

Volunteer Policy

Subject Personnel

Web Link <https://www.montana.edu/policy/volunteer/>

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Responsible Party University of Human Resources

Table of Contents

[100.00 Introduction and Purpose](#)

[200.00 Policy](#)

[300.00 Volunteer Defined](#)

[400.00 Use of Volunteers](#)

[500.00 Volunteer Agreements and Reporting](#)

100.00 Introduction and Purpose

This Policy establishes guidelines and procedures for the use of volunteers by Montana State University. This policy does not apply to 4-H volunteers. Policies for 4-H volunteers are available from the MSU 4-H Center.

200.00 Policy

Montana State University depends upon university volunteer support to carry out its mission of education, research, and public service. The university seeks to ensure that each volunteer's relationships with MSU is clearly defined and understood by both parties. This policy is designed to reduce volunteer risk and protect the interests of the university, its volunteers, and the community it serves.

300.00 Volunteer Defined

MSU volunteers, including students who volunteer for research or field experiences without academic credit or compensation, are uncompensated individuals who are authorized by a university department or unit to provide services to MSU to support the activities of MSU. Volunteers are not considered employees for any purpose. Therefore, they are not eligible for retirement, health, or any other benefits as a result of their volunteer status. MSU, through the state of Montana, maintains [limited insurance coverage](#) for injuries resulting from accidents occurring within the scope of their volunteer duties.

Volunteers serve on a part-time basis and shall not displace regularly employed workers or perform work that would otherwise be performed by paid workers.

Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the institution. Accordingly, a volunteer assignment can be terminated at the discretion of the institution without notice or cause.

400.00 Use of Volunteers

- a) Each department should establish its own volunteer screening process to best meet its needs and develop a description of the volunteer duties prior to assigning volunteers.
- b)
- c) Foreign nationals are not eligible to volunteer for MSU because to do so may jeopardize their visa status.
- d) Volunteers are not covered by MUS Worker Compensation System and, thus, their assignments should be carefully evaluated.
- e) Volunteers must have the necessary training and/or supervision to safely carry out the volunteer work.

- f) Volunteers who are on campus or interact with the university community may be subject to a background check before assignment. Where a background check is warranted, the university will use the Employment Background Check Policy to guide the background check process for these individuals. In determining whether an exemption is appropriate, the type of access requested, level of anticipated supervision, and prior association with the university shall be considered.
- g) Volunteers may not displace or perform work that would otherwise be performed by regular employees. In addition, paid employees of Montana State University cannot volunteer to provide the same or similar type of services that they are employed to provide. Volunteers serve without compensation.

500.00 Volunteer Agreements and Reporting

- a) All MSU volunteers (except volunteers for one-time, low risk activities such as Commencement or Move In Day) and their supervisors shall complete the MSU Volunteer Identification and Agreement form prior to beginning the assignment. The form link is available below.
- b) Each department using volunteers are required to report annually to [Safety and Risk Management](#) the duration of the program or volunteer term, number of volunteer participants, estimated hours per week each volunteer contributes and a general description of the duties performed by them.

[Volunteer Form](#)

[Printable Version](#)