

# City of Kettering Volunteer Handbook 2022



City of Kettering  
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Phone: (937) 296-2433  
[www.ketteringoh.org](http://www.ketteringoh.org)



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# Welcome

Welcome to *Volunteer Kettering*, the City of Kettering's program for citizen involvement!

You are a valuable member of our city staff team. Because of your volunteer efforts, we can provide many services for our city that wouldn't otherwise be possible. You can take pride in knowing that you are directly impacting our city and helping to make Kettering a great place to call Home!



Thank you for sharing your talents and skills with us. All of your work is greatly appreciated!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peggy Lehner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Peggy Lehner  
Mayor of Kettering

## Mission Statement

The mission of the *Volunteer Kettering Program* is to offer citizens an opportunity to become involved in their city by assisting city staff in a variety of roles and organizing activities that expand city programs, enhance city services, build an understanding of city government, and encourage community pride.



# History

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Like many cities, the City of Kettering had many volunteers serving in traditional roles, including members of boards and commissions, volunteer firefighters, youth sports coaches, and special events coordinators. Building on this enthusiasm and the tradition of community pride, Kettering officials decided to try something new by hiring a professional volunteer manager to establish and manage a structured volunteer program within the city government.

On July 1, 1979, the ACTIVE (Area Citizens Together In Volunteer Endeavors) Volunteer Program was officially initiated at the Kettering Government Center. The goals established for the program were:

- To assist city staff with a variety of tasks
- To create interest, pride, and goodwill with Kettering residents
- To build an understanding of city government
- To help stretch the City's budget

These are still the goals for the program today! City officials opened the door and welcomed volunteers to work side by side with staff. Volunteers have been an integral part of the City's operations for over 40 years. They have shared their professional skills and served as goodwill ambassadors for the City among their friends and neighbors.

Kettering's officials knew volunteerism was an important contribution to city government long before it became a government trend. Their enthusiastic support created a positive climate for volunteerism to flourish in the community and their leadership has fostered a feeling of pride among the volunteer workforce.

Throughout the years, the City of Kettering Volunteer Program has earned many accolades from local, state, and national organizations—in such areas as special events, academics, notable individual work, and the program itself.

In all, *Volunteer Kettering has received over 50 awards!*



# Program Overview

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All the offices and departments at the City involve volunteers in a wide variety of duties. The volunteer office staff meets with city staff to assist in developing volunteer descriptions. After a volunteer description is completed, the positions are filled. This may happen by advertising in our volunteer newsletter, by word of mouth, through social media, or by searching our physical catalog of descriptions.

Each potential volunteer is personally interviewed, attends a general volunteer orientation, and is then matched with the opportunity that best fits their time availability and skills. Occasionally, a volunteer will share with us a special skill that would be helpful to city staff. When that occurs, we contact the appropriate

staff to see if the particular skill set would be beneficial, and work with that staff to develop an appropriate volunteer description.

Volunteer opportunities are available in the Government Center, the Lathrem Senior Center, the Vehicle Maintenance Center, Frazee Pavilion, Rosewood Arts Centre and many of the other outlying city facilities. It is the goal of the volunteer program to offer every interested citizen the opportunity to volunteer.



## Types of Volunteers

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Our volunteers all share the desire to give their time and talents to benefit their community. While some volunteers live in Kettering, many do not. They include high school and college students, retirees, people with disabilities, business owners, people still in the workforce, families, and a host of organizations including service clubs, student groups, corporate volunteers, faith-based groups, scout groups and more.

Long-term volunteers are those who volunteer regularly within a department, or provide service throughout the City, via an on-going basis over the course of a year or more. These volunteers are required to complete an application and attend the

Volunteer Orientation, as well as complete a basic background check. For those who may have unsupervised access to children or seniors, or who will need to drive a city vehicle, fingerprints are required.



## Types of Volunteers *cont.*

Short-term volunteers are those who are involved for a set period of time. This could be as a youth coach, to satisfy school or work requirements, or to volunteer seasonally at the Frazee Pavilion. These volunteers are required to complete an application and attend the Volunteer Orientation, as well as complete a basic background check. For those who may have unsupervised access to children or seniors, or who will need to drive a city vehicle, fingerprints will be required.

Youth volunteers are ages 14 to 17. Youth volunteers are required to complete an application and attend the Volunteer Orientation, but are not subject to a background check. In special circumstances, youth under age 14 may be permitted to volunteer when working alongside an adult parent or guardian, such as during special events and workdays. Youth will always volunteer in group settings.



Single day volunteers are those that participate in activities that occur on a single day, often for events such as Make A Difference Day, or Christmas Day at Polen Farm. Single Day Volunteers are often comprised of group volunteers including families, school groups, service clubs, corporate outings, religious organizations, etc. Youth under age 14 are permitted to participate with an adult chaperone(s) during the entire duration of the service. Single Day Volunteers do not commit to long-term service, and do not need to submit a volunteer application or go through a background check. A waiver form and photo release will be required at sign-in. Long-term volunteers may also participate in one day events.



# Volunteer Positions

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The City of Kettering serves the public in administering the ordinances passed by city council. This involves working with neighborhoods, providing fire and police safety, inspecting properties, improving the infrastructure, planning for orderly development, maintaining parks, and

supporting health and human service needs.

The opportunities for volunteers are numerous. Many volunteers donate specific technical skills. A walk through the many departments and facilities within the City of Kettering finds volunteers serving in a variety of capacities such as:

- Receptionists
- Clerical assistance
- Data entry
- Research for projects
- Assisting the police and fire departments
- Web assistance
- Mail couriers and Vehicle Maintenance Center couriers
- Senior transportation drivers and schedulers
- Public relations
- Special events
- Senior citizen and youth activities
- Neighborhood cleanups



# Expectations

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- You will receive a clear and specific volunteer description.
- You will be given an appropriate assignment according to your skills, interest, availability, and training.
- You should expect to be given appropriate formal and informal expressions of appreciation and recognition.
- You will receive training and supervision for tasks you are assigned. You will know why you are being asked to do a particular task.
- You should expect that your time would not be wasted by lack of planning, coordination, and cooperation within the City.
- Your individual rights will be treated with courtesy and consideration.

All of this will be done in a spirit of friendliness and cooperation so that the City of Kettering will continue to be known as a *"A great place to volunteer."*



# Volunteer Benefits

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There are many benefits for the person who volunteers. Every person has a reason for committing their valuable time, so the benefits differ for each person.

- Gaining experience and a job reference
- Learning new skills
- Exploring new careers
- Enjoying community involvement
- Learning about city government
- Staying active by helping others
- Meeting new people and making new friends
- Keeping active in your profession after retirement
- Having fun!

In addition, volunteers are invited to all events and activities sponsored by the City of Kettering's Employee Council.

Once you have completed 100 hours of volunteer service, you are eligible for certain discounts through the City's Fitness Incentive Program. Volunteers must contact the Volunteer Office for a letter authorizing the discount.



## City Benefits

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The City of Kettering receives volunteer assistance in a variety of regular tasks and special needs. To date, the City has 1,000 volunteers who represent a very tangible benefit to the City. The value of the hours donated to the City is calculated at over \$24,046,655 since the beginning of the program in 1979. Kettering benefits from having volunteers that are knowledgeable concerning the needs of a community.



# Recognition

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Twice a year Kettering honors those involved in the volunteer program. Every spring, during National Volunteer Week, an invitation to attend the summer Block Party is sent to all volunteers. At the Block Party, volunteers enjoy entertainment, refreshments, and a special gift to thank them for their service.

Each spring, our mayor awards both a youth volunteer and an adult volunteer with the Mayor's Award for Volunteer Service at a city council meeting in April. Nominations are accepted until mid-March, and winners are selected by the Kettering Volunteer Advisory Committee.

At the end of each summer, youth volunteers are invited to attend a special

thank you evening at the Habitat Environment Center, in recognition of the many hours they contribute facilitating summer camps, and other special events throughout the city year round.

In the fall, a volunteer recognition luncheon is held for all volunteers and staff supervisors. At the luncheon, volunteers receive awards based on their cumulative hours from our mayor and city council.

All volunteers receive certificates designating each 100 hours of service, as well a special gift for each 500 hours they give.



# General Guidelines for Volunteers

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Age: Individuals can start volunteering as young as 14, although some positions may require an older individual. Youth under age 14 may be permitted to volunteer at certain events while under the supervision of an adult guardian or chaperone.

Absences: If you are unable to attend the day or the time of your volunteer assignment, be sure to call your supervisor or the volunteer office at (937) 296-2433. In addition to being counted on to complete a task, staff also worry if volunteers do not arrive when expected!

Application: All long-term and short-term volunteers (youth and adult) are required to complete a volunteer application with the City of Kettering Volunteer Office. Applications are available any time on-line at <https://www.ketteringoh.org/get-more-information-volunteer/>. All application materials, background information, and hours are managed by the Volunteer Office.

## General Guidelines for Volunteers *cont.*

Attire: You are expected to dress neatly in clothes suitable for the volunteer work you will be doing. The public judges the city on the appearance and attitude of the person they see working, and that includes you. Certain positions may require a designated uniform shirt, vest, or other accessory to easily designate you as a volunteer. You will be notified of these requirements when you go through formal training in the department you are assigned.

Background Check Policy and Screening Process for Volunteers: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for examining the backgrounds of prospective volunteers with the City of Kettering. The City actively pursues volunteers and supports volunteerism. The City encourages the use of volunteers in providing support and assistance to the staff of the City of Kettering.

In order to protect the safety and well-being of program participants and staff, prospective volunteers must go through an application and screening process. The process consists of the following:

- Volunteer Application: providing false information or omitting relevant information on the application is grounds for exclusion from participation in the volunteers program.
- Orientation with volunteer office staff
- Criminal background search
- Review of personal references

The City will perform criminal background searches of the following public records on all prospective volunteers:

- Justice Web by Montgomery County
- Bureau of Motor Vehicles
- National Sex Offender Search

Fingerprinting will be required of a prospective volunteer in the following circumstances:

- For positions involving unsupervised access to children.
- For positions involving driving a City vehicle.
- For positions involving unsupervised access to the senior population.

The City may conduct background searches and/or fingerprinting for current volunteers. If charged or convicted for any criminal offense listed in this policy, current volunteers must promptly disclose this information to the Volunteer Administrator.



The decision whether to exclude or limit a prospective volunteer’s participation in the City’s volunteer program remains at all times within the sole discretion of the City. Factors considered by the City in making such determinations include, but are not limited to, the nature and severity of the alleged or proven criminal conduct, and the length of time since the criminal conduct occurred. The City’s primary concern is to safeguard the best interests of children and adults who participate in the City’s recreation and other programs and City Staff who work with volunteers.

**1. Automatic Disqualification:**

Conviction of any of the following offenses:

- Any felony
- Any misdemeanor involving a child
- Any misdemeanor involving a sexual offense
- Any misdemeanor involving violence
- Court order to stay away from a child

Conviction of any of the following misdemeanor offenses within the past 7 years:

- Domestic violence
- Crime involving arson
- Crime involving the use or possession of a weapon

Conviction of any of the following misdemeanor offenses within the past 5 years:

- DUI, DWI, or possession of any controlled substance - unless this is the person’s first conviction for that charge in their lifetime (or first conviction for that charge in the last five years)
- Public indecency
- Residing on same premises as a registered sex offender

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**2. Possible Disqualifications:**

Any of the following may disqualify prospective volunteers. These will be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis.

- Conviction for any misdemeanor (including minor misdemeanors) not listed as an automatic disqualification, including but not limited to theft, fraud, forgery, violation of civil/criminal protection orders, or traffic violation.
- Being charged with any felony or misdemeanor (including minor misdemeanors) violation.

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**3. Unresolved Situations:**

If there is an open warrant for the arrest of the prospective volunteer, or there is a pending charge with no disposition, the prospective volunteer cannot be placed until the situation has been satisfactorily resolved and the criminal background check report updated. If the prospective volunteer has already begun to serve in a volunteer capacity, their participation must be suspended pending disposition of the case or resolution of the open warrant.

If a prospective volunteer is denied participation based in whole or in part on information contained in the criminal background check, the prospective volunteer and the department supervisor will receive notice from the Volunteer Administrator. The City has no control over the information maintained by a reporting agency. If an applicant is dissatisfied with the information given by the reporting agency, then the applicant must contact the reporting agency for resolution. The City is not liable to any person or entity for the information provided by the reporting agency.

Confidentiality Subject to the Ohio Public Records Act (Ohio Revised Code Section 149.43), the City will maintain the confidentiality of all criminal background search information, including information regarding disqualification decisions.

Changes in Personal Information: Please notify the Volunteer Office of any changes in your address or phone number. Also please let us know if you will be unavailable to volunteer for a long period of time.

City Vehicle: Some volunteer positions require the use of a city vehicle. If you are authorized to use a city vehicle, you must be a licensed driver, obey all traffic laws (including parking regulations), and not allow unauthorized persons to operate or ride in a city vehicle.

Confidentiality: Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all information to which they have access while serving as a volunteer. This includes information concerning personnel matters and members of the community. Failure to comply with this guideline may result in dismissal.

Dismissal: The City of Kettering has the right to request a volunteer to leave immediately for any gross misconduct or insubordination, volunteering while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft, mistreatment of co-workers, or unwillingness to support the mission of the City of Kettering. You will be respectfully asked to leave if your police check comes back with a violation that staff determines might keep you from completing your assignment.





**Harassment:** The City of Kettering intends to provide a volunteer environment that is pleasant, comfortable, and free from intimidation, hostility or other offense, which might interfere with volunteer performance. Harassment of any sort—verbal or physical—will not be tolerated. If you become aware of an incident, or a part of an incident, please report it to the volunteer office immediately.

**Identification:** A nametag or badge will be provided by the City. Your nametag will help identify you as a volunteer. Some volunteer positions require that a nametag or lanyard be worn only when volunteering with the public.

**Income Tax Deduction:** Some expenses, such as mileage to and from volunteering, are deductible from your Federal income Tax under the Charitable Deduction Section of the IRS code. Consult a tax advisor for more details.

**Insurance:** You are covered by the City's liability and injury insurance while volunteering, as long as it is within the scope of duty.

**Media Contact:** The City of Kettering employs staff designated to handle situations involving the media. Volunteers should consult the Volunteer Office prior to offering information or comments to the media. Unless notified, the City of Kettering has the right to use pictures of volunteers in media outlets.

**Newsletter:** The City of Kettering Volunteer Office will mail or email a quarterly newsletter to help keep you informed of volunteer opportunities, events, and policies. Please contact the Volunteer Office if you do not receive the newsletter, if your address changes, if you wish to change how you receive the newsletter, or if you would like to discontinue the newsletter.

**Orientation:** All new volunteers will attend a general orientation to prepare them for volunteering within the City. You will receive a copy of the handbook, sign a general liability waiver, and receive instructions for proceeding with background checks. After determining the department(s) you would like to volunteer in, you will be assigned to a city staff person who will be your supervisor to orient you to your role.

**Recording Hours:** You are expected to keep an accurate record of your volunteer hours. If you volunteer at the Government Center, a book with your timesheet will be kept in the volunteer office. If you are volunteering off-site, at a different city facility, sign-in books should be available, or you can keep your own timesheet and call your hours into the volunteer office at 937-296-2433 or send the information by email to [nick.sorice@ketteringoh.org](mailto:nick.sorice@ketteringoh.org) at the end of each month.

Reporting your hours is one way we can measure the value of the program. The Volunteer Office reports the hours and the dollar value to the City Manager, Department Directors, and City Council. It also determines your yearly volunteer recognition award. You may also need to provide your timesheet for your personal income tax records.

Training: After your orientation with the volunteer office, a time will be set for you to meet with the staff person in the department for your assigned task. The staff person will explain your role and responsibilities. Training is many times best completed while volunteering. A staff person will be available to answer questions and help with any problems that might occur. Please feel free to ask questions of employees or the volunteer office at any time.

Your Role: The role of the volunteer in the City is to assist staff in providing services and to perform every task to the best of your ability in a prompt and pleasant manner. As a volunteer, you represent the City to the public and are in a service provider position. You are never “just” a volunteer; you are a non-paid staff person. If at any time you feel your volunteer position is not working for you, for whatever reason, please contact the Volunteer Office immediately at 296-2433.



Volunteer Grievance Policy: The City of Kettering has the following Volunteer Grievance Policy in order to support those who are unsatisfied with the treatment they receive by volunteering for the City.

A grievance is defined as any cause of distress that a volunteer reasonably thinks or feels is unfair, unjust, or inequitable. In the event of a grievance, the grievance should be submitted in writing so that a record can be kept of the situation. A grievance should be made within one week of the incident and will be addressed by the City of Kettering Volunteer Office within ten business days of receipt.

Volunteers will not be subjected to coercion, discrimination, reprisal, or unreasonable interruption of services for voicing complaints or recommending changes.

We encourage volunteers to deal with conflicts in a respectful manner at all times. If you need help to resolve a conflict, additional city staff are available to facilitate a meeting. If a conflict with a staff member or another volunteer arises that you feel cannot be resolved safely by working directly with that staff member or volunteer, please contact the Volunteer Administrator at (937) 296-2433. If you are not comfortable, or unable to speak with the Volunteer Administrator, you may contact the Assistant City Manager by calling (937) 296-2412.



## *Thank You*

Giving of one's time and talents is one of the greatest gifts we can offer to our friends and neighbors. It is an act of kindness that has immediate and long lasting impact. Volunteering has also been shown to improve physical and mental health by providing a sense of purpose and by nurturing new and existing relationships. In short, everyone benefits! We appreciate your involvement and look forward to serving our community with you on the team!

## Contact Information

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The Volunteer Office is located in the upper level of the North building of the Kettering Government Center.

City of Kettering  
Volunteer Office  
3600 Shroyer Rd.  
Kettering, OH 45429

Phone:  
937-296-2433

Website:  
[www.ketteringoh.org](http://www.ketteringoh.org)

### Department Staff

Dawn Kirchner, Volunteer Administrator  
[Dawn.Kirchner@ketteringoh.org](mailto:Dawn.Kirchner@ketteringoh.org)

Nick Sorice, Assistant Volunteer Administrator  
[Nick.Sorice@ketteringoh.org](mailto:Nick.Sorice@ketteringoh.org)



## Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgement

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the contents of the handbook, and agree to the policies and procedures discussed within. Modifications to the content of this handbook may occur at any time, and communication of these policies will occur through email, or sent through posted mail. If I have questions regarding the content or interpretation of this handbook, I agree to bring it to the attention of the City of Kettering Volunteer Office.

I understand that the City of Kettering can terminate my volunteer position at any time with no prior notice, and I have the right to do the same.

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Volunteer Name (Print)

Date

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Volunteer Name (Signature)

Date

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Guardian's Name if under 18 (Print)

Date

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Guardian's Name if under 18 (Signature)

Date





CITY OF KETTERING

Volunteer Waiver of Liability

Name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

City:

Zip Code:

Home/Cell Phone:

E-mail:

Emergency Contact:

Number:

Organization:

Crew Leader:

**EACH PERSON MUST READ BEFORE SIGNING**

As a Volunteer member of the City of Kettering I agree to:

1. Follow the City of Kettering policies, rules and procedures.
2. Place safety and well-being first.
3. Represent the City of Kettering in a professional manner that presents a positive image to the community.
4. Grant City of Kettering permission to use my likeness, voice, photographs and words in any form for promotional activities without payment.
5. Grant the City of Kettering all rights to release any photos taken of me or by me to the media as they see fit.

As a volunteer member I certify that:

1. I do not use illegal drugs.
2. I have never been convicted of a criminal offense.
3. I have never been charged with neglect, abuse, or assault.

If you have been involved in any of the above activities, please provide a brief explanation and discuss the circumstance with the event staff supervisor.

**YOUTH POLICIES**

No one under 18 years old is allowed to operate a power tool or climb ladders.

All youth participants must have an adult signature with waiver.

No one under 16 years old is allowed to use specified tools (varies per project).

**WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

IN CONSIDERATION OF THE CITY OF KETTERING ALLOWING ME/MY CHILD/CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOLUNTEER KETTERING PROGRAM AND BEING AWARE OF THE POSSIBLE INJURIES THAT COULD OCCUR AS A RESULT OF THAT PARTICIPATION, I, (MYSELF) AND/OR (MINOR CHILD) RELEASE THE CITY OF KETTERING OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS AND INSTRUCTORS FROM ANY AND ALL INJURIES AND DAMAGES WHATSOEVER ARISING FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE EVENT.

I, MY HEIRS, AND REPRESENTATIVES, AGREE TO INDEMNIFY, SAVE AND HOLD HARMLESS THE CITY OF KETTERING, ITS OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS AND INSTRUCTORS FROM ANY AND ALL CLAIMS MADE BY ME (MY CHILD/CHILDREN) OR MY INSURER FOR INJURIES OR DAMAGES RELATED TO THIS EVENT.

I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THIS APPLICATION AND DURING THE INTERVIEW PROCESS IS TRUE AND COMPLETE. I UNDERSTAND THAT FALSIFICATION OR SIGNIFICANT OMISSIONS OF ANY INFORMATION MAY BE CONSIDERED JUSTIFICATION FOR NON-ACCEPTANCE OR DISMISSAL IF DISCOVERED AT A LATER DATE AND THAT APPOINTMENT TO A VOLUNTEER POSITION MAY BE CONTINGENT UPON THE COMPLETION AND REVIEW OF A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK.

Liability Waiver.doc (60.00 KB).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

