



DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Issuance Date: **January 1, 2022**

Volunteer Time Off Program

1. **Purpose.** The City of Milwaukee is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents, businesses, and employees in our community. The purpose of the volunteer time off program is to further that mission by giving employees the opportunity to volunteer during paid work time to support City of Milwaukee causes, charities, and nonprofits that serve the Milwaukee community residents.
2. **Eligibility.** All Full-Time Employees who are not represented by a bargaining unit in the Fire and Police Departments are eligible to participate in this program after six months from their hire date. Employees will be ineligible if they have received a disciplinary action within 6 months of the date of the request to volunteer, are on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), or on a leave of absence of any kind. This program does not cover employees that volunteer at City of Milwaukee sponsored events as part of their job duties or with supervisory approval.
3. **Conduct.** While volunteering under this program, employees are representatives of the City of Milwaukee. As such, during volunteer time, employees are subject to City of Milwaukee work rules, policies and procedures.
4. **Safety.** Employees must be physically fit and mentally capable of performing the volunteer activity they choose. Employees are not allowed to participate in any activity which would potentially cause them injury. If employees find themselves in situations or environments that are unsafe they should immediately notify the supervisor/manager at the volunteer site and possibly cease the volunteer activity if the safety hazard is not mitigated.
5. **Amount of Time.** Eligible employees will receive a maximum of eight (8) hours paid leave to volunteer and serve at City of Milwaukee community organizations. The eight hours do not need to be used at one volunteer event or in one day. There is no minimum increment of paid volunteer time. The paid volunteer time must be performed during the employee's normal working hours. Travel time is not included in the 8 hours of paid leave. The time cannot be counted as hours worked for the purpose of overtime. The time will be refreshed at the beginning of each fiscal year. The time cannot be accrued or carried over into the following year, and will not be paid out if unused. Time should be entered using pay code VOL and account code 9900.

6. Program Procedure. Eligible employees are able to use the time to serve and volunteer at a local cause, charity, or nonprofit event or activity located within the City of Milwaukee. The event or activity must be sponsored by a 501(c)(3) registered nonprofit in good standing or Milwaukee Public Schools. Participation is voluntary.

a. An employee must complete a Volunteer Form and submit the form to his or her supervisor for approval with reasonable advance notice (typically at least a week) of the proposed time off to volunteer.

b. The time off will be scheduled in the same manner as vacation. Approval is within the discretion of the supervisor, based on the business and operational needs of the department. In the event that the proposed time-off conflicts with the business and operational needs of the department, the supervisor may suggest alternate dates that the employee may use the volunteer time.

c. After an employee volunteers at the event, the employee shall submit a verification form and supporting documentation to his or her supervisor to confirm the date and time spent volunteering.

d. Questions regarding employee eligibility shall be referred to the departmental personnel officer.

7. Restrictions. The employee may not use volunteer time for any of the following

- a sports team or event;
- political purposes;
- elections (covered by a separate policy);
- religious purposes where the only recipients of the service are the constituents of the church (e.g. painting and maintenance of church buildings, evangelism, serving on the church Board, etc.); restrictions do not include an event that has a connection to a religious organization but the purpose is to meet human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs (e.g. food pantry, soup kitchen, clothing drive, etc.)
- an organization that discriminates based on creed, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, or any other legally protected classification

8. Volunteer Opportunities. The community service and volunteerism employee resource group may coordinate group volunteer events for employees who wish to participate. The ERG will share volunteer opportunities with departmental personnel officers for distribution. Information on local volunteer opportunities can be found here: <https://www.unitedwaygmwc.org/Volunteer>

9. Discontinuance. The City reserves the right to modify, amend, suspend, or discontinue this program at any time. If an employee does not comply with the provisions of this policy, the employee will not be allowed to participate in the volunteer program and may not be compensated for the time (up to 8 hours) spent volunteering.