

INTRODUCTION

9030

(No. 7 May 2001)

The Volunteers In Prevention (VIP) program is an integral part of CDF's fire prevention and public education program. Volunteer activities complement the information, education, engineering and law enforcement components of CDF.

VOLUNTEERS IN PREVENTION (VIP) PROGRAM

9030.1

(No. 7 May 2001)

CDF initiated the VIP program on July 1, 1980. The program was authorized by the California State Government Volunteers' Act enacted by SB 1950 (1978). The bill added Government Code Chapter 8.5, Section 3110, Division 4 of Title 1 and a ruling to include volunteers under Labor Code Section 3363.5 was made.

CDF involves and utilizes individual citizens and public service groups to promote public safety education. VIPs assist CDF in the prevention of the ignition and initial spread of unwanted, human-caused fires, with emphasis upon the prevention of large, damaging fires.

On their own initiative, minor and adult VIPs provide goods or services without any financial gain. Volunteers do not replace paid employees; instead, their efforts supplement and extend the services of CDF.

Cdf Employees Volunteering For The Volunteer In Prevention Program

CDF paid employees may volunteer to participate in a VIP program as a volunteer only under the following circumstances:

- outside of the employee's regular duty hours and (only one of the following);
- if the employee is eligible to be paid overtime under the appropriate MOU and/or Personnel Procedure Handbook for the time spent as a VIP, such overtime work must be previously approved pursuant to CDF policy, or;
- the employee is volunteering to perform work that does not fall within the scope of his/her duties as a paid CDF employee.

Examples:

- An Office Technician who is not associated with nor assigned Office Technician duties in the VIP program may volunteer to drive a vehicle in a Red Flag Alert Program.
- A Fire Apparatus Engineer may volunteer as an amateur radio operator in a VIP program.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

(No. 8 November 2005)

9030.2

A CDF employee directs and supervises volunteers in the following activities:

1. Fire and life safety education

- conduct fire safety and prevention education programs, such as, team teaching and poster contests at the pre-school and elementary school level
- prepare and present fire prevention exhibits and displays at fairs, parades, and other events with significant public contacts
- assist fire prevention and public education clerical and support staff on special projects or during emergencies
- conduct bilingual fire and life safety education programs

2. Public information and education.

- assist CDF personnel at incident information centers as information officers
- prepare and disseminate fire and life safety education materials, information materials, routine news releases, and other materials to the public and media
- develop fire and life safety materials, perform special project duties, and participate in research projects
- assist CDF information officers in the preparation, and dissemination, of news releases to the media

3. Wildland occupant firesafe program.

- perform inspections for compliance with all applicable federal, state and local forest and fire laws, codes and ordinances (i.e. uniform fire code, window bar safety, wildland and building fire safety inspections, fire extinguishers, fireworks) and issuing burning permits

4. Red flag, holiday and arson patrols.
 - patrol selected hazardous areas in marked vehicles, aircraft, or lookouts during severe fire weather, provide public fire prevention contacts, arson deterrents, and early detection of wildland fires
5. Supplemental communications networks.
 - supplement and assist CDF with amateur radio communication networks during emergencies, providing additional frequencies and radio-telephone capabilities to CDF

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

9030.3

(No. 7 May 2001)

Many volunteer recruitment sources exist in each county. These recruitment sources can assist in the advertising, recruiting, interviewing and screening of volunteer applicants. A partial list of sources includes:

- county or city volunteer bureaus
- local colleges and universities
- social, civic, professional, and fraternal organizations
- religious organizations
- newspaper community bulletin boards
- county voluntary action centers
- property and homeowners' associations

ENLISTING VOLUNTEERS

9030.4

(No. 7 May 2001)

CDF requires volunteers to read, understand, complete, and submit a "CDF Volunteer In Prevention Service Agreement" ([Form CDF-670](#)). Furthermore, the CDF-670 lists other department forms that are necessary. The volunteer and the CDF VIP Coordinator must sign the CDF-670. CDF's Intranet offers the CDF-670 as an automated form. The administrative unit maintains current records for all VIPs.

If CDF is unable to utilize a prospective volunteer, the volunteer should be referred to other local volunteer groups. Common sense and reasonableness guides the selection of volunteers. Not all applicants are suitable for this type of volunteer assignment.

TIME REPORTING AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS

9030.5

(No. 7 May 2001)

CDF requires attendance records for volunteers. Dates, number of hours, and activities worked each month are necessary in records. Work experience documentation is important to qualify a volunteer for civil service examinations, workers' compensation insurance, state liability, and reimbursement for travel expenses. Form CDF-681 Standard Time and Attendance Report may be used or a facsimile time sheet to record hours and type of work performed. The administrative unit retains attendance reports for the tenure of the VIP. The unit provides record copies to volunteers.

VEHICLE USE

9030.6

(No. 7 May 2001)

For the purpose of Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage, CDF deems volunteers to be employees. In the case of job-incurred injuries, volunteers are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance, just as any other employee.

Volunteers must complete "Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business Certification" Form (Std. 261). VIPs will comply with SAM 0753 and 0754 when using their private vehicles. VIPs will possess a current Defensive Driving Certificate before operating a CDF vehicle, or private vehicle on state business.

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

9030.7

(No. 7 May 2001)

CDF reimburses volunteers for vehicle use and approved out-of-pocket expenses. CDF pays volunteers the same per diem and travel rates that are paid to state employees.

Each fiscal year, the CDF Sacramento Headquarters Public Education Office requests a blanket exception from the Department of Personnel Administration (DPA). Volunteers cannot be reimbursed for expenses until the annual exception is approved. The exception approval spells out the reimbursement restrictions.

Travel expense claims must identify the claimant as a Volunteer In Prevention, his/her specific activity and its benefit to the state. (Note: do not use the acronym "VIP"; DPA requires it to be spelled out). Travel expense claim forms must include the statement "PER DPA BLANKET EXCEPTION". DPA mandates CDF to follow rules and regulations to complete and process travel expense claims.

Volunteers' travel expense claims are subject to DPA audit and must be readily available.

UNIFORMS

9030.8

(No. 7 May 2001)

When representing CDF, volunteers will adhere to the following standards:

Shirts

All VIPs will wear a dark blue polo shirt with a VIP patch embroidered in the left breast pocket area and a nametag on the right pocket area. It is the responsibility of the VIP coordinator in each unit to issue the shirts on a loan slip basis, to track which VIPs have shirts and retrieve the shirts when a VIP becomes inactive, and to see that their VIPs wear them whenever participating in a CDF function. VIPs should be directed to NOT wear the shirts when they are not performing VIP functions

The Sacramento Headquarters Public Education Office will purchase the initial quantity of shirts as requested by each VIP Coordinator, see exhibit [VIP Uniform Shirts](#), for all active VIPs and a limited amount of extras. Each unit will be financially responsible for the purchase of all additional shirts.

All shirts will meet the following specifications:

- Dark blue / navy (no royal, light or teal blues)
- 100% cotton – pre-shrunk
- 7.0 ounce heavyweight interlock sport shirt
- Welt collar and cuffs
- Top-centered placket with two wood-tone buttons

Pants

All VIPs will wear dark, navy blue pants or dark blue jeans. Pants must be clean and neat. Pants are the responsibility of the VIP.

Name Tags

All VIPs will be issued a standard dark blue CDF name tag with the CDF logo, the VIP's name and unit affiliation. The name tag will be worn over the right breast pocket area. The unit will provide nametags. (Name tags are available through Norco Conservation Camp.)

Belts

A plain black belt will be worn as part of the VIP uniform.

Caps/hats

Due to the sunny/warm conditions VIPs often work in, VIPs may wear a plain, solid color navy blue, baseball-style cap with the approved VIP logo sewn on it. Caps are the financial responsibility of the VIP. The unit will provide Patches.

Vests

VIPs will no longer wear Green vests. The unit chiefs have the option of providing dark blue vests with a VIP logo in the left breast pocket area and a standard dark blue CDF nametag with the CDF logo, the VIP's name and unit affiliation over the right breast pocket area. If vests are used, VIPs must wear a clean white shirt under the vest and will adhere to all other VIP uniform standards. Each unit will be financially responsible for the purchase of vests.

Special Uniforms

Occasionally, special uniforms/shirts will be provided for specific events (i.e. Special Olympics, state or county fairs, etc.).

The CDF Uniform

With unit chief approval, a VIP may wear the CDF blue work uniform per CDF Uniform Policy (1000 Handbook, [Section 1500](#)). The uniform will be worn ONLY with a VIP patch on each shoulder (NO CDF PATCHES). Uniform purchase will be the responsibility of the VIP.

Badges

When necessary (i.e. for LE-38 inspections), and at the unit chief's discretion and expense if the unit has no badges, a VIP may be issued a badge for the duration of a specific activity. A loan slip is required when badges are issued. Badges will be returned when the specific activity ends. Badges will only be worn by VIPs wearing the approved CDF uniform (not on vests or polo shirts).

Nomex

If a unit elects to issue Nomex to VIPs, the Nomex will include a tag on the right breast pocket identifying that person as a Volunteer In Prevention. Nomex is not appropriate at public functions including fairs, parades, and exhibits.

Jackets/Coats

A plain, clean, neat jacket or coat may be worn over the VIP polo shirt or plain shirt if using the VIP vest; however, no jackets or coats will be worn that endorse a company, product, club or organization.

Lapel Pins

A maximum of two (2) lapel pins -- the VIP service award pin and a CDF logo pin – may be worn on either the VIP polo shirt, vest, hat/cap, or jacket/coat. No other pins, clips, or other logos will be worn.

Identification Cards

Volunteers will receive a VIP identification card (CDF-FC-62) signed by the unit chief. To prevent unauthorized use of the card, a two-year expiration date will be noted on the card. The ID card will be collected when a volunteer's commitment is terminated. ID cards are available from the Sacramento HQ Public Education Office and are printed at Deuel Vocational Institute (DVI).

SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

9030.9

(No. 7 May 2001)

The Fire Prevention Specialist supervises VIPs. Occasionally, volunteers may be assigned to a supervisor for the duration of a project. The supervisor may be either a CDF employee or a lead volunteer. CDF employees will treat volunteers as they would any fellow employee.

TRAINING

9030.10

(No. 7 May 2001)

Volunteers will receive the following types of training before being assigned any duties:

- read and understand Handbook 9000, Section 9030
- overview of programs and services provided by CDF
- work area and facility familiarization
- staff introduction and their role in the unit
- orientation to dress standards, telephone usage, parking, equipment, and work hours
- specific skill training for project
- CDF safety rules and standards
- defensive driving

Documentation of all VIP training is required on the approved CDF form or software. CDF requires staff to receive the following orientation and training before working with volunteers:

- CDF volunteer policy and operating guidelines
- volunteer management

- staff's role in working with volunteers
- why people volunteer

VOLUNTEER EVALUATION

9030.11

(No. 7 May 2001)

When documentation is required to effect change, volunteers need to be evaluated. This evaluation will be completed on the state's Individual Development Plan (IDP) form. VIP evaluations can reduce volunteer turnover and burnout, as well as providing insight into more effective volunteer management. In addition, it gives volunteers the opportunity to evaluate and comment on the program, or programs, in which they have been involved.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

9030.12

(No. 7 May 2001)

Recognition is an important part of a volunteer program. The recognition of groups, activities and individuals reduces turnover and provides incentive and motivation. The recognition of volunteer efforts will be an ongoing part of the program. Volunteer recognition efforts may include the following:

- formal recognition/training sessions
- certificates (one nomination per unit per year can be made for the Director's Outstanding Volunteer In Prevention award)
- recognition in the media
- nomination for a local, regional, or national award
- letters of appreciation or commendation
- attendance at special events or training courses
- promotion within the volunteer structure
- providing increased responsibility
- giving praise
- soliciting input and suggestions from volunteers
- letter of recommendation for employment

TERMINATING A VOLUNTEER

9030.13

(No. 7 May 2001)

Sometimes it is necessary to terminate a volunteer. The reasons for termination may be the same as for any state employee. Common sense and reasonableness should be the rule when considering the termination of a volunteer. In all cases, document the reasons and discuss them with the volunteer. Retaining a volunteer who is unsuited for the job will only lower volunteer morale and cause problems with the paid staff.

VIP ANNUAL REPORT

9030.14

(No. 7 May 2001)

The Ignition Management Plan (annual report) for each unit, or other administrative unit having a VIP program, is due in Region Headquarters on March 1st of each year. The format for this report is available in Handbook 9000, [Section 9050](#), Ignition Management Plan. Use of the VIP personnel and program activity software to prepare the annual report and to track program activity is recommended.

AIR PATROL, DETECTION, AND SURVEILLANCE

9030.15

(No. 7 May 2001)

Volunteer air patrols may be utilized during red flag conditions, during holiday patrols, when specific detection needs have been determined (e.g. after a passing lightning storm) or during investigations as surveillance vehicles. All pilots and aircraft will meet the standards and requirements set forth by SAM 0745, 0749, DPA Regulation 599.628, and the CDF [Aviation Management Procedures Handbook 8300](#).

Each pilot must complete the "Permit to Operate Privately Owned Aircraft on State Business" (Form INS 38) and submit this form through the unit to the Office of Insurance and Risk Management, Department of General Services, before expenses can be reimbursed. The Department of General Services will notify CDF and the pilot 30 days prior to the expiration of the pilot's insurance policy. Pilots may be reimbursed for the use of their aircraft in one of the following manners:

- air statute mile established by DPA
- direct fuel replacement from a contract vendor or, if not applicable, CDF may issue a purchase document to a noncontract vendor
- actual and necessary expenses for aircraft landing and, when at a field other than their home field, parking fees when substantiated by a voucher
- mileage and expense reimbursement should be claimed on "Travel Expense Claim" ([Form Std 262](#))

Listing of Exhibits/Forms

1. [CDF-670](#) "Volunteer In Prevention Application and Service Agreement"
2. Federal Form I-9 "Employment Eligibility Verification"
3. Std. 261 "Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business"
4. [CDF-31](#) "Emergency Notification Information"
5. CDF-681 Attendance and Program Time Report (or a facsimile time sheet to record hours and type of work performed)
6. [Exhibit VIP Uniform Shirts](#) List of initial VIP shirt quantities requested by field VIP Coordinators to be paid for by CDF Public Education, Sacramento Headquarters.

(see next section)

(see HB Table of Contents)

(see Forms or Forms Samples)