

# A Supervisor/Counterpart Model Handbook

**A “How To” Workbook**



**Peace Corps  
2002**



Information Collection and Exchange  
Publication No. T0121

## Acknowledgments

The Peace Corps has worked with host country nationals since its inception. In order to build local capacity, it is necessary for our partners to be brought into all aspects of Peace Corps work. The training materials in *Working With Supervisors and Counterparts* support the capacity-building framework by placing an emphasis on the value and opportunities of host national participation and by giving tips and tools for training design and handbook development.

The Peace Corps would like to acknowledge the contribution made to these materials by people in the field who shared their many post resources for working with community partners.

The Peace Corps also acknowledges the following people who contributed to the training materials: Andrew Baird, Raquel Aronhime, Laurette Bennhold-Samaan, Judee Blohm, Kate Raftery, and Paula Bilinsky for their reviews and advice; Elizabeth MacDonald for research and writing; Michael Yoka for rewrites and editing; and Marcy Garland for desktop publishing, in collaboration with Shari Howe, technical training/training management specialist, Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research, Peace Corps/Washington.

## Contents of Introduction

Introduction .....	v
About This Workbook .....	v
Additional Resources.....	vi
Content Areas .....	vi
Workbook Design .....	vii





# Introduction

Many posts are increasing Counterpart and Supervisor participation in all aspects of their projects. This participation greatly increases the richness and sustainability of the project. Posts often hold Supervisor/Counterpart conferences to prepare Supervisors and Counterparts for their work with Volunteers and use Supervisor/Counterpart handbooks as a supplemental guide and reference. Supervisor/Counterpart handbooks generally include the following information:

- Policies and regulations
- Project purpose, goals, and objectives
- Roles and expectations
- Emergency procedures
- Other management or procedural topics

## *About This Workbook*

This workbook will help you develop or refine a handbook to use at your post. Handbooks contain general information about the Peace Corps' history, culture, and rules. They also provide specific insights into each project.

This workbook has two components:

1. **The copy** you are currently reading, and
2. **A CD-ROM** that you can use to create your own workbook.

This copy contains this introductory section and a sample handbook created from actual handbooks from various Peace Corps posts. You can review the handbook and adapt it to your own needs. Use the CD-ROM included in the materials to create your own handbook.

Much of the material in the handbook is the same worldwide: specifically, the history and goals of the Peace Corps, and rules, regulations, and policies. You can use that material exactly as it is in the electronic handbook file. Other things differ by post, such as individual projects. The electronic file provides blank areas in which to add your own content about things that are unique to your post and projects. Each section contains guiding questions to help you think about and write your own content.

If you already have a handbook you should consider revising it:

- ✓ when a project plan is revised.
- ✓ when a new project is started, and



- ✓ prior to annual Supervisor/Counterpart workshops.

## ***Additional Resources***

To maximize your efforts on developing or revising a handbook, you should seek participation of the country director, the administrative officer, the medical officer, the programming and training officer, and cross-cultural trainer, and others to make sure that the necessary information is included and that the information is accurate. You could also review the following documents:

- Any previous Supervisor/Counterpart handbook(s) at your post
- Current project plans
- Country and community agreements
- Staff contact information
- Information on emergency procedures

A handbook is a *living document* that evolves over time, reflecting changes in the projects and the country program. As outlined in the first section of the manual *Working With Supervisors and Counterparts*, there are many opportunities for participation by community partners and Volunteers.

## ***Content Areas***

This workbook addresses nine content areas that are usually included in a Supervisor/Counterpart handbook in the field:

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Basic information about the Peace Corps
3. Program, project, and country-specific information
4. Description of two-year Volunteer cycle
5. Cultural differences and cross-cultural communication
6. Roles and responsibilities of Supervisors, Counterparts, Volunteers, and Peace Corps staff
7. Peace Corps regulations and policies
8. Frequently asked questions
9. Emergency procedures and contact information

## Workbook Design

The workbook that you are now reading is a sample for the creation of your own post's handbook. We include some standard headings and content that you also will find on disk and suggest where and how you can best customize the handbook for your post. The following formats are used to help you develop your customized handbook.

Suggested topics or subheads designated are by a sans-serif font in italics. (*Like this*)

- Topics that are the same for all Peace Corps posts around the world contain suggested text.
- Topics that change by post contain the subheading, guiding questions, and examples from other posts. (The examples from other posts, in shaded boxes, are not included on the disk that you will use to create your handbook.)

Information that is provided to give you guidance is in italics and a shaded box that looks like this:

*The first section of the handbook welcomes Supervisors and Counterparts and provides an introduction to the handbook.*

**(This information is not included on the disk you will use to make your own handbook.)**

When there is a place in the text for you to insert your country's name you will see [country].

The text alignment and page breaks may change when you add your own content. Once your content is inserted electronically, you will need to adjust page breaks. As space allows, insert appropriate graphics and/or photographs available to you.

When you have completed your handbook, or whenever you make changes, be sure to adjust the table of contents to correspond.





# **Supervisor/Counterpart Handbook**



**Peace Corps [country]**

**Date**



## Contents

<b>Welcome!</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Greetings and Welcome to the Peace Corps! .....	1
<b>About the Peace Corps .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Who We Are.....	2
Who Are the Volunteers?.....	2
How Do Americans Become Volunteers? .....	3
Why Do Americans Join the Peace Corps? .....	3
What Do Volunteers Do? .....	4
Peace Corps Acronyms.....	7
<b>The Peace Corps in [country] .....</b>	<b>9</b>
About Peace Corps/[country] .....	9
<b>Peace Corps Projects in [country] .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Peace Corps Projects in [country] .....	12
<b>Volunteer Two-Year Cycle .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Cultural Differences .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Cross-Cultural Adjustment and the Volunteer.....	15
<b>Roles and Responsibilities for Working With Peace Corps Volunteers .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Responsibilities of the Peace Corps .....	18
Responsibilities of the Host Agency.....	18
Roles and Responsibilities of the Volunteer.....	19
Roles and Responsibilities of the Volunteer's Supervisor .....	19
Roles and Responsibilities of the Counterpart .....	20
<b>Regulations and Policies .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Peace Corps Regulations and Policies .....	22
<b>Frequently Asked Questions From Supervisors and Counterparts .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Emergency Procedures .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Medical Emergencies .....	33
Other Emergency Situations.....	34
Emergency Information.....	34
Sample: Information Needed in the Event of an Emergency.....	35
Peace Corps Contact Information .....	37
<b>Quick Guide to the Peace Corps' Policies .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Legal Status.....	38
Financial Gain .....	38
Drugs .....	38
Alcohol.....	38



Political Expression .....	38
Firearms .....	38
Media.....	38
Official Agreements.....	39
Volunteer Transportation .....	39
Bicycle Helmets.....	39
Volunteer Health Care .....	39
Medical Emergencies .....	39
Natural Disasters .....	39
Sexual Harassment .....	39

## Welcome!

*The first section of the handbook welcomes Supervisors and Counterparts and provides an introduction to the handbook. It should explain the importance of the Supervisors' and Counterparts' roles in the post's program. This introductory part can also give information about programming initiatives such as AIDS education, girls' education, or women in development.*

- *How do you want to welcome the Supervisors and Counterparts?*
- *What are the cross-sectoral programming initiatives of the Peace Corps country program?*

## Welcome!

### *Greetings and Welcome to the Peace Corps!*

Thank you for working with our Peace Corps Volunteers. The focus of the Peace Corps' work is on the development of people, not things—helping people develop the capacity to improve their lives. As a Volunteer's Supervisor or Counterpart you will help to ensure that capacity building happens in your community. The Volunteers will also learn from you about the communities in which they live and work. The Volunteers need your help to be successful as they work with people and institutions in the community. You can be their partner during the project.

The Peace Corps begins the process of development by designing a country program at each post. The process involves people in the host country who will become partners in the development work. Those people help the Peace Corps understand the country's needs from the community all the way to the national level. One rule in the Peace Corps is that the Peace Corps cannot work alone. Work must be done with the participation of host country nationals such as Supervisors and Counterparts. Everyone benefits when people plan together, work together, solve problems together, and learn together. The participation, support, and direction that Supervisors and Counterparts give to Peace Corps Volunteers are very important.

This handbook will help you learn more about the Peace Corps and the policies and regulations related to the Volunteer's assignment. It will also help you and the Volunteer establish a relationship built on understanding and trust. Use this handbook to understand roles and responsibilities, learn about cross-cultural communication issues, improve your communication skills, and begin your work together in your community.



## About the Peace Corps

*The purpose of this section is to explain two things:*

- 1. What the Peace Corps is, who started it, when it was started and why.**
- 2. Who the Volunteers are, where they are working, and how they are prepared for their work.**

## About the Peace Corps

### *Who We Are*

The Peace Corps is an independent agency of the United States government. President John F. Kennedy started the Peace Corps in 1961. Its mission is to promote international peace and friendship through the service abroad of American Volunteers. More than 165,000 Americans have served in the Peace Corps in 135 countries. Volunteers try to help communities to improve their quality of life. They try to create new opportunities for people. Volunteers learn to speak the local languages. While living and working with people in communities, Volunteers share American culture and values. They help people learn about Americans of various ages, races, and ethnic and religious backgrounds. When Volunteers return to the United States they also help Americans learn more about the world by talking about the cultures, customs, languages, and traditions of other people.

The three goals of the Peace Corps are:

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women,
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served, and
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

### *Who Are the Volunteers?*

Since 1961 the Peace Corps has shared America's most precious resource—its people. Peace Corps Volunteers have worked with countless individuals who want to build a better life for themselves, their children, and their communities. Americans must be willing to give two years of their lives to living and working in a developing country in order to join the Peace Corps. Today, there are about 7,500 Peace Corps Volunteers serving in more than 75 countries worldwide. More than 61 percent of the Volunteers are women. The average age of Volunteers is 28 years, and 7 percent of Volunteers are over the age of 50. Some 70- and 80-year-olds even join the Peace

Corps! Most Volunteers are single, although a few are married. Volunteers come from every state as well as the U.S. territories. Reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the United States, Volunteers show other countries that Americans come from many different racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

To be successful, Volunteers have to adapt to different cultures, be patient, and have strong motivation. Some Volunteers live in cities, others in rural areas and isolated communities. In training, Volunteers learn to speak the local language and begin to adapt to the cultures and customs of the people they serve. Volunteers also receive training in advanced technical skills that will make their work better. Volunteers work with teachers, parents, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), ministries, health clinics, community organizations, and other agencies that serve people.

The Peace Corps has become a model of success for efforts to promote sustainable development at the community level. The Peace Corps, however, is much more than a development agency. Volunteers represent some of America's most enduring values: hope, peace, optimism, freedom, and opportunity. Volunteers are not asked to impose their values on other people or cultures but to build the bridges of friendship and understanding that are the foundation of peace among nations.

## ***How Do Americans Become Volunteers?***

Every year, almost 150,000 Americans ask for information about the Peace Corps. About 9,000 persons decide they want to become Volunteers and complete an application. Applicants must have an interview with a Peace Corps officer. They must send three letters of recommendation. They also have to pass an extensive medical and dental examination. Finally, the Peace Corps checks to be sure they do not have legal problems. In the end, 3,500 people are selected.

When an applicant has been cleared for legal, medical, skill, and personal requirements, the placement officer matches the applicant to a country and specific project. The Volunteer receives a Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD), which describes the job and country-specific information. This information helps the applicant decide whether to accept the invitation.

## ***Why Do Americans Join the Peace Corps?***

There are many benefits for Americans who join the Peace Corps. Volunteers learn new skills for their careers and gain experience in international development. They live in and learn about another part of the world. Most Americans join the Peace Corps because they care about people and want to help others. Most Volunteers say they want to make a difference in the world.

## **Career Benefits**

Many U.S. employers value international living experience, knowledge of other cultures, and foreign language skills. When Volunteers finish their two-year experience, they have gained skills that will help their careers.



## **Educational Benefits**

Volunteers can get university credit toward a master's degree, as well as scholarships and assistantships at many U.S. universities.

## **Financial Benefits**

Volunteers get a monthly living allowance so they can live like co-workers in their host country community. Volunteers also receive medical and dental care, transportation to and from the host country, and 24 vacation days per year.

## **Personal Benefits**

Volunteers form lasting friendships with people from different parts of the world. With the help of the host community, their Supervisor, and Counterparts, they become comfortable in their host country's culture. They learn many new things about the world that will be important for the rest of their lives. Volunteers often say that they learn and gain more from the experience than they give.

### ***What Do Volunteers Do?***

Peace Corps Volunteers work in different activities within the “sectors” of education, business, environment, health and water sanitation, youth development, and agriculture. Volunteers have an assignment in one of these sectors. They also have responsibilities outside of their job. They are expected to work on development projects with their communities. For example, English teachers might also have environmental or health information in their lessons. Teachers might also take these lessons and activities to groups outside the school. An agricultural Volunteer could do his primary job and also teach small business skills to farmers or help people make a craft from agricultural products.

Many Volunteers also coach sports teams, advise student clubs, develop job-related resource materials, teach computer skills, work with community women and youth groups, and much more.

Volunteers work on projects developed by the country and the Peace Corps, which have clear goals and objectives that guide what Volunteers do in their assignments. The goals and objectives provide a standard to measure progress of the project. As mentioned, many Volunteers also work with their communities on local development projects.

## Peace Corps Programming Criteria

### A strong project:

- ✓ increases local capacity,
- ✓ strives to address expressed needs of those who have limited access to resources and opportunities,
- ✓ seeks sustainable results that complement other development efforts,
- ✓ has local participants as partners in developing, implementing, and assessing the project,
- ✓ considers gender relationships and promotes women's participation to increase their status and opportunities,
- ✓ places Volunteers at the local level where needs occur,
- ✓ does not displace qualified and available local workers with Volunteers,
- ✓ uses the types and numbers of Volunteers that are consistent with available applicants,
- ✓ has local Peace Corps staff and resources to train and support Volunteers to complete their assignments successfully, and
- ✓ has host agencies and communities as partners who can support the project and the Volunteers.

The primary focus of the Peace Corps is on capacity building and sustainable development—helping people develop the capacity to improve their own lives. Peace Corps Volunteers try to build local capacity at one or more of the following four levels:

1. **Individual members** of the community or the project participants (students, farmers in a cooperative, clients of an NGO, and so on)
2. **Professionals and service providers** (teachers, leaders of an NGO, managers, and so on)
3. **Organizations** (schools, NGOs, farmers' cooperatives, and so on)
4. **Communities** served by the project in which the Volunteer is working (parent-teacher associations, Earth Day campaigns, Bring Your Daughters to Work, summer camps, and so on)

The relationship between a host country government and the Peace Corps is guided by the Country Agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). These agreements outline



the processes, requirements, and allowances under which the host country government recognizes the Peace Corps' operation in the host country. The agreements also set out the responsibilities that the Peace Corps and host agencies have for supporting Volunteers and the projects to which they are assigned.

## **Peace Corps Training**

Training is an essential part of Peace Corps service. Training gives Volunteers the technical, language, cross-cultural, and personal support skills needed for their life and work. Training also starts the process of questioning, learning, and discovery that continues throughout the Volunteers' service. Training programs are carefully designed to get Volunteers ready to perform their jobs as well as possible.

### **In Pre-Service Training, Trainees learn:**

- ✓ to begin to use the local language
- ✓ to strengthen and adapt their technical skills for their assignment
- ✓ to make the transition necessary to live and work effectively in a local community
- ✓ to understand, adjust to, and appreciate the culture and cultural differences that exist between the Volunteer and the host community
- ✓ to understand the goals and organization of their assigned agency and their roles/tasks within their assignment
- ✓ to respect and follow professional rules and guidelines of their agency
- ✓ to begin their work with their Supervisor and Counterpart(s)

Volunteers are offered other Peace Corps training throughout the course of their two-year assignment. Volunteers often attend these trainings with their Counterparts.

## *Peace Corps Acronyms*

People who have worked for the Peace Corps for a long time often sound as though they are speaking another language because they use so many acronyms. People new to Peace Corps are sometimes overwhelmed and do not understand what is being said. Here is a partial list of Peace Corps acronyms.

<b>AO</b>	administrative officer
<b>APCD</b>	associate Peace Corps director
<b>APCMO</b>	area Peace Corps medical officer
<b>CD</b>	country director
<b>COS</b>	Close of Service
<b>ET</b>	early termination
<b>GAD</b>	Gender and Development
<b>HCA</b>	host country agency
<b>HCN</b>	host country national
<b>ICE</b>	Information Collection and Exchange
<b>IRC</b>	In-country Resource Center
<b>IST</b>	In-Service Training
<b>NGO</b>	nongovernmental organization
<b>PC/W</b>	Peace Corps/Washington
<b>PCT</b>	Peace Corps Trainee
<b>PCV</b>	Peace Corps Volunteer
<b>PSR</b>	Project Status Report
<b>PST</b>	Pre-Service Training
<b>PTO</b>	programming and training officer
<b>PVO</b>	private volunteer organization



<b>QTRS</b>	Quarterly Trainee Request System
<b>SBD</b>	small business development
<b>SED</b>	small enterprise development
<b>SPA</b>	Small Project Assistance
<b>SRPTC</b>	sub-regional programming and training coordinator (Africa/Pacific)
<b>TSR</b>	Training Status Report
<b>VAD</b>	Volunteer Assignment Description
<b>WID</b>	Women in Development

## The Peace Corps in [country]

*This section describes the history of the Peace Corps' work in your country. Supervisors and Counterparts may not be familiar with it. This section allows you to give an overview of how the Peace Corps has been involved with development projects. If the Peace Corps has been active in the country for many years, then you may want to describe how the program has evolved over the years. If your post is relatively new, you may want to describe how the program started.*

### *Guiding Questions:*

- *How long has the Peace Corps been in the country?*
- *What are the programming goals?*
- *How many Volunteers have served and are currently serving I- country?*
- *In what regions of the country are the Volunteers working?*
- *Are there regional variations in the Peace Corps Projects? If yes, describe.*
- *Have there been significant changes in Peace Corps projects over time? If yes, what are they?*
- *What are future goals of the country program?*

*Consult with your country director and other staff when working on this section!*

## The Peace Corps in [country]

### About Peace Corps/[country]

#### *Example from Mozambique*

*The government of Mozambique invited the Peace Corps to work in Mozambique in the field of education. The first group of 24 Volunteers arrived in October 1998, and began working in schools in February 1999. These Volunteers worked in the Maputo, Gaza, Inhambane, and Sofala provinces teaching English in high schools. The second and third groups of Volunteers included biology and English teachers. Volunteers continue to work in the central regions of the country.*

*The goals that guide the work of the Volunteers in this education project are to:*

- *Provide quality instruction in English.*
- *Collaborate and support the Mozambican professors in their professional development to help improve their qualifications, creativity, and effectiveness.*

*Continued*



- *Support the development of pedagogical materials at the local level to supplement and enhance the curriculum and textbooks of English instruction.*
- *Provide linkages between the schools and the communities around the schools in the areas of public health and environmental education through the inclusion of youth, women, and out-of-school youth in activities.*

*Consistent with the establishment of Peace Corps in Mozambique, the Volunteers will be placed progressively throughout all areas of the country. Peace Corps/Mozambique hopes to work in the future in other sectors such as environmental education and health.*

#### *Example from Tonga*

*The Peace Corps was invited to Tonga by the government in 1967. The first group of 55 Volunteer teachers arrived in October of that year. Until 1982 about 100 Volunteers served at any given time. Most Volunteers served as classroom teachers in primary and middle schools in outer islands and in primary and secondary schools in the capitals of the three island groups. More than half of the Volunteers were placed on Tongatapu, where most of the schools and government offices are located. Large numbers of Volunteers were also assigned to work in areas of agriculture, cooperatives, and health services.*

*In 1982, the Peace Corps reduced the number of Volunteers to an average of 35 per year, allowing Peace Corps staff and Tongan government officials to assess the Peace Corps' role in terms of current Tongan development priorities. They decided to place more Volunteers in rural areas or outer islands, since the high concentration of Volunteers in and around the capital limited the attainment of the Peace Corps' second goal.*

*Between 1982 and 1988, groups of Volunteers worked primarily as secondary education teachers in the areas of science, math, accounting, and industrial arts. The 1982 program shift resulted in a more focused and productive Volunteer workforce and extremely low "early termination" rates. Because of further programming initiatives, the Volunteer population has increased to an average of 50 Volunteers in the 1990s.*

*Beginning in 1996, the initiative is again to move Volunteers away from the capital as much as possible. There is a focus on more youth development and business advising in the outer islands. As always, secondary school teachers will continue working with students and teachers in science, English, math, and computers.*

*Historically, over 1,000 Volunteers have worked in more than 30 areas of development sponsored by the Tongan government, private nonprofit organizations, and individual community projects. The Peace Corps has been primarily served in*

*the sectors of education, agriculture and fisheries, health, cooperatives, and public works.*



## Peace Corps Projects in [country]

*This section describes the current Peace Corps projects. It will allow Supervisors/Counterparts to review the different projects, and give them some core language with which to describe the key features of each project. In addition, given that many posts are clustering Volunteers to work cross-sectorally, describing all of the projects can help increase your audience's awareness for potential cross-sectoral collaboration.*

*Provide detailed information about each project. If the country program only has one project, then you may prefer to put it in the previous section. However, if there are several projects, you may prefer to put them in a separate section as illustrated in the examples below.*

*Guiding Questions:*

- *How many projects are there?*
- *How old are the projects?*
- *What is the purpose of each project?*
- *What are the goals and objectives of each project?*
- *What are the Volunteers' tasks in each project?*
- *How do these tasks fit into their work assignment and community project needs?*
- *How do Volunteers collaborate with their Counterparts in each project?*
- *What makes these projects sustainable?*
- *What is the impact of the project?*
- *Work with your country director and fellow program managers on this section!*

## Peace Corps Projects in [country]

### *Peace Corps Projects in [country]*

#### *Example from Romania*

#### *Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)*

*Peace Corps Volunteers teach English in secondary schools throughout Romania using communicative methods that are designed to increase students' knowledge and skill in the English language. Methods used emphasize the development of listening and speaking skills as well as critical thinking skills that can be applied to other disciplines.*

*Continued*

*The TEFL program has been developed in accordance with the Ministry of Education and supports the English Language Curriculum Program.*

**Social Work/NGO Development**

*Volunteers in this sector work with local NGOs dedicated to children, youth, and family support activities. Attention is given to improving the services provided by these organizations, as well as the development of the organization's management, fundraising capabilities, and programming expertise. Another aspect of this sector is the assignment of Volunteers to social work faculties, where they assist in developing a balanced curriculum that combines theory and practice in order to prepare Romanian social work graduates for the challenges in their field.*

**Small Business Development (SBD)**

*SBD Volunteers work toward increasing the capacity of potential and existing entrepreneurs to identify and develop ways of improving and developing their businesses within the specifics of Romania's transition economy. The program focuses on small private businesses outside Bucharest that traditionally have less access to technical assistance and information. This is accomplished by two different activities:*

- 1. Small business consulting and training in conjunction with local organizations such as municipalities, chambers of commerce, cooperatives, and foundations*
- 2. Business education in free-market economy concepts in conjunction with secondary schools, universities, and other institutions*

*Note: The above is a field handbook example. It would be a good idea to include the purpose, and the goals and objectives (and some Volunteer tasks) of the project(s) as well. See the guiding questions in italics above for more ideas on project information for your handbook.*



## Volunteer Two-Year Cycle

*Explain to the Counterparts and Supervisors major events and activities that usually happen within the two years of Volunteer service. This helps the Supervisors and Counterparts to anticipate when the major trainings are, when American special holidays are, when a Volunteer might need to be absent from his/her site or when there might be a need for participation in events by Volunteer Supervisors and Counterparts.*

**Guiding Questions:**

- *What are the major training events and when are they held?*
- *What other dates are necessary for the Supervisor and Counterpart to know about? (Special events, site visits, etc.)*

*You can use the chart below as a sample, inserting dates from your Volunteers' two-year cycle.*

## Volunteer Two-Year Cycle

<b>Month</b> (you can use specific dates)	<b>Event</b> (you may want to include local holidays, American holidays, and other specific events here)
1	Trainees arrive
1 - 3	Pre-Service Training (PST) that includes technical, language, cross-cultural, personal health and safety subjects; Trainees visit their future site of assignment; Supervisor and Counterpart workshop; host family day, etc.
3	Swearing-in ceremony; Volunteers begin work at their sites
3 - 6	In-Service Training (IST) for Volunteers and Counterparts; Project Design and Management (PDM) workshop for Volunteers and Counterparts; special events such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.
12 - 14	Midservice training; annual medical exam
24	Close of service (COS) conference; final medical exam
27	Volunteers depart

## Cultural Differences

*This section identifies crossing cultures as one of the most important issues affecting the success of a Volunteer and the building of a relationship with Counterparts and Supervisors. At times, a Supervisor or Counterpart will not realize the adjustment a Volunteer goes through as he/she learns how to work and live in a different cultural setting. Supervisors and Counterparts may not realize that they too will need to adjust their cultural expectations as they learn to work with Volunteers from a totally different culture. It is beneficial to include a section in your handbook that highlights the importance of recognizing cultural differences, cultural adjustment, and cultural communication skills. It is also important to include cross-cultural activities in all your Supervisor and Counterpart trainings.*

**Guiding Questions:**

- *Are your Supervisors and Counterparts aware of the cultural adjustment cycle most Volunteers go through?*
- *What information about American cultural norms do you want to share with your Supervisors and Counterparts?*
- *How do the American norms and your norms differ, especially in the workplace?*
- *Are there challenges in your country that continue to come up between Supervisors/Counterparts and Volunteers that may be cross-culturally based?*

*Below is an example of text you may wish to use or revise for your handbook.*

## Cultural Differences

### Cross-Cultural Adjustment and the Volunteer

Peace Corps Volunteers go through different stages as they adjust to their host country, the host culture, and their job. Adjustment stages can affect the performance and satisfaction of Volunteers. As Volunteers adjust, they learn more about the culture and their feelings and ideas about the culture change. Most Volunteers experience the stages of adjustment described below. However, each Volunteer's experience will be unique.

**Cultural Adjustment Stages:**

1. **Initial enthusiasm (the honeymoon):** During training, Volunteers usually feel very excited and enthusiastic, but they still don't know very much about the host culture.



2. **Initial country and culture shock:** Volunteers can begin to feel homesick and frustrated. They don't speak the language very well and they are beginning to have more contact and experience with the new culture.
3. **Initial adjustment:** The Volunteer is still in training and learning to become more self-reliant. Some cultural aspects now seem normal to the Trainee.
4. **Further culture shock:** This is the time Supervisors and Counterparts begin to work with Volunteers. Volunteers are now "on their own" and totally immersed in a new culture. From time to time they can feel homesick, lonely, insecure about using the country's language, and frustrated with working in a culture that is very different from their own.
5. **Ongoing adjustment:** Volunteers now have new friends and use the language better. They are more settled into their home and work environment. Sometimes, however, cultural challenges can happen throughout Volunteer service, especially in the workplace.

During their two years of service Volunteers will have many ups and downs. Volunteers will try to have balance in the three main areas of their lives: their living situation, their social/relationship life, and their working life. It can be helpful for Supervisors and Counterparts to understand that Volunteers are working on all three areas of their lives. Cultural conditions affect these areas greatly. Below are some cultural differences that Supervisors, Counterparts, and Volunteers often find as they live and work together.

#### **Differences in:**

- how cultures view the concept of time
- the type and amount of physical contact between people
- communication styles, either direct or indirect
- expectations for relationships with other people
- expectations for privacy at home or work
- basic needs for living conditions
- how men and women are viewed in the society
- what is considered appropriate clothing
- what is considered harassment
- attitudes toward age and skills
- perception of what is considered feedback
- local views of what an "American" is

As Volunteers, Supervisors, and Counterparts work and live together, they will find cross-cultural challenges and opportunities. Everyone can learn new things and gain new skills by working on the challenges—discovering new beliefs, ideas, and ways of doing things.

## Roles and Responsibilities

*The purpose of this section is to review the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved with the project. Often, Counterparts and Supervisors are working with the Peace Corps for the first time. They may not be familiar with what is expected of them and what to expect from the Volunteers and the Peace Corps. Use this section to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Peace Corps, the Volunteer, the Supervisor and Counterpart, and the hosting agency.*

*The roles and responsibilities associated with Supervisors and Counterparts may vary significantly between posts and between different projects. S, the examples here are just that, examples. Review the official project documents and country agreement, and review this section carefully with your country director and programming and training team to ensure that it accurately reflects the post's interpretation of the roles and responsibilities.*

*Because the issue of roles and responsibilities is so important to the success of the project and the Volunteer's service, consider holding a special session during Supervisor/Counterpart workshops to address it.*

*Anticipate areas that may need further clarification. For example, in some projects a Counterpart may also be a Supervisor, lending another layer of roles for that person. The Supervisor's role needs to address how the Volunteer is not just another paid local worker. They are Volunteers, and may need to be supervised differently from other employees. At the same time, the Volunteers are subject to the same policies and working conditions as their colleagues and should not be exempted from following the rules that everyone else has to follow.*

### Guiding Questions

- *What provisions were made in the country agreement as host agency contributions to the project? Training site? Textbooks? Living accommodations?*
- *According to the country agreement, what type of support do you need and expect from the host agency? Will it provide a venue for regional seminars? Permit professionals a leave of absence to attend a local Volunteer-sponsored seminar? Other?*
- *What are the travel reimbursement expectations for Volunteers traveling on official business for the host agency?*
- *Whose responsibility is it to identify and assign a Supervisor to work with the Volunteer? A Counterpart?*
- *Who will orient the Volunteer upon arrival at the site?*
- *How will the Volunteer receive feedback on work performed?*

*You can adapt the following information taken from field examples for your handbook.*



# Roles and Responsibilities for Working With Peace Corps Volunteers

## *Responsibilities of the Peace Corps*

- To provide all financial, medical, and administrative support directly related to a Volunteer's ability to live modestly in a community
- To monitor the activities of the Volunteer through regular visits to the Volunteer and the organization and by maintaining open lines of communication with the Volunteer's Counterpart and Supervisor
- To notify the Volunteer's sponsoring agency of the Peace Corps organized events at which the Volunteer's presence is required, thus necessitating an absence from work
- To visit the Volunteer on-site in order to observe the Volunteer's activities and provide appropriate feedback and support
- To provide prospective Volunteers with language, cross-cultural, personal health and safety, and technical training during the first three months in-country to prepare them for their jobs

## *Responsibilities of the Host Agency*

*(This sample is based on a country agreement. It requires modification by each post.)*

- Through the *National Office of District Education* and the *Director of Schools*, to support the Volunteer in the areas of developing and administrating the project and providing technical assistance
- To provide each Volunteer with an English textbook and curriculum guide for each level in which they may be teaching, and any other pertinent information regarding the Ministry of Education's educational system
- To assist in identifying venues for local seminars held by Volunteers
- To give permission to local professionals and teachers to participate in activities and seminars organized by the Peace Corps

- Together with the local community, to provide adequate lodging for the Volunteer (based on the Peace Corps' criteria), including paying rent or building a small house. This lodging should be similar to the lodging of the Volunteer's colleagues in the same district
- To identify and assign a Supervisor to work with the Volunteer
- To provide reimbursement for the Volunteer's travel and per diem costs that are for official business on behalf of the host country organization

## *Roles and Responsibilities of the Volunteer*

- To make a commitment to serve the communities to the best of his/her ability for two years
- To use local language and adapt to expected cultural norms
- To collaborate with the Supervisor and Counterpart in planning and implementing activities in accordance with the goals of the project and local community development plans
- To submit regular reports to the host country agency and the program manager
- To abide by Peace Corps regulations and local laws as they pertain to the Volunteer's activities in the host country organization

## *Roles and Responsibilities of the Volunteer's Supervisor*

The Supervisor plays an important role in the success of the project and linking the hosting agency with the Peace Corps. Supervising a Volunteer will be different from supervising a local, paid employee. Volunteers commit themselves to serving for two years in the community job and to the goals of the Peace Corps project and local project, if there is one. Therefore, they have a community development focus as well as a "job." The Supervisor's role is one of supporting integration into the workplace and the community, while at the same time giving appropriate feedback to the Volunteer on his/her job performance and appropriate community involvement.

The Supervisor will:

- become an active partner in the development process with the Peace Corps and the Peace Corps Volunteer
- provide structure, advice, and guidance for the Volunteer's placement
- reinforce the link between the Peace Corps and the Volunteer assignment
- understand Peace Corps policy and procedures
- introduce the Volunteer to his/her community, Counterpart(s), and local authorities



- provide feedback on safety issues
- assist in finding housing, if possible
- provide a job framework and work activities for the Volunteer
- assist the Volunteer in identifying Counterparts
- design a work plan with the Volunteer
- work with the Volunteer on reports
- assist the Volunteer in formalizing leaves
- assess job performance with the Volunteer
- give the Volunteer feedback on working and cultural activities
- work with the Volunteer on meeting personal and professional goals
- partner with the Volunteer in developing community projects
- collaborate with program managers and other program and training staff on project and training needs
- provide support in emergencies

### *Roles and Responsibilities of the Counterpart*

The Counterpart(s), in addition to being a colleague and helping orient the Volunteer in the workplace, also serves as a socio-cultural guide who can help increase the long-term positive impact of the Volunteer's activities by making sure that they are culturally, politically, and economically appropriate and sustainable. Counterparts often "carry on" after a Volunteer has left his/her assignment. They may have one or many of the following roles as they work with Volunteers.

The Counterpart will:

- serve as an active partner in development with the Volunteer
- develop and implement programs and projects with the Volunteer
- contribute to the sustainability of a program or project
- be a cultural guide for the Volunteer in the community
- ensure local needs are recognized and met

- act as a resource for people and things
- provide feedback on safety issues
- exchange technical skills
- share his/her knowledge, skills, and attitudes with others in the community
- continue to *build local capacity* after the Volunteer has left



## Regulations and Policies

*Some regulations and policies are applied worldwide while others are determined by and for the individual post. Supervisors and Counterparts need to understand the Peace Corps regulations and policies that impact the Volunteer and the Volunteer's work.*

*What are the policies and regulations that Counterparts and Supervisors need to be informed of? The Peace Corps Policy Manual is an internal document written for Peace Corps staff that contains some information that is not relevant to host country nationals. Generally, Counterparts and Supervisors need to know the information that relates directly to the Volunteer's performance on the job and well-being, such as policies on*

- *Transportation*
- *Drugs and alcohol*
- *Personal health and safety*
- *Volunteer's role being apolitical and nonsecular*
- *Sexual harassment*

### *Guiding Questions*

- *What means of transportation are Volunteers permitted to take? If Volunteers have bicycles, are there specific bicycle policies? If Volunteers often travel by boat, are there special considerations and policies for boat travel?*
- *Are Volunteers permitted to drive? If yes, under what circumstances? Do Volunteers need international drivers' licenses?*
- *What illegal drugs are available in country?*
- *How can you cluster the regulations so that they are easier to remember and process?*
- *Are the policies and regulations described simply and clearly? What aspect of the policy or regulation is most important for host country nationals?*

## Regulations and Policies

### *Peace Corps Regulations and Policies*

The Peace Corps must have regulations and policies to organize the Volunteers and their work, and keep them safe. This is a list of the regulations and policies related to the Volunteers' work with Supervisors, Counterparts, and communities. Violation of any of these policies could result in the Peace Corps ending the Volunteer's service and returning him/her to the United States.

## **Vehicles and Transportation**

The Peace Corps staff can only take passengers in their vehicles who are conducting official service with the Peace Corps. All passengers in Peace Corps vehicles must wear a seat belt.

Volunteers shall not operate vehicles overseas except when they are outside of their site on approved leave, or when their operation of a vehicle is specifically needed in order to do their job and is authorized by their country director.

Volunteers may be passengers in a car, but are forbidden from being passengers on motorcycles.

Motorcycle use is limited only to those cases where use is clearly necessary to accomplish the goals of the particular project to which Volunteers are assigned and with approval of the country director.

Motorcycle operators and passengers must wear approved helmets at all times while operating the vehicle.

When Volunteers are riding bicycles for work or pleasure, they must wear bicycle helmets.

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

If a Volunteer is found to be involved with illegal drugs in a manner not authorized for medical purposes, he/she will return immediately to the United States and his/her mission of service will be terminated.

Volunteers may drink alcohol. However, inappropriate behavior or inability to perform in an assignment resulting from misuse of alcohol may be cause for the Volunteer to be terminated from the Peace Corps.

## **Firearms**

Volunteers are not allowed to possess or use firearms.

## **Natural Disasters**

Each Peace Corps post has developed an Emergency Evacuation Plan that is put into action in case of a natural disaster or any other emergency. Volunteers are required to check in with the Peace Corps office or the Peace Corps duty officer in the event of a disaster to confirm their location and safety.



## **Living Allowance and Health Care**

Volunteers receive a monthly living allowance from the Peace Corps. This allowance is intended to provide for the Volunteer's personal transport, food, clothing, and personal necessities. Job-related transportation, office supplies, and work-related communications are to be provided by the host organization where the Volunteer is assigned.

The Peace Corps provides 100 percent of the medical care for all Volunteers.

Volunteers may not receive payment for any of their services except for their living stipend given to them by the Peace Corps.

## **Political Expression, Legal Status, and Official Agreements**

Because the Peace Corps wants to keep Americans and host country citizens informed about its accomplishments, it maintains a policy of openness and willingness to respond to inquiries from journalists and to provide information about programs.

Volunteers may discuss their role in the Peace Corps with a media representative; however, they should notify their program managers of such a discussion before it takes place. Volunteers may write articles for publications that are to be cleared with their program managers and are not used for personal financial gain.

Volunteers should not participate in political activities or manifestations. Volunteers may express their opinions on U.S. politics as their own individual opinions, and not as representatives of Peace Corps or the U.S. Government.

Volunteers do not have diplomatic immunity. They are required to work and live according to the local laws.

Volunteers may practice their religions, but are forbidden from proselytizing.

Volunteers may not sign contracts, agreements, certificates or any other official documents on behalf of the Peace Corps. Volunteers are to work in support of the assigned institution or organization and may not make commitments in the name of the Peace Corps in writing, verbally or implied.

Based on the agreement between the U.S. government and the national government, Volunteers are not required to pay taxes, customs duties, import taxes, or for visas.

## **Volunteer Vacation, Holidays, and Sick Leave**

Volunteers are allowed two days of vacation per month, for a total of 24 vacation days per year. Volunteers cannot take vacation during the first three months of service or the last three months of service except in conjunction with an authorized emergency leave.

Volunteers must discuss their planned vacation dates with the host organization and receive permission from the host country organization's Supervisor at least two weeks in advance. The Volunteer must complete the appropriate Peace Corps Leave Request Form, which must be signed by the Supervisor from the host country organization before submission to the Peace Corps office.

Volunteers should receive the day off on the country's public holidays but not for U.S. holidays. The Peace Corps office is closed on both U.S. and host country public holidays.

Often a Supervisor or Counterpart is identified as the Volunteer's primary emergency contact person at his/her site. If this is the case, the Volunteer should inform that person any time he/she will be away from the site overnight, providing a phone number or location where he/she can be reached.

In case Volunteers become seriously ill, they might return to the United states for medical attention. If this happens, the Peace Corps will notify the host organization when and if the Volunteer will return to work.

## **Extensions, Transfers, Emergency Leave, and Terminating Service**

A Volunteer's period of service is for two years. After this it is assumed that a Counterpart will carry on the Volunteer's work. At times, depending upon the project, there may be more than one cycle of Volunteer placed in a job. Options therefore are to:

1. extend the service of a current Volunteer for up to two years, or
2. assign a second (or third) Volunteer to serve for two years in the same position, or another related supporting position, or
3. have a Counterpart carry on the work.

There are certain circumstances in which it becomes apparent that a Volunteer should be transferred to a different assignment or should not remain in-country. Reasons for early termination or transfer include: medical problems; security issues; behavior or performance problems; family or personal reasons.

Volunteers may return to the U.S. in the event of a grave/critical family medical emergency or death (mother/father or surrogate, brother/sister, son/daughter). Fourteen days of emergency leave (exclusive of travel time) are allowed in the first instance. If the emergency continues, an extension of an additional 14 days may be allowed, but only under the most extraordinary circumstances. Combined emergency leave and extension leave cannot exceed 60 days.

If a Volunteer is authorized to take emergency leave, the Peace Corps will notify the host organization of the circumstances and keep the organization informed as to when to expect the Volunteer back at work.



In exceptional cases the Peace Corps can transfer a Volunteer to another site, based on a determination that a new site placement would better serve the Peace Corps, the Volunteer, or both.

If a Volunteer violates local law or any Peace Corps regulations (especially concerning vehicles, drug use, and working for paid services), he/she will be immediately separated from Peace Corps service and sent back to the United States.

Peace Corps does not guarantee replacing a Volunteer whose service has been terminated.

## **Reasons Why the Peace Corps Can Withdraw a Volunteer**

The Volunteer's skills and/or qualifications do not match the organization's requirements.

The anticipated host country organization's support for the Volunteer's assignment is not forthcoming. For example, the Volunteer's Counterpart will not meet with the Peace Corps staff representatives for discussion of issues affecting the Volunteer's assignment.

Irreconcilable differences arise between the Volunteer and his/her Counterpart or other organization personnel.

The Volunteer's assignment/presence is deemed to be detrimental to the interests of the Volunteer, the Peace Corps, or the host agency.

It becomes apparent that the Volunteer, by being present in the assignment, is keeping a qualified host country national out of a job.

There are conditions in the assignment which could or do result in physical, mental, or emotional harm to the Volunteer.

Changes in the assignment result in making it different from the original request for a Volunteer and making it no longer a suitable assignment.

The Volunteer is separated from the Peace Corps for any reason.

## **Reasons Why the Host Agency Can Request the Withdrawal of a Volunteer**

The Volunteer knowingly disregards the organization's legitimate directives/regulations; the Volunteer's presence becomes untenable, or irreconcilable problems develop.

The Volunteer is clearly not qualified (academically, professionally, physically, or skill-wise) for the assignment as agreed on by both the Peace Corps and the host country organization, and a suitable alternative assignment cannot be identified or developed.

The Volunteer's behavior is culturally inappropriate to his/her role and offensive to host country colleagues.

The Volunteer's presence in the host country organization is detrimental to the interests of the Volunteer, the Peace Corps, or the host organization.

## **Reasons for Immediate, Mandatory Administrative Separation of the Volunteer**

Violation of the Peace Corps' policy concerning use of illegal drugs.

Violation of the Peace Corps' motorcycle helmet policy.

Violation of the Peace Corps' policy regarding involvement in intelligence gathering or activities.

Refusal to take required vaccinations or medical prophylaxis.

## **Medical Services for Volunteers**

Volunteers receive 100 percent of their medical care from the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps' medical office has regular office hours and a member of the Medical Unit staff is always on call after office hours and on weekends and holidays. These services are only for Volunteers and not for Peace Corps staff or other persons in the community. Below is detailed information about medical care and medical emergencies.

The medical office usually does site visits to assess Volunteer housing and safety and health needs.

Volunteers should not be treated by a local doctor without the authorization of Peace Corps medical office except in cases of emergency when it is not possible to contact the Peace Corps medical office.

Volunteers receive training in how to prevent illness, care for minor illnesses, and when to consult with the medical officer.

Occasionally, Volunteers may be required to go to the medical office to receive mandatory inoculations and to have an annual checkup.

If Volunteers need to consult the Peace Corps medical office, they must inform their Supervisor that they will be absent from their work to get medical treatment, and estimate when he/she will return.

Sometimes, it is necessary for Volunteers to leave the country to receive special medical care. In such cases, the Volunteer may be out of the country for a maximum of 45 days. If the situation cannot be resolved during that time period, the Volunteer's service will be terminated and they will return home.



The Peace Corps guarantees confidentiality of Volunteers' medical information. For this reason, the Peace Corps cannot provide any information on the medical condition of Volunteers, or on the treatment they are receiving. The Peace Corps will let Supervisors know if a leave of absence is needed.

If Supervisors have any concerns about a Volunteer's health or safety, they should contact the Peace Corps medical office.

## **Living Standards**

The Peace Corps gives a monthly living allowance to each Volunteer. This allowance is intended to provide for the Volunteer's personal transport, food, clothing, and personal necessities. Job-related transportation, office supplies, and work-related communications are to be provided by the host organization where the Volunteer is assigned.

## **Housing**

Often housing is identified and/or provided by the host country organization and community members and must comply with established Peace Corps' criteria. The Volunteer is normally expected to live in this housing for the duration of service. Issues regarding Volunteer housing should be discussed with the program manager.

## **Personal Appearance**

Volunteers should dress appropriately both on and off the job and respect host country attitudes toward personal appearance.

## **Conferences and Training Sessions**

Periodically throughout the two years of service, there will be training sessions and conferences which all Volunteers are required to attend. They include In-Service Trainings for both technical and language purposes and a close of service conference several months before they finish their service. Often Counterparts are invited to attend a workshop with a Volunteer. The Peace Corps will cover most or all of the conference costs for both Volunteers and their Counterparts.

## Frequently Asked Questions From Supervisors and Counterparts

*Think about the site development trips you took. What were the most common questions you were asked during these trips? What seemed to be most surprising or puzzling for people? Ask your receptionist what questions people often ask. Meet with other staff members and ask them. Use these insights to help develop a section covering commonly asked questions.*

*A section on commonly asked questions is not mandatory by any means, but it may be a useful addition to the Supervisor/Counterpart Handbook.*

## Frequently Asked Questions From Supervisors and Counterparts

**Q** Why is it necessary to have a Counterpart to work with the Volunteer, and how is this Counterpart selected?

**A** The Peace Corps' goal is to assist an organization in becoming self-sufficient and self-sustaining. The process of strengthening the organization happens through the acquisition of new skills, information, and resources. Therefore, there must be a person or persons with whom the Volunteer can work to learn about the organization, where he/she fits in, and to facilitate the mutual transfer of skills and generation of ideas. Some agencies identify one Counterpart with whom the Volunteer works. Other agencies use a strategy in which the Volunteer works with several people, in other words, multiple Counterparts.

**Q** What responsibility do we as Counterparts and Supervisors have in introducing the Volunteer to members of the community?

**A** In order for Volunteers to be effective, they need to become part of the community. Supervisors and Counterparts can introduce Volunteers to people in the community. These people can be friends, neighbors, and others who will work with the Volunteers. This will help Volunteers be more successful, happy, and safe. You can also take the Volunteer to local sites and help them learn about the community.



**Q** Can a Volunteer get us grants?

**A** The focus of the Volunteer's work is on people, not things. The Volunteer can assist in the proposal writing and/or fundraising process, but only if the Volunteer and Counterpart work together. In this way Counterparts can be better prepared to do fundraising on their own in the future.

**Q** How can we best support a Volunteer?

**A** Every Volunteer is different. It is important to talk to the Volunteer about his or her skills, interests, needs, and motivations. Volunteers often ask Supervisors for feedback. It is important to build an open communication channel. When challenges happen, you will be able to talk about them and solve them together. When you are successful you will be able to celebrate together.

**Q** What should I do if a Volunteer is a victim of crime?

**A** Ensure the Volunteer's well-being, offer support, and encourage the Volunteer to report the incident to the Peace Corps.

**Q** What should we do if the Volunteer does not come to work as expected?

**A** As with anyone else in your organization, the Volunteer should inform the Supervisor that he/she will not be at work and the reason(s) why. If you do not hear from the Volunteer, you should find out what has happened as soon as possible. Perhaps if there is a problem and the Volunteer needs help, or perhaps the Volunteer is being negligent in his/her work. You should notify the program manager of a Volunteer's continuing absence.

**Q** What if absence from work becomes chronic?

**A** Chronic absence can be an indicator that the Volunteer is having problems. The absences might be a sign of difficulty in physically adjusting to the change in climate, food, or physical exertion. They may also indicate there is a cultural adjustment problem. As with any other employee, you should talk to the Volunteer and try to identify the problem and find a workable solution. If this is not possible call the program manager and discuss the situation. It is important to identify a plan of action to help the Volunteer as soon as possible.

**Q** Is it possible to have another Volunteer after this one?

**A** It is possible. Talk to the program manager about your request. Sometimes it takes more than two years to institutionalize a program, and therefore, it is appropriate for a second or third Volunteer to work with an organization. It is important, however, for the organization and the Peace Corps to develop a plan for how the organization will one day work on its own and no longer depend upon Peace Corps support.

**Q** Is it possible to have more than one Volunteer assigned to one organization?

**A** It is unlikely that more than one Volunteer would be assigned to the same organization, although it does happen. The Peace Corps believes in spreading the skills and experience of Volunteers to as many organizations as possible. Requests for Peace Corps Volunteers are usually greater than the number of people available.



**Q**

Is it possible for a host agency to select the Volunteer?

**A**

The Peace Corps programming, medical, and training staff are responsible for determining which Volunteer will go to which organization. The host agency should tell the program manager what is needed, especially if certain technical skills and experience are important. This will help make a good match.

**Q**

What should I say if a Volunteer says he/she is thinking about leaving?

**A**

Ask your Volunteer to talk with you about the situation. Assist the Volunteer in identifying his/her reasons for thinking about leaving. Perhaps it would be appropriate to discuss pros, cons, and potential options for staying in the assignment. The Volunteer's reasons may be personal and out of your control. If you feel that there are serious issues that the two of you cannot resolve, discuss the situation with the program manager and the Volunteer.

## Emergency Procedures

*Emergencies happen. Prepare Supervisors and Counterparts for what to do in case of emergency. Consider developing a worksheet that lists all the information that is needed in case there is an emergency (see sample Emergency Information Sheet). In this way, in times of stress, the worksheet can help them to communicate all of the necessary information.*

### *Guiding Questions:*

- *What forms of communication are available in the communities? (radio, telephone, Internet)*
- *Do you and the Volunteer have access to direct communication with each other?*
- *How will you communicate with the Peace Corps?*
- *What forms of emergency transportation are available in your or surrounding communities?*
- *Do you know how to get to the Volunteer's house?*
- *Where are the accessible airports?*
- *Do you have an emergency evacuation plan designed with the Volunteer?*

## Emergency Procedures

If a Volunteer is involved in an emergency you or a member of the community should inform the Peace Corps immediately and communicate the information clearly, concisely, and distinctly. Possible emergency situations include:

- **medical** (a sickness, an accident, or a serious health condition)
- **legal** (a volunteer is arrested by the police, or someone threatens the Volunteer),
- **other** (floods or other natural disasters, political turbulence, etc.)

## *Medical Emergencies*

For medical emergencies, contact the medical office, the duty officer or anyone else at the Peace Corps immediately. If it is not possible to contact the Peace Corps, call the U.S. Embassy to explain the emergency and ask that the information be communicated to the Peace Corps office at once. (See the example of contact information below.) In case of an extreme emergency the Volunteer can seek medical assistance if available, and then notify the Peace Corps (car accident, life-threatening injury, etc.).



## ***Other Emergency Situations***

For other emergency situations, contact the Peace Corps office or duty officer directly. Have a backup plan if the telephone communication does not work.

## ***Emergency Information***

In the case of an emergency, try to communicate all of the following information as completely as possible.

- Name, telephone number, and location of the person who is calling
- Name of the Volunteer, and the Volunteer's site or present location of the Volunteer
- Description of the problem or situation (symptoms, circumstances, etc.)
- General condition of the Volunteer or situation
- Treatment or medication that the Volunteer is taking, if appropriate
- Medication, equipment, or materials that will be urgently needed
- If evacuation is necessary, a recommendation on what would be the best way. If recommending evacuation via air, identification of the nearest runway.
- Other important information (road conditions, weather, temperature, local resources, etc.)
- Clear instructions on how to get back in touch with the caller (telephone number, radio, etc.)

*Sample: Information Needed in the Event of an Emergency*

<b>Who and where?</b>	
Name of the person who is calling	
Telephone number of the person who is calling	
Can we call back the person who is calling at this telephone number?	
If it's not possible to call back the person who is calling on the telephone, who can call us back and when?	
Name of the Volunteer who is sick, in trouble, or in danger	
Name of the town and exact place where the Volunteer is located	
<b>What is the emergency?</b>	
Describe the Volunteer's situation.	
When did the problem happen?	
Where did it happen?	
Is the Volunteer conscious?	
Can the Volunteer walk?	
Does the Volunteer have a fever?	
Can the Volunteer travel?	
<b>Immediate action</b>	
What can be done for the Volunteer?	
If evacuation is necessary, what means do you recommend?	
What is the name and telephone number of the local hospital?	
What is the name and telephone number of a local doctor?	
Where can we meet or pick up the Volunteer?	





## *Peace Corps Contact Information*

*This is a sample. It may require modification by each post.*

<b>Office</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Office Telephone Number</b>	<b>Home or Alternate Telephone Number</b>
Peace Corps Office			
Peace Corps Duty Officer (evenings and weekends)			
Country Director (CD)			
Administrative Officer (AO)			
Programming and Training Officer (PTO)			
Program Manager (APCD)			
Medical Office Number (PCMO)			
Medical Officer (PCMO) On-Call Number			
Medical Assistant			
Consulting Physician			
American Embassy/Consulate			
Consulting Physician			



# Quick Guide to the Peace Corps' Policies

## *Legal Status*

Volunteers are not officers or employees of the United States government. They do not have diplomatic immunity. They are subject to your government's laws while overseas and will be treated in accordance with the local laws.

## *Financial Gain*

Volunteers may NOT receive payment for any of their services. The Peace Corps provides them with a living stipend.

## *Drugs*

A Volunteer found to be involved with illegal drugs in a manner not authorized for medical purposes will be separated from the Peace Corps immediately.

## *Alcohol*

The use of alcohol is left to the discretion of the Volunteer. Inappropriate behavior or inability to perform in an assignment resulting from misuse of alcohol may be cause for the Volunteer to be separated from the Peace Corps.

## *Political Expression*

The Peace Corps' ability to perform its mission is contingent upon not being identified with host country political issues or movements. Therefore, Volunteers are to avoid becoming involved in country politics in any way. It is the Peace Corps' expectation that their Counterparts will understand and support them in this approach.

## *Firearms*

Volunteers are not allowed to possess or use firearms.

## *Media*

Because the Peace Corps wants to keep Americans and host country citizens informed about its accomplishments, it maintains a policy of openness and willingness to respond to inquiries from journalists and to provide information about programs. Volunteers and their Counterparts should discuss upcoming articles or activities in advance with the program manager and/or country director.

## ***Official Agreements***

Volunteers may not sign contracts, agreements, certificates, or any other official documents or make verbal agreements on behalf of the Peace Corps.

## ***Volunteer Transportation***

Volunteers may not own or drive motorized vehicles in their country of assignment unless it is necessary to accomplish the goals of a project or otherwise authorized by the program manager and the country director.

## ***Bicycle Helmets***

Bicycle helmets must be worn when operating bicycles.

## ***Volunteer Health Care***

The Peace Corps provides the medical care for all Volunteers. The Medical Unit staff is always available during and after regular office hours. If a Volunteer is ill, the Peace Corps must be notified immediately. If the Volunteer is unable to notify the Peace Corps, the Volunteers' Supervisor/Counterpart or friend needs to do so as soon as possible.

## ***Medical Emergencies***

In case of medical emergencies, Volunteers should notify the Peace Corps, the Medical Unit, the Peace Corps medical officer on call and/or the Peace Corps duty officer. The U.S. Embassy can also be contacted in case of emergencies. In case of an extreme emergency the Volunteer can seek medical assistance if available, and then notify the Peace Corps (i.e., car accident, life-threatening injury, etc.).

## ***Natural Disasters***

The Peace Corps has developed an Emergency Evacuation Plan that is put into action in case of a natural or civil emergency. Volunteers are required to check in with the Peace Corps office or the Peace Corps duty officer in the event of a disaster.

## ***Sexual Harassment***

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by U.S. law. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:



1. submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or a Volunteer's service;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions or decisions regarding Volunteer status or service; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may be physical, verbal, or graphic. It may result from the actions of supervisors, co-workers, Volunteers, Trainees, and/or nonemployees. It may occur both on and off the job, and may victimize members of either sex. It includes conduct that is not intended to be harassing by the person who acts, if such conduct is reasonably perceived by the recipient to be harassment.

All Peace Corps managers, supervisors, employees, contractors, Volunteers, and Trainees are responsible for ensuring that their own actions do not constitute or contribute to sexual harassment. Managers and supervisors are responsible for correcting behavior that may constitute sexual harassment; taking immediate action to investigate all allegations of sexual harassment; protecting against retaliation against any individual who raises a complaint; and taking appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action, which may range from a reprimand to removal.

## Notes



## Notes