

CHAPTER 4

GOVERNOR

4.50 Office of citizenship and volunteer services.

4.50 OFFICE OF CITIZENSHIP AND VOLUNTEER SERVICES.

Subdivision 1. Information center for volunteer programs. (a) The office of citizenship and volunteer services is under the supervision and administration of a director appointed by the governor. The office shall: (1) operate as a state information, technical assistance, and promotion center for volunteer programs; and (2) promote and facilitate citizen participation in local governance and public problem solving.

(b) In furtherance of the mission in paragraph (a), clause (2), the office shall:

(1) engage in education and other activities designed to enhance the capacity of citizens to solve problems affecting their communities;

(2) promote and support efforts by citizens, community-based organizations, nonprofits, churches, and local governments to collaborate in solving community problems;

(3) encourage local governments to provide increased opportunities for citizen involvement in public decision making and public problem solving;

(4) refer innovative approaches to encourage greater public access to and involvement in state and local government decisions to appropriate state and local government officials;

(5) encourage units of state and local government to respond to citizen initiatives and ideas;

(6) promote processes for involving citizens in government decisions; and

(7) recognize and publicize models of effective public problem solving by citizens.

Subd. 2. Cooperation with other groups. The director shall cooperate with national, state, and local groups in collecting information on federal, state, and private resources which may encourage and improve volunteer projects within the state. The office shall coordinate its research and other work on citizen engagement with the board of government innovation and cooperation, the Minnesota extension service, and Project Public Life, Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota.

Subd. 3. Money. The director may accept and disburse public or private funds and gifts made available for the promotion of the office's programs.

Subd. 4. Fee for services. The director may charge a fee for services provided to state agencies, political subdivisions, private and nonprofit organizations, and individuals. Fees collected by the office must be deposited in the state treasury and are appropriated to the director for the purposes of this section.

Subd. 5. Research and information. The director shall: (1) identify methods for increasing the capacity of citizens to influence decisions affecting their lives, identify methods citizens can use to solve problems in their communities, and promote innovative techniques for citizen and community-based organizations to collaborate in understanding and solving community problems; and (2) identify needs of volunteer programs. The director may issue informational materials relating to volunteer programs in Minnesota and results of the director's research.

History: 1977 c 389 s 1; 1983 c 260 s 3; 1985 c 285 s 1; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 365 s 1-3,24; 1988 c 613 s 30; 1991 c 114 s 1; 1991 c 238 art 1 s 1; 1995 c 254 art 1 s 60-63; 1Sp2001 c 10 art 2 s 32,96