



Standard Policies of the Pennsylvania Volunteers Inc.

The Pennsylvania Volunteers Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the Organization) establishes this list of specific policies to accompany the Organization's By-Laws and Code of Conduct.

101 Standards of Conduct

Each volunteer must maintain the highest standards of personal and professional ethics. These rules, trainings, and policies concerning conduct and behavior are instrumental to the continued success of the Organization.

102 Volunteer Conduct and Work Performance

Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, at all times demonstrating a positive attitude and respect for everyone.

Every member of the Pennsylvania Volunteers is expected to:

- Report to their assigned detail punctually and be prepared to start their assigned part of the operation.
- Notify their Unit supervisor when unable to report to a call out, or unable to report for the operation on time;
- Comply with all performance/conduct and safety/security policies and procedures;
- Wear appropriate attire for the work being performed;
- Perform assigned tasks efficiently and correctly;
- Address co-workers, members, vendors, and visitors in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner;
- Maintain operational site and reporting area cleanliness;
- Refrain from behavior or conduct deemed offensive or undesirable;
- Obtain approval from a Unit leader before removing any Pennsylvania Volunteer Unit property for use.
- Only members of the Executive BOD or their official designates are authorized to engage Federal, State or Local officials concerning matters of the Pennsylvania Volunteers.

103 Personal Appearance

The Pennsylvania Volunteers expects all members to be well groomed, clean, and neat in appearance at all times. Work attire should reflect an efficient, orderly, and professionally operated organization. All employees are required to maintain the highest standards relating to personal hygiene including regular bathing, clean hands, and fingernails.

When reporting for training or activation, your attire should reflect the nature of the training or operation.

CERT Team members will be required to maintain their CERT kit and to keep it current and ready in the event to an activation. CERT Team members are NOT permitted to wear any part of their kit unless they are required to do so during a training or at times of official activation.



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Wearing the CERT kit at any other time will call for immediate removal from the Pennsylvania Volunteers.

The CERT kit is the sole property of the Pennsylvania Volunteers and for reasons of resignation, removal, or for any other reason where the volunteer no longer is part of a recognized Pennsylvania Volunteers CERT Team, the kit will be required to be returned in good and orderly fashion within 5 business days to any member of the Pennsylvania Volunteers Board of Directors. Failure to do so may lead to legal action. The volunteer accepts responsibility of any and all costs to re-secure the kit.

104 Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when a member engages in any activity that may compromise him or her, another individual or member, the organization, or the organization's relationship with a member, other agency or agencies' member or any other person. Potential conflicts of interest may include soliciting business for personal gain, accepting gifts other than those of nominal value, and requesting favors, discounts, or services.

Members are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest. Failure to disclose a potential conflict of interest or engaging in activities determined to be a conflict of interest may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership.

No member should use his or her position with the Pennsylvania Volunteers or information acquired from the organization in a manner that may create a conflict or the appearance of a conflict between the member's personal interest and that of the Pennsylvania Volunteers.

All activities conducted as a member of the organization should always place the lawful and legitimate interests of the organization as well as the general public over any personal gain.

If a member has any reason to believe there may be a conflict of interest, he or she should immediately disclose the matter to an immediate supervisor.

105 Harassment

The Pennsylvania Volunteers intend to provide an environment that is pleasant, healthful, comfortable, and free from intimidation, hostility, or other offenses that may interfere with a member's performance. Harassment of any sort will not be tolerated. Harassment is conduct focused on a person or group of persons including, but not limited to, physical or verbal abuse, unwelcome activity of a sexual nature, and retaliation, as well as any behavior or action that interferes with an individual's ability to perform assignments or which creates a hostile or intimidating environment.

Examples of Harassment

- Repeated unwelcome flirtations, advances, or propositions;
- Racial slurs;
- Sexually graphic or degrading comments about a person's appearance, dress, or anatomy;
- Repeated unwelcome dirty jokes or offensive gestures;
- Prurient or graphic intrusive questions about a person's personal life;
- Graphic descriptions of the harasser's own sexual experiences;



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- Practical jokes aimed at individuals because of sex, race, religion, age, disability, etc.;
- Unwelcome physical contact: touching, kissing, patting, pinching, tugging at clothing, etc.;
- Physical or sexual assault;
- Jokes about the disabled;
- Religious jokes;
- Use of crude or offensive language.

Harassment creates a hostile environment and violates a victim's civil rights. All incidents of harassment are to be reported. A confidential investigation will be conducted. All members are expected to cooperate with such an investigation. Violation of this policy will lead to discipline, which can include immediate discharge.

Any member who feels he or she is the victim of discrimination or harassment has a responsibility to report this to their supervisor, Unit leader, any member of the Board or designated representative immediately. A written complaint should include the specific nature of the incident, date and place of incident, and names of all parties involved as well as a detailed report of all pertinent facts. Complaints of harassment will be promptly and carefully investigated. Investigations will include interviews with all relevant persons, including the accused and other potential witnesses.

Any member, who, in good faith, files a complaint of harassment, will be free from any and all reprisal or retaliation as a result of filing the complaint. Investigators will make every effort to strike a balance between the parties' desires for privacy and the need to conduct a fair and effective investigation.

Harassment shall subject a member to disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership. Likewise, there will be disciplinary measures if in fact it is determined that the incident and thus the accusation were fabricated.

All members of the Pennsylvania Volunteers will be required to take specific training for EEOC Title VII Anti-Harassment and Discrimination.

106 Politics and Political Endorsements

As a 501(c)(3), the Pennsylvania Volunteers or any member representing the Pennsylvania Volunteers is strictly prohibited by law from all areas of a political matter, including political endorsements.

107 Safety

Great care has been taken to provide a safe environment for all members and those who our members deal with, including monitoring and complying with both federal and state laws and regulations.

Specific safety and health rules will be posted at operational activities and will be reviewed at each training or activation. All members are required to be familiar with the Pennsylvania Volunteers safety rules and policies. Each member is responsible for remaining aware of and following safe working procedures. Failure to follow safety and health rules may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership.



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A brief review of these guidelines:

- Report any unsafe conditions or trainings immediately to a supervisor or Board member;
- Report all personal injuries immediately to a supervisor;
- Alert your Unit leader if you become sick or injured in any way at a training or activation;
- Never remove safeguards or safety devices from equipment nor from any required safety gear or CERT Kit. Report any broken or missing devices immediately.

108 Smoking

Smoking is permitted ONLY in designated areas at specific times. It will be up to the Unit leader or the Pennsylvania Volunteers leadership to determine when and where smoking is permitted. Always ask first. Smoking during an operation as a rule will not be permitted for health and safety reasons. Smoking is not permitted inside any building or rooms used by the organization or in any “official” vehicles.

109 Substance Abuse

Members are expected to be in a suitable mental and physical condition for activation and to perform their assigned duties in a safe and effective manner. The possession, sale, and use of mood-altering substances such as alcohol or other drugs at the workplace, or reporting to work under the influence of such substances, is a violation of safe work policies. Members violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and possible dismissal.

110 Media Relations

The opinion or position of the Pennsylvania Volunteers is often requested by local media. All requests from the media, whether written or verbal, are to be referred to the Board member who deals with media, or his/her designated representative. It is imperative that members recognize that any comment made to the media, even if in a personal conversation or as a jest, may be interpreted as the official position of the Pennsylvania Volunteers, FEMA, PEMA, and the Department of Homeland Security; therefore, comments are under no circumstances to be made to the media except by authorized personnel.

111 Communications

The two primary forms of communication used by the Pennsylvania Volunteers during trainings or activation will be by cell phone or ham radio (handheld, mobile, or base).

Cell phones are to be used for communication ONLY when absolutely necessary. They are not permitted to be used to take video, take photos, or record audio during an activation or training. There will be designated individuals who may be designated to do so solely for the use of the organization.

Two-way radios are to be used only by those with a current license issued by the FCC and only utilizing those communication devices that correspond to the guidelines set by the FCC for specific license types. Radio protocol must be followed at all times.



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112 Reporting Accidents

Should a member become injured at an authorized training or activation, he or she should report the injuries immediately to his or her Unit leader. Prompt reporting is imperative so that the member may receive appropriate treatment.

113 Disciplinary Procedures

It is the policy of the organization that any conduct that in its view interferes with or adversely affects its public reputation or its operations is grounds for disciplinary action, ranging from verbal warnings to immediate termination of membership.

Grounds for Immediate Termination of Membership

Some conduct may result in immediate dismissal. Examples of behavior that may result in immediate dismissal include:

1. Dishonesty (including but not limited to theft).
2. Insubordination (refusal to perform assigned duties or to follow orders given by authorized personnel).
3. Fighting or assault.
4. Possession of a firearm or offensive weapon of any kind without the written approval of the Board. Excluded is equipment issued by the Pennsylvania Volunteers or specific items in use by a CERT Team member.
5. Deliberate destruction of, or damage to, any property or products.
6. Possession, use, or being under the influence of alcohol while participating in organization-related activities.
7. Possession, use, or being under the influence of drugs, narcotics, or other intoxicants while participating in organization-related activities.
8. Harassment (e.g., sexual, age, race, national origin, religion) will not be tolerated. Anyone in violation of this rule may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership.
5. Negligence or carelessness in performing specified or assigned duties that either cause or can cause injury to others.
10. Operating without safety devices in place and in working order.
11. Failure to wear required safety protection in designated areas.
12. Failure to report to his or her Unit leadership if the volunteer has knowledge of:
 - a. Any questionable deviation from approved training procedures
 - b. Any damage to equipment, supplies, materials, machinery, or buildings
 - c. Any situation or condition that might discredit or bring negative perception to the organization.
16. Violation of the smoking policy.
18. Violation of any harassment and or discrimination laws (EEOC Title VII).



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19. Violation of confidentiality.
20. Violation of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy regulations.
21. Failure to inform Pennsylvania Volunteers of any changes in driver's license status or other issue that may affect the member's clearances.
21. Littering (throwing trash or objects on the ground that legally constitutes littering).

Additional or Alternative Provisions

- Discipline is to be administered privately, out of sight and sound of others.
- Discipline will be administered by a member of the Board as soon as it is practical. However, a violation that is serious in nature is to be corrected by any supervisor immediately, whether the member is a subordinate or not.
- Due to the nature of the organization, only three (3) forms of discipline are recognized: verbal warning, written warning with suspension, and dismissal.
- Warning notices will be filed with the Secretary; should further violations occur; such warnings serve as a basis for progressive discipline.

SEE ALSO: Appendix B - Pennsylvania Volunteers Code of Conduct (2017)

Disciplinary Procedure

Violation of the Pennsylvania Volunteers' policies and rules may warrant disciplinary action. Forms of discipline that the organization may elect to use include verbal corrections, written warnings, and/or suspensions or removal from the organization. The system is not formal, and the Pennsylvania Volunteers may, at its sole and absolute discretion, deviate from any order of progressive disciplinary actions and utilize whatever form of discipline is deemed appropriate under the circumstances, up to and including immediate removal of the individual(s) from all facets of the Pennsylvania Volunteers.

Attachments:

Appendix A - Pennsylvania Volunteers Bylaws (2017)

Appendix B - Pennsylvania Volunteers Code of Conduct (2017)