



## **CITY OF AGOURA HILLS VOLUNTEER ON PATROL PROGRAM**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

On behalf of the City of Agoura Hills and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, thank you for your interest in the City's Volunteer on Patrol (VOP) Program. All volunteers are required to review and complete the application process associated with this program. This process consists of several important phases or steps that must be satisfied before a prospective applicant can be accepted into the program.

The following information contained in this packet will assist you in understanding the VOP program so that you can complete the required application process:

1. Description of VOP Program.
2. Application Form
3. Initial Interview Process
4. Fingerprinting and Background Investigation
5. Screening and Selection
6. Volunteer Contract
7. Civilian Volunteer Rules
8. Orientation and Training Program

#### **1. Description of VOP Program**

The Volunteer on Patrol Program is a civilian volunteer program administered by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Lost Hills Station, on behalf of the City of Agoura Hills. All costs associated with the program (i.e., uniforms, patrol car, radio equipment, etc.) are paid directly by the City of Agoura Hills. The intent of the program is to train volunteer citizens to undertake on-going patrols throughout the community. *The program does not allow VOP volunteers to undertake any law enforcement activities other than to patrol neighborhoods and commercial/business areas for the purpose of reporting suspicious activities to the Lost Hills Station.* Typical duties of the VOP volunteer include, but are not limited to, serving as the "eyes and ears" of the Sheriff's

Department, reporting unusual or suspicious activities, serving as a mobile “neighborhood watch” program, assisting the Sheriff’s Department in conducting drive-by checks of homes in which residents are on vacation, providing traffic control at special events, undertaking graffiti removal, observing and reporting a variety of public works related items (i.e., signal outages, downed street signs, etc.), and keeping statistical information following patrols. All volunteers are required to attend an orientation and training program administered by the Lost Hills Station. Additionally, all volunteers will be equipped with uniforms, volunteer badges and other equipment provided at no cost by the City of Agoura Hills.

## **2. Application Form**

To initiate the application process, all interested volunteers will be required to complete a standard Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Civilian Volunteer Application Form (please see attached sample application form).

## **3. Initial Interview Process**

All prospective VOP volunteers will be required to participate in an interview involving the coordinator of the program from the Lost Hills Station. During this initial interview, the coordinator will assess the applicant’s interest and reason for volunteering, determine the applicant’s time availability, and explain the volunteer program in detail – including the application process, the need for a background check of the applicant, and the importance of confidentiality in dealing with law enforcement information and records. During the interview, the coordinator will look for the following traits in the applicant: maturity and reliability; enthusiasm; support for law enforcement; flexibility; sense of humor; team work; skills needed by the unit; work experience; interests and hobbies.

## **4. Fingerprinting and Background Investigation**

Following the initial interview, applicants will be fingerprinted by the Sheriff’s Department (for processing with the Department of Justice), and a background investigation will be conducted in which the applicant’s current employer and other personal references may be contacted. *The Sheriff’s Department does not discriminate against volunteer applicants. To be eligible to apply, prospective volunteers must be at least eighteen years of age and reside in California.*

## **5. Screening and Selection**

At the conclusion of the initial interview, fingerprinting and background investigation, the Sheriff’s Department will assess the applicant’s abilities and overall interest in the volunteer assignment. At that time, a decision will be made concerning the acceptance of the individual into the program. The applicant will be notified by the Sheriff’s Department regarding the selection process, and, if accepted, will be asked to

sign and execute a standard Sheriff's Department Volunteer Contract as well as a copy of the Civilian Volunteer Rules.

**6. Volunteer Contract**

If accepted into the VOP Program, you will be asked to carefully review and sign a standard Sheriff's Department Volunteer Contract (see attached copy). This contract addresses the requirement for volunteers to maintain the highest ethical standards in both their personal activities and official capacity as volunteers in the Sheriff's Department.

**7. Civilian Volunteer Rules**

As with the Volunteer Contract noted above, newly appointed VOP volunteers will also be asked to review and sign a copy of the Sheriff's Department Civilian Volunteer Rules (see attached copy). This set of rules addresses a number of issues, including assignment of volunteer hours, the issuance of an identification card to civilian volunteers, safety requirements, medical related issues, dress standards, etc.

**8. Orientation and Training Program**

The last step in the process of becoming a VOP volunteer involves participation in a comprehensive orientation and training program conducted by members of the Sheriff's Department. During this orientation, volunteers will be briefed and trained on all facets of the program involving such subjects as the protocol in handling patrols in the community, radio communications with Sheriff's Department personnel, safety standards, record keeping, etc. Upon the satisfactory completion of this program, newly appointed volunteers will be eligible to begin serving in the VOP Program.