



Riverside County California Sheriff's Volunteer Forces Unit

Volunteer Unit Formed: 1976
Number of Volunteers: 600 plus
County Population: 2.4 million
Full Time Staff: 4,300
VIMS Client Since: 2020

The VIMS Impact:

Using VIMS allows members and their coordinators to enter data at any time. We're able to get up to date information and access it from anywhere. VIMS has been very helpful retrieving data from mobile devices while away from the office and desktop computers. VIMS allows us to recognize volunteers based on documented hours & events accurately and timely.

What Feature(s) do you like best about VIMS and why?

While we use all the VIMS features to their fullest, the Online Prospect Application feature is key to being able to grow the number of volunteers we have. We currently process an average of 200 new volunteer applications a month with a small team of three VFU full time personnel under my command.

What do your volunteers like best about VIMS?

Being able to view an up to date calendar at all times, sign up for events, and create their shifts all within a matter of seconds.

Overview from Sgt. Chris Gaskins Volunteer Forces Unit Riverside County California Sheriff's Office September 2023

Created in 1893 from portions of San Bernardino and San Diego counties, Riverside County is the fourth largest in the state of California out of 53 counties covering over 7,300 square miles bordering on Arizona to the east and is 60 minutes due east of Los Angeles and 60 minutes north of San Diego. Riverside County has a population of 2.4 million citizens served by 11 Sheriff's stations and five separate jails / corrections facilities.

What are the primary functions of your volunteer unit?

The 600 plus citizen volunteers are grouped into specialized units which include: **Station Volunteers** providing logistics and admin support; **Citizens on Patrol** who patrol their communities in marked patrol units acting as Eyes and Ears and supporting Deputies with duties such as traffic control, DUI check points support, etc.; **Mounted Posse** who provide similar functions as COP's yet on horse back; **Chaplains** serve the community and Sheriff's staff with support during difficult times, loss of life, etc.; **Search and Rescue Team** provides traditional SAR functions for lost hikers along with specialized teams such as water rescue and recovery Dive Team and Search Dogs; **Reserve Deputies** are sworn civilians who have peace officer powers and armed when on duty in the county and work side by side with full time deputies to back them up as a patrol partner; **Explorers** are young men and women between 14 and 20-1/2 years old who have an interest in becoming a member of law enforcement as an adult and gain valuable training and experience assisting deputies and the community.

What are the qualifications to become a volunteer member?

Complete an application, Good Character (Criminal History & Drivers License Check), Oral Interview, Livescan Fingerprinting for non-sworn.

Prior to using VIMS, what methods did you use to track hours, schedule events and shifts, track recognition, etc.?

Excel and Word to track various functions such as hours, personnel data, years of service, etc.

What challenges did you have using previous methods?

The biggest challenge we had with 600 volunteers spread out over 11 stations and over 40 units was recording their hours on paper then turning them into their unit leader who then entered those hours into an Excel spreadsheet for their unit. All those separate spreadsheets were then forwarded to one person who would merge the hours into one large spreadsheet, every month. VIMS provides us a consolidated streamlined method with up to the minute hourly totals as they are entered by our volunteers and a current view of what and where are volunteers are performing their duties.