

Volunteer Policy

Subject: Personnel

Policy: Volunteer Policy

Revised: February 17, 2012; October 2, 2019

Effective Date: September 1, 2006

Review Date: October 2, 2022

Responsible Party: University Human Resources, University Family Advocate

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. Volunteer Defined

MSU volunteers, including students who volunteer for research or field experiences without academic credit or compensation, are uncompensated individuals who is authorized by a university department or unit to perform work or 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 at the pleasure of the institution. Accordingly, a volunteer assignment can be terminated at the discretion of the institution without notice or cause.

4. 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. A current employee may not become a volunteer in any capacity in which the current employee is employed at MSU, or which is essentially similar to or related to the individual's regular work at the MSU. A current employee may only volunteer for special events, such as United Way events, phone-a-thons, Commencement, and the like.
- 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 Montana's Worker's 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.

5. Volunteer Agreements and Reporting

- a. All MSU volunteers (except volunteers for one-time, low risk activities such as Commencement, Move In Day or phone-a-thons) and their supervisors shall complete the MSU Volunteer Identification and Agreement form prior to beginning work. 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](#)