

# BATH POLICE DEPARTMENT

## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



*Bath Police Department  
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**VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICY**

# Welcome!!

Thank you for becoming involved in our police volunteer program. From the Chief down through the patrol officers, as well as all of the administrative staff, we want to welcome you to the Bath Police Department.

Your participation in this program is very important to us, and we look forward to getting to know each of you better. You will receive training prior to receiving your assignments and we welcome any feedback and questions you might have.

As a result of our volunteers, the officers are able to concentrate on other important matters that will help Bath to remain a safe place to live. We are proud of our volunteers and appreciate all the work they provide the department.

We hope this handbook will help you to feel more comfortable with us. It will give you a description of our program, some of your tasks and our policies and procedures as well as training practices.

Once again, thank you for becoming part of the Bath Police Volunteers Program. We are sure you will find the Bath Police Department a good place to volunteer.

Sincerely,

Andrew M. Booth  
Chief of Police

## **Program Overview**

The Bath Police Department utilizes volunteers to enhance existing police services and improve the efficiency of the organization.

The Police Volunteer program is for citizens who wish to volunteer their time as non-sworn, non-paid members of the Department. Volunteers are not sworn and do not have any authority or duties that would consider them a police officer. They assist the department in non-law enforcement related tasks oriented towards our community policing efforts.

We value regular commitment to this program. Participation is important but we are flexible and accommodating for all our volunteers to ensure they participate when and where they can based upon their schedule, training, and abilities.

As volunteers, you will learn more about our department. The Bath Police Department is a highly structured department that falls under the Chain of Command as described below.

## **Chain of Command**

As a structured organization, the Bath Police Department requires that all volunteers recognize and utilize the proper chain of command department wide. The chain of command is the process in which our organization works within its ranks.

This department's structure is organized under the following:

**Chief of Police**

**Deputy Chief**

**Patrol Division: Sergeants, Corporals, Patrol Officers**

**Criminal Investigations Division: Detective Sergeant, Detectives, School Resource Officer**

# **Special Services: Parking Enforcement Officer, Animal Control Officer, Crossing Guard, Harbormaster, Records/Data Clerks, Receptionist, Administrative Assistant**

## **History of Bath Police Volunteers Program, formerly known as VIPS**

### **VIPS**

#### **Volunteers in Police Service**

In his 2002 State of the Union Address, the President announced the creation of the USA Freedom Corps, an effort to foster a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility, building on the generous spirit of the American people. The Citizens Corps programs are part of the USA Freedom Corps initiative and share the common goal of helping communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to crime, natural disasters, and other emergencies.

One of the Citizen Corps programs is the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) Program. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is managing and implementing the VIPS Program in partnership with and on behalf of the White House Office of the USA Freedom Corps and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. The program's ultimate goal is to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers.

The use of volunteers in law enforcement benefits the agency, the volunteer and the community. While agencies are designed and staffed to maximize law enforcement services to the community there is always more to do. Agencies are experiencing an increased workload in a resource-constrained environment.

*Maximizing Resources* by utilizing volunteers allows law enforcement agencies and officers to focus on policing and enforcement functions by providing supplemental and/or support services. Volunteers can help provide services that the public wants but that sworn or civilian staff may not have the time to furnish thereby *enhancing public safety and services*. A community member who volunteers with the local law enforcement agency will have a better understanding of that agency and law enforcement as a whole. Like graduates of *citizen police academies*, volunteers can serve as *ambassadors* and further enhance *community buy-in*.

## **BATH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

### **Mission Statement**

**Our mission is to provide the highest quality police service to our community and to protect the rights of all guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, the Laws of the State of Maine, and the Ordinances of the City of Bath.**

### **Statement of Values**

We, the Bath Police Department (est. 1831), have dedicated ourselves to public service. By choosing a career in law enforcement we recognize the community holds us to the highest standards of conduct. We will foster public trust through our commitment to the following values:

#### **Community Service**

We will strive to meet the challenge of protecting our citizens and be responsive to the needs of our community. We recognize that to be an effective law enforcement agency, we must have the support and trust of the public. We will welcome and seek an active partnership with the community in carrying out our responsibilities.

#### **Integrity**

Our community has entrusted us with tremendous authority and expects that we will do what is right in matters of personal and professional integrity. We will recognize and respect all people as individuals and will hold ourselves to the highest standards of the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics.

#### **Professionalism**

We are committed to maintaining an environment that promotes and encourages our long-standing tradition of professionalism. We will promote continued professional development through quality recruitment, education and training. We will recognize the changing needs of our community and will demonstrate the flexibility necessary to meet them. We take great pride in our services and our accomplishments.

# **BATH POLICE VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To promote and support the Bath Police Department in its mission. Police Volunteers will help to increase police responsiveness, service delivery, and information input, and they provide new program opportunities. Volunteers will be used for specified tasks and duties that can create efficiencies for the department and improve services to the community. Volunteers are intended to supplement and support, rather than supplant, sworn officers and civilian personnel.

## Volunteer Expectations

While these expectations are to help assist us to become and remain a professional part of our Police Department, it is also very important that you enjoy your work here and have fun serving your community.

1. You will receive adequate training prior to being assigned any task. It is your responsibility to know your duties and how to do them promptly, correctly and pleasantly. Please ask for clarification if you are uncertain of them at any time.
2. You are expected to cooperate with staff and your fellow volunteers and maintain a good team attitude.
3. You are expected to grasp opportunities for personal development that are offered to you. If you have a special skill you'd like to share, let us know.
4. You will be expected to voice your opinions and contribute your suggestions to improve the Volunteers program. Try to attend all meetings and training sessions.
5. Volunteers are required to sign in at the Police Department before any detail. Please complete a Volunteers service report shortly after you complete your duties.
6. Inform your Coordinator, Deputy Chief or On-Duty Supervisor as soon as possible if you will be unable to keep an assigned duty.
7. **Criminal Justice-based information and communications may be confidential, requiring you to adhere to all applicable State and Federal Laws regarding its handling. You will be expected to abide by Department policy regarding Criminal Justice Information Systems confidentiality. You can face civil or criminal penalties for non-compliance.**
8. Identifications badges and appropriate clothing shall be worn only while on duty, or going to and from your assignment.



9. The City will provide liability coverage for volunteers who are performing within the scope of their volunteer position and exercising reasonable and prudent judgment and care. Any volunteer who is injured on the job must report the injury to the coordinator as soon as possible. An injury report should be filled out within 24 hours.
  
10. Sexual Harassment/Discrimination. Please refer to the City's Policy.

## **Disqualifiers**

1. Under 18 years old.
2. Convicted of any felony crime.
3. Convicted of certain misdemeanor crimes.
4. Mental instability.
5. Conviction or violation of any domestic abuse or child violence.
6. Conviction or violation of any sexual violence against adults or children.
7. Conviction of any illegal narcotic drug offense.

## **Volunteer Tasks**

Although this is not a complete list of the tasks a volunteer may be asked to perform, it will outline some of the activities that Volunteers have been involved with.

1. **Crossing guard**- assists elementary children to cross the street safely. Involves standing for approximately 30 minutes, once or twice per day as assigned. Traffic direction/control training is required prior to being assigned this task.
  
2. **Parking Enforcement**- observing for parking and handicap violations usually on foot patrol usually in the downtown Bath area. Involves walking for periods of time, writing out parking tickets, speaking with

violators and the general public. This duty will be under the direction of the parking enforcement officer.

3. **Direct Traffic-** assist with traffic control and direction during special events such as the parade, triathlon or large crowds. Involves standing for one to several hours. Volunteer may need to use radio communication as well as hand and eye communication. Traffic direction/control training is required prior to being assigned this task.
4. **Security-** special events may require a volunteer to perform a security detail (observation and report duties only) to prevent property destruction during special events. Involves standing, walking and radio use. Time commitment may vary.
5. **Administrative-** volunteers have been helpful in creating PowerPoint presentations, pamphlets, and other documents that aid the Volunteers program, or other Community Policing type event. Involves creativity, and computer skills
6. **Neighborhood Community Speed Watch:** This program supplements patrol officer duties by monitoring and studying areas where speeding violations largely occur. The volunteers are trained in the use of portable radar units. A team of two members records the speed of each vehicle passing their location for a specific time. The report records the date, time, and speed and if needed, the license number of the vehicle. If there are noted violations on the report a letter is sent to the owner of the vehicle stating the date, location, time, and speed of the vehicle, with a general warning that the letter will be kept on file for future reference. The program has been well received by various neighborhoods in our community. Also through this program, data is collected to see if there are particular speeding problems in areas throughout the City. Volunteer members take this data and put it in statistical form for use by the Department.
7. **Neighborhood Property Watch Program:** This program supplements patrol officer duties in keeping an eye on properties in the City such as when residents take a long vacation or live South in the winter. It requires a team of two volunteers. They wear reflective "Police Volunteer" vest and mark their vehicle as a police volunteer

vehicle prior to checking residences. The volunteers walk the perimeter of the house and check to see that all doors are locked and that there are no visible signs of forced entry. Reports of each visit are kept on file at the Police Department.

8. **Bath Community Safety Day:** Each year Bath PD organizes an event in our community where children and their families are invited to attend and be exposed to many safety messages. These messages are provided by the Bath Police Department, Maine Fish and Game, U.S. Coast Guard, Bath Fire and Rescue, American Red Cross, and many more. This event promotes safety to our youths. It usually entails a “bike rodeo” where we give out bike helmets, offer bike tune-ups, and hold raffles for new bikes or other prizes. Volunteers assist with various parts of this event.
9. **LOCK’ER UP:** This program is conducted during the Holiday season. Flyers are printed and placed on windshields of cars parked in Bath warning citizens to make sure their vehicle and homes are locked up to prevent thefts in autos and at home.

## **Conclusion**

As this program evolves and develops, volunteers are expected to stay current with updated policies regarding this program. We have a policy that is routinely updated and will expect participating volunteers to offer input to that policy. You will receive all applicable policies and required training upon your acceptance into the program.

Your main point of contact is the Deputy Chief who is responsible for the general supervision of this program, to include its volunteers.

Thank you for your participation and we look forward to working with you.

Chief Andrew Booth