



Gibsons Business Watch Volunteer Program

Terms of Reference

The Town of Gibsons is committed to supporting small business through the covid-19 pandemic. The Town recognizes that businesses in the community have closed their doors to help fight the spread of covid-19. To support businesses, the Town has established a Gibsons Business Watch Volunteer Program. This document will serve to describe the purpose, structure and expectations of the program.

Purpose

The Gibsons Business Watch (“GBW”) volunteers provide the Town’s bylaw services with additional eyes and ears in business areas of the municipality. Specifically, the GBW volunteers support the Town’s bylaw services by observing and reporting suspicious activity to the RCMP. GBW volunteers conduct passive activities related to community safety and crime prevention by monitoring the municipal business areas. GBW volunteers are grouped into teams wherever possible. GBW volunteers fulfil their monitoring from their own vehicles. GBW volunteers are expected to immediately call in and report any criminal or suspicious activity to a designated phone number or the RCMP. GBW volunteers do not become actively involved in any situations that they observe.

Membership

The program is comprised of community-based members who volunteer their time, vehicles, energy and expertise to become the extended “eyes and ears” of the Town.

In order to become a volunteer with the GBW program, applicants must be able to fulfill these minimum requirements:

- Be nineteen (19) years or older at the time of application
- Hold a valid BC Driver’s Licence (if acting as the driver of a volunteer vehicle)
- Must not be under investigation by any police force
- Consent to a criminal record check
- If part of a team of 2 or more persons, in order to limit the exposure and spread of covid-19, a team will be comprised of persons identified as self-isolating together in the same residence, such as a husband and wife

An application form for the program is attached as Appendix A of this document.

Accountability

The GBW Volunteer Program is under the direction and control of the Director of Corporate Services. A Chief Volunteer, themselves a volunteer in the program, will act as liaison between the Director of Corporate Services and the volunteers in the program. All volunteers will be accountable to the Chief Volunteer and the Director of Corporate Services for the duration of the program.



Gibsons Business Watch Volunteer Program Terms of Reference

Roles

Director of Corporate Services	The Director of Corporate Services is responsible for, and provides direction to, the GBW Volunteer Program. The Director of Corporate Services establishes all operational procedures and guidelines within the program. The Director of Corporate services is also responsible for selecting volunteers for the program and maintains full discretion over dismissing volunteers from the program. The Director of Corporate Services can at any time designate another employee of the Town of Gibsons to act in their role.
Chief Volunteer	The Chief Volunteer acts as the liaison between the Director of Corporate Services and the rest of the volunteers in the program. The Chief Volunteer helps to ensure the operations of the program fall within the parameters defined by the Director of Corporate Services. The Chief Volunteer will regularly report to the Director of Corporate Services on the activities of volunteers in the program.
Volunteer	Any persons selected to be a part of the GBW Volunteer Program.

Communication

For the duration of the covid-19 pandemic, all communication to and within the program will be conducted by electronic means, including telephone, email and video conferencing.

Operations

The safety of the GBW volunteers is paramount. The operating procedures developed for the program are described below. All volunteers in the GBW Volunteer Program will follow these operating procedures. Failure to follow these procedures can result in dismissal from the program.

- Participation in the program is at the discretion of the Town of Gibsons, and any participation can be terminated by the Town at any time;
- Volunteers will patrol in teams wherever possible;
- A team is defined as a minimum of two volunteers in the GBW Volunteer Program;
- In order to limit the exposure and spread of covid-19, a team will be comprised of persons identified as self-isolating together in the same residence, such as a husband and wife;
- Individual volunteers will be approved to patrol alone on a case by case basis;
- If a volunteer is working alone, they will stay in regular communication with other volunteers working the same shift, or with the Chief Volunteer, as directed;
- Volunteers will patrol from a vehicle and not on foot or by other means;



Gibsons Business Watch Volunteer Program Terms of Reference

- Volunteers will sign on at the beginning of their shift by calling the Director of Corporate Services, the Chief Volunteer, or the RCMP, as directed;
- Volunteers will sign off at the end of their shift by calling the Director of Corporate Services, the Chief Volunteer, or the RCMP, as directed;
- Volunteers will be given a designated phone number to call if they witness suspicious activity;
- Volunteers will call 911 if they witness any situation that requires immediate action, such as if someone's health, safety or property is in jeopardy, or a crime is in progress;
- Shift length and frequency will be determined in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services, the Chief Volunteer, and the RCMP;
- Volunteers will not become involved in any situation they witness;
- Volunteers will not engage directly with any persons they witness conducting a suspicious or criminal act; and
- Volunteers will have a mobile phone on their person at all times;

Remuneration

Remuneration will be offered to volunteers for mileage expenses, and any costs associated with the required criminal record check. Any other requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Corporate Services.

Mileage	Mileage allowances for all miles travelled on municipal business shall be paid to volunteers required to use their own vehicles in the performance of their duties. Rates shall be consistent with the Revenue Canada Agency Automobile Allowance rate.
Criminal Record Check	The cost of a criminal record check for volunteer purposes will be reimbursed by the Town.