



# Volunteer Handbook

Effective January 2026

# Message from the City Manager

Dear Volunteers,

On behalf of the City of Mesquite, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to you for choosing to serve our community. Volunteers like you represent the very best of our city, the spirit of generosity, compassion, and commitment that strengthens neighborhoods and improves lives.

Every hour you dedicate, every skill you share, and every act of service you provide makes a real difference. Whether you are helping at a community event, supporting local programs, or lending a hand to a neighbor in need, your contribution helps us build a stronger, more connected, and more resilient city.

This handbook is designed to give you the tools, information, and guidance you need to succeed in your role as a volunteer. But beyond policies and procedures, I hope it also reminds you that your work is valued and deeply appreciated. You are not just giving your time, you are shaping the future of our community.

Thank you for being a vital part of our mission to make Mesquite a place where everyone can thrive. We are proud to serve alongside you.

With appreciation,



Cliff Keheley,  
City Manager, ICMA-CM

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### City Contact Information

<b>Main Line</b>	<b>972-288-7711</b>
<b>Animal Shelter</b>	<b>972-216-6283</b>
<b>Arts Center</b>	<b>972-216-6444</b>
<b>Code Enforcement</b>	<b>972-329-8704</b>
<b>Fire</b>	<b>972-216-6267</b>
<b>Historic Mesquite, Inc.</b>	<b>972-216-6468</b>
<b>Keep Mesquite Beautiful</b>	<b>972-329-8331</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>972-216-6220</b>
<b>Municipal Court</b>	<b>972-216-6206</b>
<b>Police (non-emergency)</b>	<b>972-285-6336</b>
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	<b>972-216-6260</b>

**Volunteer Services**  
**1616 N. Galloway Ave.**  
**Mesquite, Texas 75149**  
**972-216-6473**

## Introduction

City of Mesquite volunteer opportunities are open to residents and community members age 18 and older. We welcome individuals who are committed to giving their time, skills, and passion in service to others. We appreciate your willingness to serve and look forward to partnering with you to make a positive impact in our community. The City of Mesquite volunteer policies are based on the policies used by the City of Mesquite to govern its employees. Any questions or needs for interpretation of these policies should be directed at the volunteer coordinator or department director.

### **Equal Employment Statement Equal Opportunity Employer**

The City of Mesquite provides equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran in accordance with applicable federal laws. In addition, the city complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the city has facilities. These same terms apply to volunteers.

### **Hostile Work Environment/Sexual Harassment/Racial Discrimination**

Volunteers shall be courteous to members of the public, employees and other volunteers. Volunteers shall refrain from yelling, shouting or using verbally abusive or offensive/profane language toward a citizen, employee or other volunteer. Disagreements between volunteers and other volunteers or city staff should be directed at the volunteer supervisor or department director. Volunteers shall refrain from discussing religion, politics or other controversial subjects and shall not express prejudice or discrimination concerning race, religion, politics, national origin, lifestyle, cultural biases, or personality characteristics while serving for the City.

Volunteers shall refrain from unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature constitute sexual harassment. Sexual harassment occurs when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's volunteer status. Sexual harassment also occurs when the submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for volunteer status.

Volunteers will immediately report any observations or instances of discourteous behavior, sexual harassment, racial discrimination or acts creating a hostile volunteer or work environment.

## **Drug-Free Environment**

The City of Mesquite is committed to maintaining a safe, secure, healthy and productive environment for all volunteers, and to ensure the safe and efficient delivery of services to Mesquite residents. To maintain a drug-free environment, the city prohibits any volunteer from participating in the following actions during operating hours:

- Unlawful or unauthorized: manufacturing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or transferring illegal drugs, alcohol, inhalants, drug paraphernalia or any controlled substance.
- Attempting to sell/transfer, storing, dispensing, possessing, using, or being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, inhalants, drug paraphernalia or a controlled substance.
- The use or misuse of medication that adversely affects job performance, safety, security, and/or property. These medications include prescriptions, inhalants and over-the-counter medicine.

## **Background Checks and Drug Screenings**

All volunteers who will enter and utilize city buildings and equipment as a part of their volunteer assignment must undergo a criminal background check. Volunteers who drive a city vehicle must pass a drug screening and undergo a motor vehicle review.

## **Intellectual Property Policy**

Property intellectual or otherwise developed by volunteers for or in relation to any City of Mesquite program, becomes the property of the City of Mesquite.

## **Talent Release**

By registering as a volunteer, the city has the right to capture, reproduce, edit and distribute broadcast audio or visual media of the volunteer without payment of fees.

## **Resignation/Termination**

Volunteers are free to resign at any time for any reason. Volunteers are encouraged to notify their supervisor or the City's Volunteer Coordinator.

The City may terminate the service of a volunteer at any time for any reason. Violations of policies will be documented prior to termination.

## Volunteer Policies

### **Customer Service Standards**

Volunteers are expected to provide a high-level of customer service at all times to both citizens and employees. The City expects all volunteers to adhere to the City's dedication to serving citizens and employees with respect and professionalism at all times.

### **Dress Code**

The City of Mesquite is committed to upholding a positive and professional image while delivering exceptional services to the public. Individual departments will have standards for volunteers based on the responsibilities of the volunteer. In general, all clothing is to be clean and free of tears or rips. Shoes and footwear should be neat and clean in appearance. Volunteers working outside should wear close toed shoes. T-Shirts, hats, and other items should be free of political advertising or statements, offensive language or statements and any images or language that do not reflect the values of the community. This requirement is not intended to preclude cultural or religious customs.

### **Use of City Equipment or Property**

Volunteers will respect City equipment and property at all times. Equipment should be used properly and safely. Property should only be accessed as directed and should be protected from damage. Volunteers should not remove equipment from City property without prior authorization for use while volunteering. The personal use of City equipment or property is strictly prohibited.

### **Speaking to the Media**

Volunteers will refrain from contacting media or speaking with the media while actively serving the City. Any media inquiries should be directed to the volunteer supervisor or department director. Volunteers will be alerted prior to the appearance of media at any City event or function. If volunteers are requested to appear on camera, the appearance will be pre-arranged and the volunteer will be notified.

### **Social Media**

Volunteers will refrain from posting information about City programs or operations on social media. Volunteers may post information about their service and "check-in" at volunteer sites.

Volunteers posting derogatory or negative information during the course of their service will be terminated from the program.

## **Reporting Hours**

The City of Mesquite utilizes Better Impact Volunteer Software, MyImpactPage.com to assist volunteers with recording and tracking their volunteer hours. Volunteers are responsible for recording their own hours in Better Impact. Volunteers who volunteer more than once a quarter is required to register through Better Impact.

Volunteers are provided with unique usernames and a password to access their individual volunteer portals. For more information, bi-annual volunteer trainings are offered both in-person and virtually. Additionally, volunteers may also watch instructional videos at <https://www.betterimpact.tv> or utilize the 24-hour a day chat on Better Impact. Volunteer Administrative Liaisons and the Volunteer Coordinator can available to assist volunteers monitor and input their volunteer hours.

## **Grounds for Rejection or Discontinuance**

Although not intended to be an exhaustive list, examples for grounds of rejection or discontinuance of volunteer service include, but are not limited to:

1. Violation of the City's policies, procedures, and volunteer handbook.
2. Inability of the applicant to perform the essential duties of the job due to medical, psychological, or physical impairments, even with reasonable accommodations.
3. Failure to meet the City's driving requirements for those positions which require the operation of equipment in the performance of their duties.
4. Conviction, deferred adjudication, or placement on probation for a felony or crime other than traffic violations where such history represents a risk to the City of Mesquite or where such history is in conflict with the responsibilities and duties of the volunteer service.

Such rejection or discontinuance may occur at any time in the volunteer process.

## **Injury and Accident Procedure**

The City of Mesquite strives to maintain a safe working environment. It is important for volunteers to:

- Understand the duties and functions assigned to the volunteer
- Know the layout of the facility, emergency exits and areas that can be accessed by a volunteer
- Familiarize themselves with operating equipment and utilization of safety features
- Attend any all training and orientation settings for position
- Know the volunteer supervisor, department director and how to contact them

- Know the procedures for reporting volunteer hours
- Complete all forms for background checks and emergency contact information
- Adhere to all applicable local, state, and federal laws, while acting on behalf of the City

All accidents and injuries must be reported immediately, no matter how minor the incident may appear. If a volunteer is injured while serving with the City of Mesquite or involved in an accident with a city-owned vehicle, it must be reported immediately to the city staff. The supervisor should also be contacted right away. In case of a vehicular accident, volunteers should contact 911 and state they are a volunteer with the City.

All volunteer injuries and claims are covered through the Texas Municipal Risk Pool Health Insurance. Volunteers should not use their personal health insurance. Care may be sought at any local hospital or urgent care facility.

Volunteers involved in an accident with a city-owned vehicle must remain at the scene until cleared by staff and will submit to required drug and alcohol testing.

Volunteers should maintain current emergency contact information with the Volunteer Coordinator. If your emergency contact information changes, notify Volunteer Services to update your records.

All volunteers are encouraged to carry a Risk Management Pocket Guide at all times. This guide is provided when you begin volunteering and can be picked up at the Volunteer Services Office.

For full policies regarding injuries and accidents, refer to the [City of Mesquite General Government Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 13, Section III–X](#). Physical copies of these policies can be requested from Volunteer Services or electronic copies can be provided upon request. Additional safety guidelines for volunteers can also be found in Appendix A.

## Youth Volunteers

Youth volunteers are welcome to participate in all City volunteer programs, including seasonal and special events. Parent or guardian permission is required. The City of Mesquite is launching a separate Youth Volunteer program in Spring 2026 for residents under the age of 18. More information will be available in the Youth Volunteer Handbook.

## Age Requirements

To volunteer at the Mesquite Animal Shelter, individuals must be at least 18 years of age unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Additionally, participation requires completion of a safety orientation conducted by Animal Services prior to the start of service. Service in the Mesquite Fire Corps requires residents to first complete the Mesquite Citizens Fire Academy, and membership in the Mesquite Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (MCPAAA) requires successful completion of the Mesquite Citizens Police Academy. Both organizations also require a minimum age of 18. Please note that volunteer organizations may have additional criteria, which will be reviewed and verified during the application process.

## Court-Mandated Community Services Hours

The City of Mesquite does not accept court-ordered community service hours. You may download a list of agencies in Mesquite that will accept court-ordered community service hours.

## Special Events

All volunteers for special events must complete a Special Events Volunteer Form. Failure to complete a form nullifies coverage under the City's insurance and liability.

Corporate groups are welcome and encouraged to volunteer with the City of Mesquite. Corporate or group volunteers must coordinate with Volunteer Services to identify an appropriate volunteer project. To allow sufficient time for planning, project scoping, and coordination, groups are strongly encouraged to make contact at least 45 days in advance of their desired volunteer date.

Middle and High School groups are also welcome to participate in City of Mesquite volunteer opportunities. School groups must coordinate with Volunteer Services to identify a suitable project and are encouraged to do so at least 45 days in advance to allow for proper planning and preparation. In addition, all school group volunteer activities must follow Texas Education Agency guidelines regarding student to teacher or chaperone ratios to ensure the safety and supervision of participating students.

# Appendix A

## Safety Guidelines for Volunteers

All volunteers must read and show an understanding of these basic safety guidelines. Any questions should be referred to the department volunteer coordinator. This information focuses on the common hazards volunteers might encounter each day across all work functions. Avoid horseplay, follow all instructions and procedures, and use provided equipment as instructed. If the volunteer activity requires special procedures and training, the department volunteer coordinator will provide additional training.

### **Slips, Trips and Falls**

To help prevent slips:

- Wear appropriate footwear
- Look for wet or slippery surfaces
- Watch for smooth floor surfaces or a change in walking surfaces.
- Clean spills as soon as possible; a sign should be used to warn others until cleanup is completed.

To help prevent trips:

- Watch for changes in floor elevation.
- Keep equipment out of walkways and keep desk/file drawers closed when not in use.
- Secure or tape down extension cords.
- Use handrails when going up or down stairs.
- Avoid carrying anything that you cannot see over.

To help prevent falls:

- Always use a ladder or step stool.
- Use “three-point contact” when climbing a ladder.
- Never stand on a chair or box, or the top three rungs of a ladder.

### **Body Mechanics**

Keys to safe lifting:

- Do not try to lift more than you are able.
- Use the tip test to determine if the object is too heavy.
- Keep your back straight, bend at your knees (not at your waist).
- Pull load close to your body.

- Let your legs do the lifting.
- Turn your feet and body, avoid twisting your back.
- It is just as important how you lower the object as how you lift it.
- Ask for assistance, if needed.

Material handling:

- Use a cart or dolly to move objects instead of carrying them.
- It is better to push carts than to pull them.

### **Clothing and Personal Protective Equipment**

Clothing and personal protective equipment provide protection from health and safety hazards that cannot be practically removed from the work environment. Be mindful of loose fabric or clothing, long hair, and jewelry that may get caught in machinery. Dress properly for the task, activity and work environment. Examples include:

- Safety glasses for flying objects
- Work gloves for sharp objects or irritating substances
- Safety vests in traffic control areas

The department you are volunteering with will discuss any equipment needs.

## Appendix B

### Code Of Conduct for Volunteers

As representatives of the City, volunteers are expected to uphold standards that promote safety, integrity, inclusiveness, and public trust. This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for behavior, communication, and ethical decision-making while serving in any volunteer capacity. This completed form is required to participate as a volunteer.

I will:

1. Be of service to Mesquite citizens and the community.
2. Adhere to all applicable local, state, and federal laws, while acting on behalf of the City, including all laws and regulations that govern appropriate conduct in the workplace.
3. Be punctual and accept supervision graciously.
4. Conduct myself with dignity, courtesy, and consideration.
5. Not discriminate and shall be respectful of ethnic, national, and cultural differences.
6. Maintain confidential information.
7. Interpret volunteer to mean that I have agreed to work without pay. I will try to make my work of the highest quality, just as the paid staff are expected to do their work.
8. Promise to bring an attitude of open- mindedness to my work. I will be non-judgmental. I am willing to receive training and will show interest and attention.
9. Not harass, bully or mistreat staff or other volunteers.
10. Believe that my attitude toward volunteer work should be professional. I believe that I have an obligation to my work, to those who supervise me, to my fellow workers, and to those who benefit from my services. I will uphold the traditions and standards of City of Mesquite and will interpret them to the community at large.
11. Report violations or suspected violations of Code of Conduct. Violations should be reported to the assigned staff, their manager, or [Volunteers@cityofmesquite.com](mailto:Volunteers@cityofmesquite.com).
12. Notify my supervisor or lead staff if I want to end my assignment.

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to abide by the Mesquite Volunteers Code of  
(Print Name)  
Conduct.

Volunteer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pleas return signed form to Volunteer Services at [Volunteers@cityofmesquite.com](mailto:Volunteers@cityofmesquite.com) or Volunteer Services Office, Community Services Building, 1616 North Galloway, Mesquite, TX 75149.**