



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

HUMAN RESOURCES

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Humboldt County Volunteer Liability Waiver Frequently Asked Questions

Humboldt County is so grateful for the time, heart, and dedication our volunteers bring to the programs they volunteer with. The County wants to make sure everyone feels informed and comfortable when participating in volunteer activities. Liability waivers are a tool to help clarify expectations and keep our programs effective and supportive for everyone. Risk Management has put together the following FAQ to answer common questions about the form and to assure you that our goal is to protect our volunteers while safeguarding the community we all care so deeply about.

1. Why do volunteers need to sign this form?

The waiver helps everyone understand that the work you will be doing can carry some risks. By signing, you're acknowledging those everyday risks and confirming that you are choosing to volunteer knowingly and with an understanding of those risks. Waivers are standard practice for cities and counties throughout California.

2. What is the purpose of this waiver?

The form is meant to protect both you and the County by making sure expectations are clear. It's not about blame or fine print – it's about being transparent. We want every volunteer to have a full picture of what the work involves before jumping in.

3. Does signing mean the County won't help me if something happens?

If something were found to result from County negligence, the County will review and address it appropriately. Our goal is always to handle such matters responsibly and fairly. The waiver doesn't take away compassion or accountability; it sets clear understanding about the normal risks of volunteering.

4. What if someone is injured in or by County property?

If a volunteer is injured while on County property, we want to know about it right away so that we can ensure the volunteer receives any needed attention or access to care, and so the situation can be reviewed and addressed appropriately per County rules and procedures. The County works to maintain safety standards for all facilities and any concerns about conditions at a volunteer site should always be reported to staff. The waiver is in place to clarify that volunteers understand and accept the general risks that can exist in any facility or providing any activity.

5. Why is the language formal?

Because it is a legal document, some wording needs to stay in place to meet insurance and risk management requirements. We appreciate that you are taking the time to read it thoroughly and ask these important questions before signing—this underlines your serious commitment to volunteering.

6. Is this waiver unique to Humboldt County?

Not at all. Similar waivers are used across California for volunteer programs involving animals, outdoor work, or community service. This version was reviewed to ensure it follows best risk management practices while staying as clear and concise as possible.

7. Does the language of the waiver ever change?

Yes—individual departments and Risk Management review volunteer materials from time to time, and we are open to suggestions to make the information easier to understand while ensuring legal protections remain in place.

8. Who can I talk to if I have questions?

If you would like to go over the form before signing, the departmental volunteer coordinator or a Risk Management staff member would be happy to walk through the form with you. We want every volunteer to feel comfortable, informed, appreciated, and safe!

A Final Note:

Our volunteers make an extraordinary difference every single day. The County deeply values your time, compassion, and commitment to the services you provide and the people of Humboldt County. This waiver is simply one of the tools that help keep our programs and our community safe, sustainable, and strong.