



STATE OF KUWAIT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
GENERAL CIVIL DEFENCE DEPT.



Volunteering in Civil Defence: A Civil Duty

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Preface

Volunteer work has perpetually been considered a humane gesture that we, as good Muslims, are required to do. The Kuwaiti community is not alien to volunteering; throughout Kuwait's booming period it has seen many disasters and plagues, where mosques turned into shelters for many, and people took families into their homes to protect them, and everyone volunteered whatever they could to ease the pain and suffering of those affected. The State of Kuwait has worked long and hard to guarantee that volunteer work be made as easy and accessible to everyone as possible, in case of any disastrous occurrence. There are many adversities that are too widespread for the Civil Defense to be able to contain on their bases, such as wars, plagues, earthquakes, and floods. This requires all government agencies, social organizations, and civilians to participate with the Civil Defense personnel to provide safety, and rescue the population. Civil Defense is considered one of the most important places for a civilian to volunteer as it addresses vital survival needs of human kind. In assisting evacuation processes, rescue teams, giving shelter, first aid and nursing, giving social and psychological aid, and facilitating guidance and awareness campaigns, preventing the spread of rumors, and lending a hand in the operation of government sectors, civilians are limiting the amount of human life losses to a minimum and protecting their way of life by calmly and safely overcoming tragedies in the most constructive manner.

To all our volunteering brothers and sisters who have inherited their patriotism from their fathers and grandfathers, their love for their country, and their sacrifices for it, and their safeguarding it in times of war as well as times of peace, the Public Administration of Civil Defense presents this brochure. Hoping that it will be of use to you all; and hoping that it will encourage every organization and individual to support the Civil Defense, and offer to serve their country with unwavering certainty.

General Civil Defence Dept.

Definition of Volunteering

Volunteer work is commonly defined as offering oneself for a service or undertaking (without pay) for any reason, be it social, psychological, or political. Volunteer work, as specialists define it, is nothing more than humane charitable work that is closely connected to good will and samaritanism. Though it might differ in essence and motive from one society to the next and from one timeframe to the next, there are still people in every community who have committed all of their time, energy, and money to helping others in their areas.

Volunteer work can be both individual or in the form of non-profit organizations. Individual charity work comes with a decision made by a person to give back to the community without any financial reimbursement; the motives could be ethical, social, humane, or religious. For example, in an attempt to eliminate illiteracy, an individual could offer to educate a group of illiterate people that he/she knows, or the individual could donate a sum of money to a charity that addresses the issue of illiteracy.

As for non-profit organizations, which are more advanced, organized and widespread than individual charity work, they are very common in the Arab world, where it is easy to find a number of large organizations that attempt to help the society in progressively advancing and remaining safe and secure.

Volunteer/ charity work comes in two forms as follows:

1. Charitable behavior: Defined by the different behavioral characteristics that a person demonstrates in volunteering for any cause, be it ethical, social, psychological, or religious. However, these characteristics are only shown, or put to use, in emergencies; for example, saving someone from drowning, or helping someone get first aid after an accident.

2. Volunteer Acts: These do not come in a spur of the moment reaction like charitable behavior; instead, volunteer

acts are a result of careful planning and organization. One's feeling of others' needs, and wanting to help out as much as possible, leads to such planning; which, in turn, improves the quality of life for individuals or a nation as a whole. In order for volunteer acts to be as effective on social change and improvement as possible, they must contain two basic characteristics:

1. The basis of the act is to help people in their times of need, therefore, the volunteer should not expect financial returns, rather he/she should expect the returns to be in the form of social improvement and raised spirits.
2. The value of the act should be moral and humane.

For these reasons, it is worth noting that the value of volunteer work does not decrease with the low financial returns of it, instead it is the humane, social, religious, and ethical values that give volunteer work its worth.



Volunteer Work in the State of Kuwait

Caring for others and volunteer work in the State of Kuwait was not created overnight; charity is embedded into the souls of Kuwaitis who inherited this trait from their fathers and grandfathers. This is apparent in the Kuwaiti youth, before the elders, in their contributions and lending helping hands to any project that helps in the advancement of the Kuwaiti society; this is due to their faith in the sayings of the Prophet Mohammed:

«إن الله عبادةً اختصهم لقضاء حوائج الناس حبيهم للخير وحبب الخير إليهم أولئك الناجون من عذاب يوم القيامة» صدق رسول الله {ص}.

Rooted in the values of Kuwaitis are mercy and compassion, which are exposed in the numerous charity acts and non-profit organizations and charity projects, which have steadily increased in the past few years with the growth in the number of volunteers. With this expansion came the need for an organization / team that would take on the management of such projects, and make sure that everyone who needs aid in the society gets their fair share of help needed. Another need for such a team is to encourage more people to volunteer and lighten the burden on the government.

The Kuwaiti citizens have always loved helping people, and they have constantly felt and acted like they were one big family, with the strong always helping the weak, and the rich giving the poor.

Therefore it is no surprise that volunteers and charity work increase in Kuwait, as it is built on humane efforts, and quite a number of organizations in Kuwait adopt this kind of work. Undoubtedly, volunteer work was amplified in the State of Kuwait's hard times, such as the Iraqi invasion, and the Iraqi independence, as well as the existence of helpers in Kuwait when other countries went through tragedies, whether they were Arab or non-Arab countries, Muslim or non-Muslim countries.

The State of Kuwait has survived quite a few catastrophes

a long time ago and recently, including:

- AlHailak disaster (1288 Hijri)
- The Plague disaster (1247 Hijri)
- AlTaba'a disaster (1871 Gregorian)
- The First Hadama disaster (1872 Gregorian)
- Locusts disaster (1889 Gregorian)
- The flu disaster (1918 Gregorian)
- The Measles disaster (1932 Gregorian)
- The Second Hadama disaster (1934 Gregorian)

Not to mention the disasters and catastrophes that the sea farers faced, (Kuwait primarily being an aquatic environment due to its location on the Arabian Gulf), where the simple people of ancient Kuwait were terrified trying to save those affected and their families.

The aforementioned disasters and catastrophes have shaped our understanding of civil defense in its modern sense, giving us a more scientific and effective approach to disaster management.

Unquestionably, the State of Kuwait is considered the most affected country by disasters in the region, the main one being the Iraqi invasion of 1990, when its citizens retaliated wisely and with determination not to steer off the path of development and advancement. This experience has strengthened the Kuwaiti defense strategy as it is now built on both theory and actuality. It became apparent that the defense strategy does not only depend on police and military protection, but civilian defenders play a major part in making sure the country always remains safe.



Based on this understanding, we find that the system of managing disasters and catastrophes that threaten the country's security, whatever the cause may be, has to inter-connect between police/military teams and civilian volunteers, in order to ensure the best protection plan possible against anything that is expected or unexpected to happen. In addition, a volunteer selflessly sticking to the emergency security plans forms the grounds on which civil defense is based.

Volunteering is considered humane teamwork performed by individuals from the society during national emergencies to help the Civil Defense officials in saving those affected, first aid, and putting out fires. Volunteers are trained by the Civil Defense to ensure the most effective outcome. Civil Defense plays a vital part in the advancement and booming that the State of Kuwait is going through right now, in making sure that the Civil Defense is present in every corner of the nation ready for any emergency that may occur.

Who is a volunteer?

A "volunteer" is someone who chooses to offer his/her services to the Civil Defense without anything in return, be it in times of war, peace, or emergencies.

The volunteer must be:

- Well behaved and a good citizen
- At least 18 years of age
- Generally in good health.

A volunteer's duties:

- Helping in putting out fires and keeping them under control.
- Contributing to aiding injured people and making sure that they are transported to the nearest medical unit.

- Participating in sheltering homeless people, and the victims of wars and disasters, and making sure they receive enough food and needed services.
- Being involved in safety awareness campaigns, and raising the spirits of members of the community.
- Raising awareness in the society about the importance of Civil Defense, and encouraging more people to volunteer.
- Reporting to the authorities any suspicious substances that are found (for example, explosives or toxic materials).
- Supervising safe havens and shelters, making sure that they are well maintained, and that everyone knows the way to get to them.
- Completing any other tasks assigned by authorities during wars, disasters, or emergencies.

The female's role in volunteer work:

Women participating in civil defense are considered one of the main components in saving people's lives, and avoiding great losses in times of peace, war, or emergencies. Women contribute to civil defense by caring for mothers and children, and performing basic nursing duties, such as, first aid, providing food and water, and administering medication to those in need of it.

In addition, women help in keeping spirits high and caring for the elderly. A woman's role is considered a completion of the male's role in keeping the rescue campaigns well rounded, which is why female volunteers



find themselves fully supported by the Civil Defense and other government authorities.

The role of charity organizations:

General social organizations such as The Red Crescent, Kuwait Scouts, and others partake in encouraging members of the society to participate in volunteer work.

Their role is regarded as a completion to the role of the Civil Defense in spreading safety awareness and supporting the efforts of the Civil Defense in natural disasters by providing tents, nutrition, and medication. Charity organizations also supervise refugee camps, providing needed help and keeping spirits high.

Numerous training courses in first aid and rescue tactics are held for volunteers; and everyone eligible in the community is encouraged to attend them to try to form a society ready for any emergency that comes its way.

The Civil Defense with its men and its mechanisms can provide real security to the nation, with the help of volunteers and charity organizations.

Volunteering in Civil Defense:

The Civil Defense's strength lies in its complete and utter trust and dependence on its volunteers, both men and women, who are capable of completing the tasks and duties dictated by the legal bill number 21 for the year of 1979 regarding the Civil Defense missions.

The work of a civil defense volunteer is not just confined to wars, catastrophes, and disasters, but in times of peace as well, when they make sure that civilians and expatriates have a safe and secure environment to live in.

The previously mentioned ministry decree in article (2) item number (8) relays the importance of forming teams of both male and female volunteers to carry out the following tasks:

1. Monitoring aerial gases and directing people and helping them.
2. Controlling and fighting fires, bombs, and explosives of any shape or form.
3. First aid.
4. Determine radioactive and nuclear pollution, etc.
5. Restore public ports.

In addition, ministry decree number (618) for the year 1987 regarding the conditions for volunteering for the Civil Defense missions:

1. The volunteer must be at least 18 years old.
2. The volunteer must be in good health.
3. Must be well behaved and a good citizen with a clean record.

Opening the doors to volunteering

The Public Administration of Civil Defense announces from time to time, and in times of emergencies of opening its doors to register those willing to volunteer, whether citizens or expatriates, male or female. These registrations are managed by the Civil Defense bases in provinces; basing the acceptances on the following:

Conditions and documents required

1. Civil ID card and a photocopy of it.
2. Two recent personal pictures.
3. Volunteer must be at least 18 years old.



Volunteering Procedures

The Ministry decision number (618) for the year of 1986 concerning the Civil Defense volunteer's procedures, go by the following:

Article (6):

Volunteers should apply in the Public Administration of Civil Defense or any of its branches.

The application must include the full name of the volunteer, the age, nationality, and profession. In addition, a document stating the willingness to volunteer for at least one year, with the agreement of the employer, must be admitted.

Article (7):

The volunteer is considered available for work starting from the day of acceptance for the period of one year, according to the contract. The general manager of the Public Administration of Civil Defense reserves the right to relieve the volunteer of his/her duties before the contractual period is over, if they are found unfit for the job. The volunteer will be assigned a duty in one of the Civil Defense teams, depending on his/her abilities.

The Unified Order of the Civil Defense in the Gulf Cooperation Council

Article One:

A volunteer is any person who offers his/her services voluntarily to the Civil Defense team, in times of war and peace; there is no return expected and the drive is the feeling of civil duty and humanity and the need to save human lives, properties and the nation's treasures.

A female's role in civil defense is confined to first aid, and other duties that match her nature depending on each country's law and what the Islamic constitution permits.

Article Two:

Volunteers are accepted based on the following:

1. The volunteer must be a citizen of one of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and if not, then acceptance is based on specific rules set by each country.
2. The volunteer's day job should not overlap or get mixed up with his/her volunteering duties.
3. Volunteer should be medically capable of performing civil defense duties.

Article Three

The following are the duties and tasks that volunteers are expected to help out in:

• In times of peace:

1. Putting out fires, keeping them under control, and stopping them from spreading.
2. Aiding those who are injured and evacuating patients and trapped people from dangerous areas.



3. Sheltering refugees and providing them with the needed services.

4. Participating in charity for those affected by disasters.

5. Participating in security and safety awareness campaigns, making sure that all citizens receive informative brochures and pamphlets.

6. Any other duties that certain situations demand.

• **In times of war and disasters:**

1. Putting out fires, keeping them under control, and stopping them from spreading.

2. Aiding those who are injured and making sure they are safely transported to the nearest medical center.

3. Participating in decontamination of places and things polluted by chemical and radioactive materials.

4. Reporting the sightings of any suspicious objects such as explosives, poisonous materials, and any other dangerous substances.

5. Guiding citizens to shelters and providing the necessary services.

6. Warning people of the danger zones.

7. Participating and helping out in making sure that people affected by disasters are evacuated from danger zones and taken to a safe haven.

8. Serving the necessary survival materials and helping in their distribution.

9. Making sure inhabitants are in high spirits.

10. Guarding ports and establishments and life.

11. Maintaining the safe operation of public ports.

12. Any other duties that certain situations demand.

Article Four:

The following are the steps needed to volunteer:

1. Completing an application form.

2. One photocopy of the civil ID.

3. Two personal photographs.

4. Photocopies of work and technical certificates.

Article Five:

The following is how volunteer training programs are planned:

1. A two-week foundation training course is given to first-time volunteers on the most important Civil Defense tasks.
2. An annual refresh training course is given to all volunteers who have completed the foundation course for a period of time determined by each country.
3. Trainers from the defense of the GCC countries are in charge of preparing the volunteers.
4. Special simplified training courses are given to those volunteers of high technical qualifications in their field of expertise.

Article Six:

The volunteers' rights are as follows:

1. After their employers have agreed to them volunteering, volunteers have the right to a paid leave from their day jobs to help out in internal and external disasters; this follows a written request from the general manager of the Civil Defense.
2. The Civil Defense provides clothes, food, and shelter to volunteers, similar to those provided to the Civil Defense team.
3. The Civil Defense provides transportation for volunteers when they are called in, if they lived outside of the operational area, otherwise, the volunteers are reimbursed for transportation expenses.
4. The time that a volunteer spends training or serving the Civil Defense is treated as an extension to his/her day job; and the volunteer does not lose any benefits he/she is entitled to in their original day job.



5. It is allowed for a volunteer putting exceptional effort into helping the Civil Defense to receive a monetary award determined by the operational board of each country.

6. Volunteers are awarded with certificates and medals and military stars to show appreciation for their heroism and their sacrifices.

7. Country laws are applied concerning deaths and injuries of volunteers during training or performing duties.

8. Volunteers, who are not employees of companies, are reimbursed for injuries during training and performing duties according to the operational bylaws of each country.

9. Every volunteer is given an identification card, proving his/her association with the Civil Defense.

Article Seven:

The volunteer's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Immediately answering to Civil Defense duty calls at any given time.

2. The volunteer cannot refuse to answer to duty calls, or withdraw in the middle of an operation without a valid excuse.

3. Unless excused, the volunteer is considered in duty starting from the day he/she is accepted into the Civil Defense force.

4. The volunteer must inform the Civil Defense of any change in address or contact information.

5. The volunteer must remain trustworthy and honest, and not leak any confidential information that has been entrusted to him/her.

6. The volunteer must maintain the clothes and machinery and any objects given to him/her by the Civil Defense in good shape, making sure to return them after the volunteering period is over.

7. The volunteer must refrain from making statements to any form of media without getting permission first.

8. The volunteer must refrain from unruly citizen behavior or doing anything rebellious.

Article Eight:

Every volunteering citizen of the country receives the following benefits:

1. The priority to be picked over others to join the Civil Defense Forces, if he/she met the criteria.
2. The citizen who volunteers for three consecutive years receives certificates of training and experience that give him/her the right to work in safety and security teams in public and private establishments.
3. The volunteer receives discounted fares on all transportation means (air, train, etc.) within the GCC countries, determined by the operational bylaws of each country.

Article Nine:

When a foreigner (not a citizen on one of the GCC countries) is accepted for volunteering in the Civil Defense they are entitled to all the benefits that GCC citizens get regarding clothes, accommodation, transportation, medical care, and rights.

Article Ten:

The volunteer is relieved of his/her duties in the following cases:

1. Valid excuses.
2. Inability to perform due to health obstacles.
3. If convicted with a felony or misdemeanor that is dishonorable, or dishonest.

Article Eleven:

A uniform is to be worn by volunteers, which consists of the following:

1. Protective head helmet.
2. A suit.
3. Shoes.
4. A shoulder mark.
5. An identification card to be worn around the neck that carries the name and ID number of the volunteer.

Article Twelve:

Volunteers are called to duty via the following means:

1. Told in person.
2. Telephone call.
3. Different media devices.
4. Alarm siren.

Article Thirteen:

Volunteers will be asked to aid in any wars or other disastrous situations in any of the GCC countries, regardless of which country they have volunteered in.

Article Fourteen:

Volunteers are treated as any other citizen according to the operational bylaws in terms of arrest, investigations into misdemeanors and felonies, discipline, etc.

Article Fifteen:

Volunteers' complaints and suggestions are taken to the general manager of Civil Defense; complaints are investigated, suggestions are studied, and finally the right course of action is followed.

Article Sixteen:

Interior Ministers are given the responsibility of placing the bylaws and making the necessary decisions to carry out this system.