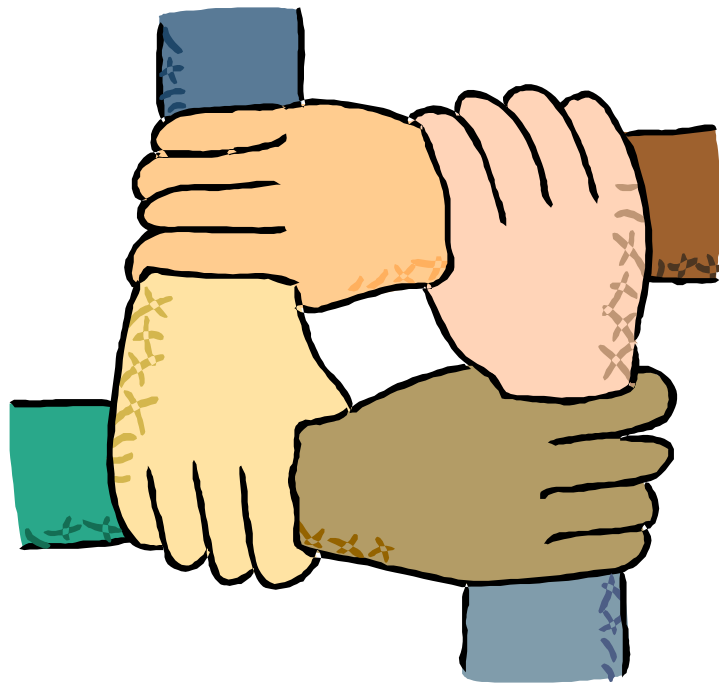


# **VOLUNTEERS**



# **FOR SCIENCE**

**May 2000**

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## INTRODUCTION

Public Law 97-394 states “Provided further, That the Geological Survey is authorized to accept lands, buildings, equipment, and other contributions from public and private sources and to prosecute projects in cooperation with other agencies, Federal, State, or private sources...” and authorizes the acceptance of contributions and gifts from private and public sources and the Department of the Interior’s (DOI’s) current Appropriations Act provides for the reimbursement of incidental expenses incurred by volunteers. These authorities and the “Take Pride in America” campaign laid the groundwork for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Volunteer for Science Program. The primary purpose of the Volunteer for Science Program is to provide a vehicle through which the USGS can accept and utilize voluntary help and services from the public. The program strives to increase public awareness, understanding, and acceptance of scientific programs conducted by the USGS and to use voluntary help in such a way that it is mutually beneficial to the USGS and the volunteer. The USGS is a Federal agency of scientists who provide information on the Earth's land, water, and life resources to support the wise management of our natural resources and the well-being of the people. The USGS statement of vision is “a world leader in the natural sciences through our scientific excellence and responsiveness to society's needs.” The USGS attributes in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are to realize the vision of "One Bureau, One Mission, One Message" and ensure the preeminence of our science into the future must be our major goal. Our mission is to serve the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to:

- describe and understand the Earth;
- minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters;
- manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and
- enhance and protect our quality of life.

The Volunteer for Science Program was formally established in 1986. Program policy was established by the issuance of Survey Manual 500, Chapter 23, which was released in April 1986 and updated in November 1987. The Survey Manual chapter sets policy and describes the basic framework within which to operate the program. It also sets forth the limitations and conditions under which volunteer services may be accepted by the USGS. Beyond the basic policy and guidance set by the Survey Manual and the guidance offered by the USGS Volunteer Coordinator, USGS offices operationally manage the program. Specific guidance concerning such areas as the availability of projects, the use of funds, the needs and goals of the organization, the availability of space and equipment, and the number of volunteers that can be utilized must come directly from the office sponsoring the volunteer.

## **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

**Bureau Volunteer Program Coordinator.** The bureau coordinator is responsible for the bureauwide program administration, working with the office coordinators, and administrating and maintaining the Volunteer for Science website. The coordinator inputs, changes, and amends information on the volunteer opportunities and hosts provided by the offices.

**Office Headquarters Volunteer Program Coordinator.** The coordinator is responsible for disseminating and collecting program information and providing guidance throughout their science discipline.

**Regional Volunteer Program Coordinators.** Each office has assigned coordinators in their regional offices who are responsible for providing program guidance and assistance to supervisors, managers, and volunteers and serving as liaisons between regional staff and the headquarters coordinator. The regional coordinators disseminate and collect program information, publicize the program in the regions, assist with recruitment, and report regional activities and statistics to the office coordinator.

**Local Volunteer Program Coordinators.** Each office has established a network of employees who serve as volunteer program coordinators in their local geographical areas. These local coordinators are very much involved with identifying the specific volunteer needs within their organizations, recruiting, publicizing the program, and ensuring that supervisors and volunteers understand their responsibilities.

**Contact Information.** The names, addresses, telephone numbers, faxes, and e-mail addresses of the key program administrators, with the exception of the local volunteer program coordinators are provided on the next page. Because the Volunteer for Science Program is a nationwide program, there are too many local coordinators to list in this handbook. Contact the appropriate regional or office headquarters coordinator if you need information concerning volunteer opportunities within a specific region.

<b>Name/Position</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone/Fax Numbers E-Mail Address</b>
Bureau Volunteer Program Coordinator  Eleanor Fisher	U.S. Geological Survey National Center, MS 601 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive Reston, VA 20192	703-648-7455 (phone) 703-648-5200 (fax) efisher@usgs.gov
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Earth Science Corps (ESC)  Melvin Y. Ellis Lynn Keefe	U.S. Geological Survey National Center, MS 513 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive Reston, VA 20192	703-648-4646/4616 (phone) 703-648-5412 (local VA) 1-800-254-8040 option 9 703-648-4772 (TTY) 703-648-6265(fax) escorps@usgs.gov myellis@usgs.gov lkeefe@usgs.gov

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Southeastern Region - Water Resources Division  Connie L. Smith	U.S. Geological Survey Spalding Woods Office Park Suite 160 3850 Holcomb Bridge Road Norcross, GA 30092	770-409-7706 (phone) 770-409-7725 (fax) clsmith@usgs.gov
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<b>Name/Position</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone/Fax Numbers E-Mail Address</b>
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EROS Data Center - National Mapping Division  Gail Hanson	U.S. Geological Survey EROS Data Center Sioux Falls, SD 57198	605-594-6548 (phone) 605-594-6083 (fax) ghanson@usgs.gov
Western Region - Geologic Division  Anne E. Gartner	U.S. Geological Survey 345 Middlefield Road MS 919 Menlo Park, CA 94025	650-329-5106 (phone) 650-329-5125 (fax) aegartne@usgs.gov
Western Region - ESC (plus American Samoa, Guam, Midway Island, and the Northern Marianas)  Robert D. Elsloo	Earth Science Corps Coordinator U.S. Geological Survey, MS 509 Rocky Mountain Mapping Center Box 25046, Denver Federal Center Lakewood, CO 80225	303-202-4556 (phone) 1-800-254-8040 x5421 303-202-4386 (fax) rdelsloo@usgs.gov pdibarra@usgs.gov
Western Mapping Center - National Mapping Division  Dola Greene	U.S. Geological Survey, MS 531 Western Mapping Center 345 Middlefield Road Menlo Park, CS 94025	650-329-4266 (phone) 650-329-5546 (fax) vgreene@usgs.gov
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## CHAPTER 1. VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY

**A. General.** People of all ages, backgrounds, and citizenship may donate their time, talent, and expertise to the USGS. The Volunteer for Science Program includes citizens, non-citizens (that live in the United States on a working visa), retired employees, USGS employees, homemakers, high school students, college students, teachers and faculty members, and many more. There are no age restrictions, but volunteers under age 18 must have the written permission of a parent or guardian.

**Individuals and Groups.** Generally, volunteer services are contributed directly to the USGS by individuals or members of a group or organization acting as individuals. In either case, the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement," Form 9-2080 (See Chapter 7 or website "<http://www.usgs.gov:8888/ops/hro/recruit/volunteer.html#form>"), is used as the official document for the acceptance of volunteer service and must be signed by both the volunteer and an appropriate USGS official.

**Volunteer Services Donated by an External Source.** There may be cases in which an employer, such as a professional society or a private industry firm, may wish to donate the services of a paid employee to the USGS. Such services can be accepted. It does not matter if the individual receives pay or work credit from sources outside the USGS as long as the USGS does not compensate the individual for the services performed. In such cases, the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement," Form 9-2080, should be signed by both the volunteer and the employer who is donating the paid services of the volunteer. The agreement should reflect the name of the organization and the name, title, and signature of the employer donating the services. The following statement should be added to the agreement form:

Volunteer Services Donated by \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employer's Name, Title, and Signature

The guidance provided above is not appropriate for any services contributed under an established through cooperative agreements or contracts with organizations, such as the Environmental Careers Organization. Contact your Acquisition and Federal Assistance Office for guidance and information concerning this type of program.

**B. Minors - Volunteers Under Age 18.** The Volunteer for Science Program has no minimum age requirement for volunteers. However, volunteers under age 18 must have the signature of a parent or guardian on Form 9-2080, the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement" and the "Emergency Care for Minors" form (see Chapter 7 and website "<http://www.usgs.gov:8888/ops/hro/recruit/volunteer.html#form>").

An "Emergency Care for Minors" medical release form is required to be completed and signed by the minor's parent or guardian before the child begins volunteer service. The release indicates medical and health conditions that a supervisor or medical professional may need to take into consideration in assigning work or providing care, and it authorizes treatment for medical emergencies in the event the parent or guardian cannot be reached. Because the original form must accompany the minor for medical care, supervisors are required to have the original available at the site of the volunteer's activities, where it can be immediately accessed in an emergency. Forms may be obtained at "<http://www.usgs.gov:8888/ops/hro/recruit/volunteer.html#form>" or by calling the Volunteer for Science Program Coordinator at (703) 648-7455.

Supervisors are cautioned against signing up volunteers who may not be sufficiently mature to function successfully in a work setting. All volunteer assignments should be of mutual benefit to the volunteer and the USGS.

**Federal Child Labor Laws** govern the employment of minors and preclude the performance of certain jobs by individuals under the age of 18 years. Federal agencies are required to apply the provisions of Federal child labor laws to volunteers although the volunteers are not in an employment status and receive no salary. Supervisors and administrative officers must familiarize themselves with the Federal child labor laws found in Appendix B or on website <http://www.elaws.dol.gov/flsa>, Child Labor Requirements in Nonagricultural Occupations.

**State Child Labor Laws.** As a Federal agency, we are not required to apply State child labor laws. Nevertheless, in order to protect the interests of the USGS and the volunteer, it is a requirement under the Volunteer for Science Program that State child labor laws be considered and used as placement guidelines when entering into a volunteer agreement with a minor. State child labor laws can be obtained from the State Department of Labor.

**Minors Under Age 16.** Appendix B Child Labor Requirements in Nonagricultural Occupations, provides pertinent information about the employment of minors. A specific description of occupations in which 14- and 15-year-old minors may and may not be employed is found under that heading. Supervisors and administrative officers must carefully review the provisions of this document before accepting the services of a volunteer who is a minor. The child labor provisions for 14- and 15-year-olds described in Appendix B or on website "<http://www.dol.gov/dol/asp/public/programs/handbook/childlbr.htm>", must be applied without exception. Therefore, permission from a parent or guardian is not an acceptable basis for permitting a minor to volunteer in any of the excluded occupations.

**Minors Under Age 18.** The Fair Labor Standards Act provides a minimum age of 18 years for any nonagricultural occupation that the Secretary of Labor has declared by order to be particularly hazardous for 16- and 17-year-old persons or detrimental to their health and well being. The minimum age of 18 for these occupations applies even when the minor is employed by the parent or guardian. Therefore, even with the approval of a parent or guardian, a volunteer must not be permitted to perform any of the 17 hazardous occupations described in Appendix B or on website “<http://www.dol.gov/dol/asp/public/programs/handbook/childlbr.htm>”, under the heading: Hazardous Occupation Orders in Nonagricultural Occupations.

**Constraints in the Use of Minors as Volunteers.** In addition to applying child labor law in the utilization of minor volunteers, the USGS prohibits assigning to minors duties involving any of the following or similar types of activities that might potentially constitute a hazard:

- underwater diving,
- use of toxic chemicals or other laboratory hazards,
- exposure to radioactive substances or biological hazards,
- riding in small boats, helicopters, or any unscheduled aircraft,
- driving government-owned motorized vehicles,
- operation of power-driven machinery or equipment (e.g., chain saws, power shop tools, rock crushers, drill rigs, specialized equipment or vehicles, etc.), and
- use of firearms, explosives, or incendiaries.

If the State has a higher standard of child labor laws than those from the Federal Government, the State laws should be used.

Minor volunteers may perform fieldwork only as part of a group or team consisting of two or more USGS employees. Under no circumstances may minors substitute for a USGS employee in constituting the required number of individuals on a team or group.

Permission from a parent or guardian is not an acceptable basis for permitting a minor to volunteer in any position prohibited either by law or by the Volunteer for Science Program. Employees' minor children are not exempt from these restrictions.

### **C. USGS Employees and Family Members as Volunteers**

**Acceptance of Volunteer Service from USGS Employees and Employees of Other Federal Agencies.** A USGS employee can serve as a volunteer within the USGS as long as the services performed as a volunteer are not the same type of duties for which the employee is paid. For example, a hydrologic technician cannot volunteer to collect hydrologic data, make and compute streamflow measurements, or make ground water measurements since this work is typically an integral part of his or her official duties.

A USGS employee is not allowed to volunteer to perform the duties of the official assignment in order to (1) avoid any violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act and (2) avoid any perception that an employee is being asked to volunteer service in lieu of overtime compensation. This guidance pertains to both exempt and nonexempt employees.

An employee of a Federal agency other than the USGS may volunteer to perform any duties for which he or she is qualified, including those which are the same as or similar to his or her official duties in a Federal agency.

USGS or other Federal employees must be the ones who initiate the volunteer service; and they must donate their service on their own time.

USGS or other Federal employees, while performing volunteer service for the USGS, are considered private citizens and do not receive insurance or liability benefits other than those provided to volunteers. In a situation where compensation is necessary based on pay, the comparable pay level of the volunteer position is the basis for determining benefits. In some cases, this level may be substantially lower than the pay level of the individual's officially appointed Federal position.

If a USGS or other Federal employee is injured while serving on a volunteer assignment and becomes unable to perform his or her official job duties, he or she may be able to file for worker's compensation or disability retirement, whichever is warranted by the nature of the injury. However, the individual may not collect from worker's compensation and disability retirement simultaneously.

**Acceptance of Volunteer Service from Relatives of USGS Employees.** The following guidelines are provided regarding the acceptance of volunteer services by family members of USGS employees:

- Immediate family members and other relatives of USGS employees may serve as volunteers and may work in the same office or on the same assignment with the USGS employee.
- Form 9-2080, Volunteer Services Agreement, authorizing the volunteer assignment, should not be signed by the related USGS employee.
- Authorization to pay incidental expenses to a volunteer cannot be approved by a relative of a volunteer.

- USGS policy is *not* to pay travel-related expenses for volunteer service provided by the relative of a USGS employee who is participating on a joint project or assignment with the employee. However, the office chief may approve such expenses in exceptional cases. Requests for approval must be submitted in writing to the office chief and should describe the value of the services to be contributed by the volunteer which would justify the travel costs and avoid the appearance of financial benefit to the employee, e.g., permit spouses to accompany employees on official travel without personally having to pay travel costs. Copies of these requests and the decision of the office chief should be retained by the office volunteer program coordinator.

**D. Non-Citizen Volunteers.** A non-citizen may volunteer for the USGS provided he or she is:

- a legal, permanent resident of the United States; or
- pursuing a full course of study at an academic institution, and the academic institution has granted the individual permission to engage in volunteer activity with the USGS.

Foreign nationals may not be invited by the U.S. Geological Survey to enter the United States or any other country for the purpose of participating in the Volunteer for Science Program. A supervisor wishing to accept volunteer service from a foreign national who resides outside the United States should contact the respective organizational Exchange Visiting Scientist Program coordinator for guidance.

## CHAPTER 2. HEALTH AND SAFETY OF VOLUNTEERS

The USGS is profoundly concerned with the health and safety of its employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. The USGS is committed to the goal of building a safety and health culture that will achieve zero loss to human and material resources. In support of this goal, the Volunteer for Science Program has developed health and safety guidelines and requirements for supervisors and volunteers.

Participants in the Volunteer for Science Program supervisors and volunteers will practice safe behavior and avoid unacceptable risks. No volunteer activity may be performed where careful analysis shows an unacceptable risk to any employee, volunteer, contractor, or visitor. Additionally, no volunteer is ever required to accept an assignment he or she does not feel comfortable doing or is not willing to agree to do.

**A. Supervisors** must exercise proper safety precautions in accepting volunteer services and must disclose potential health or safety conditions on the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement," Section 4. When required by the nature of the volunteer services, personal safety equipment and clothing will be provided by the USGS and will be used to aid in preventing injuries. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring the use of safety equipment and clothing where required for the health and safety of the volunteers.

**B. Volunteers** must observe the same safety precautions and receive training in the use of the safety equipment as required of the permanent workforce. The volunteer is entitled to a clear description of his or her assignment and any risk factors that may affect his or her health and safety. The project description and relevant risk factors must be noted on the "Individual Volunteer Service Agreement" and be provided to the volunteer prior to the performance of duties. Volunteers are encouraged to communicate safety ideas, concerns, and suggestions to their supervisor or to the USGS volunteer coordinator, whenever necessary.

**C. Operation of Machinery and Equipment.** Volunteers age 18 or older may be assigned to operate machinery or equipment (such as chain saws, power shop tools, specialized equipment or vehicles, etc.) under the following conditions: they must demonstrate their proficiency in the operation of that equipment to the satisfaction of the responsible supervisor; or they must receive appropriate training prior to the operation of the equipment. **Under no circumstances may minor volunteers be assigned to operate machinery or equipment.**

**D. Hazardous Conditions.** Volunteers age 18 or older who are assigned to projects involving potentially hazardous conditions (e.g., helicopters or other unscheduled aircraft, boats, drill rigs, laboratories with toxic chemicals, underwater diving, etc.) must have these conditions noted in detail in the project description section of the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement." The supervisor, a Survey Safety Officer, and the volunteer must sign the statement in Section 5 confirming the volunteer (1) has been informed of the hazardous conditions inherent in the assignment, (2) has received appropriate safety training, and (3) has been advised of the possible extent and limitations of benefits that may be available in the event of injury. **Under no circumstances may minor volunteers be assigned to projects involving potentially hazardous conditions.**

**E. Firearms.** Volunteers age 18 or older that are assigned to projects requiring participants to carry firearms must have this condition noted in the project description section of the "Individual



Volunteer Services Agreement." The supervisor, a Survey Safety Officer, and the volunteer must sign the statement in Section 5 confirming the volunteer (1) has been informed of the specific conditions of the assignment requiring the carrying and possible use of a firearm, (2) has received appropriate safety training including demonstration of acceptable proficiency in the use of the firearm, and (3) has been advised of the extent and limitations of benefits that may be available in the event of injury. **Under no circumstances may minor volunteers be assigned to projects that require or allow participants to carry firearms.**

**F. Helicopters and Unscheduled Aircraft.** See paragraph entitled "Hazardous Conditions" above.

**G. Boats.** See paragraph entitled "Hazardous Conditions" above.

**Except in very rare cases, supervisors may not assign duties that expose volunteers to high-hazard working conditions or physical hardships.** As a general rule, these would include (1) conditions such as those that are considered a hazard or hardship for Federal pay purposes; or (2) circumstances in which an accident could result in serious injury or death. (Reference Survey Manual 370.550.9 "Hazard Pay Differential," and Survey Manual 370.550.10, "Environmental Differential.") In rare cases where a volunteer's experience or training provides exceptional skill or ability in dealing with hazardous situations, an exception may be made only after careful evaluation and approval by the office chief and the Regional Safety Manager. The Regional Safety Manager can provide further clarification about specific high-hazard situations that should be avoided.

**H. Safety Standards.** In order to ensure the health and safety of all persons, supervisors, employees, and volunteers are expected to:

- Comply with all Department of the Interior and/or U.S. Geological Survey standards contained in regulations, manuals, handbooks, or other regulatory publications. References include the USGS Safety Handbook (445-1-H); Survey Manual 445.1; and the Regional Safety Manager.
- Use required personal protective equipment and other safety equipment.
- Report all unsafe or unhealthful working conditions to your supervisor.
- Report all work-related accidents, injuries, or illnesses to your supervisor.
- Ensure that you follow all work procedures for the tasks assigned.

**I. Restrictions for Volunteers Under Age 18. See Chapter 1 B on page 10.**

Permission from a parent or guardian is not an acceptable basis for permitting a minor to volunteer in any position prohibited either by law or by the Volunteer for Science Program. Employees' minor children are not exempt from these restrictions.

### CHAPTER 3. ETHICS

The USGS is the principal source of scientific and technical expertise in Earth and biological sciences within the Federal Government. Because of the scope of the programs of the USGS and its involvement with unpublished, confidential, or proprietary information, it is essential that volunteers and supervisors understand the concerns of the USGS regarding unauthorized use or release of data.

For data collection activities, volunteers are required to provide unbiased and objective results to the supervisor. All information and data collected by a volunteer is considered provisional until verified by the supervisor or other qualified USGS employee.

No volunteer may enter private property unless authorized by the supervisor, who has obtained appropriate permission.

Volunteer service is undertaken for the purpose of accomplishing the USGS mission and vision. To avoid any possible criticism of a volunteer's interests, supervisors should avoid placing volunteers in a USGS project that is related to an outside activity from which the volunteer, or member of the volunteer's household, would benefit financially.

If there is a question as to the appropriateness of a volunteer's assignment, the supervisor should offer the volunteer the opportunity to serve in other USGS activities to eliminate the appearance of a conflict of interest. In extreme cases, the supervisor may feel it is necessary to terminate the volunteer's service with the USGS. Whenever possible the volunteer should be referred to the local, regional, or office coordinator, as appropriate, for placement.

Family members of USGS employees may serve as volunteers. However, the USGS employee may not (1) sign the Individual Volunteer Services agreement to authorize the volunteer assignment; (2) authorize payment of incidental expenses to the volunteer; nor (3) authorize payment of travel-related expenses when the relative is participating in a joint project with the employee.

## CHAPTER 4. REIMBURSEMENT OF INCIDENTAL EXPENSES

**A. Local Travel.** The USGS has the authority to reimburse volunteers for incidental expenses incurred as a result of their volunteer service. Although the authority exists to reimburse volunteers for certain expenses, reimbursement is not mandatory. An important guideline for supervisors to consider when authorizing payment of incidental expenses is that the volunteer service rendered be significant enough to offset expenses paid. The offices have their own guidelines and practices surrounding the payment of incidental costs. Each supervisor and administrative officer should be thoroughly aware of the office's position on the reimbursement of incidental expenses and, whenever in doubt, seek guidance from the office volunteer program coordinator.

Volunteers can be reimbursed for actual expenses such as bus and train fare, gasoline, and parking fees, while traveling to and from the work site. The distance for which volunteers are reimbursed for such travel expenses should be limited to the local commuting area; however, reimbursement of travel expenses to and from the work site should not be routinely approved. Consult your office volunteer coordinator for further guidance.

Reimbursement is not meant to function as a salary, but rather to offset the volunteer's personal cost of volunteering. **Under no circumstances may a volunteer receive a stipend in exchange for volunteer service.** Stipends are regarded as income and must be reported as such for tax purposes.

Unless otherwise specified, reimbursement claims should be submitted on existing government forms and handled in accord with the established procedures that apply to USGS employees. The supervisor should specify the frequency with which the volunteer may submit claims for reimbursement, for example, once every 14 days.

Any documents or forms submitted to claim reimbursement of incidental expenses for volunteers must clearly note "Volunteer" after the name.

Volunteers must claim their own incidental expenses. Supervisors or coworkers are cautioned not to charge travel or other expenses for volunteers on their personal credit cards or to make expenditures on behalf of volunteers, and subsequently claim reimbursement.

Supervisors should discuss the office's position on the payment of incidental expenses with the volunteer. To the extent possible, provide the volunteer with a clear and specific indication of allowable incidental costs and approve out-of-pocket expenses in advance, before the volunteer incurs costs.

**B. Long Distance Travel.** If a volunteer is involved in field work or a special assignment which requires long distance travel, expenses can be paid by the USGS. Authorization to pay transportation costs, advance funds, and reimburse long distance travel expenses must be handled on a case-by-case basis, have written justification and be approved by the appropriate office chief or designee. (See Chapter 3, "Ethics" for guidance regarding travel expenses for volunteer service provided by a relative of a USGS employee when the relative is participating on a joint project or assignment with the employee.)

Existing government forms should be used and unless otherwise specified, the established procedures that apply to USGS employees should be followed.

Volunteers are cautioned to be aware that making travel arrangements outside the established government procedures for long distance travel may make them ineligible for the protections afforded employees and volunteers on official travel.

The following guidelines apply:

- Travel for volunteers can be authorized with the approval of the office chief or his designee through the issuance of Form DI-1020, Travel Authorization.
- Volunteers can be given an advance of funds by following the same procedures that are established for USGS employees. SF-1038, Application and Account for Advance of Funds, should be used to obtain funds before a scheduled trip.
- The USGS can acquire special passenger transportation services for volunteers with the issuance of SF 1169, Government Transportation Request.
- Volunteers must not use cash to purchase travel tickets. When possible, tickets should be purchased through a contract travel agency on the Government Transportation System (GTS); otherwise, SF 1169, Government Transportation Request, must be used.
- To claim reimbursement of authorized expenses incurred while in a travel status, the volunteers should use SF 1012, Travel Voucher.
- Volunteers must claim their own expenses. Supervisors or coworkers are cautioned not to charge travel or other expenses on their personal credit cards or to make expenditures on behalf of volunteers and subsequently claim reimbursement.
- Any documents or forms used to authorize travel or claim expenses for volunteers must clearly note "Volunteer" after the name.

**C. International Travel.** International travel for volunteers must be requested and authorized in accordance with the requirements of Department Manual 347. Before submitting requests for approval, the office chief or other designated office official should determine that the volunteer service will sufficiently offset the travel expenses incurred or is significant enough to justify the travel expenses.

Proper travel procedures must be followed and approvals obtained in accordance with Survey Manual 340.16. Consult your administrative officer or the Office of Financial Management for assistance as appropriate.

**D. Non-Citizen Reimbursement.** Non-citizen reimbursements for expenses are explained on page 14.

## CHAPTER 5. VOLUNTEER BENEFITS AND PROTECTIONS

Volunteers receive the same benefits and protection as USGS employees under the Federal Employees Compensation Act, 5 U.S.C., Chapter 81, and the Federal Tort Claims Act, 28 U.S.C., 2671 through 2680. Both documents can be found on website <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr>.

**A. Federal Employees Compensation Act** entitles volunteers to first aid and medical care for on-the-job injuries as well as hospital care, when necessary. When travel is necessary to receive medical care, transportation may be furnished and/or the travel and incidental expenses associated with it may be reimbursable. When death results from an on-the-job injury, burial and funeral expenses, not to exceed \$800, may be paid. In addition, other compensation may be approved by the Office of Workers Compensation Programs on a case-by-case basis. Because volunteers are unpaid, they do not receive compensation for lost wages.

A volunteer who suffers an on-the-job injury and desires to file a claim for compensation should contact his or her immediate supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for helping the volunteer obtain and complete the proper forms and must certify the authenticity of the claim. The supervisor then submits the claim to the servicing personnel office for processing.

Supervisors should contact their administrative officers for forms and guidance. If administrative officers need assistance, they should contact their servicing personnel offices.

**B. Federal Tort Claims Act** provides a means to award damages as a result of claims against the USGS for injury or loss of property or personal injury or death caused by the negligent or wrongful act or omission of any employee of the USGS while acting within the scope of his or her office or employment under circumstances where the USGS, if a private person, would be liable to the claimant in accordance with the law of the locality where the act or omission occurred. Since volunteers are considered employees by the provisions of this Act, they are offered the protection of the Act for personal liability as long as they are within the scope of their assigned responsibilities.

Questions regarding tort claims should be referred to your bureau's tort claims officer. See Survey Manual 451.1 for additional information.

**C. Procedures for Processing Tort Claims.** The supervisor should follow the same procedures and use the same forms that are prescribed when a USGS employee is injured or involved in a tort claim. If you are not familiar with these procedures, you should contact your administrative officer or your servicing personnel office (as appropriate) for assistance.

Since volunteers receive injury and tort claims coverage, it is imperative that they be properly signed up and operating under written descriptions of duties containing specific information on the type of services they are assigned to do, and the specific dates and times of performance. This information is necessary in case questions arise on whether a volunteer was acting within his or her assigned responsibilities.

## CHAPTER 6. GENERAL GUIDELINES

**A. Physical Requirements.** Volunteers must be physically capable of safely and efficiently performing the services agreed upon without hazard to themselves or to others. In some assignments performance of duties requires manual dexterity and normal hearing, vision, speech, depth perception, and ability to distinguish colors. However, a specific physical condition or impairment will not automatically disqualify an applicant from performing service under the Volunteer for Science Program.

Some assignments may require moderate to arduous physical exertion under rigorous and unusual environmental conditions: prolonged walking, standing, crawling, climbing, kneeling, lifting, and reaching, etc.

Environmental or other conditions of the volunteer assignments may require travel over rugged, precipitous, slippery, and hazardous terrain at high elevations, carrying backpacks of equipment, exposure to the elements when performing services outside, performing services with or around machinery with moving parts, performing services alone and with others, and exposure to dust, smoke, fumes, or gases.

The supervisor must inform the volunteer of the working conditions and environment in which services are to be performed. Upon acceptance of an agreed upon assignment, the volunteer must assure himself/herself and the supervisor of the physical capability to carry out the duties involved. See Chapter 1.B. "Minors -- Volunteers Under the Age of 18" for discussion related to minors.

**B. Security Investigation.** A security investigation may be required if a volunteer is to be given work assignments of a critical sensitive or noncritical sensitive nature. Contact your servicing personnel specialist for specific guidance.

**C. Use of Government-Owned Vehicles.** Volunteers may operate government-owned vehicles if they possess a valid State driver's license and are at least 18 years of age. The supervisor should review the nature of the services that will be contributed by the volunteer to determine whether the volunteer needs to operate government vehicles. If so, the supervisor must instruct the volunteer on the requirements of Survey Manual 409.1, which provides the volunteer with a copy of the rules governing the official use of government-owned vehicles, and ensure that all procedures are followed.

Under some circumstances a non-citizen who meets the conditions for volunteer service with the USGS (see above) and who does not possess a valid State driver's license but does possess an International driver's license, may be permitted to drive a government-owned vehicle. For specific guidance, consult the Department of Motor Vehicles in the State where the volunteer will be operating the vehicle.

**D. Attendance Schedules.** The attendance schedules of volunteers are not subject to the same limitations or restrictions that apply to USGS employees. A volunteer's schedule may be irregular and intermittent and also a volunteer may also contribute a one-time service.

The number of hours contributed must be recorded by the volunteer, maintained by the supervisor, and reported by the timekeeper to the office volunteer coordinator on a quarterly or

other basis. This bookkeeping requirement is particularly important in the event of injury compensation or tort claims and serves as validation of the hours contributed for employment purposes. Supervisors should explain to the volunteers that this requirement is in their best interest.

**E. Equipment, Materials, and Supplies.** In most cases, volunteers should use government-furnished equipment, materials, and supplies that are generally available to employees. However, when determined necessary by the supervisor and approved by the appropriate office official, equipment, materials, and supplies needed for the accomplishment of volunteer assignments may be purchased using normal procurement procedures.

Controlled property and equipment should remain the supervisor's responsibility. Although a volunteer can use controlled property and equipment under the same guidelines as USGS employees, a volunteer may not serve as property custodian or have controlled property placed under his or her name and social security number.

**F. Temporary Identification Passes.** Volunteers who have no other appropriate form of government identification may be issued temporary identification passes. See Survey Manual 440.1 for instructions about obtaining this card.

**G. Parking.** The same procedures as required of employees should be used to obtain parking permits for volunteers. See Survey Manual 429.7.

**H. Credit Cards.** The same procedures as required of employees should be used to obtain government credit cards for volunteers. See Survey Manual 340.18 and 403.10.

## CHAPTER 7. FORMS

In most instances, routine forms, already in use by the USGS, are used for volunteer administration and compensation. Examples of typical forms used for volunteer activity are SF-1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business; DI-1020, Travel Authorization; SF-1169, U.S. Government Transportation Request; SF-1012 Travel Voucher; SF-1038 Application and Account for Advance of Funds; CA-1, Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay Compensation; and CA-16, Request for Examination and/or Treatment. Always indicate "Volunteer" after the name when completing any of these forms.

The following forms were specifically devised for the Volunteer for Science Program:

**A. Individual Volunteer Services Agreement.** The Individual Volunteer Services Agreement, Form 9-2080, is the document that officially establishes the individual as a volunteer who is providing services to the USGS. The agreement must be completed and signed by both the volunteer and the appropriate supervisor or USGS official before the individual can perform any volunteer services for the USGS. The agreement must include a brief description of the services to be performed and disclosure of any hazardous conditions or other situations that may affect a volunteer's health or safety. This form must also be completed for USGS employees who wish to volunteer. See website "<http://www.usgs.gov:8888/ops/hro/recruit/volunteer.html#form>" for a copy.

**B. Emergency Care for Minors.** To ensure that immediate emergency medical care may be provided, when necessary, to a volunteer under age 18, a parent or guardian of every minor volunteer must complete and sign the Emergency Care for Minor form see website "<http://www.usgs.gov:8888/ops/hro/recruit/volunteer.html#form>." Every attempt will be made to contact the parent or guardian immediately in the event of a medical emergency. However, when the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the Emergency Care for Minor form authorizes medical professionals to begin treatment deemed necessary for the well-being of the minor. The form also provides information on medical and health conditions about the volunteer that may be relevant to the supervisor in assigning work. **The original form must accompany the child when seeking emergency care.** Supervisors must have the form within reach in offices, laboratories or field sites when utilizing services from minor volunteers.



**INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER SERVICES AGREEMENT**

1a. Name of Volunteer (print or type)	1b. Social Security Number	1c. Date of Birth
1d. Address (include zip code)	1e. Home Telephone Number (include area code)	
2a. Person to Notify in an Emergency	2b. Relationship to Volunteer	
2c. Address (include zip code)	2d. Telephone Number (include area code)	

**3. Agreement by Volunteer:** I offer and agree to perform the services described below without compensation to assist the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in accord with the following understandings:

- a. I will contribute my services from \_\_\_\_\_ (date) to approximately \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- b. This volunteer service will not confer on me the status of a Federal employee; however, while acting within the scope of this Agreement, I am covered under the provisions of the:
  1. Federal Tort Claims Act, which protects a Federal employee from liability for injury or damage to others while the employee is acting within the scope of his or her duties, and
  2. Federal Employees Compensation Act, which authorizes compensation for work-related injury.
- c. If I am less than 18 years old, my parent or guardian consents to this Agreement by signature below.
- d. I understand the health and physical conditions requirements for performing the services described in item 4 below, and certify that I know of no physical condition or limitation that may adversely affect my ability to perform these services.
- e. Either I or the USGS may terminate this Agreement at any time by notifying the other party in writing.
- f. Because volunteers are not Federal employees, their volunteer service will not be creditable for leave accrual, retirement, or other benefit purposes if they later accept a Federal appointment.

Signature of Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent  
Or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(if volunteer is under 18)

**4. Project Description (attach an additional sheet as necessary):**

USGS Project Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Division/Office/Location \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Organizational Code \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Agreement by USGS:** Under the authorities of Public Law 99-591, Public Law 100-202, and current Department of the Interior Appropriations Act, the USGS accepts this offer. While this Agreement is in effect:

- a. The volunteer is covered by the provisions of the Federal Tort Claims Act and the Federal Employees Compensation Act.
- b. The USGS will provide for such materials, supplies, equipment, support services, and facilities as are needed and are available to accomplish this project, except as may be specified in an attachment, marked \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature of USGS Official \_\_\_\_\_ Name (print or type) \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_ Office/Location \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Time and Attendance:** The volunteer must maintain a timesheet to ensure coverage in case of injury and to verify creditable experience for employment purposes.

**7. Additional Information:**

- a. Volunteer Source (be specific) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. USGS Retiree ( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Yes ( ) No
- c. Scientist Emeritus ( ) Yes ( ) No
- d. Faculty ( ) Yes ( ) No School \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Student ( ) Yes ( ) No School \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Termination of the Agreement:**

a. Total number of hours contributed by volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

b. This Agreement was terminated on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Signature of USGS Official \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

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**PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT**

The following information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a): 5 U.S.C. 301 authorizes collection of information requested on this form, and Executive Order 9397 authorizes use of social security numbers to identify individual personnel records. The personal data will be used when emergency contact is necessary. Furnishing this information, including the social security number, is voluntary, but failure to provide may result in nonacceptance as a volunteer.

**United States Department of the Interior  
U.S. Geological Survey**

**EMERGENCY CARE FOR MINORS**

**IMPORTANT: ORIGINAL FORM MUST ACCOMPANY CHILD**

In case of emergency, U.S. Geological Survey representative(s) will contact the worksite Federal Occupational Health facility or A911" or other local emergency response number. Every attempt will be made to contact a parent/guardian or designated emergency contact.

**CHILD's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
SSN \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Child Resides With ( ) Father ( ) Mother ( ) Both ( ) Guardian

**FATHER's Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Car Phone/Pager ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**MOTHER's Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Car Phone/Pager ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**GUARDIAN's Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Car Phone/Pager ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, IF PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN CANNOT BE REACHED, CONTACT:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information:**

Name of Health Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Policy/Group/Employee Number/HMO Number (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Child's Physician \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical Information** (Check any current health condition):

_____ allergies (be specific)	_____ hemophilia
_____ foods _____	_____ physical disability (be specific)
_____ medicines _____	_____ respiratory problems (be specific)
_____ bee sting/insect _____	_____ seizures
_____ other _____	_____ vision problems (be specific)
_____ asthma	_____ glasses _____ contacts
_____ cancer	_____ other (be specific)
_____ diabetes	_____
_____ hearing problems _____ hearing aid	_____
_____ heart problem (be specific) _____	_____

List all medications and dosages the child receives on a continual basis:

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The U.S. Geological Survey has my permission, in an emergency when I (or my physician) cannot be contacted, to take my child to (1) a Federal Occupational Health facility, when immediately accessible; or (2) the emergency room of the nearest hospital; and the Federal Occupational Health facility and/or hospital and their medical staffs have my authorization to provide treatment which a physician deems necessary for the well-being of my child.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE**

**DATE**



## CHAPTER 8. RECOGNITION

**Types of Recognition.** Volunteers donate their services without pay and receive no monetary reward for their contributions. Their “reward” often comes in the form of a feeling of accomplishment and a sense of belonging. Volunteers want to take pride in their contributions and association with the USGS. A successful volunteer supervisor knows this and keeps morale and productivity high, making volunteers feel wanted and a part of the working team by praising them for work well done, by showing them how their specific work helps the USGS achieve its goals, and by giving them special recognition. Although volunteers cannot receive the monetary and honorary awards established for USGS employees, supervisors can provide them with recognition through personal interaction and feedback such as the following:

1. **Thank You.** A simple, sincere, and frequent verbal thank you is probably the most important form of recognition.
2. **Letters of Appreciation.** A thank you letter is always a welcome show of appreciation.
3. **Letters of Recommendation.** Many students and young professionals serve as volunteers. Be prepared to supply letters of recommendation as they apply for jobs.
4. **Letters of Commendation.** With the permission of the volunteers, send letters to employers commending the volunteers’ work. Many employers encourage their employees to volunteer and will appreciate the report. In the case of students, a letter of commendation to their college department heads would be appreciated.
5. **Honorary Awards.** Volunteers may be granted honorary awards including imprinted
6. **T-shirts and hats by the offices.** These items are stocked in the USGS Self-Service Store at the National Center.

## CHAPTER 9. RECORDKEEPING AND REPORTING

**Individual Volunteer Data.** The USGS is required to keep a database of its volunteers. The information maintained is that found on the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement," Form 9-2080. All information is subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a). 5 U.S.C. 301 authorizes collection of information requested on the form, and Executive Order 9397 authorizes use of social security numbers to identify individual personnel records. Submission of the information, including the social security number, is voluntary, but failure to provide it may result in nonacceptance. Information collected is used to verify participation in the Volunteer for Science Program for employment or other purposes, establish the volunteer's eligibility under the Federal Employees Compensation Act and the Federal Tort Claims Act, and facilitate emergency contact, if necessary. The volunteer database also maintains the number of hours donated by each volunteer.

To ensure that volunteer data is current and accurate, the following procedures are recommended:

### **The volunteer:**

- Completes his or her portion of the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement," reviews and, if necessary, requests clarification of the project description and any health and safety considerations, and signs the form(s) as required.
- Maintains a timesheet of hours donated and the date of the service to ensure coverage in case of injury and to verify creditable experience for employment purposes.
- Reporting allowable reimbursable expenditures, according to established procedures.

### **The supervisor:**

- Provides a thorough description of the volunteer project on the "Individual Volunteer Services Agreement," informs the volunteer of any special health or safety considerations, obtains approval from the Regional Safety Officer when applicable, obtains the signature of the USGS Official, and forwards a copy of the signed agreement to the office volunteer coordinator.
- Certifies the volunteer's timesheet and reporting to the volunteer coordinator, the number of hours donated each quarter.
- Authorizes and reports to the volunteer coordinator reimbursement of volunteers' allowable expenditures.
- Forwards a copy of the terminated agreement to the volunteer coordinator when the volunteer's service has ended.

**The volunteer coordinator:**

- Reports to the Headquarters office volunteer coordinator the number of new and terminated "Individual Volunteer Services Agreements" and the number of hours donated by each volunteer at a specific geographic location.
- Reports to the Headquarters office volunteer coordinator the amount of funds expended each quarter in support of volunteer activity at a specific location.

## CHAPTER 10. PROGRAM DATA

**Quarterly Reports.** Complete and detailed reports describing volunteer efforts and results are submitted to the Director by the bureau volunteer coordinator every quarter. Offices may determine their internal reporting channels as long as the following information is provided to the Headquarters office volunteer coordinator no later than 15 days following the end of each quarter. A final, cumulative report is submitted to the bureau volunteer coordinator no later than 30 days following the end of each quarter.

The following information shall be included in quarterly reports:

- **Volunteers at End of Last Quarter.** Indicate the total number of active volunteers at the end of the last quarter.
- **Geographic Location.** Indicate the city and state of the office supporting the volunteer activity.
- **Agreements Signed this Quarter.** Indicate the actual number of new agreements signed during the quarterly reporting period.
- **Hours Contributed.** Indicate the number of hours received from volunteer services during the quarterly reporting period from all volunteers, collectively, at a specific location.
- **Incidental Expenses.** Indicate the amount of funds expended during the quarterly reporting period for all volunteers at a specific location.
- **Agreements Terminated This Quarter.** Indicate the number of agreements terminated by either the volunteer or the USGS during the quarterly reporting period at a specific geographic location.
- **Volunteer Services.** Briefly describe the type of services provided by volunteers. If there are large numbers of volunteers performing the same service, indicate the total whenever possible.



## CHAPTER 11. INFORMATION ON VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for volunteers may be sent to the bureau volunteer coordinator by e-mail at [efisher@usgs.gov](mailto:efisher@usgs.gov) at any time. These opportunities will be input into the website for volunteers to review and respond directly online. An online application and the opportunities are on the website at <http://www.usgs.gov/volunteer>. The application will go directly to the supervisor who has asked for volunteers. The following information is needed before the opportunity can be established:

- A. Title
- B. Name of Contact
- C. Phone Number of Contact
- D. Fax Number of Contact
- E. Discipline
- F. Office Location
- G. E-Mail Address
- H. Research
- I. Schedule
- J. Duties of Volunteer
- K. Knowledge/Skills Required
- L. Benefits
- M. Project Location
- N. Accommodations
- O. Region(s)
- P. Science Discipline(s)

## APPENDIX A.

### **Fair Labor Standards Act**

Can be found on the following website:

<http://www.elaws.dol.gov/flsa>

## **APPENDIX B.**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Can be found on the following website:

<http://www.usgs.gov:8888/ops/hro/recruit/volunteer.html#form>