

# Procedures and Guidelines for Engaging Volunteer Workers

1 July 2016

It is the policy of the Departments of Physics, Astronomy and the Institute of Nuclear Theory to encourage outreach programs that are consistent with the University's public services responsibilities. The following procedures and guidelines are intended to remind members of the Departments of their legal responsibilities when hiring volunteers and to assist them in satisfying University and State requirements when engaging volunteer workers.

## **DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEER:**

A volunteer is someone who:

- Is unpaid;
- Offers services freely without coercion or pressure to serve;
- Has no expectation of receiving pay or other benefits including future positions at the University;
- Does not currently and/or did not previously hold a position performing the same tasks; and
- Does not displace a current or past paid position and whose volunteer services are not substantially the same as a paid position.

## **GUIDELINES:**

Volunteers receiving academic credit for work they perform are classified as “interns” and are not covered by UW workers’ compensation. Interns must provide their own coverage for accidents or injuries that occur while performing intern work.

Volunteers who are not covered by UW workers’ compensation:

- Unpaid student interns who are enrolled at the UW or another institution of higher education and participating in an approved/authorized work-training program for a defined period of time.

Volunteers who are covered by UW workers’ compensation:

- Unpaid student volunteers not enrolled at an institution of higher education and/or not in an approved/authorized work-training program for a designated period of time.
- Unpaid high school students volunteering for credit.
- Unpaid UW, other college, or high school student volunteers NOT receiving credit.

Volunteers who are minors (less than 18 years old) cannot:

- Drive or operate machinery
- Perform jobs requiring specialized personal protective equipment
- And require special consideration as described below under “Volunteer Agreement Form”

## ***Supervision:***

- The supervisor or another departmental employee designated by the supervisor (e.g. an advanced graduate student or post-doc) must be in the lab/work space with the volunteer. With prior approval from the departmental Chair, this may be waived for volunteers with exceptional experiences or abilities (e.g. retirees from national labs, high school teachers whose normal duties include managing lab environments).

- In the special case where supervision will be the responsibility of a person who is not a department employee (e.g. high school teachers supervising their students who are participating as volunteers) this person must first be approved by the Department Chair.
- Supervisors should track the dates and hours of volunteers to ensure that if a volunteer is injured, he/she is covered by the University's workers' compensation and insurance policy.

**Safety and training requirements:**

- It is the supervisor's responsibility to instruct the volunteer that safety and safe working practices take priority over all other considerations in the work place.
- Accompanied by their supervisor, all volunteers must first complete the New Employee Safety form that can be obtained from the department web site:  
<https://sharepoint.washington.edu/phys/admin/Pages/Safety.aspx>
- It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that volunteers are made aware of, and comply with, all the safety considerations and requirements that a university employee engaged in the same activity would be subject to.
- The volunteer should not undertake any activity that requires special training unless they can demonstrate that they have received that training and that the training is current. This includes the operation or use of equipment or apparatus, together with any procedures needed to operate them.

**Access to restricted areas of the Physics-Astronomy Building:**

- Volunteers may access and work in areas that are not open to the general public only at the discretion of the supervisor; otherwise they should be accompanied by their supervisor or another department employee designated by the volunteer's supervisor.
- Volunteers may access the Department outside of normal hours only at the discretion of their supervisor, otherwise the volunteer must be accompanied by their supervisor or another departmental employee designated by the volunteer's supervisor.

**VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM:**

The University carries insurance to cover medical expenses related to injuries that occur during approved volunteer activities. This insurance policy requires that the department, and therefore the supervisor maintain the names of all their volunteers and the dates and hours they worked. To assist the supervisor in meeting this requirement the Departments have provided the **Volunteer Agreement Form** appended to the end of this document. This form should be completed, signed and dated by the volunteer and their supervisor, *who thereby accepts responsibility for the safety of the volunteer while engaged in the volunteer activity*. This form should be returned to the main office along with the New Employee Safety form.

University Administrative Policy Statement 14.1.4 "Workers' Compensation Program" provides more information. See <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/APS/14.01.html>

Volunteers who are injured should follow the same claim filing and accident reporting procedure as regular University employees. See <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/APS/10.08.html>, Administrative Policy Statement 10.8 and Section 4.c of this policy statement for information.

### ***Volunteers under age 18:***

The University has well defined guidelines for volunteers classified as minors. More information can be obtained at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/APS/44.03.html> and at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/polproc/emp-minors.html>.

The UW guidelines conform to the Washington State guidelines laid out in publication F700-022 that can be found at <http://www.lni.wa.gov/ipub/700-022-000.pdf>

These documents describe the records that must be kept, the hours that can be worked and those specific activities that cannot be undertaken by minors of certain ages. The supervisor should be familiar with the contents of this publication before engaging volunteers who are minors.

In general, under-18 volunteers must not do:

- Jobs using power-driven machines
- Jobs with possible exposure to bodily fluids, or radioactive and hazardous substances
- Jobs requiring specialized personal protective equipment
  - examples include jobs requiring: chemical or bio-protection suits, respirators, helmets, gas/vapor masks, welders gear;
  - does NOT include jobs requiring: items meant only to protect clothing (e.g. aprons, lab coats), clean-room clothing, or items commonly used in lab classrooms, such as eye protection, hearing protection, gloves, or dust masks.

Further Washington State rules on hiring minors can be found at:

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/TeenWorkers/HiringMinors/default.asp>

More information on coverage for volunteers and the supervisor's responsibilities is available by calling the Office of Risk Management, 206-543-0183 or by sending an email inquiry to:

[workcomp@u.washington.edu](mailto:workcomp@u.washington.edu)>[workcomp@u.washington.edu](mailto:workcomp@u.washington.edu)

### ***Students receiving credit (interns)***

- Students receiving academic credit for work they do are classified as interns and are not covered by UW workers' compensation. Students (interns) must provide their own coverage for accidents or injuries that occur while performing intern work.
- If the student will not be paid and will not receive academic credit, then the student is a true volunteer, and will be covered by workers' compensation for their work at UW.
- Volunteers are considered "employees"; interns are not considered employees of the UW.

Department Volunteer Agreement Form

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Volunteer Name:

Volunteer Address:

Volunteer Telephone Number and E-Mail:

Is the Volunteer 18 years or older?            **Yes**      **No**  
*(If the volunteer is under 18 years, please refer to the specific rules regarding working with minors at the UW - see "Guideline for Engaging Volunteers").*

Is the Volunteer performing these activities for course credit?            **Yes**      **No**  
*(If the volunteer is receiving course credit for the activities, this qualifies as an internship and is covered by different policies - see "Guideline for Engaging Volunteers").*

Provide a brief description of the overall activities to be performed by the volunteer.

Provide a list of specific expectations the volunteer will be asked to fulfill based on the overall activities described above.

Provide the specific duration of the volunteer appointment, including day, month and year.

Provide the specific volunteer work schedule and location during this appointment. *Please note, maintain up-to-date records of any schedule revision.*

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Volunteer Signature	Date	Supervisor Signature	Date
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NOTE: By signing this document, the volunteer agrees not to work on, or operate equipment, for which they have not received training or permission to operate.

PLEASE RETURN FORM TO: Department Administrator