

## H-1116-3 - HANDBOOK FOR RAPS PARTICIPANTS

1. Explanation of Material Transmitted: This Handbook provides overall policy guidance and general instructions for the Participants of the

Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students (RAPS).

2. Reports Required: None.

3. Material Superseded: None.

4. Filing Instructions: File as directed below.

REMOVE: INSERT:

None H-1116-3

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Assistant Director, Support Services

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Chapter I. Welcome

Welcome to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM is responsible for the sustained and productive management, while protecting the environment, of 270 million acres of diverse public lands and an additional 300 million acres of subsurface mineral rights. This is a great responsibility because this makes up 1/8 of the nation's land. Public land resources managed by BLM include energy and minerals, timber, livestock forage, fish and

wildlife habitat, wilderness, recreation, and archaeological and historical values. As a new member of the BLM team, you will be assisting us in our mission to be responsible stewards of public lands.

We are pleased that you are participating in the Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students, also known as RAPS. RAPS is designed to provide you with an opportunity to explore a variety of resource management activities offered through summer work experience.

We are committed to providing you with a worthwhile experience. Of course, your effort is also critical to the success of your experience. During your stay with us at BLM, your RAPS Mentors will assist and guide you, so be sure to utilize their experience when you have questions or need help.

## Chapter II. What is the RAPS Program?

The purpose of RAPS is to provide you with an educational work experience which is stimulating and which assists you in maximizing your potential for success. You are asked to spend 6 to 8 weeks of summer work in resource-management-related activities to encourage you to consider resource-related or support service-related studies in college. As a RAPS Participant you will become eligible for possible placement in authorized Federal Youth Employment Programs, such as Cooperative Education or Stay-In-School. Placement in these programs, however, is not guaranteed.

You will learn more about the RAPS program during your first several days at BLM. During the first week, your RAPS Mentor is responsible for orienting you to the agency and providing a job description outlining the experience to be offered through RAPS. This is an opportunity for you to express your interests and discuss the resource-management-related activities in which you would like to participate.

Throughout your stay with BLM, your Mentor is responsible for evaluating your performance. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide you with information about yourself in relation to the educational and work experience. Sometimes your Mentor may ask you to reflect on your experience and evaluate yourself.

Past RAPS students have found that when they take the best possible advantage of these opportunities they have a rewarding experience. BLM RAPS employees rely upon your suggestions to improve the program, so feel free to express to your RAPS Mentor your concerns and suggestions.

## Chapter III. Your Rights and Responsibilities

### A. Participant Rights

Participants serving with BLM have the following rights:

1. To equality and fairness of treatment and opportunities throughout the process of recruitment, placement, and service regardless of handicaps, gender, race, color, religion, or national origin.
2. To be placed according to your interests, needs, and capabilities after receiving sufficient information about the BLM and the availability of RAPS positions.
3. To receive an orientation to BLM and the program in which you are placed, a written position description, the training necessary for the assigned position, and the opportunity to advance within RAPS.
4. To have your time used effectively and efficiently. This includes being given meaningful work assignments.
5. To the information, guidance, resources, tools and environment needed to encourage creative and meaningful productivity.
6. To be heard and to receive thoughtful, considerate responses to your suggestions, questions, and concerns.

7. To constructive and timely feedback, including regularly scheduled progress reviews.
8. To assistance in resolving problems or conflicts with anyone throughout the BLM.
9. To appropriate recognition and appreciation for your efforts and contributions.
10. To be granted the fulfillment of commitments made to you by BLM in the Volunteer/Participant Agreement.
11. To be briefed on taxability of any stipends.
12. To a work environment free of sexual harassment.

#### B. Regulations Governing Participant Conduct

1. You are required to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and conduct in the course of or in relation to your program service.
2. You are expected to observe the requirements of courtesy, consideration and promptness in dealing with and serving the public.
3. You must comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations issued by the Department of Interior and/or Bureau of Land Management.
4. You must comply with any lawful regulations, order, policy, and proper requests of the Mentor or other Government official having jurisdiction over the your work or project involved.
5. In the course of your RAPS service, you should adhere to the policy of the Federal Government that there shall be no discrimination in employment or service based on factors such as race, religion, color, national origin, political affiliation, physical handicap, sex, age and similar matters not related to merit and fitness.
6. You shall be held accountable for Government property and moneys entrusted to you in connection with your work. It is your responsibility to protect and conserve Government property and to use it economically and for official purposes only.
7. You shall not use or authorize the use of a Government owned or leased motor vehicle for other than official purposes.
8. You shall not sexually harass other Participants, Government employees, or members of the public having business with the Department.
9. You shall not participate in any gambling activity while on Government-owned or leased property, or while on duty as a Participant for the Government.
10. No use of alcohol or illegal drugs is permitted while on duty as described in the RAPS Agreement. A Participant who uses intoxicants while on duty is subject to having his/her RAPS Agreement canceled. While drug testing will not be applied, any off-the-job intoxicant use to the point that it impairs job performance can also be grounds for termination.
11. You are expected to consult with your Mentor on general questions you may have regarding the applicability of various regulations which may pertain to your service.
12. If you must resign, give adequate notice (2 weeks) to your Mentor, if possible.

### C. Participant Responsibilities Regarding Safety

Your health, safety, and well-being have priority in all cases. Participants must share in the responsibility to find new and better way to reduce injuries, illness, and associated costs. You must:

1. Comply with applicable work rules and procedures.
2. Report unsafe and/or unhealthful conditions.
3. Exercise rights and responsibilities as granted by the program without fear of restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal for reporting an unsafe or unhealthful condition, or otherwise participating in the program.
4. Actively participate in safety and health education and training activities.
5. Report every job-related accident or incident to your Mentor that results in, or has the potential to cause injury, illness, or property damage. Also report personal conditions (physical or mental) that adversely affect your ability to perform in a safe and healthful manner on the job.

### D. BLM Responsibilities Regarding Safety

The following are safety responsibilities BLM shall consider when assigning Participants:

1. Mentors must ensure that Participants only perform duties within the scope of their agreements.
2. Participants are never required to perform any type of work for which he or she is not qualified, has not been adequately trained for, has not been adequately equipped for, does not feel comfortable doing, or does not willingly agree to do.
3. Mentors must ensure Participants working in BLM units observe the safety precautions and use the same safety equipment as paid employees.
4. Each Participant must receive orientation on job safety. Participants should attend first aid and driver training courses, when applicable.

### E. Program Requirements

You will provide your Mentor with a written report or evaluation of each work project or training exercise undertaken, as well as a summary review of program participation at the end of the year. Successful Participants will demonstrate a continuing commitment to RAPS, remain in school, complete and submit the required RAPS reports and evaluations, and observe the same standards of conduct while in RAPS which are required by all employees of the U.S. Department of the Interior.