

ARRL Volunteer Counsel Program Policy

The purpose of the ARRL Volunteer Counsel (VC) Program is to make available to ARRL members a pool of lawyers who are Amateur Radio operators. As professionals, Volunteer Counsels work on a division level to assist amateurs regionally with a variety of regulatory and legal issues including local government zoning and covenant issues as well as legal issues surrounding interference problems. VCs play an especially important part in division-level affairs by advising ARRL members in their area on complex legal issues as ARRL HQ is prohibited from doing so. The role of ARRL HQ is that of a clearinghouse for regulatory information which should be used by a qualified legal advisor when necessary. Unlike most appointees, VCs are appointed and approved by the Division Director as requested by ARRL HQ. In addition, because of the professional nature of their work, VCs may require fees for their advice. A list of VCs nationally can be found at: <http://www.arrl.org/locate-a-vc>

An online application is available at: <http://www.arrl.org/vc-application>

Responsibilities

The Division Director:

- Recruits and appoints VCs to serve under Director supervision in all ARRL division level affairs;
- Supervises VCs to ensure that the best interests of ARRL division level amateurs are being served by VCs;
- Makes ARRL division-level policy with input from VCs on legal issues when necessary.

ARRL HQ:

- Will evaluate initial regulatory inquiries from ARRL members and make VC referrals when legal advice or aid is required;
- Administer the VC Program and maintain an internal VC list on the ARRL database, and a public referral list on the ARRL Web;
- Keep files of important cases for possible use by the Board, its Officers, and staff, and by members when necessary;
- Refer amateurs to online PRB-1 and covenant packages at <http://www.arrl.org/prb-1> and www.arrl.org/ccrs-covenants-conditions-restrictions which will refer amateurs to regional VCs;
- Update the PRB-1 package as necessary;
- Assist Board members and Officers, especially the FCC Counsel, with coordination duties of ARRL sponsored legal seminars which are held on a regional basis at the request of the Division Director;
- Refer amateurs to online regulatory material at <http://www.arrl.org/regulatory-advocacy>.
- Act as a clearinghouse for regulatory material for amateurs faced with state and local zoning and covenant restrictions as well as other regulatory concerns;
- Distribute material to VCs as directed by the Board, Officers, and senior staff;

NOTE: HQ staff are not permitted to provide legal advice or aid since that must be done by a lawyer.

The Volunteer Counsel:

- Will be a reputable member of the Bar of at least one state;
- Be an Amateur Radio operator;
- Be a member of ARRL;
- Provide an initial consultation to ARRL members at no cost;
- Provide a profile for referral to ARRL members which will include the name, call sign, address, phone number, area of specialization, and state(s) admitted to the Bar;
- Notify the Regulatory Information Branch at HQ of contact information changes (many VCs prefer that office contact information is given out with referrals to amateurs while the *QST* mailing address remains at the home address);
- Provide feedback to the Division Director and FCC Counsel on precedent-setting cases;
- Attend ARRL sponsored regional legal seminars when possible;
- Represent ARRL at Amateur Radio gatherings in a professional manner;
- Be available for participation in the ARRL Alternative Dispute Resolution Program as requested.

An Amateur Seeking Legal Advice:

- Must be an ARRL member at the time assistance is provided;
- Understand that free legal advice is not expected beyond the initial consultation;
- Understand that ARRL holds no liability for the actions of VCs.