

# **FOUNTAIN VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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## **RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)**



## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

2024

# Fountain Valley Police Department

## RSVP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## **PURPOSE OF RSVP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- Ensure the safety of all RSVP members.
- Ensure that RSVP members carry out their assigned duties uniformly.
- Present a positive image of the Police Department and RSVP Program to the citizens of Fountain Valley.

All RSVP members are required to read, understand, and be familiar with these policies and procedures. Compliance with these procedures is mandatory.

Failure to comply with these policies and procedures may result in dismissal from the RSVP Program.

## **RSVP CODE OF ETHICS**

All RSVP members shall adhere to the RSVP Code of Ethics.

As a Retired Senior Volunteer Program member, my fundamental duty is to serve the citizens of Fountain Valley.

I will conduct my official duties in a professional and courteous manner.

I will obey the rules and regulations of the Fountain Valley Police Department.

**I will protect the confidentiality of all information relating to the Department.**

I will respect the function of the Department's paid staff and contribute fully to maintaining a smooth working relationship between paid staff and volunteers.

I will exercise caution and good judgment on the Department's behalf.

### **Gratuities:**

RSVPs shall not solicit or accept any gifts, money, food, beverages, tickets, passes, travel, special accommodations, favors or the use of property or facilities from any individual, group or company when the receipt of the aforementioned is directly or indirectly tied to the RSVP's affiliation with the Fountain Valley Police Department.

An exception to this rule is when an RSVP member participates in an event where a gift (in any form) is provided to everyone at an event, not exclusively to members of the FVPD or RSVP.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

### **Volunteers must:**

1. Be age 55 or older.
2. Have the physical and mental capability to perform their assigned RSVP duties.
3. Agree to volunteer 20 hours per month to the program.
4. Be chosen for the program via an oral interview.
5. Pass a Police background check.
6. Attend all training.
7. Have a valid California driver's license or state issued identification card (for non-driving members).

## **TRAINING**

Persons selected as RSVP members will attend training classes covering the following subjects:

- Organization and operations of the Fountain Valley Police Department
- Organization and operations of the RSVP Program
- Patrol Operations
- Police Communications/Use of Police radio & cellular phone
- RSVP safety instruction
- Parking citation procedures
- Graffiti abatement
- Vacation house checks
- Driver's test
- Court Package Transport
- In-station Duties
- Department tours
- Each member will go on at least one ride-along with a Police Officer
- Each member will team with an experienced RSVP member for on-the-job training

## **DUTIES**

The basic purpose of the RSVP Program is to fulfill requests by the Police Department, which will ultimately benefit the citizens of the City of Fountain Valley.

### **Duties fall into two categories:**

- I. **Patrol** duties require driving a patrol car and consist of:
  - A. Public Relations
  - B. Performing vacation house checks
  - C. Removing illegally posted signs
  - D. Writing parking citations
  - E. Business Licensing (Dispatch request updated business information)
  - F. Code Enforcement
  - G. Disabled/Abandoned Vehicles
  - H. Graffiti abatement
  - I. Mosquito abatement
  - J. Court Package Transport
  - K. Special Events (DUI Checkpoints, DUI Education, Summer Festival, National Night Out, etc.)
  - L. Other duties as assigned
  
- II. **In-Station** duties include:
  - A. RSVP administrative responsibilities
  - B. Fingerprinting / Live Scan
  - C. Police Department Tours
  - D. Parking Citation Administrative Hearings
  - E. Crime Prevention Office
  - F. Other Duties as assigned

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

In accepting a volunteer assignment with the RSVP Program, members agree to contribute a minimum of 20 hours a month.

Vacations, illness and emergency situations are recognized as valid reasons for excusing members from meeting their 20-hour per month commitment.

Members may be granted a medical leave of absence. The length of the absence will depend on the nature of the medical condition and will be approved by the Program Manager.

Members may be subject to dismissal from the program for the following reasons:

- Failure to comply with the RSVP Policies and Procedures.
- Any conduct which brings discredit upon the RSVP Program or the Fountain Valley Police Department.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Organizational Structure:**

The Fountain Valley Police Department is a paramilitary organization characterized by the following features:

- Formal Organization – A hierarchy of rank with commensurate authority and responsibility. The wearing of a distinctive uniform, which identifies the position of the wearer. Adherence to the Chain of Command.
- RSVP members shall adhere to the Chain of Command.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

### **RSVP Chain of Command:**

1. Chief of Police
2. Patrol Captain
3. Watch Commander (Patrol Sergeant or Lieutenant)
4. RSVP Program Manager (Sergeant)
5. Assistant Program Manager
6. RSVP Coordinator

## **UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT AND PROPERTY**

The uniform and its individual items shall be worn only while on duty and while performing authorized RSVP assignments. For reasons of safety, uniforms shall be removed or covered by a sweater, shirt or jacket on the way to and from the Police facility.

RSVP personnel are issued the following items by Fountain Valley Police Department:

- RSVP badge
- RSVP ID card
- Name plate
- Gray shirt
- Navy blue pant
- Black leather basket-weave belt
- Baseball cap (optional)
- Jacket (optional)

RSVPs shall supply their own plain toe black shoes (no high heels) and black socks.

Vendor: Premier Uniforms  
7275 Murdy Circle  
Huntington Beach, CA 92647  
(714) 842-1200

Only the uniform items listed above are authorized.

The badge is always worn on the gray shirt, pinned to the badge tabs on the garment. A cloth badge is also available that can be sewn to the jacket in the absence of badge tabs.

A nametag shall be worn on the right side, 1/8 inch centered above the top pocket flap seam of the shirt.

Only badges and accessories issued by the Fountain Valley Police Department and issued to RSVP personnel may be worn on the RSVP uniform. The RSVP pin shall be worn centered ¼ inch above the nameplate. Only one pin is authorized to wear centered over the RSVP pin. Your choices are: the service pin [number of years], Presidential pin [gold, silver or bronze] or flag, which shall be worn ¼ inch centered above RSVP pin. No other pins or badges may be worn on the RSVP uniform without the express permission of the RSVP Program Manager.

No jewelry shall be worn with the uniform except rings, watch and, for women, plain earrings.

RSVPs shall wear a plain, white or black, crew neck T-shirt under their uniform. Only the top button shall be undone.

All issued items are the property of the Fountain Valley Police Department and must be returned within one week of resignation from the RSVP Program.

RSVP members are encouraged to wear their uniforms when working in the Police facility. If civilian clothes are worn in the Police facility, the Police identification card shall be worn. When there is public contact while working within the Department, the uniform shall be worn.

Except while on duty or when specifically authorized or directed to do so, your Police ID or badge shall not be worn or displayed to any person. Display of the ID card or badge to attempt to receive favors or preferential treatment is cause for immediate dismissal from the RSVP Program.

Use of all tobacco products is **prohibited** when in uniform.

**Preparation of Documents:**

Use only ballpoint pens with black ink.

All reports and documents prepared by RSVP members, including parking citations, etc., shall be with black ballpoint pen and printed in block letters to ensure legibility.

## **PATROL OPERATIONS**

### **Hours of Patrol:**

Daily Patrol duties shall normally be carried out between 0900 and 1500.

### **Patrol Priorities:**

The overriding priority of the RSVP Program is to enhance the public service of our Police Department. All RSVP members are liaisons with our community and our employees. Their first priority is to provide courteous and professional service.

A primary service function of the RSVP Program is to complete vacation house checks for the residents of our city. Completion of all assigned vacation house checks should be done each shift.

### **Other services include:**

- Removal of illegally posted signs
- Reporting graffiti
- Business alarm updates for Dispatch
- Reporting violations to Code Enforcement
- Parking Citations
- Mosquito abatement
- Deliver mail between City facilities
- Patrolling the strip malls and fitness centers
- Court Package Transport (For designated Personnel)

RSVP patrol duty has first priority for the use of RSVP patrol cars. These cars will not be used for other RSVP assignments until the requirements of daily patrol have been met.

If you are unable to go on patrol on the day you are scheduled:

- Call your partner and tell him/her you are unable to patrol due to sickness, etc. It is your partner's responsibility to pick a suitable replacement for you.
- If a replacement person is not available, advise the other team that you will not be going out. Send an email to the master scheduler, assistant program manager and the RSVP coordinator.

### **Inclement Weather:**

In General, teams do not go on patrol if it is raining. It is up to the discretion of the scheduled RSVP member to determine if cancellation of patrol duties is necessary based upon the severity of the rain. Safety is the primary concern. In addition, send an email to the master scheduler, assistant program manager and the RSVP coordinator.

**Prior to beginning patrol:**

- Take a radio and log the radio number
- Make sure to take a charged battery
- Take RSVP cellphone
- Take citation book
- Leave a copy of the Vacation Checklist with Dispatch
- Sign out on Daily Roster – Be sure to confirm the correct date and Day Watch

Each team shall advise Dispatch when you are in-service (10-8). This should be done over the radio.

**Before returning from patrol:**

- Fill the patrol vehicle's gas tank if level is below  $\frac{3}{4}$  full
- Place disposable signs in the large trash bins at designated area
- Place commercial/valuable signs in the Code Enforcement truck #264 (Located in the City Hall lot adjacent to Los Alamos, normally parked near the corner of Slater and Los Alamos).
- Use the radio to advise Dispatch that you have returned to the station (10-19)
- Park vehicle in RSVP assigned parking space
- Be sure all electrical units are turned off
- Lock the vehicle
- Return keys, radios, radio holders, phones and ticket books to their normal place in RSVP office
- Return batteries to chargers and plug in cell phones (turn cell phones off)

## **CHECKOUT AND MAINTENANCE OF PATROL VEHICLES**

Prior to leaving the Police parking garage for patrol, RSVP members shall check the following items on patrol vehicles:

- Check fuel level
- All lights are working
- Brakes are working
- Gauges are working
- Rear and side-view mirrors are set
- No obvious leaks from the engine compartment
- Visually check tires
- In Trunk:
  - Tools for removing signs
  - Traffic vests
  - Adequately filled first aid kit
  - Fire extinguisher (note quantity and fill date)
  - Cones
  - Box of flares

Visually inspect for vehicle damage (scratches, dents, and graffiti). If minor problems are discovered, such as burned-out light bulbs, take car to the Police Vehicle Maintenance area at the City Yard, 17300 Mt. Herrmann.

If any mechanical, electrical problems or vehicle damage is found before going out on patrol, report problem to Watch Commander and complete a "Vehicle Damage" report. Note all problems with the vehicle/equipment on form. Give form to the Watch Commander. Advise Dispatch of the problem and provide Dispatch with the replacement car number if you need to change units.

**When driving an RSVP patrol car, obey all California Vehicle Codes.** Here are a few of the most critical regulations:

- Have your VALID driver's license with you
- Wear seat belts
- No cellular phone use by the driver while operating a City vehicle
- Make full stops at all red lights and stop signs
- Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians
- Yield the right-of-way to other vehicles at all stop and yield signs
- Obey the directions of crossing guards
- Utilize turn signals when changing lanes or making turns
- Obey the posted speed limit at all times

**If an RSVP member is involved in an accident in a City vehicle, he/she will immediately notify Dispatch to have a field Supervisor respond to the scene. A supervisor MUST be notified.**

## RESIDENTIAL VACATION CHECKS

### Preparing for Vacation Checks:

- Obtain the Vacation House Check Report form for the area to be patrolled.
- Review the Vacation Check Reports. List the RD numbers and residence addresses on the Vacation Checklist.
- Print the information on the Vacation Checklist so that it is legible.
- Make one copy of the Vacation Checklist. Return blank copy to the bin. Prior to going on patrol, give one completed copy to Dispatch.
- Upon returning from patrol, return the Vacation Check Reports to the bin on the RSVP desk. Make a copy of any reports that are no longer active, place it in the "completed" file, remove any RD map, and mail the original to the resident.
- Enter number of hours worked on RSVP Program Timesheet.

### Conducting Vacation Checks:

- Drive to the Reporting District (RD). Upon entering the RD, verify that the street sweeping sign is posted at the entrance, legible, and not obstructed.
- Review the Vacation Check Report regarding backyard access, dogs, alarms, and people who may be authorized on the property.
- Both RSVPs should exit the car, lock the vehicle door, and take radios and Vacation Check Report forms with them to the house.
- If there is no backyard access, the driver may remain in the vehicle if he can keep his partner in sight at the front of the house.
- Note the make, model, color and license plate of any vehicle in the driveway (or directly in front of the residence). If not on the form, include it in your verification.
- Check the doors and windows of the residence.
- Pick up newspapers, flyers, etc., and place them on property where they are not visible. **Do not remove items from the property.**
- Examine all windows, and look for out-of-place screens, open windows and trampled brushes. Also look for broken glass and signs of forced entry. Note open windows on verification form.

**NOTE:** It is especially important that the initial RSVPs checking the residence note everything so future patrols are aware of the original condition of the home.

If no problems are found during the vacation check, enter the date, names of RSVP members and write "**Home Secure**" or if no backyard access is available, write "**Front Secure**" on the verification form. If a door is found open or unlocked, notify Dispatch by radio or cell phone. An "**Open Door**" call will receive a different Police response than an "**Unsecured Door**" call. Always advise if damage is observed to the door or locking mechanism! Never go inside a house or garage. Do not go in the backyard if a dog is on the premises.

## **PARKING CITATIONS**

**RSVPs are authorized to write citations for the following parking violations:**

- Handicapped parking
- Handicapped parking Hash Marks
- No parking fire lane
- No parking anytime

Writing/issuing parking citations is not a “primary” duty of the RSVPs. To provide good customer service, RSVPs are encouraged to administer verbal/written warnings in lieu of a citation when appropriate. When writing a citation, certain basic procedures must be followed:

1. Park the patrol car so it does not impede traffic flow while writing the citation.
2. NEVER park the patrol car illegally while issuing citations.
3. Both patrolling RSVPs should view the vehicle and confirm the violation. Both RSVPs shall get out of the RSVP vehicle.
4. Both RSVPs shall be aware of their location.
5. Both RSVPs shall check the citation to ensure the proper code section is used. Both RSVPs shall agree to the violation.
6. Both RSVPs shall write their names and badge numbers on the citation.
7. Place the violator’s ticket portion securely under the windshield wiper on the driver’s side, ticket facedown.
8. Upon completion of patrol, place the original citation in the Parking Cites Box.
9. Citations may be cancelled even after they are filled out. To do so, you must retain all copies, have a valid reason, and complete a citation cancellation form. Place the original citation and the cancellation form in the RSVP Coordinator’s in box.
10. If a citizen becomes argumentative because you issued him/her a citation, remain calm and polite. Ask the person if he would like to speak with an Officer or a supervisor. Contact Dispatch accordingly.
11. If the RSVP team cannot accurately determine a parking violation is occurring, the best practice is simply to not issue a citation and move on to other duties. If a question arises, seek clarification from the program supervisors or the Watch Commander upon your return to the station.

## **No Parking Fire Lanes / No Parking Anytime:**

For RSVPs on patrol, "Fire Lane" and "No Parking Anytime" violations will generally be in commercial, retail, and medical. We do not patrol condos or mobile home parks unless requested.

Parking restrictions must be clearly visible to any violators. Generally, this means a red curb and signs posted to identify the area as a fire lane or no parking zone. Fire lanes may also be identified with "Fire Lane" written on the red curb.

## **Handicapped Parking Spaces:**

"Handicapped" parking areas shall generally be in retail, medical, and parking structures.

The handicapped parking stall must be clearly marked with a distinguishing handicap symbol and a sign with symbol posted immediately adjacent to and visible from each designated stall or space. There must be a posted sign and the stall must have blue lines or a handicapped symbol. If they are parked on the blue striped "hash mark" lines only, it is a ticketable offense 22507.8 CVC.

The vehicle must be visually checked to ascertain that a distinguishing placard or license plate issued to physically handicapped drivers by the California Department of Motor Vehicles is visible in whole or in part. California issues two types of placards: permanent (blue) and temporary (red).

Some permanently disabled will display authorized plates instead of placards. California license plates that begin with the letters DP (Disabled Person) or DV (Disabled Veteran) should not be cited.

If the placard is only partially visible or the validity of the placard is in question, then a citation should not be issued; and a Warning Notice should be carefully placed under the driver's side windshield wiper. The RSVP member can make a note of the placard number, expiration date and license number of the car. The validity of the placard can be researched at a later time once in the station.

If no placard is visible as ascertained by **both** RSVPs, a citation may be issued. If a placard appears to have been altered or out of date, a citation should be issued. If a vehicle is parked in the blue striped "hash marks" section, a citation should be issued. The section for the "hash marks" is 22507.8 CVC.

**At no time should an RSVP member open the door or enter an unlocked vehicle.** If a handicapped placard is visible inside the vehicle, but not properly displayed, it is not the function of the RSVP to post it properly. A warning notice explaining the violation left on the vehicle is the appropriate action.

## **SIGN REMOVAL**

It is illegal to post signs on public property in Fountain Valley. Public property includes:

- Utility poles
- Streetlight poles
- Fences, trees and walls around public property
- Median strips on public streets
- Publicly owned signs such as traffic control signs
- Flood control fences

Sign removal by RSVP members:

Any sign that creates "a safety hazard to the public" should be reported to dispatch via radio or cell phone and relayed to the Watch Commander.

RSVP members are not authorized to remove signs posted on private property. RSVP members are authorized remove signs posted on public property with two exceptions: Real Estate signs and Political signs.

1. A "real estate sign" is a sign advertising real estate. RSVP members will not remove real estate signs on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. On Monday through Thursday RSVP members are authorized to remove real estate signs.

2. A "political sign" is any sign representing a candidate or a voting ballot proposition. RSVP members will not remove any political signs unless specifically authorized by the RSVP Program Manager.

RSVP members shall use caution when removing illegal signs. If possible, park off the street. If off-street parking is not available, park the patrol car as close to the right-hand curb as possible.

- Turn on the rear window or rooftop flashing lights on the patrol car. Keep trunk lid down.
- The driver shall remain in the patrol car.
- The member removing the sign shall exit the car from the right side only and close the car door.
- The sign remover shall not stand on any part of the patrol car while removing a sign.
- Upon opening the car trunk, the sign remover shall place the sign in the trunk.
- When the sign removal is complete, turn off the light bar. Do not drive the patrol car with the light bar on at any time unless directed to do so by a Police Officer.
- Dispose of paper signs in the large trash bin in designated areas.
- Turn commercial signs in to Code Enforcement by placing them in their designated area behind City Hall.

## **COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES**

### **RSVP members use:**

- Cellphones for non-emergency communications with Dispatch if radio traffic is heavy, or there is EMERGENCY TRAFFIC
- The Police radio for routine transmissions

### **The police radio shall be used:**

- When reporting observed conditions that require immediate Police, Fire or Paramedic response, e.g. traffic accidents, disabled vehicles in the roadway, fires, etc. Call signs for volunteer patrols are designated as **SR-1, SR-2 and SR-3.**

In emergency situations that threaten life or property, plain language should be used.

RSVP members shall study and become familiar with radio codes most commonly used to communicate with Dispatch.

### **Most often used RSVP Codes:**

10-8            In Service  
10-19          Return to Station

**\*\*\*IN AN EMERGENCY USE PLAIN LANGUAGE\*\*\***

### **Other common codes:**

10-1            Poor transmission quality  
10-4            OK or Acknowledged  
10-6            Busy  
10-7            Out of Service  
10-9            Repeat last transmission  
10-20          Location  
10-21          Telephone the Station  
10-22          Cancel or Disregard  
10-23          Standby  
10-42          Pick Someone Up  
10-87          Meet Someone  
**10-33          EMERGENCY TRAFFIC (IF YOU HEAR THIS, STAY OFF THE RADIO)**

In all cases when using the radio, take the time to plan the message so it is clear and concise prior to transmitting.

When on patrol, RSVP members shall monitor all radio calls for the following conditions:

- Calls directed to the RSVP patrol unit.

- The location of major Police activity. In the event of such activity, the RSVP patrol unit shall stay away from such locations unless specifically directed by Dispatch or a Police Officer to go to that location.
- RSVP members shall take care not to break in to Police radio traffic to make routine reports. Always listen to the radio traffic for a few moments prior to transmitting.
- **If there appears to be any type of emergency traffic on the radio, DO NOT make any transmission. Wait until the emergency is over.**
- Pay attention to Police radio traffic. When major Police activity such as traffic accidents or a serious crime is occurring, take positive action to stay off of the radio and away from the area unless otherwise directed by Dispatch or a Police Officer.
- If you accidentally depress the Emergency button on the top of your radio, the button **MUST** be reset before transmitting. The button is reset by holding it down for 3 seconds.

## **RESIGNATION**

Members who wish to resign from the Program will submit their request in writing to the RSVP Coordinator and will include the effective date of the resignation. The member will return to the RSVP Coordinator all items issued to him/her by the Police Department. The member will also return all shoulder patches obtained by the member through the purchase of additional uniforms.

The following items shall be returned to the RSVP Coordinator within one week of resignation:

- Badge
- RSVP identification card
- RSVP issued shirt complete with Police shoulder patches
- Issued jacket complete with Police shoulder patches
- Any other shoulder patches which might be added to additional uniforms