



UNIVERSITY
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Many Traditions One Alaska

GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENTS USING VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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I. INTRODUCTION

The willingness of our volunteers to share their skills and talents is highly appreciated. There is a great deal of work and service that would not get done if not for these friends of the University. As we bring volunteers into our community, it is important that we not overlook our responsibilities to both the volunteer and the university. The following information is meant to educate departments on issues to be aware of and areas that need attention. Part of this process includes the completion of the [Volunteer Qualification Checklist](#) which addresses criteria explained in section II of this Guide.

II. VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

The federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows public agencies, such as the University of Alaska, to use the services of volunteers under the following circumstances:

- ✓ The Volunteer cannot perform the same type of services that he or she performs as a university employee or perform services during normal working hours if the Volunteer is employed by UA in any capacity. Note: University employees who are released by their dean/director to perform temporary services for another department (registration assistance, etc.) while on the University payroll are not “volunteers.”
- ✓ The Volunteer must offer their services freely and without coercion, direct or implied, from the university.
- ✓ The Volunteer must perform service without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for their services. In some circumstances, volunteers can receive reimbursement for expenses, benefits, or a nominal fee. However, Human Resources (HR) must approve the payment arrangements and receive the necessary withholding forms. A written Volunteer Agreement (provided by Risk Management (RM) or HR) signed by the volunteer and the department dean/director is required.

If any of the above criteria are not met, the services performed may constitute compensable time under the FLSA and require payment of minimum wages and overtime.

In addition to the above criteria, other laws and university policy require the following:

- ✓ Volunteers must be US citizens or otherwise eligible for unrestricted employment in the US, unless they are performing a service that no one is paid to do.
- ✓ Volunteers who will be in contact with minors (under age 18) must be approved by Risk Management and Human Resources and may be subject to a criminal background check.
- ✓ Volunteers may not transport groups, students, minors, or non-UA affiliated persons on UA business or UA sponsored events and activities. Exceptions may be made only with prior approval of Risk Management.

- ✓ For Volunteers under the age of 18, written permission must be received from Risk Management and from a parent or legal guardian.
- ✓ No written volunteer agreements may be utilized other than those provided through RM or HR.
- ✓ Volunteers must be under the direct supervision of a **paid** University of Alaska employee. Supervision by a University employee means that the Volunteer is given the means and the direction for the performance of the work.
- ✓ The Volunteer will perform productive work where there is a legitimate need for services.
- ✓ Volunteers must be engaged in activities related to the business or operations of the University of Alaska. Such activities are defined as work that furthers the goals and missions of the university in education, research, or community service.
- ✓ Volunteers must have the skills necessary to perform the work.

| Some examples of qualified Volunteers: | Some activities where an individual is not qualified as a Volunteer: |
|--|---|
|  |  |
| Docents Flower planting or gardening campus grounds (excludes community gardens) Models in art classes Enrolled and Accepted 4-H Leaders Coaches Recreational assistants Student registration assistants | Employees from other universities or organizations doing joint research, or performing other services and activities with UA Students in practicum, internship or work study programs Students on class field trips Spouses, friends, or family members traveling with a UA employee Performers in theatre, music, dance, or other productions Participants in club activities |

III. VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

A [Volunteer Qualification Checklist](#) is to be completed to ensure the necessary criteria are met for the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), insurance, IRS and risk management. Questions regarding Volunteer status should be directed to RM or HR.

IV. APPROVAL PROCESS

The department Dean/Director must sign off on a completed [Volunteer Qualification Checklist](#) and approve the volunteer services. The checklist will help departments determine whether additional review and approval by Risk Management is needed. If, in accordance with the Volunteer Qualification Checklist, the approval of Risk Management is not required, no other documentation is needed. Departments are at risk for expenses arising out of lack of adherence to this process.

The approval of RM and/or HR is required in the following situations:

| Approval Required By  | RM | HR |
|--|----|----|
| Volunteers who will be in contact with minors (< age 18) | X | |
| Volunteers under 18 | X | |
| Volunteers providing transportation | X | |
| Volunteers receiving payment(s) | X | X |
| Volunteers with a written volunteer agreement (between UA and the volunteer) | X | X |

V. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Ensure your volunteers are informed of university policies, procedures, and compliance requirements for safety and security; sexual harassment; drug and alcohol abuse; non-discrimination and equal opportunity, etc. Volunteers should also be informed of ethical codes or similar standards of conduct applicable to the department in which they provide volunteer services, as well as other relevant policies, such as policies on confidentiality of records, intellectual property, conflict of interest, etc. Volunteers should be provided with the information sheet titled "[Information for Volunteers.](#)"

Volunteers are not authorized to act in any way on behalf of the university in business matters, including purchasing property, signing contracts, leases or other agreements, hiring or supervising employees or otherwise attempting to bind the university to any agreement. Please do not ask them to fill any of those roles.

Volunteers are under no obligation to provide services to the university and are free to discontinue their volunteer activities at any time.

Qualified volunteers are eligible for certain types of University of Alaska insurance protection. For information on this insurance, please go to the following links:

Volunteer Services and Liability:

http://www.alaska.edu/risksafety/b_insurance/insurance-coverage/volunteer-services-and-li/

Volunteer Services and Workers' Compensation:

http://www.alaska.edu/risksafety/b_insurance/insurance-coverage/volunteer-services-and-wc/

The completed Volunteer Checklist should be retained by the department for one year after the volunteer service is completed.