represented state-wide departments.
- Less than one percent of respondents represented tribal departments.
- Two percent of respondents represented other departments including a school police department, a Forest Preserve District, a Parish (in Louisiana), a Bi-county/state mandated department, and two townships.

- 83 percent of agencies currently utilize volunteers.
- 17 percent of agencies do not currently utilize volunteers.

Part II of the survey asked agencies without volunteers to let us know if they used volunteers in the past and their reasons, if any, for not using volunteers currently. Part III was for agencies with volunteers to learn more about their volunteer programs.

Of those agencies without volunteers

- 20 percent of responding agencies have had previous experiences with volunteers.
- 28 percent of those agencies listed the value that volunteers bring as the most interesting factor to utilizing volunteers.
- 21 percent of those agencies listed liability concerns as a barrier to implementing a volunteer program.

Of those agencies currently using volunteers, experience with volunteers varied significantly:

- 53 percent of law enforcement agencies have had volunteers for more than 11 years.
- The total number of volunteers ranged from 3 to more than 1,000.

Agencies were asked about the structure and management of their volunteer programs:

- 75 percent of agencies have a dedicated manager/coordinator for their volunteer program.
- Of these agencies, 48 percent said their managers were sworn employees. Twenty-five percent said their programs had a full-time manager.

Agencies were asked about their volunteers' involvement in specific categories of volunteer activities

- 25 percent have at least five volunteers involved in all categories.
- 26 percent have more than 11 volunteers involved in all categories.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of various factors referred to below. The following percentages of respondents indicated that the described factor was "important" or "very important."

- 76 percent cited the ability to provide additional services.
- 75 percent cited enhancing citizen understanding of the police.
- 72 percent cited value added to the department.
- 69 percent cited enhancing the agency's understanding of its community.
- 69 percent cited return on investment.
- 68 percent cited required training requirements.
- 59 percent cited the ability to deploy officers to frontline duties.
- 59 percent cited confidentiality concerns.
- 58 percent cited staff time requirements.
- 49 percent cited turnover of volunteers.
- 47 percent cited liability concerns.

Additionally, 62 percent of respondents rated the contributions of volunteers to agency effectiveness and productivity as "essential" or "very essential."

Part IV of the survey asked about agencies' familiarity with the VIPS Program and resources.

- 72 percent of respondents were familiar with the VIPS Program prior to receiving the survey.
- 45 percent of respondents were already registered VIPS programs.

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Part I: Agency Profile

May we contact you in the future if we have further questions about volunteerism in your agency?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	293	96%
No	10	3%
No response	3	1%

Type of agency (See Appendix for individual responses):

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Municipal	275	90%
County	15	5%
State	6	2%
Tribal	1	.3%
Other	6	2%
No response	3	1%

Current Number of Sworn Officers (Note, survey asked for actual numbers.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
<10	9	3%
10-50	129	42%
51-100	84	27%
101-250	46	15%
251-500	20	7%
501-1000	4	1%
>1000	11	4%
No response	3	1%

Jurisdiction size: Square miles (Note, survey asked for actual numbers.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
<15	128	42%
16-30	60	20%
30-50	32	10%
51-100	28	9%
101-300	11	4%
301-500	11	4%
501-1000	3	1%
>1000	9	3%
No response	24	8%

Jurisdiction size: Population (Note, survey asked for actual numbers.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
<1,000	154	50%
1,001-5,000	16	5%
5,001-10,000	26	9%
10,001-25,000	29	9%
25,001-50,000	29	9%
50,001-100,000	23	8%
100,001-500,000	16	5%
>500,001	6	2%
No response	7	2%

Does your agency currently utilize volunteers?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	253	83%
No	51	17%
No response	2	1%

Part II: Agencies Without Volunteers

Has your agency utilized volunteers in the past?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	60	20%
No	53	17%
No response	193	63%

- a. *If yes, why did your agency stop using volunteers? (Note, see Appendix for individual results.)*

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses	21	7%

- b. *If yes, would you consider starting or restarting your volunteer programs?*

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	25	8%
No	10	3%
No response	271	89%

- c. *If yes, what most interests you about utilizing volunteers? (Select all that apply.) (Note, see Appendix for other responses.)*

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Value added to the agency (dollars and/or staff hours)	41	13%
Enhancing citizen understanding of your agency	39	13%
Enhancing your agency's understanding of your community and its citizens	28	9%
Ability to deploy officers to frontline duties to provide additional services	33	11%
Other	5	2%
No response	257	84%

- d. *If no, why not? (Note, see Appendix for individual responses.)*

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses	18	6%

What barriers to implementing a volunteer program do you anticipate? (Select all that apply.) (Note, see Appendix for individual responses.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Time requirements	30	10%
Liability concerns	34	11%
Confidentiality concerns	29	9%
Lack of confidence in volunteer ability	17	6%
Turnover of volunteers	25	8%
Return on investment	9	3%
Other	18	6%
No response	231	76%

Part III: Volunteer Program Profile

How long has your volunteer program been in existence?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 1 year	4	1%
1-5 years	58	19%
6-10 years	53	17%
11-20 years	78	26%
21-35 years	31	10%
More than 36 years	19	6%
No response	63	21%

On average, how many volunteers does your agency engage?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
<10	65	21%
10-50	136	44%
51-100	29	10%
101-250	18	6%
251-500	4	1%
>501	4	1%
No response	50	16%

What kind of administrative activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
General administrative duties	169	55%
Data entry	152	50%
Answering phones	103	34%
Greeting visitors at the front desk	88	29%
No response	112	37%

What kind of volunteer program administration activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Full-time volunteer program administration	44	14%
Part-time volunteer program administration	88	29%
Volunteer program administration on an as needed basis	104	34%
No response	98	32%

What kind of community liaison activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
General community liaison activities	177	58%
Advisory councils	56	18%
Staff special events or booths	194	63%
No response	82	27%

What kind of citizen patrol activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Citizen patrols	135	44%
Parking enforcement	68	22%
Handicap parking enforcement	87	28%
Vacation home checks	98	32%
Senior wellness checks	44	14%
Code enforcement	35	11%
Homeland security patrols	30	10%
No response	138	45%

What kind of citizen academy activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Attend Citizen Police/Sheriff Academy	156	51%
Assist with Citizen Police/Sheriff Academy	98	32%
No response	139	45%

What kind of emergency response activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Overall emergency response	108	35%
Disaster preparation and response	101	33%
Victim assistance	69	22%
Search and rescue	82	27%
No response	136	44%

What kind of agency programming activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
General agency programming	163	53%
Crime prevention activities	165	54%
Graffiti abatement	54	18%
Gang prevention activities	29	9%
Neighborhood Watch	151	49%
No response	88	29%

What kind of research activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
General research	76	25%
Crime mapping	38	12%
Compile literature reviews/statistics	69	22%
No response	202	66%

What kind of youth activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
General youth activities	69	22%
Explorer Post	87	28%
Police Activities/Athletic League	44	14%
Youth camp	37	12%
No response	168	55%

What kind of investigation activities are your volunteers engaged in?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Overall investigations	35	11%
Cold case	26	8%
Property crime	37	12%
Financial crime	18	6%
Warrant calls	29	9%
Filing	89	29%
No response	189	62%

What other kinds of activities are your volunteers engaged in? (See Appendix for individual responses.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses	94	31

How many volunteers are involved in administrative activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	86	28%
One to five volunteers	118	39%
Six to 10 volunteers	29	9%
More than 11 volunteers	29	9%
No response	44	14%

How many volunteers are involved in volunteer program administration?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	105	34%
One to five volunteers	125	41%
Six to 10 volunteers	13	4%
More than 11 volunteers	17	6%
No response	46	15%

How many volunteers are involved in community liaison activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	54	18%
One to five volunteers	85	28%
Six to 10 volunteers	35	11%
More than 11 volunteers	81	26%
No response	51	17%

How many volunteers are involved in citizen patrols?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	90	29%
One to five volunteers	35	11%
Six to 10 volunteers	33	11%
More than 11 volunteers	92	30%
No response	56	18%

How many volunteers in involved in your agency's citizen academy?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	98	32%
One to five volunteers	88	29%
Six to 10 volunteers	28	9%
More than 11 volunteers	37	12%
No response	55	18%

How many volunteers are involved in emergency response activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	105	34%
One to five volunteers	40	13%
Six to 10 volunteers	29	9%
More than 11 volunteers	85	28%
No response	47	15%

How many volunteers are involved in agency programming?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	144	47%
One to five volunteers	71	23%
Six to 10 volunteers	16	5%
More than 11 volunteers	22	7%
No response	53	17%

How many volunteers are involved in research activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	149	49%
One to five volunteers	94	31%
Six to 10 volunteers	9	3%
More than 11 volunteers	3	1%
No response	51	17%

How many volunteers are involved in youth activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	116	38%
One to five volunteers	67	22%
Six to 10 volunteers	30	10%
More than 11 volunteers	39	13%
No response	54	18%

How many volunteers are involved in investigation activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	137	45%
One to five volunteers	94	31%
Six to 10 volunteers	8	3%
More than 11 volunteers	7	2%
No response	60	20%

How many volunteers are involved in other activities?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Volunteers not involved	87	28%
One to five volunteers	49	16%
Six to 10 volunteers	20	6%
More than 11 volunteers	53	17%
No response	97	38%

Do volunteer services result in an added value to your agency, in dollars and/or staff hours?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	206	67%
No	50	16%
No response	50	16%

a. If yes, what is the value added:

Total value in dollars	\$29,209,130.28
Average value in dollars	\$221,281.29
Responses	132
Total value in hours	1,787,332
Average value in hours	13,439
Responses	133

Does your agency's volunteer program have a manager/coordinator?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	230	75%
No	25	8%
No response	51	17%

a. If yes, is the manager/coordinator:

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Sworn	148	48%
Non-Sworn	79	26%
Full –Time	76	25%
Part-Time	20	6%
Volunteer	35	11%
No response	72	23%

Do you think the effectiveness and productivity of your volunteers' activities is

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very Essential	119	39%
Essential	72	27%
Neither marginal or essential	16	5%
Marginal	8	3%
Very marginal	1	.3%
No response	79	26%

In regard to your volunteer program, please rate the significance of the following:

a. Value added (dollars and/or staff hours)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	135	44%
Important	85	28%
Neutral	25	8%
Unimportant	4	1%
Very unimportant	3	1%
No response	54	18%

b. Enhancing citizen understanding of your agency

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	157	51%
Important	71	23%
Neutral	22	7%
Unimportant	4	1%
Very unimportant	0	0%
No response	52	17%

c. Enhancing your agency's understanding of your community and its citizens

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	121	39%
Important	91	30%
Neutral	38	12%
Unimportant	4	1%
Very unimportant	0	0%
No response	52	17%

d. Ability to deploy additional officers to frontline duties

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	121	39%
Important	59	19%
Neutral	51	17%
Unimportant	14	5%
Very unimportant	7	2%
No response	54	18%

e. Ability to provide additional services

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	146	48%
Important	86	28%
Neutral	19	6%
Unimportant	1	.3%
Very unimportant	3	1%
No response	51	17%

f. Staff time requirements

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	78	25%
Important	100	33%
Neutral	67	22%
Unimportant	4	1%
Very unimportant	3	1%
No response	54	18%

g. Liability concerns

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	68	22%
Important	75	24%
Neutral	89	29%
Unimportant	13	4%
Very unimportant	7	2%
No response	54	18%

h. Confidentiality concerns

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	93	30%
Important	89	29%
Neutral	51	18%
Unimportant	15	5%
Very unimportant	5	2%
No response	53	17%

i. Turnover of volunteers

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	43	14%
Important	107	35%
Neutral	85	28%
Unimportant	13	4%
Very unimportant	5	2%
No response	53	17%

j. Training requirements

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	98	32%
Important	111	36%
Neutral	38	12%
Unimportant	3	1%
Very unimportant	2	1%
No response	54	18%

k. Return on investment

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Very important	124	40%
Important	89	29%
Neutral	25	8%
Unimportant	4	1%
Very unimportant	4	1%
No response	60	20%

l. Other (See Appendix for individual responses.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses	4	1%

Based on your agency's experience with volunteers, what is the most important advice you would give to other agencies? (See Appendix for individual responses.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses	207	68%

Part IV. Products and Resources

Prior to receiving this survey, were you familiar with the VIPS Program?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	227	74%
No	74	24%
No response	5	2%

Do you intend to register your volunteers program on the VIPS Web site?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	60	20%
No	61	20%
Already registered	137	45%
No volunteer program	40	13%
No response	8	3%

Which of the following resources would you like to receive more information about?

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
No-cost Training	160	52.3%
Resource Guide on Law Enforcement Volunteer Programs	145	47.4%
<i>Citizens Guide to Volunteering</i>	139	45.4%
<i>VIPS in Focus</i>	102	33.3%
Educational Programs and Presentations	98	32.0%
VIPS Resource Library	90	29.4%
Educational Video Series	82	26.8%
IACP's Citizen Involvement in School Safety project resources	79	25.8%
<i>VIPS Info</i> Electronic Newsletter	76	24.8%
IACP's Citizen Involvement in Sex Offender Management project	58	19.0%
Use of the VIPS Logo	49	16.0%
Mentor Program	44	14.4%
Technical Assistance Program	43	14.1%
VIPS to VIPS: a moderated discussion board	42	13.7%
No response	69	22.2%

What other resources or tools would you like to see the VIPS Program create to help develop/enhance volunteer opportunities at your agency? (See Appendix for individual responses.)

	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
No response	18	6%

Recommendations

1. The majority of respondents represent smaller departments. Some respondents cited agency size as too small to manage a volunteer program.
 - a. Recommendation: Update issue of *VIPS in Focus* which highlights using volunteers as force multipliers. While emphasizing what volunteers can do to support a small agency, also highlight how small agencies can effectively manage a volunteer program.
2. Many respondents mention needing assistance with seeking out and applying for appropriate grants.
 - a. Recommendation: Create a step-by-step guide on writing grants for law enforcement programs, including grant opportunities that agencies have found and grantmaking agencies and programs. Keep it general so agencies can tailor it to specific funding opportunities.
3. Respondents noted they would like assistance with recognition programs.
 - a. Recommendation: Create an interactive web-based toolkit that allows users to select recognition ideas or tools based on Section 7 of Volunteer Programs: *Enhancing Public Safety by Leveraging Resources*. Toolkit would also accept ideas from users that would be approved by VIPS staff prior to inclusion in toolkit.
4. Many respondents reported that union issues prevent agencies from establishing volunteer programs.
 - a. Recommendation: Hold a focus group with agencies that have successfully incorporated volunteer programs while gaining union support. Develop a best practices report based on focus group.
5. Forty-eight percent of respondents said their volunteer program manager/coordinator was sworn. Many respondents voiced the importance of a dedicated volunteer coordinator for a successful program.
 - a. Recommendation: Create a publication for agencies just starting their volunteer program to assist them in determining the best volunteer coordinator for their needs. Publication could include a questionnaire that would help the agency best determine what they are seeking in a volunteer coordinator. This resource would explain the different expectations placed upon sworn/civilian coordinators. Highlight the success of agencies that use sworn coordinators and agencies that use civilian coordinators. Feature agencies that use volunteers to support a coordinator who has multiple responsibilities.

Appendix—Detailed Reponses

Part I

Type of agency:

- School police department
- Forest Preserve District
- Parish
- Bi-County/State Mandated
- Township (2)

Part II

Why did your agency stop using volunteers? (Results are summarized.)

- Administration costs associated with training and supervision
- After three years our volunteer decided to try something else
- Could not find interested and qualified volunteers
- Department manual rewrite, basic background checks
- Lack of commitment, interest, or participation by volunteers (3)
- Lack of control by previous administration
- Needed close supervision, not enough personnel to provide the supervision
- New program
- No qualified applicants
- Positions are currently compensated
- Professional standards, training
- Program ended
- The citizens elected to take on paying employment
- Unknown (4)

What most interests you about utilizing volunteers?

- Auxiliary officers for additional support in major and community events
- More efficient handling of routine tasks
- Redirect sworn officers to crime suppression and prevention. Reduce administrative activities for sworn staff such as fingerprinting, citation entry, etc.
- Supplementing the work of our police department
- Other

If no, why not? (Results are summarized.)

- Cost, effectiveness, union issues
- Difficult to attract volunteer police officers if not compensated
- Has not been a valuable resource
- I am a new Chief, no idea why they were not used
- Lack of response (2)
- Liability issues, training, scheduling, people not showing up
- Supervision issues
- Management
- Not enough manpower to effectively administer a volunteer program
- Previous administration
- Reluctance on part of command staff due to confidentiality, confidence, turnover vs. training
- State requirements and unions preventing use of them (2)
- Too much responsibility
- Volunteers would not fit into a basically part-time agency

What barriers to implementing a volunteer program do you anticipate? (Results are summarized.)

- Acceptance by the sworn members
- Attracting qualified uncompensated candidates
- Background checks, training to task, supervision and oversight
- Board taking VIPS beyond the intended use and use them for other tasks
- Collective bargaining agreements
- Equipment and training cost
- Finding qualified applicants
- Lack of community interest in becoming a volunteer
- Time involved in managing the program
- Union-related issues (4)

Part III: Volunteer Program Profile

What other kinds of activities are your volunteers engaged in? (Results are summarized.)

- Abandoned vehicles
- Amateur Radio Operators
- Animal control
- Answer anonymous tip-line
- Assist with property/evidence, records, and background investigations
- Assist with quality of life issues
- Auxiliary
- Background checks for landlords on prospective tenants
- Booking officers
- CALEA certification
- Call-outs
- Chaplains
- Child ID Kits
- CITE (Citizen Initiated Traffic Enforcement)
- Commercial burglary letters
- Community surveys
- Court bailiff, courier
- Court certified translators, language and ASL sign language
- Crime analysis
- Crime-free multi-housing program
- Decoy vehicle placement
- Detention programs
- Dispatch
- DUI Checkpoints on holidays
- Elder affairs liaison
- Emergency rehab
- Evidence transport
- Family Advocacy Center
- Fingerprinting and Live Scan
- Fire investigations
- Firing range assistants
- First-time offender mentoring
- Foot patrols
- Found property pick up
- Funeral details
- Funeral watch at the home of the deceased
- Gang Unit clerical assistance
- Gas theft (drive-offs)
- GIS mapping
- Hazmat
- Informational Technology

- Inmate ombudsman
- Interns
- Jail visitation
- Law Enforcement Torch Run
- License plate reader
- Local cable television shows
- Marine patrol
- Missing person follow-up
- Mobile command vehicle drivers
- Motorcycle patrols and motor pool
- Motorist assistance
- Mounted patrols by volunteers with their own animals
- National Night Out
- Oral interview boards
- Parking and traffic direction
- Pawn slips
- Pet therapy teams
- Police Foundation
- Radar patrol
- Reserve Officers
- Retail alcohol training and administrations
- Runaway tracking
- Safe kids committee
- SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together)
- School patrol and crossing guards
- Sex offender notification
- Speed complaints
- Speed Watch
- Staff police museum: cashiers, supply, and inventory
- Stolen vehicles
- Streetlight patrol
- Tactical emergency medical support
- TAP (Telephone Assurance Program)
- Teaching at police academy: firearms, defensive tactics
- Towing
- Training scenario participants
- Transcription
- Vehicle maintenance
- Weather watchers
- Wild land fire

*In regard to your volunteer program, please rate the significance of the following:
Other*

- All volunteers are former law enforcement or military
- Volunteer Program provides its own liability insurance
- Our volunteer efforts make a significant contribution to the Police Department's ability to respond to the community needs, as it frees up commissioned staff for a quicker response, and more time to do line of duty work.
- Highly enhanced community service

Based on your agency's experience with volunteers, what is the most important advice you would give to other agencies? (Responses have not been edited or summarized except for spelling and formatting to this report.)

- A very well-planned training program and to keep the volunteers engaged, even if it is only in correspondence.
- A volunteer chaplain can assist with not only in-house needs but also outreach to victims and survivors.
- Access and prioritize your agency's needs for volunteer assistance as you develop your program.
- Adequate work space, equipment (desk, phone, computer, vehicles, etc.) show appreciation for the hours they contribute and are critical to maintaining long-term volunteers.
- Appreciate their value but make sure that you have policies, procedures, training, and application requirements in place.
- Be careful who you let represent your agency. There are lots of weirdos out there.
- Be consistent and if at all possible do not have a board or rank.
- Be creative in finding worthwhile positions for all skill levels of volunteers for your agency.
- Be creative in keeping the volunteers involved in activities within the department.
- Be creative in utilizing volunteers.
- Be flexible and considerate of volunteers' time.
- Be innovative.
- Be open to their ideas and let them help out. They may have a different approach, but sometimes new eyes lead to better vision. These people are not weekend warriors. They are dedicated and have pride in what they do. Their motivation is not money.
- Be patient, treat them as if they were paid staff, and listen to what their concerns are.
- Be selective.
- Be selective and make sure you hire competent adults.
- Be selective and try to find the right volunteer for the right job.
- Be sure that the activities that volunteers are assisting with are not only beneficial to the department, but also meaningful to the volunteer.
- Be very clear on your expectations. Eliminate those that are not on board with the program or rules.
- Be very selective in who you hire. This is important internally and externally.

- Begin first with a very structured Citizens Police Academy, taught by the officers, as a strong foundation for volunteers to begin their law enforcement knowledge base.
- Believe and trust your volunteers, they will be great assets.
- Careful selection process with defined duties
- Carefully selected and trained volunteers are an invaluable asset to police departments.
- Carefully selected volunteers will be an outstanding asset to your department and community.
- Complete a background check.
- Conduct a thorough background investigation prior to placement of any volunteer.
- Conduct good training. Reward and motivate the volunteers. Make sure the Chief Administrator is behind the program
- Conduct thorough backgrounds on all volunteer applicants. Recognize them for their contributions. Conduct regular meetings with volunteers to share program and agency expectations and solicit feedback.
- Coordinator should have 'people skills' and want to be involved with volunteers - this assignment is too important to assign it to someone who doesn't want to work with volunteers.
- Depending on where the volunteers are to be assigned, buy in from the unit commander is essential prior to assignment.
- Develop sound hiring and screening practices.
- Develop and commit to youth programs such as Police Explores and Police Camps. Organize and support Community Emergency Response Teams.
- Do complete backgrounds.
- Do it right at the beginning and it will pay dividends in the end.
- Do not bring on too many volunteers into your program. Take your time and determine what your needs are and an approximate number of volunteers needed to help. Otherwise, you will have volunteers who may have nothing, or not enough, to do.
- Do thorough background checks on volunteers.
- Don't accept just anyone. Maintain a high standard. Use quality, committed people.
- Don't assume anything. Unguided enthusiasm is dangerous.
- Don't forget to recognize your volunteers for the services they provide to your organization
- Don't let the liability issue(s) deter you!!!!
- Don't underestimate the capacity of and the skills that citizens can bring to your service.
- Education - provide adequate training to the volunteer.
- Embrace all volunteers as being a part of the team and show them how valuable they are to your department.
- Encourage volunteerism but make sure you offer something to do (e.g. training, activities, etc).
- Ensure orientation covers privacy issues and assign them supervision.
- Ensure the programs add value to the agency and the quality life.

- Ensure your day-to-day 'hands on' program coordinator is motivated and appreciates the value of volunteers.
- Find a good coordinator and set good policy
- Find ways to show your volunteers that you appreciate and value them.
- Follow existing best practices. Praise often publicly, counsel as needed privately. Give credit for success to the volunteer. Accept responsibility for failures yourself. Enjoy vicarious recognition through the direct recognition of your volunteers.
- Get all key stakeholders on board before starting to develop your volunteer program.
- Get on the bandwagon and start a volunteer program!
- Get people in your community to volunteer because it helps in closing the gap between the city and the citizens.
- Give them every bit of support they need and include them in everything you do.
- Give them meaningful work and recognize their efforts as true partners. You will reap tremendous value.
- Give your volunteers jobs that truly meet the needs of the community or the department, not just busy work.
- Good tool. It is a win-win.
- Have a person devoted specifically to the coordination of volunteer activities.
- Have a designated program manager, screen carefully, and match applicants to specific jobs.
- Have a formal process to recruit and process volunteers and document all volunteer activity.
- Have a full-time coordinator to make sure needs of the volunteers are met.
- Have a full-time professional volunteer administrator, paid well who has the support of the Chief.
- Have a large pool of volunteers to use in several functions. Volunteers have been found to be dependable; however, scheduling can be difficult if only a small number of volunteers are trained and ready when needed.
- Have a plan.
- Have a plan on how to use volunteers.
- Have a strong coordinator that will keep your volunteers motivated by offering trainings and other activities to keep them committed.
- Have a structure with policies and procedures. Have a strong leader who is patient and understanding.
- Have an approved Standard Operating Procedure in place prior to implementation.
- Have an organized program and ensure that you can keep your volunteers involved before recruiting.
- Have guidelines in place to accept only the most qualified and outstanding individuals.
- Have proper training outline the processes to be used. Remember they are doing a service for you for FREE! Be nice!
- Have something for them to do when they volunteer.
- Have them attend a Citizen Police Academy. Do thorough background checks.
- Have to keep their interest up.

- Have volunteer feel part of family.
- Having a Volunteer Administrator full-time. Volunteer management is key to a successful program.
- I would recommend that you have your policy and procedure in place at the very beginning of the program.
- If in a Union State, educate on the importance of volunteerism and community involvement...try to get contractual language added so you are not fighting each time you try to implement a program.
- If it is available use it.
- If you have a Citizen Academy, those graduates are the best volunteers.
- If you have sufficient personnel to administer the program, it is a very worthwhile investment.
- If you treat your volunteers well, they will be your best representatives to the community.
- Implement the program. Our active volunteers are priceless, not only for the work they do, but for their giving personalities.
- Important to select people with skills to provide necessary ingredients to provide additional services and perspective to the department's mission and goals.
- In the last two years, we have shared information about our successful and long time Citizens Patrol with some 25 agencies in the Northwest. Our program began in 1994 and has been well received by our officers, community and city.
- In these economic times volunteer police officers are a huge benefit. A police presence for community based programs at no charge to the program or the town is great. Training is essential to overt liability issues.
- In these times of manpower shortages and reduced budgets volunteers become a very important part of a department's overall plan to serve their communities. If you are going to have a volunteer program you must keep them involved or you will lose them.
- Invest in training your volunteers or the program will not be successful. If you do, they will produce invaluable results for the agency and community.
- Involve as many members of the community, across stakeholders groups and ages, to be part of the department's mission.
- It is a great tool to garner strong support within the community.
- It is worth exploring as it can be of value in terms of value obtained from volunteer services as well as aid in positive community relationships.
- It's a home run. Budget friendly and improves channels of communication with your customers.
- Keep a close watch and terminate problem people.
- Keep the lines of communication open and take the time to visit with them on a personal level.
- Keep up with retention and recruiting efforts.
- Keep volunteers actively involved.
- Keep volunteers engaged in the organization; seek creative ways to use volunteer talents.
- Like any resource/asset, volunteers require proper supervisory/management oversight which is best provided by a full-time staff member.
- Maintain accountability and control over volunteers using sworn personnel.

- Maintain continuous opportunities for meaningful work. Maintain continuous open relationship.
- Make as much use of volunteers as possible. Think outside the box.
- Make sure that the volunteers have plenty of contact with the line officers.
- Make sure you have a top notch coordinator overseeing the program.
- Make sure you pick the right employees to work with the volunteers and support the program. A simple thank you goes a long way.
- Make sure your volunteers are matched with a job that they are happy and comfortable with.
- Make the volunteers feel like than are truly a contributing member of the organization. Recognize each one personally for their contributions.
- Make them feel appreciated for their time and effort.
- Make volunteers understand that what they are doing is important to the department.
- Making sure your volunteers are trained in the job you need them to perform in.
- Manage closely.
- Need to be flexible. Also it is important to make your volunteers feel that they are part of your agency just as you would a paid employee. Your volunteers truly want to give back to your community and agency.
- Open communication between volunteers and police staff (sworn and non-sworn) and providing the volunteers a sense of 'belonging' to the agency.
- Our volunteers give us the opportunity to engage our community in positive ways we otherwise would be limited due to economic restraints, limited resources, etc. I believe our volunteer programs enhance our relationship with our community.
- Oversight and control.
- Patience.
- Perform an accurate cost savings analysis.
- Plan, usage, and organization-- get the right volunteer leaders.
- Plan your programs carefully and screen volunteers prior to inviting them to participate in any department activity.
- Police departments without volunteer programs are missing out on a valuable resource.
- Prepare the sworn employees. Managers'/supervisors' buy-in is important to the success. Articulate benefits of volunteers.
- Program must be well managed with clear policies and procedures. Return however, is significant.
- Provide a variety of tasks citizen volunteers can do.
- Provide face-to-face staff support with volunteers, rather than email and phone mail communication between staff and volunteers.
- Provide meaningful work for volunteers.
- Provide the necessary support and resources to the program/manager. Make sure that the VIPS program is involved in all levels of the police department.
- Publicly acknowledge their good work on a regular basis.
- Recognition and appreciation of your volunteers
- Recognize and reward volunteers. Appreciate their contributions.

- Recruit reserve officers. Provide them the same training regular certified officers attend. Equip them with all items and equipment certified officers carry. They are an asset to any department but specifically as backups to the certified officers.
- Recruit them through a Citizen's Academy.
- Recruit them, train them, and effectively use them on important work. Thank them.
- Recruitment and background checks.
- Recruit, retain, reward.
- Remain professional.
- Requires organization. Return on investment is well worth the effort.
- Research from other agencies to see what works and what does not.
- Reserve Police Officers provide excellent personnel for handling special events and assisting regular officers with routine patrol duties. Other citizen volunteers provide community insight and valuable recommendations to the Chief of Police.
- Reward volunteers, acknowledge their efforts and make sure that paid staff is familiar with all volunteers.
- Saves officer time, great community liaison, and ambassadors for the department.
- Screen applicants well with thorough background checks the same as sworn officers.
- Seek to employ volunteers in every area possible.
- Seek to use volunteers within your framework.
- Select appropriate volunteers.
- Select volunteers based upon their life experience and match up their talents to the needs of your agency. You get a better work product and a happier volunteer.
- Select your volunteers very wisely as they represent your agency. Do background checks.
- Set a target problem and involve a volunteer with experience in dealing with the target problem.
- Set policies that clarify responsibilities, mission and define lines of communication and accountability. Establish a structure for sound management. Establish values, beliefs, and directions for volunteer involvement
- Set specific guidelines for volunteer duties.
- Set up criteria and job descriptions prior to starting a program. Training, training, training.
- Show volunteers you value them and their time.
- Start a program today.
- Start with a good core group of volunteers.
- Structure and organization.
- Structure your program to the enjoyment of what your volunteers want to do.
- The program should be structured so that top management is aware and endorses the volunteer activities.
- The vast return is more than worth the effort of getting the program going and keeping it running.
- The volunteer needs to understand police and become part of the department but most important they must be able to keep everything confidential and be non-judgmental.

- The volunteers have provided a valuable service to our department by doing simple administrative type jobs, thereby freeing up paid employees to concentrate on more significant aspects of their job.
- There are volunteers out there, determine programs they can assist you with.
- These volunteers enhance the services provided and enable a better understanding within the community on public safety.
- They are willing to work, let them.
- Think outside of the box when thinking of ways to utilize volunteers.
- Thorough backgrounds are essential.
- Thorough background checks. The volunteers are a valuable asset as long as they are properly screened.
- To create highly structured and well organized programming that allows for sound screening and proper management.
- To have a good coordinator that has the time to devote to the program.
- To have a good set of standing operating procedures, oral interviews, training, vehicles, uniforms and equipment and time.
- Train them well, provide clear expectations and limitations, reward them with recognition.
- Train volunteers well. Keep them involved. Show appreciation.
- Trained volunteers can be an incredible asset.
- Training and finding new things for them to do.
- Training of volunteers for their duties and responsibilities.
- Training staff in the importance and value of volunteers is key. Also, there is no better pay to a volunteer than to be remembered and to hear 'thank you.'
Volunteers should be included in staff trainings and events.
- Training, training, and training.
- Treat a volunteer like a normal person.
- Treat them with dignity and respect.
- Use good people if you find them.
- Use incentives to attract and keep volunteers.
- Use it as much as possible.
- Use them.
- Use them when you get the opportunity.
- Use them, don't abuse them. But really check who you are getting.
- Utilize the talent and experience of the volunteers. Seek their advice. Also let them organize themselves and give them structure. We implemented a rank structure for the volunteers on patrol (City Watch). They love it and they do their own scheduling.
- Utilize them in as many aspects as you can, they have a wealth of knowledge.
- Utilize your community resources and have residents give back to their community by volunteering.
- Utilizing any resources that can assist or supplement our ability to accomplish our mission is imperative in these economic times.
- Utilize them whenever and wherever you can.
- Value added depends on effective supervision and direction.
- Very beneficial to department in achieving goals.
- Volunteers are a priceless asset when trained, utilized, and supported properly.

- Volunteers are a tremendous asset to any organization. They offer many talents and are willing to work countless hours to better the agency.
- Volunteers are a valued commodity. Ensure that they are used properly and to fullest effect by incorporating specific policies and procedures to the volunteer program and placing a dedicated staff member to oversee the volunteer effort.
- Volunteers are an important part of our Police Department.
- Volunteers are beneficial but you must have guidelines and training in place for them to be utilized effectively.
- Volunteers are crucial, especially in smaller communities. Must be adequately trained and equipped to do the job.
- Volunteers are one of the single most important community relations tools
- Volunteers are priceless and provide valuable skills and knowledge to our agency. Placing volunteers in areas where they are interested will bring great results to your agency and your volunteer program.
- Volunteers can do anything you train them for.
- Volunteers perform an important role in our agency, especially in these lean economic times.
- Volunteers tend to be enthusiastic and willing to help where ever there is a need.
- Volunteers that are required to go through selection processes and background investigations are hard to find. Those who are not willing to be vetted should not be used.
- We could not operate our small department without our volunteer program. They are an excellent resource and provide many services we do not have paid personnel to perform.
- We 'hire' and 'terminate', as well as evaluate, and hold our volunteers to the same high standards and ethics as the commissioned staff. We do not have 'warm body' volunteers. Each member is carefully interviewed, with a complete background investigation.
- What you put into the program is what you get out.
- With volunteers the positives outweigh the negative.
- You have to have a well-defined program supported throughout the agency.

Part IV. Products and Resources

What other resources or tools would you like to see the VIPS Program create to help develop/enhance volunteer opportunities at your agency? (Responses have not been edited or summarized except for spelling and formatting to this report.)

- A guide to provide assistance with volunteer recognition programs, specifically the President's Lifetime Award for Volunteerism
- A standard application/background for volunteers
- Funding resources.
- Funding sources/support.
- Funding/Grant programs both nationally and at state levels, with application/contact information.
- Grant funding for opportunities to host more Citizens Academy courses and VIPS training.
- Grants.
- How to apply for equipment grants.
- If VIPS can somehow incorporate a national database to track Reserve Hours, like the Presidential Volunteer Service Awards service, that would work in conjunction with the PVSA but be much less time consuming to do entries.
- MS Access Database Template for tracking assignment, training, and skill set of volunteers.
- None- Putting something here would be agreeing to budgetary consideration and I believe things should be kept local.
- Resource page/brochure that lists funding or grant opportunities.
- Safe Haven Programs.
- Train the trainer programs for volunteers.
- VIPS related apparel.
- Volunteer management and tracking software comparisons.
- Volunteer programs and police unions working together.
- We are currently in the process of enhancing our volunteer program; therefore, we would like more information on training and implementation.