

Reference Manual #7

Volunteers-In-Parks Program

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1. Background *(See DO-7, § 1)*

The National Park Service's Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program was authorized by Public Law 91-357 enacted in 1970. The primary purpose of the (VIP) program is to provide a vehicle through which the NPS can accept and utilize voluntary help in such a way that it is mutually beneficial to the service and volunteer.

Volunteers are accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, color, national origin, or disability. Under the VIP legislation, volunteers may be recruited without regard to OPM regulations, are provided coverage for tort liability and work-injury compensation, and can be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses while participating in the program. Volunteers are selected to participate in the program because they can fill an identified need. They are usually individuals, or members of groups, with specific skills and/or interests, who will perform a specific function or type of work.

Most of the work in the National Park Service VIP program occurs at the park level. Using the following guidelines as a basis, the Park Volunteer Manager develops and operates a VIP program that fits the conditions and needs of that particular park. Each park program is a local operation with recruiting, selection, training, recognition, and many other aspects of a volunteer program being handled on-site. At the regional level, the Regional Volunteer Coordinator, usually located in the Division of Interpretation, monitors the park VIP programs and funds, and assists the parks as needed. The Servicewide Volunteer Program Coordinator in the Washington Office exercises overall coordination and guidance of the program.

Volunteers assist the National Park Service in diverse and innovative ways. For example, amendments to the National Trails System Act affirm the critical importance of volunteers to NPS-administered trails and even authorize that private landowners, maintaining natural trails crossing their property, may become NPS VIPs. Along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, through cooperative agreements, volunteers carry out resource management on Federal lands. On other trails, volunteers perform trail work on non-Federal trail lands.

There is a land management agency national volunteer job listing at www.volunteer.gov/gov and NPS opportunities are also listed at www.nps.gov/volunteer. Individuals may also call or write the Volunteer Manager in the national park or program offices where they would like to volunteer and request an application. They can also obtain information on the VIP program by writing or calling the Washington or Regional offices.

Purpose

- The purpose of the Director's Order is to provide direction to National Park Service personnel, who are responsible for, and/or involved in, implementing a Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program. The Director's Order only covers those aspects of the Volunteers-In-Parks program that are required as a matter of law or policy. The National Park Service Reference Manual, Director's Order #7 provides details pertaining to requirements given in the Director's Order.

- For the purposes of this Director’s Order and Reference Manual, Volunteers-In-Parks are referred to as “VIPs,” the Washington Office, which oversees the national volunteer program, is referred to as “WASO,” and the National Park Service is referred to as “NPS.”

Objective

- The primary objective of the Volunteers-In-Parks program is to provide a vehicle through which the National Park Service can use voluntary help that is mutually beneficial to the service and the volunteer.

2. Authorities *(See DO-7, § 2)*

- The National Park Service’s Volunteers-In-Parks program was authorized by Public Law 91-357 enacted in 1970. Amended October 24, 1984 (PL 98-540) and November 12, 1996 (PL 104-333). An amendment (Public Law 98-11) dated March 28, 1983 extended this program to include National Trails in Section II of the National Trails System Act.
- Authorization for the use of appropriations to provide non-monetary awards of nominal value to private individuals and organizations that make contributions to Department programs is given under PL 102-154 (dated 11/13/91). This law also authorizes the use of funds to pay costs incidental to the use of services contributed by volunteers for the Department.

Chapter 1

3. Program Administration *(See DO-7, § 3)*

Washington Office

Overall responsibility for the VIP program rests with the Servicewide VIP Program Coordinator in the Washington Office. The WASO Coordinator monitors the VIP program, resolves problems, develops direction and guidance for the program, ensures funding and allocates to the regions, monitors the use of funds, provides assistance to the field, prepares reports and provides information regarding the VIP program to the director and to Congress, and maintains contacts with other agencies and outside organizations in the field of volunteerism.

Regional Offices

Regional responsibility for the VIP program rests with the Regional Volunteer Coordinator usually located in the Division of Interpretation in the regional office. The VIP program coordination duties are assigned by the regional director to a particular position and included in the position description and critical results of that position. The Regional Volunteer Coordinator monitors the park VIP programs in the region, provides assistance to the parks as requested, serves as liaison between the region, the parks, and the Washington office, compiles VIP fund requests from the parks, allocates VIP funds to the parks and monitors their use, and answers public inquiries regarding the program.

Parks

At the park level, the Park Volunteer Program Manager administers the VIP program. Each program office that utilizes volunteers is required to assign someone the responsibility for the park VIP program. The Superintendent makes that assignment and the duties are included in that individual's job description. A park's VIP Program Manager can be located in any division in the park, depending on the characteristics of the particular program and on where he or she would be most effective. Wherever the manager is located in the management structure of the park, he or she must maintain contact with the Regional VIP Coordinator to ensure that proper program procedures are being followed.

The Park VIP Program Manager is responsible for keeping the program running smoothly and ensuring that it is meeting the needs of the park and volunteers. The manager assists the park staff in assessing needs and identifying work that can be accomplished by volunteers, advises staff members in proper utilization of volunteers, usually does the recruiting, coordinates volunteer orientation and training, sometimes directly supervises volunteers, and coordinates volunteer recognition and overall program evaluation. He/she also handles correspondence relating to the program, develops and submits program funding requests and program reports to the Regional Volunteer Coordinator, monitors and records the use of park VIP funds, and keeps staff current on ideas and procedures for utilizing volunteers.

Although the Park Volunteer Program Manager is responsible for the overall coordination of the park's VIP program, he/she may not directly supervise the volunteers. The staff members who are directly responsible for the work the volunteers are performing usually supervise volunteers. The role of the Park Volunteer Coordinator is to provide guidance and assistance to the staff members supervising the volunteers.

4. VIP Definitions (See DO-7, § 4)

Who Can Volunteer

A VIP is anyone who performs work for the NPS for which he/she receives no salary. Individual volunteers must function under a current, signed "Agreement for Individual Voluntary Services" (Form 10-85). Organized groups must volunteer under a current, signed "Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services" (Form 10-86). Children under the age of 18 may volunteer provided they have the written consent of their parent or guardian (Parental Approval Form 10-89). The parental approval form is to be attached to the relevant agreement form. All agreement forms must have a position description attached with the volunteer duties clearly specified and described. These forms must be signed by the volunteer or volunteer group leader, and park volunteer program manager.

VIP Program Categories

Volunteer-In-Parks

- All volunteers of the National Park Service, on or off-site, doing work that benefits the National Park Service are considered Volunteers-In-Parks and are volunteering under a current, signed agreement as mentioned above.

Master Volunteer Ranger

- This program includes anyone who has made a formal commitment to volunteer at least 500 hours per year and meets that goal and/or;
- Anyone who has expertise in a field of interest to the National Park Service such as archeology, geology, education, natural science who would be available for special projects servicewide and/or;
- Anyone who is a member of a specialty volunteer group such as the Volunteer Senior Ranger Corps, the Geo-Scientists-In-Parks, the Artists-In-Residence, the Natural Resources Volunteer Laureates, or the Trails and Rails Volunteers.

Presidential Volunteer Ranger

This category includes any VIP who has contributed at least 4000 hours of cumulative volunteer service.

5. VIP Qualifications (See DO7, § 5)

Volunteers are recruited and accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, color, national origin, disability, or OPM classification laws, rules and regulations. But, they must be physically able to perform the work for which they volunteer. If there is a question regarding the volunteer's ability to perform the assigned duties, the park Superintendent may request that the volunteer complete a standard form 256 (self-identification of medical disability) or obtain a medical examination at the government's expense.

Off-duty NPS employees can be VIPs, as well as family members of NPS employees, student interns, and individuals from the private sector whose employer is donating their services to the NPS while keeping them on payroll (i.e., Eastman Kodak personnel giving evening programs on photography). A NPS employee can serve as a VIP provided the duties he/she performs as a volunteer are not the same types of duties for which he/she is paid.

Individuals convicted of minor crimes who are participating in court-approved probation, work release, or alternative sentencing programs, may serve as VIPs at the discretion of the Superintendent. Generally, a person who has been convicted of a felony, violent crime, crime against persons, or crime involving use of a weapon will not be utilized in the NPS VIP program; however, the Superintendent may permit the person to volunteer based on an analysis of the nature of the crime, the date of conviction, evidence of rehabilitation, etc.

Partners

VIPs serving in coordination with a non-profit partner organization must be full members of that organization and be working towards standards and tasks formally established by the administering NPS office. It does not matter if the person is receiving pay, work credit, academic credit, or other types of compensation from sources outside of the NPS; if the NPS is not paying that person for the work they are doing, they are considered VIPs.

Cooperating Association Employees

Cooperating Association Employees can be VIPs if they perform functions that are normally carried out by NPS employees. However, cooperating association employees performing work on behalf of the NPS, must function under a signed "Agreement for Individual Voluntary Services" (Form 10-85) in which their duties are clearly identified and described. This type of arrangement is permitted only when: the Service and an association mutually agree that association employees may perform work on behalf of the NPS (such as issuing Golden Age or Golden Eagle Passports, operating an information desk during NPS staff breaks, issuing backcountry permits), and the association employees performing such functions receive appropriate training from the NPS.

Do not count association employees' hours as VIP hours if their salary costs are already reported as aid (NPS Form 10-40) to the NPS through agreements set up between the NPS and cooperating association partners. It is not permissible to use Form 10-85 as a way to circumvent requirements for association liability insurance.

Student Conservation Association

Short term volunteers are frequently obtained through the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Go to <http://inside.nps.gov/waso/waso.cfm?prg=451&lv=4> for the Cooperative Agreement between the National Park Service and the Student Conservation Association.

Volunteer Interns

You can recruit and utilize student interns through the NPS VIP program. However, there is a NPS hiring program for student interns as well. Consult with your human resources staff for more information.

NPS Employees or Family Members

A NPS employee can serve as a VIP within the service as long as the duties he/she performs as a volunteer are not the same types of duties for which he/she is paid. For example, a secretary in the Superintendent's office can volunteer to give an interpretive program in the park on his or her own time as a VIP, but cannot volunteer to do secretarial work for a Chief Ranger.

Relatives of NPS employees may serve as VIPs as long as the supervisor and/or service representative signing the agreement for voluntary services is not an immediate family member.

If reimbursement is involved, the regional ethics counselor should be consulted before an agreement is signed. Conflict of interest could result if a family member or relative of an employee receives financial benefit from the program. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest is a violation of the Department's employee conduct regulations and should be avoided. See Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 as Amended.

IVIP and J1 Visa (International Volunteers)

The International Volunteers in Parks (IVIP) program is in many ways different from regular VIP programs in the parks because of special requirements of the State Department for the issuance of a J-1 visa. All non-U.S. citizens who volunteer for the NPS are to enter the country on a J-1 visa. The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service (BCIS) considers any type of reimbursement, whether it be housing, meals, or other types of compensation (training), as a form of payment. It is illegal for a person traveling under a normal tourist visa to work for compensation-no matter how small it is. The J-1 visa allows non-U.S. citizens to train/study in the United States for a limited time while receiving compensation. The process may seem complex, but once you have maneuvered through it, you will find that it is actually very easy.

There are many logistical matters to consider before bringing an IVIP to a park. Adequate time is needed to coordinate an IVIP program from the initial planning stages to the arrival of the IVIP at the park. 4 to 6 weeks are needed to gather needed documentation and paperwork and it can take an additional six weeks for a foreign individual to apply and receive a visa. Most IVIPs will not have transportation and will need rides to buy supplies and to take care of other practical concerns. IVIPs may have certain cultural differences which should be considered. The IVIP may need help obtaining a social security number and setting up a bank account if the park is providing a stipend.

The NPS Office of International Affairs (OIA) is in charge of issuing DS-2019 forms (application for a J-1 visa) so you should expect to have close communication with that Office. Because of State Department regulations the IVIP program must provide training to all participants and they should not perform unskilled labor. Hosting NPS units must develop individual training programs for each IVIP. Therefore you should look for students pursuing park-related degrees (Natural Sciences, Education etc.), or people already in park or conservation-related careers. A proposal of the training to be provided to the volunteer should be submitted to the international volunteer coordinators. The training should in some way enhance the volunteer's education or career goals. The aim is that: **1)** The IVIP makes a valid contribution to National Park Service operations, and **2)** The IVIP gains career enhancing knowledge and/or skills that will contribute to entering a park-related, or natural or cultural resource-related field in his/her country.

The initial contact procedures of the VIP process are similar for IVIPs; however, more in depth biographical and background material about the IVIP candidate is required for the State Department. Potential IVIPs may contact the VIP Coordinator in the park of their choice or they may contact the IVIP coordinator directly. The IVIP Coordinators often have available IVIP applicants for placement if parks are unable to find suitable individuals.

As with domestic VIPs, parks should carefully select appropriate individuals for IVIP programs. Because the NPS is the official U.S. sponsor for IVIPs, we have a responsibility for their welfare while they are at their host parks. All IVIP candidates should be carefully screened and if

possible interviewed. If parks do not have the capacity to call internationally, the IVIP coordinators are available to interview candidates for parks. It is very important to determine if the foreign individuals have adequate funds to cover their travel and expenses in the U.S. and that they meet the requirements to receive a J-1 visa. Selected IVIPs should be prepared mentally and physically for their volunteer positions and for conditions which they will live and train in.

Once an IVIP has been approved, the VIP coordinator should work with the IVIP to develop a training plan. The plan must include the name of the volunteer, the dates of program, a general overview of the program, goals and objectives and most importantly, an outline in a weekly format, which states each specific training activity, and covers the entire period that the IVIP will be at the park. The plan must also contain an orientation to the park and local community and cross-cultural opportunities. The IVIP coordinators have sample training plans and they are also available at the OIA web site.

Once you have evaluated the applicant and set up a starting and ending date for the program. (IVIP programs can be a maximum of 12 months), you must contact the Office of International Affairs and provide the information needed by that office to complete the DS-2019, J-1 visa application. (DS-2019 form) It is very important that OIA has all the information necessary at least 45 days prior to the volunteer leaving his/her country.

The IVIP must acquire a supplemental health insurance policy before the DS-2019 form can be sent to him/her from the OIA. This adds an extra cost on the individual, but it provides for medical care in case of accidents outside of working hours. In some cases when the volunteer comes from an undeveloped country and cannot afford insurance, the park is able to choose to pay for his/her insurance. Policies are available for as little as a few dollars a day. For help locating appropriate insurance policies which meet the J-1 visa requirements, see the OIA website or contact the IVIP coordinators. Also, just as with domestic volunteers, IVIPs must sign a volunteer agreement so that they will be covered under workman's compensation, if any accidents occur while they are on duty.

Once IVIPs arrive at their park sites, supervisors should notify the IVIP coordinators. This is extremely important because the IVIP coordinators must activate IVIP records in the visa tracking system within 30 days or the system will automatically record them as "no shows." This no show designation can cause many problems for IVIPs with immigration and border agents when they leave the country. It is very difficult to change records to active status once they fall into the no show category.

The IVIP coordinators must also be notified if international volunteers leave their park for more than 48 hours. These instances could include extended field trips to parks or other areas, training outside the park, or other similar events. Failure to notify the coordinators may cause the State Department to terminate the volunteer's visa.

The IVIP coordinators are required to receive a mid-program and ending evaluation for the IVIPs, from their supervisors. Supervisors should also make sure that IVIPs write a summary report and send it (with a digital photo if possible) to the IVIP coordinators.

Once you have maneuvered through this process you will find it quite easy and rewarding. Close working relations with international volunteers can add an interesting and educational cultural

experience for the employees in the park, and if the ideals of the program are followed you will be helping a present, or future, park counterpart gain experience that can be applied in another park system.

For a complete information packet to begin your IVIP program contact the International Volunteer Coordinators in the Office of International Affairs at:

NPS/OIA
International Volunteer Program
1201 Eye Street, NW (0050)
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 354-1806

Or: <http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/ivip.htm>

6. VIP Activities (See DO7, § 6)

Volunteers can be utilized in any and all parts of park management. All levels and types of skills can be utilized and almost any type of work can be performed as long as it is work that:

1. Would not otherwise get done during a particular fiscal year because of funding or personnel limitations.
or
2. Enables paid employees to accomplish work that would not otherwise get done during a particular fiscal year because of funding or personnel limitations.
3. **Does not displace paid employees.** (See DO7, § 5.4)

For example, a park might recruit VIPs to patrol its cross country ski trails, organize and catalog the photo file, conduct research on an endangered species, or paint picnic tables and signs in the campground - all work that needed to be accomplished but had been cut out by reduced funding and personnel limitations. Another example might be a park that recruits a VIP to staff the information desk on off-season weekdays so that an interpreter can provide interpretive services that had been cut for lack of staff.

Consider utilizing volunteer assistance as one means of accomplishing your management goals, but remember that volunteers are not free. They should only be utilized in situations where their utilization is cost effective. Remember, in identifying work to be done by volunteers, the requirement that VIPs must not displace paid employees.

Fee Collection

A VIP may sell permits and collect various fees authorized by the Land and Water Conservation Act of 1965 as amended. VIPs must be bonded and be adequately trained in the sale of permits and fee collection. The same annual training provided to permanent and seasonal employees will meet this requirement. Public Law 100-203 prohibits using VIPs for fee collection unless they receive training and are covered by a surety bond. (See DO 22, ch. 8, 10) surety bond info.? Appropriated funds, including VIP funds, may be used to cover the cost of the surety bond. VIPs under age 18 should not be used to collect fees or sell permits.

Government Vehicles

VIPs can operate government-owned vehicles if they possess a valid state driver's license or international driver's document for the class of vehicle being operated, and the operation of the vehicle is required in writing as part of the description of work on the Volunteer Service Agreement (Form 10-85 and 10-86).

Each park permitting international volunteers to operate government motor vehicles for official purposes should contact the Department of Motor Vehicle Administration for the state in which the volunteer will be residing and/or operating the vehicle to determine what is recognized as a valid operator's license.

Liability

For any vehicle other than a passenger car or light truck, and specialized vehicles such as dump trucks, snow plows, passenger buses, emergency vehicles, etc., the VIP must first show credentials verifying his/her qualifications to operate such equipment and demonstrate his/her proficiency in the operation of the vehicle to the satisfaction of the responsible supervisor. The operation of such a vehicle must also be in the VIP's job description.

If a VIP causes damage to a government vehicle through an act which is determined by the Board of Survey to be simple negligence, the liability normally incurred by a government employee (including the requirement to pay a deductible of \$200 or the amount of the damage, whichever is less) is not applicable. VIPs are considered government employees only for the purposes of workers compensation, tort claims liability and the Employees' Claims Act, and should not be required to pay for damage to a government vehicle resulting from an act which is determined by the Board of Survey to be simple negligence.

Use of Government and Personal Equipment

Whenever possible, volunteers should use government-owned equipment and property in their work, rather than personal property. If a volunteer does use his/her own personal property or equipment for official purposes, and that property is lost, damaged, or destroyed in the process, the volunteer may be reimbursed for the loss. Title 16 U.S.C. - 18i (d) deals with reimbursement for personal property that was lost, damaged, or destroyed while being used for official purposes for the NPS.

In order to be eligible under this Act, the VIP must have been required by an authorized NPS employee (usually the VIP Coordinator) to furnish his/her own personal property for use in the assigned work. A statement to this effect must be included on the VIP Agreement Form and must specifically identify and describe the personal property involved and state that the VIP is required to provide and use this equipment as part of his/her official duties. Reimbursements under this Act would normally be charged to the VIP account. In light of this, carefully consider any request requiring a VIP to use his/her personal equipment, especially a vehicle.

Volunteers working on NPS computers will comply with all security procedures.

Campground Host Program

The Campground Host Program involves utilizing volunteers who can furnish their own lodging (tent, camper, trailer, or motor home) and can contribute a specific amount of time, to serve as a

resident host in National Park Service campgrounds. Individuals, couples or even families can serve as hosts. Some hosts live in town and stay in the campground only on weekends.

Campground Hosts help visitors register and find campsites, distribute maps and brochures, clean restrooms and campsites, perform emergency repairs, provide emergency assistance for visitors, reduce litter and vandalism through low-key incentive programs, gather use information, and keep their NPS supervisor informed on conditions and problems in the campground.

Hosts are provided a free campsite, usually near the main entryway to the campground or in a conspicuous location so that they are noticeable and available to campground visitors. The normal camping time limit is waived. If available, utility hookups can be furnished at no cost to the volunteer. Hosts work under a specific agreement and job description. Hosts must receive orientation and training to adequately perform their job. Some parks supply their hosts with portable radios for emergencies; others use CB's or the telephone. Hosts should work under the direct supervision of the employee who has direct responsibility for the campground in which they are located.

7. Funding/Reimbursement *(See DO-7, § 7)*

Funding

Congress appropriates a set amount of funds each year for the NPS Volunteers-In-Parks program. The Departmental Appropriations Bill (PL 102-154, Section 116) allows permanent use of this money for “paying costs incidental to the utilization of services contributed by individuals who serve without compensation of services as volunteers in aid of work for units of the Department of the Interior.”

VIP funds are allotted to each region based on a formula where each region’s volunteer hours and number of volunteers are considered from the previous fiscal year. Regional VIP Coordinators allocate these funds to the parks and monitor their usage throughout the fiscal year.

These VIP funds are specifically earmarked for use in reimbursing VIPs for out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a direct result of their volunteer activities (local transportation, meals, uniforms and special clothing, on-site and off-site lodging, etc.). They can also be used for incidental expenses directly related to the activities in which the VIPs are engaged, and to buy gifts for VIPs as awards or tokens of appreciation. During any fiscal year the NPS may not spend more on reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses than Congress has allowed.

Reimbursement

As mentioned above, the NPS has the authority, and limited funds, to reimburse volunteers for actual out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of VIP activities. It is important to note that this is a volunteer program and reimbursement is **not** mandatory. You do not have to reimburse volunteers.

Reimbursement is meant to offset the personal cost of volunteering. Many VIPs do not need or want to be reimbursed for their expenses. However, others could not volunteer without some financial assistance. Handle reimbursement on a case-by-case basis.

Local and Long Distance Travel

You may reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses (gasoline, bus, and train fare, etc.) incurred while traveling to and from the worksite. The travel distance for which your VIPs are reimbursed should be limited to a reasonable daily commuting distance from the worksite. With the approval of the Superintendent, you are authorized to reimburse VIPs for long-distance travel if it can be shown that the services of the volunteer and experience or training they gain will be of exceptional value to the NPS. Long distance travel is considered anything beyond the normal commuting distance to the park.

Note: In some circumstances, long distance travel by volunteers can be paid by benefiting accounts by using the invitational travel authority found in DO 31 (Travel Policies and Procedures), Chapter 6. Travel reimbursements for volunteers will have to be handled through request for a treasury check since 3rd party drafts are no longer used for travel payment.

Food

VIP funds can be used to purchase food only if the volunteer will be working in an area where access to normal sources of food supplies and/or meals is not available such as furnishing freeze dried food for backcountry assignments. See COTI 92-7, Purchase of Personal Protective Equipment

Incidental Expenses

VIP funds can also be used to cover incidental expenses directly related to the operation of the VIP program. Included are supplies and materials, VIP training and materials, uniforms and costumes, housing (including off-site housing), and special tools and equipment, etc. Large expenditures for items such as supplies and materials, equipment, reproduction period clothing or objects, awards, etc., that are for direct use in the VIP program should be handled through the regular procurement process. In all cases, accurate and current records of expenditures must be maintained.

Claim for Reimbursement (Form 10-67)

VIP reimbursement should be handled through third party draft and VIPs should be reimbursed within a reasonable period of time. The use of government treasury checks for VIP reimbursement should be avoided whenever possible because of the time and costs involved, except in the case of long-distance travel payment.

VIPs must submit their claim for reimbursement on NPS Form 10-67 (Claim or Reimbursement of Volunteer Expenses). Receipts should be required for reimbursement of lodging, supplies and materials, uniform and historic costume items, and medical examination expenses. Receipts are not necessary for reimbursement of local transportation and meal costs. Organized groups operating under a Form 10-86 (Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services) must also complete the backside of Form 10-67, listing the names of individual group members, the amount each claimed, the date, and individual signatures. VIPs should submit reimbursement claims through their immediate supervisor to the VIP coordinator for approval, signature, and transmittal to the authorized paying officer.

8. Benefits and Protection/Risk Management (*See DO-7, § 8*)

VIPs who have a current, signed volunteer agreement form on file, and who have been trained for specific duties receive the same benefits and protection as NPS employees under the Federal Employees Compensation Act (5 USC, Chapter 81) and the Federal Tort Claims Act (28 USC, 2671-2680). Volunteers are considered to be Federal Employees for those purposes only. These two acts provide the following benefits and protection:

Federal Employees Compensation Act

On-the-Job Injury

VIPs are entitled to first aid and medical care for on-the-job injuries when necessary. When travel is necessary to receive medical care, the travel and expenses associated with it are reimbursable. In addition, the Office of Workers Compensation Programs on a case-by-case basis may approve other compensation benefits.

Compensation is payable based on a paid employee with the same functions.

Permanent impairment to certain parts of the body will entitle the claimant to an award of compensation payable for a set number of weeks. This is known as a schedule award for permanent impairment.

A VIP who suffers an on-the-job injury or occupational disease and desires to file a notice should contact his/her immediate supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for helping the VIP complete the proper OWCP forms (CA-1 or 2) and must sign the claim, submitting factual, and medical evidence if immediately available, as necessary. The supervisor submits the claim to the servicing personnel office for processing and a copy to the VIP manager. (Specific information on this procedure and process, including information on the various forms that are required, can be found in the publication DOI – Safety Management Information System (SMIS). This publication should be available from your VIP Program Manager, Administrative Officer, or Human Resource Officer.) *OWCP must receive the forms in no more than 10 working days.*

Work-Related Death

In the case of a work-related death of a VIP, the qualified surviving spouse or children of the VIP are entitled to compensation including death benefits, funeral expenses, and transportation expenses for the remains, if necessary. Up to \$800.00 will be paid for funeral and burial expenses provided that the individual has not received Veterans Administration (VA) payments. Any VA payments are deducted from the \$800.00. It should also be noted, if a survivor furnishes documentation that he/she has paid burial costs, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) pays the \$800.00 to the survivor. If the VIP dies away from his/her home or duty station, the cost of transporting the body to the place of burial will be paid in full. Itemized funeral bills should be submitted to OWCP for consideration of payment or reimbursement.

According to the Code of Federal Regulations (20 CFR Parts 10 and 25 Claims for Compensation Act)

a) The employer shall immediately report a death due to a work-related traumatic injury or

occupational disease to OWCP by telephone, telegram, or facsimile (fax). In no more than 10 working days after notification of the death, the employer shall complete and send **Form CA-6, Official Superior's Report of Employee's Death** to OWCP. The purpose of this form is to notify OWCP of the death of an employee, which should be prepared by the supervisor. The form should be submitted to OWCP within 10 workdays after such knowledge.

- b) **Form CA-5, Claim for Compensation by Widow, Widower, and/or Children.** The purpose of this form is to claim compensation on behalf of these dependents when injury results in death.
- c) **Form CA-5b, Claim for Compensation by Parents, Brothers, Sisters, Grandparents, or Grandchildren.** The purpose of this form is to claim compensation for these dependents when injury results in death. This form should be completed by the person claiming compensation (or guardian on behalf of children) and the attending physician. Both forms should be submitted to OWCP within 30 days, if possible to OWCP, but no later than three years after death. OWCP determines whether the applicable dependency requirements have been met.

Benefits do not stop for the widow/er unless they remarry before age 55. If that occurs, the individual receives a lump sum of 24 months compensation after which benefits cease.

Minor children are entitled until age 18 or the end of the semester in which they finish high school, if later. Adult children incapable of self support due to a serious mental or physical disability continue to receive benefits unless that status changes or unless they marry. College (post secondary) students can receive payments for up to 4 school years through the age of 23. A portion of a year counts as a full year.

Third party subrogation applies in both death cases and disability cases.

Federal Tort Claims Act

This act provides a means whereby damages may be awarded as a result of claims against the NPS 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 NPS while acting within the scope of his/her office or employment under circumstances where the NPS, if a private person, would be liable for the claimant in accordance with the law of the place where the act or omission occurred. Since VIPs are considered employees for the purpose 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.

VIPs must complete the appropriate volunteer forms, receive proper training, and operate under specific, written job descriptions. This is necessary if questions arise on whether a VIP was acting within his or her assigned responsibilities.

Safety/Risk Management

A VIP is not required to perform work for which he/she is not qualified, has not been adequately trained, does not feel comfortable doing, does not willingly agree to do, or has not been properly signed up to do.

The volunteer's supervisor should use a *Job Hazard Analysis* or *Job Safety Analysis* for any volunteer work assignments to determine the level of risk and appropriate mitigation. When the Job Hazard/Safety Analysis indicates the need for operational and/or safety training, the VIP will not be allowed to perform the job until all training is completed, the supervisor knows the VIP's work capability, and the VIP understands the job and its hazards. This form is available from the park safety manager.

VIPs assigned to operate machinery or equipment (such as chain saws, power shop tools, specialized equipment or vehicles, etc.) must show documentation of training and first demonstrate proficiency in operating the equipment to the satisfaction of the responsible supervisor. All applicable age restrictions relating to the operation of machinery or equipment must be enforced.

VIPs must observe the same safety precautions and use the same safety equipment as paid employees. If placed in a work environment with occupational hazards, personal protective equipment must be provided at no cost to the VIP. Failure to provide equipment increases NPS exposure to potential violation notices of Federal health and safety regulations, violates existing labor-management agreements, escalates the number of Workers' Compensation claims, and heightens the potential of tort liability for supervisors' acts of omission (moved up from below).

VIPs may assist in law enforcement and visitor protection functions but must not be assigned duties that would place them in a life-threatening situation, even as an observer. Some examples of duties a VIP should not perform include serving as backup on patrol, issuing citations, or carrying modern firearms. Some examples of protection work a VIP could perform include traffic/parking control and clerical support. VIPs may supervise or participate in firing demonstrations of historic weapons but only if they have received proper training and hold a current Historic Weapons Supervisor Certification or an Historic Weapons Demonstrator Certification. See DO-6 for certification requirements.

Any use of VIPs in jobs considered to be hazardous for federal pay purposes must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the VIP's training and qualifications to perform such work. Use a "Job Hazard Analysis" for any questionable work assignments. Consult your regional safety officer if you have any questions on whether a VIP should be assigned a specific duty. Individuals under 18 cannot legally do some work. Consult your regional personnel and safety officers for information and talk to your state employment agency to obtain local regulation.

9. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) (*See DO-7, § 9*)

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and also provide protection from reprisal for having filed a complaint of discrimination. VIPs are not considered employees of the NPS and are not eligible for formal counseling by EEO Counselors assigned to the parks. However, these counselors may offer assistance in resolving potential complaints and should be contacted for assistance. VIPs who feel they have been discriminated against should contact the park or region's EEO Counselor, or the nearest district office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. These offices are generally located in state capitols and

other large metropolitan areas and are listed in telephone directories under "U.S. Government" information. Assistance in locating the appropriate office can also be obtained from regional EEO offices of the NPS. Complaints must be filed within 30 days of the latest incident of discrimination.

10. Uniforms (*See DO-7, § 10*)

The public must easily recognize VIPs by means of a visible distinction between paid employees and VIPs. VIPs must not wear, or attempt to duplicate, any part of the official NPS uniform.

There are 2 official means of identifying VIPs to the public. They are as follows:

1. The **VIP emblem** is available as either a patch or a decal. The patch comes in two sizes: A 4" patch for use on shirts, blouses, vests, coats, etc., and a 2 1/2" patch for use on the front of a cap. The decal is the same size as the small patch and is for the front of a hard hat. (is this info still current given the new patches?)
2. The **VIP Name Bar** is available from the NPS uniform contractor with optional hour/year recognition attachment. Alternate name bars may develop a local name bar or name tag if desired.

As of January 1, 2004, the Volunteers-In-Parks program is displaying a new official insignia. Sites will have a 2-year period in which to transition all volunteer uniforms over to reflect the change. Old volunteer patches may still be worn on the uniform or may be kept by volunteers as mementos, but may not be displayed in an inappropriate manner that would be considered undignified. Patches or decals may not be sold.

Volunteers-In-Parks are authorized to wear the following dress options:

Regular personal clothing (street or outdoor type)

Regular personal clothing that is neat, clean, in good taste, and appropriate to the type of work being done may be worn. VIPs dressed in personal clothing will wear the identification tag or name bar on the shirt, blouse, or jacket in the area of the left pocket. VIPs involved in activities where the I.D. tag or name bar could be considered a safety hazard (such as some maintenance work) should be issued a cap with a small VIP patch sewn on the front, or a hard hat with the decal on the front, in lieu of the I.D. tag or name bar.

Park VIP Uniform

A Superintendent may designate a particular uniform to be worn by the VIPs in a particular park. The uniform should be designed to meet the particular program needs and park conditions. It must present a neat and professional appearance and be consistent throughout the park. Where possible, VIP uniforms should be off-the-rack, readily available items.

The park VIP uniform can use the VIP patch and/or identification tag or name bar for identification to the public. If the full sized patch (shoulder) is used, it must be worn on the left shoulder (the same place as the NPS uniform patch) or on the front of the bodice. The small VIP patch (cap) is to be worn on the front of a cap or hat and the VIP sticker can be displayed on the front of a hard hat. The Superintendent is free to develop whatever type of VIP uniform he/she feels is appropriate to the park situation as long as the above criteria are followed and is consistent parkwide.

A small, enameled lapel pin in the form of the VIP patch is also available. It can be worn as part of the uniform, or given to the volunteer as a token of appreciation. The pin is provided at no charge and can be obtained from the regional or Washington offices as well.

Reproduction Period Clothing

Reproduction period clothing that complies with historic dress standards of the NPS area may be worn. If the identification tag or name bar is not worn, some other method should be employed to let the public know that volunteers are involved in that activity.

Source of Supply

Volunteer program supplies including patches, lapel pins, and stickers are available from the regional or Washington offices.

Volunteer name bars and VIP Hours/Years recognition attachments are available through the NPS uniform contractor. When ordering the VIP name bar, specify the VIP's name as it should appear. When ordering the VIP Hours/Years name bar attachment, specify the number of hours/years as they should appear. The attachment is applied to the back of the name bar and is removable for subsequent attachments.

Hard hats, caps/hats, and other VIP uniform items should be purchased locally. The park can purchase required items and provide them to the volunteer, or the volunteer can purchase items and be reimbursed by the park.

11. Housing *(See DO-7, § 11)*

VIPs may be lodged in government housing as authorized by the Volunteers-In-Parks Act of 1969, when said housing is not needed for paid employees. A VIP may be required to work a specified number of hours per week – such number to be determined by the Superintendent – to be *eligible* for park housing or trailer pads. As a matter of policy, volunteers will not be charge rent or utility costs for such occupancy. Congress appropriates a set amount of funds each year for the NPS Volunteers-In-Parks program. These VIP funds are specifically earmarked to be used to reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a direct result of their volunteer activities, local transportation, meals, uniforms, and special clothing, lodging, etc., and are not intended to be used to pay rent.

Because the VIP is working, as an incidental service in support of a program, the parks will pay the rental rate and utilities. The park Superintendent will determine which park office or benefiting account will pay rent and utilities for the units being used by VIPs and have them reimburse the park housing income account for the full rent and utilities. Excessive cleaning and damage will be billed directly to the VIP on a Bill of Collection. If the VIP is non-compliant, the benefiting account is expected to pay for any excessive cleaning or damages to the unit. See NPS Employee Housing Management Handbook, § 8.3.1.

12. Reports/Records *(See DO-7, § 12)*

Various forms are used in the NPS VIP program for record keeping and reporting. They are listed below with general instructions. Sample copies of these forms are provided at the end of this chapter. Electronic copies are available online at <http://inside.nps.gov/waso/custommenu.cfm?lv=3&prg=169&id=1812>.

Volunteer Application Form

As part of the Paperwork Reduction Act, the National Park Service uses a generic, universal application for land management agencies. OF 301 is the only OMB-approved application for NPS volunteer applicants and NPS staff may not request potential volunteers to complete park-specific or any other type of application.

Volunteer Services Agreement

This form legally enrolls an individual in the NPS VIP program and provides him/her with Federal protection in case of injury or tort claim. There are two types of Volunteer Services Agreement form—one for individuals; the other for groups. Both forms must clearly describe the volunteer work to be performed and must have the original signatures of all involved parties.

Individual Volunteers: An “Agreement for Individual Voluntary Services” (Form 10-85) is to be used for individual volunteers. It must be completed and signed by both the VIP and the appropriate NPS official, even for projects of only a few hours duration.

Volunteer Groups: An “Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services” (Form 10-86) is to be used for organized groups and is to be signed by the group representative or leader. A list containing the name, address, phone number, and signature of each member of the group participating must be attached to Form 10-86. (The reverse side contains a worksheet to record statistics that will be needed for the annual activity and expense report).

Attach a job description or clearly describe the volunteer work on the form. This is important if questions arise on whether a VIP was acting within his/her assigned responsibilities. It will also assist the VIP and the supervisor in understanding the VIP’s exact job. The document can be modified at any time by mutual agreement, but it must accurately reflect VIP duties. The termination line at the bottom of the two agreement forms serves two purposes. It provides a means of officially terminating an agreement when necessary or appropriate, and it provides a legal record of when an agreement was terminated in case of a lawsuit or injury claim.

A copy of the signed agreement, along with any revisions or amendments, should be given to the volunteer for his/her own records before the work is begun. Retain the original in a park file. Upon termination, place the agreement in an inactive file in the park or program office for at least three years. (This is an OPM requirement designed to protect you and the VIP in the event of a lawsuit or injury claim).

Parental Approval Form (10-89) Attach a completed and signed Form 10-89 to the Volunteer Services Agreement for any individual volunteer under the age of 18. For organized groups, obtain a signed Form 10-89 for each group member who is under 18 years of age and attach it to the Form 10-86 for that group.

Claim for Reimbursement for Volunteer Expenses (Form 10-67) This form is used by volunteers to record out-of-pocket expenses and submit as a claim for reimbursement. Organized groups also use Form 10-67, but they must complete the back side of the form which calls for the names of individual group members, the amount each is claiming, the date, and individual signatures. VIPs should submit Form 10-67 through their immediate supervisor to the park VIP Program Manager for approval, signature, and transmittal to the authorized paying officer. All volunteer program management forms are available online at <http://inside.nps.gov/waso/custommenu.cfm?lv=3&prg=169&id=1812>.

Annual Reports

The NPS Volunteers-in-Parks program requires one report: the VIP Program Activity and Expense Report (Form 10-150). This is an annual report, based on the FISCAL YEAR, prepared by the park VIP Program Manager. VIP Program Managers should use the web-based VIP Reporting System (<http://inside.nps.gov/volunteers/index.cfm>) to submit their 10-150s to WASO by November 1 of each year. Regional volunteer coordinators will assign each park volunteer coordinator a login and password to this website. Parks with more than one site that utilizes volunteers may be assigned a login and password for each site.

Record Keeping

Maintain an accurate and current VIP Program records system. Special files should be established, preferably under the control of the VIP Coordinator, containing all pertinent information such as the needs assessment information, job descriptions, recruiting information and strategies, training materials, etc. Since these documents contain personal information that may be covered under the privacy act, these files should be secured appropriately. Separate files should be maintained for each volunteer or volunteer group in your VIP program. They should contain the originals of all forms associated with the volunteers and logs listing dates and hours worked, type of work, reimbursement, evaluation, comments, or other pertinent information. At the end of each fiscal year, purge the files. The folders of all inactive VIPs within the fiscal year should be removed from the active file and placed in an inactive file. The records of inactive or terminated VIPs must be held for a minimum of 3 years before being discarded.

Recruitment Forms (OPM Regulations)

All NPS forms for public use are to be approved by Office of Management and Budget. No other forms may be substituted.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
VOLUNTEERS-IN-PARKS PROGRAM

AREA

Agreement for Individual Voluntary Services

(Act of July 29, 1970 Public Law 91-357)

_____ NAME - Last,
first, middle initial (please print) TELEPHONE

_____ ADDRESS
(Street, city, state, zip code)

Brief description of work to be performed, including minimum time commitment required. (Attach complete job description to this form)

I understand that I will not receive any compensation for the above work and that volunteers are NOT considered to be Federal employees for any purpose other than tort claims and injury compensation, and I understand that volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits. I also understand that either the National Park Service or I may cancel this agreement at any time by notifying the other party.

I do hereby volunteer my services as described above, to assist the National Park Service in its authorized work.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

The National Park Service agrees, while this arrangement is in effect, to provide such materials, equipment and facilities that are available and needed to perform the work described above, and to consider you as a Federal employee only for the purpose of tort claims and compensation for work related injuries.

Signature of Park VIP Coordinator

Date

TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

Agreement Terminated on _____
Month, Day, Year

Signature of Park VIP Coordinator

Forma No. 10-85
Rev. (9-99)

DEPARTAMENTO DEL INTERIOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS
SERVICIO DE PARQUES NACIONALES
PROGRAMA PARA VOLUNTARIOS EN PARQUES (VEP)

ÁREA

Acuerdo para Servicios Voluntarios Patrocinados (Acto del 29 de julio de 1970, Ley Pública 91-357)

NOMBRE – Apellido, primer nombre, inicial del segundo nombre (favor de escribir con letras de imprenta)

TELÉFONO

DIRECCIÓN (Calle, ciudad, estado, código postal)

Una breve descripción del trabajo que estará efectuando, incluyendo el tiempo mínimo requerido. (Adjunte una descripción completa del trabajo a esta forma)

Entiendo que no recibiré compensación por el trabajo descrito anteriormente y que, como voluntario, NO soy considerado empleado del gobierno Federal para ningún otro propósito que no sea por queja de agravio o compensación por lastimadura, y entiendo que servir como voluntario no ofrece vacaciones o ningún otro beneficio que los empleados regularmente reciben. Igualmente tengo entendido que la oficina de Servicio de Parques Nacionales o yo podemos cancelar este contrato a cualquier hora notificando el uno al otro.

Yo, por la presente, ofrezco mi servicio voluntario según se describe arriba, para ayudar al Servicio de Parques Nacionales en su trabajo autorizado.

Firma del Voluntario

Fecha

El Servicio de Parques Nacionales acuerda, mientras este contrato este vigente, proveer materiales tales como, el equipo y los medios disponibles y necesarios para efectuar el trabajo descrito anteriormente, y de considerarlo(a) como empleado Federal solo para propósitos de quejas de agravio o lastimaduras relacionadas al trabajo.

Firma del Coordinador del VEP

Fecha

TERMINACIÓN DEL CONTRATO

El contrato terminó en _____
Mes, Día, Año

Firma del Coordinador VEP del Parque

Form No. 10-86
Rev. (9-99)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
VOLUNTEERS-IN-PARKS PROGRAM

AREA

Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services

SPONSOR, ORGANIZATION, OR EVENT

NAME OF

(Street, city, state, zip code)

ADDRESS

CONTACT PERSON (Liaison for day-to-day operations)

WORK TELEPHONE (Including area code)

HOME TELEPHONE (Including area code)

Brief description of work to be performed, including minimum time commitment required. (Attach complete job description to this form)

We agree to obtain parental or guardian consent for each individual under 18 years of age and to comply with applicable child labor laws. We understand that the individuals volunteering under this agreement will not receive any compensation for the above work and that they will NOT be considered to be Federal employees for any purpose other than tort claims and injury compensation, and we understand that volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits. We also understand that either the National Park Service, or we, may cancel this agreement at any time by notifying the other party. We agree to provide the National Park Service with a listing of active participants, and the number of hours each contributed, when and as requested.

Signature

Date

The National Park Service agrees, while this arrangement is in effect, to provide such materials, equipment and facilities that are available and needed to perform the work described above, and to consider you as a Federal employee only for the purpose of tort claims and compensation for work related injuries.

Signature of Park VIP Coordinator

Date

TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

Agreement Terminated on _____
Month, Day, Year

Signature of Park VIP Coordinator

DEPARTAMENTO DEL INTERIOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS
SERVICIO DE PARQUES NACIONALES
PROGRAMA PARA VOLUNTARIOS EN PARQUES (VEP)

ÁREA

Acuerdo para Servicios Voluntarios Patrocinados

NOMBRE DEL PATROCINADOR, ORGANIZACIÓN, O EVENTO

DIRECCIÓN (Calle, ciudad, estado, código postal)

PERSONA A CONTACTAR (Persona de enlace para la coordinación de tareas diarias)

NO. DE TELÉFONO DEL TRABAJO (Incluya el prefijo)

NO. DE TELÉFONO DE CASA (Incluya el prefijo)

Una breve descripción del trabajo que estará efectuando, incluyendo el tiempo mínimo requerido. (Adjunte una descripción completa del trabajo a esta forma)

Acordamos obtener un permiso de los padres o tutor para las personas menores de 18 años y cumplir con las leyes de trabajo apropiadas a menores de edad. Entendemos que las personas que ofrecen servir voluntariamente bajo este contrato no recibirán compensación por el trabajo descrito anteriormente y que NO se considerarán empleados del gobierno Federal para ningún otro propósito que no sea por queja de agravio o lastimadura, y entendemos que servir como voluntario no ofrece vacaciones o ningún otro beneficio que los empleados regularmente reciben. Igualmente tenemos entendido que nosotros o el Servicio de Parques Nacionales puede cancelar este contrato a cualquier hora notificando el uno al otro. Estamos de acuerdo en proveer al Servicio de Parques Nacionales una lista vigente de participantes, y el número de horas que cada uno contribuyó, cuando éste lo pida y según lo pida.

Firma

Fecha

El Servicio de Parques Nacionales acuerda, mientras este contrato esté en efecto, proveer materiales, tales como, el equipo y los medios disponibles y necesarios para efectuar el trabajo descrito arriba, y de considerarlo(a) como empleado Federal solo para propósitos de quejas de agravio o lastimaduras relacionadas al trabajo.

Firma del Coordinador VEP del Parque

Fecha

TERMINACIÓN DEL CONTRATO

El contrato terminó en _____
Mes, Día, Año

Firma del Coordinador VEP del Parque

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
VOLUNTEERS-IN-PARKS PROGRAM

AREA

Parental Approval Form

NAME OF VOLUNTEER

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE: (Residence)

(Business)

I affirm that I am the parent/guardian of the above named volunteer. I understand that the National Park Service's Volunteers-In-Parks program does not provide compensation, except as otherwise provided by law, and that the service will not confer on the volunteer the status of a Federal employee. I have read the attached description of the work that the volunteer will perform.

I give my permission for _____ to participate in this program

sponsored by _____
(Name of sponsoring organization, if applicable)

at _____ from _____ to _____
(Name of park or office) (Date) (Date)

(Signature)

(Date)

DEPARTAMENTO DEL INTERIOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS
SERVICIO DE PARQUES NACIONALES
PROGRAMA PARA VOLUNTARIOS EN PARQUES (VEP)

ÁREA

Forma de Consentimiento de los Padres

NOMBRE DEL(A) VOLUNTARIO(A)

NOMBRE DE LOS PADRES O TUTOR

DIRECCIÓN (Calle, ciudad, estado, código postal)

NO. DE TELÉFONO (de la casa)

(del trabajo)

Yo confirmo que yo soy el padre, la madre o tutor del voluntario mencionado arriba. Yo entiendo que el Programa Voluntarios-en-Parques del Servicio de Parques Nacionales no provee compensación, excepto lo provisto por ley, y que el servicio no confiere al voluntario la posición como empleado del gobierno federal. He leído la descripción adjunta del trabajo que el voluntario efectuará.

Yo doy permiso para que _____ participe en este programa patrocinado por

(Nombre de la organización que lo patrocina, si se aplica)

en _____ de _____ a _____
(Nombre del parque u oficina) (fecha) (fecha)

(Firma)

(Fecha)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 VOLUNTEERS-IN-PARKS PROGRAM

AREA _____

VOUCHER NO. _____

SCHEDULE NO. _____

Claim for Reimbursement for Volunteer Expenses

NAME OF CLAIMANT - Last, first, middle initial (please print) _____
 ADDRESS _____
 (Street, city, state, zip code)

Date Expenses Incurred Mo./Day/Yr.	Amount Claimed					
	Local Transportation	Number Of Miles	Meals	Lodging	Uniforms/ Costumes	Other Expenses
Subtotal:						
1.1.1.1 GRAND TOTAL \$						

I certify that this claim is correct and proper and that payment or credit has not been received.

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER MAKING CLAIM _____ DATE _____

Approved, as advantageous to the government, for \$ _____

VIP COORDINATOR OR DESIGNEE _____ DATE _____

Accounting Classification Organization Code _____ Paid by check no. _____ Received in cash, \$ _____	Pursuant to authority vested in me, I certify that this voucher is correct and proper for payment in the amount of \$ _____ _____ Authorized Certifying and Paying Officer Date
	_____ Signature of Volunteer Date

Chapter 2

Program Planning

Introduction

The previous chapter of these guidelines provides policy and procedural guidance for the VIP program. This chapter deals with program planning, development, and operation. The objective of this chapter is to assist managers in determining their need for VIPs, developing and operating their own program, and increasing the productive utilization of volunteer services in their respective areas.

Volunteering is an American tradition that has made an immeasurable contribution to communities, organizations, and individuals throughout the country. A public survey found that over one-third of the American public has been, or is now, a volunteer. Over half of those presently involved in volunteer work are also employed in full or part-time jobs. Volunteers work in hospitals and leading scout troops, operating visitor information stations, managing campgrounds, training seasonal park staff, rehabilitating park trails, and assisting in search and rescue operations. Today's volunteers are active, dynamic, creative individuals of all ages who possess the skills, desire, patience, and time to accomplish a variety of tasks.

Why Use Volunteers?

There are many advantages to working with volunteers beyond the obvious one of accomplishing a job at minimal expense. Enabling people in the community to be actively involved with NPS programs increases public support and helps them understand the work and planning behind management decisions. With volunteers, you can expand existing programs beyond the limits imposed by personnel ceilings and budget reductions, and begin and complete projects that would otherwise not be started. A volunteer can provide skills or expertise needed only a temporary basis. Behind-the-scenes volunteer work can free up paid staff for more up-front critical services.

Who Volunteers?

Volunteers no longer fit a stereotyped image. They may be elementary school children who volunteer as a group to pick up litter, or active individuals in their eighties, with both knowledge and experience to share with others. They may be doctors, lawyers, carpenters, or biologists who may or may not want to use their professional skills in their volunteer jobs. They may be skilled people seeking to learn new skills, or people who come to you without any specific training.

Volunteers come with different backgrounds, abilities and desires to interact with other people. Some may prefer working alone. Others may prefer an opportunity to work with other people, or look at volunteering as a way to make new friends with similar interests. Socializing among volunteers and between volunteers and staff is an inherent part of any volunteer program.

Groups constitute a special category of volunteers. Through group involvement, projects requiring many people such as the maintenance of a long segment of trail or the handling of a special event, can be accomplished. Special-interest groups can be recruited (or may approach you) for projects that relate to their interest. School-affiliated groups (elementary through college), or church or scout groups might propose specific projects that they would like to do, or

they may be willing to assist with NPS-proposed projects. Perhaps you could design projects that would also fulfill requirements for schoolwork or scout merit badges.

Why Do People Volunteer?

The reasons why people volunteer are almost as numerous as the types of work they do. Most volunteers have more than one reason or objective. Satisfactions and benefits that do not involve money motivate volunteers. Unlike many paid jobs, volunteering gives people the opportunity to do things they want to do and can do well. Although many people will volunteer to use their available skills, others will want to do work that is totally different from their everyday work.

Volunteering is a way to provide a public service and fulfill responsibilities to society. It provides an opportunity for people to be helpful. Volunteering can provide opportunities for learning, to follow an avocation, and to be an outlet for people's creativity and energy.

Operating Your VIP Program

13. Recruitment *(See DO-7, § 13)*

After determining your needs, you are ready to start looking for volunteers to fill those needs. Recruiting requires patience and persistence, particularly in the initial stages of building a program. As time goes on, satisfied volunteers will spread the word and may be one of your best sources of additional help.

You may post volunteer opportunities on the volunteer.gov/gov website, which is the clearinghouse for all federal land management agencies that recruit volunteers. Your regional volunteer coordinator will assign you a username and password for this site. Once you've entered opportunities in volunteer.gov/gov, they will automatically populate your park VIP profile pages.

Another good place to start recruiting is at a volunteer clearinghouse in your community. Volunteer clearinghouses generally provide help in locating and placing volunteers. They also help supervisors with questions on volunteer management and often offer seminars on managing a volunteer program.

Individual volunteers can also be reached through the news media, at club meetings, social functions, or church gatherings; through professional societies or senior citizens groups; at shopping malls, fairs or conferences; and through private businesses, industries, or state and other federal agencies. Student volunteers can be found on college campuses and reached through college clubs, student union information networks, college newspapers, job placement centers, and by approaching professors teaching a course related to your needs. High school and elementary school age volunteers can be found through teachers, principals, guidance counselors, and clubs. Special interest groups, such as a local hiking club or Boy Scout troop, can be reached through their activities manager, president, leader, or through an active member. You can present your needs at one of their meetings or describe your needs through an article in the club's newsletter.

Many courts now have alternative sentencing programs in which individuals found guilty of certain crimes do public service work rather than serve a jail sentence. Frequently, the individuals eligible for alternative sentencing are juveniles or persons who have committed "white collar" crimes and the only extra effort on your part usually required is a verification that the alternative "sentence" was served. See page 4 of Chapter 1, for specific restrictions.

How do you communicate your needs, and the opportunities your park can offer to potential volunteers? The most effective way of recruiting volunteers is by personal contact; go out and tell them your needs. NPS employees can staff an information booth at a conference or fair, or be guest speaker at a club or organization's meeting. Bring along the NPS VIP Recruitment video tape *"Come Join Us"* to use as part of your recruitment efforts. Whenever and wherever you get the opportunity, let people know what you need. And don't forget to let your visitors know. You would be surprised to know how many park visitors have volunteered their services while in the park or have come back later to help.

Radio and television are effective in conveying your personal interests, enthusiasm and commitment to the volunteer program. Public service can be heard by thousands of people. Participation in local talk shows gives some of the intimacy of personal contact, but reaches many people at once.

Non-personal techniques of communication, such as posters, articles, or slide shows can also reach a great number of people, but lack enthusiasm and question-answering abilities of personal contact. When using non-personal techniques, enough information should be given to answer the potential questions of an interested individual and a source of additional information should be referenced. Articles in newspapers, newsletters, or magazines and letters to the editor can specifically describe your needs. You might consider placing an advertisement to promote the program. Posters, posted notices, and exhibits can be placed in a number of places (as long as it's legal), including on busy street corners, at conferences, in supermarkets, at your entrance station and in your visitors centers.

Slide shows can be loaned to groups and organizations. A well-done show will answer many questions without requiring the presence of a service employee. One of your volunteers with audio-visual experience may produce the show or you might recruit someone. You may find a volunteer that will even present the program for you. Direct mail techniques can also be an effective way to reach people, but require an investment of time and money. Again, some of the volunteers might design the notices and address envelopes for mailing.

You may also want to use the NPS VIP brochure in recruiting volunteers. You can distribute the brochure at meetings, fairs, conventions, at the visitor centers or wherever else the park staff meets the public, and, it can be used to respond to general inquiries from prospective volunteers.

Interviewing and Placement

Just as you would not feel comfortable hiring an employee without first talking to him/her, you should not place a volunteer without first conducting an interview. Define your needs before scheduling any interviews. The interview provides the volunteer and the supervisor a chance to ask detailed questions and gather information before any commitment is made.

Identify the individual's skills, interests, limitations, and determine the need for reimbursement, if any. It offers an opportunity to provide information on training, orientation, equipment, liability protection and injury compensation, any uniform or special clothing requirements, and other benefits or requirements relating to your area.

Consider using a "Volunteer Job Portfolio" of all the volunteer job descriptions in your park. Compare job possibilities in the portfolio with the volunteer applicant's interests and abilities. Assist the applicant in reaching a decision, but never pressure anyone.

By the end of the interview it should be apparent if you have a match of skills and needs. Don't be afraid to say "no" or refer the applicant elsewhere if it is obvious that there is no mutually beneficial situation. The applicant may think of additional needs and offers assistance in areas you have not considered. You might want to adapt a job description to the unique skills or needs of the volunteer when appropriate, or create special assignments. Be careful, volunteer jobs must be connected with real needs.

The interview provides an opportunity for negotiation between you, as a representative of the NPS, and the volunteer applicant. One or both parties may want to think over the situation before making a commitment. A specific time should be agreed upon to discuss the final decision. This can be done either in person or over the telephone. **Inform all applicants of your decision as soon as possible.**

The Volunteer Agreement

When agreement has been reached on the work a volunteer will be performing, time commitments, official starting date, and other negotiable items, the Agreement for Voluntary Services can then be prepared and signed. The content and use of the Volunteer Agreement (Form 10-85 for individuals, Form 10-86 for groups) is discussed in Chapter 1, Page 15 of this Reference Manual. A complete job description must be attached to the agreement. Form 10-89 (parental approval) must be attached if the VIP is less than 18 years of age.

The Agreement for Voluntary Services is, in effect, a contract between the National Park Service and the VIP. It individualizes the job description by identifying rights and responsibilities, time frames and commitments, and support. It should also be used to spell out the conditions for reimbursement of expenses if reimbursement is to be provided. A properly executed volunteer agreement is a key tool for successful VIP program management.

Once the agreement has been signed, and before he/she begins work, introduce the new volunteer to co-workers and the work environment. Provide the volunteer with materials that will familiarize him/her with your area and operation.

14. VIP Orientation and Training *(See DO-7, § 14)*

We need to add something here to correspond with DO7.

On-Site Readiness

Be ready when the VIP arrives for the first day of work. The volunteer's first impression is critical to a good attitude. How well you are prepared will determine how important the

volunteer thinks his or her services are to your park. Take the time to organize the necessary details before the volunteer arrives. Details such as: Who is the immediate supervisor? Where is the workspace and what does it consist of? Does the rest of the paid staff know the volunteer is coming? When does the training start? Has the schedule been determined?

15. Supervision *(See DO-7, § 15)*

Some people may feel uncomfortable about supervising volunteers--how do you supervise someone who is not being paid? Others may feel that volunteers are difficult to supervise. You may hear statements like; "You can't rely on volunteers." "You can't ask volunteers to do that." "VIPs need to be treated with kid gloves." Or: "You can't fire volunteers." In reality, supervising VIPs does not require some special skill. In fact, it requires the same skills and techniques as supervising paid employees. VIPs want adequate supervision, direction, and guidance so that their donated time is utilized effectively. Just as in supervising paid employees, the goal of a good VIP supervisor is to help the volunteer feel productive, successful, supported, recognized, and rewarded.

VIPs "reward" comes in the form of a feeling of accomplishment and participation. VIPs take pride in their association with the NPS. A successful volunteer supervisor knows this, and keeps morale and productivity high by making each volunteer feel wanted and part of the working team, by praising them for work well done, by showing them how their specific work helps the service achieve its goals, by providing them with a visible means of identifying themselves with the NPS, and by giving them special recognition and awards.

Carefully schedule VIP's work and consider how productivity might be increased through better methods, coordination, equipment, training, etc. It is important to involve VIPs in decisions that affect them. As with paid staff, value the expertise they bring to the task. Provide the VIPs with positive and negative feedback. Hold the VIPs accountable for duties and time commitments agreed upon.

In some cases the Park VIP Coordinator may directly supervise all the volunteers, direct supervision of volunteers is usually assigned to the specific employee with whom the volunteer will be working. Be sure that the supervisory roles, relating to the volunteers, are clarified.

Parks with small staffs and large VIP programs, or programs that require a great amount of coordination might consider recruiting a VIP to serve as Assistant VIP Coordinator. This individual could handle some administrative tasks such as scheduling, training, and perhaps recruiting. However, the designated Park VIP Coordinator must directly supervise a VIP Assistant Coordinator and must not lose touch with the program's operation.

Successful volunteer supervisors get to know what motivates each of their volunteers. What appeals to one may turn another off. One volunteer may be best motivated by appealing to his/her leadership capabilities, while another may do best when feeling part of a team. The supervisor must get to know each of the VIPs and understand their attitudes and interest.

Volunteers may decide to end their services for a number of reasons: The completion of a specific project, a conflict with personal or family obligations, or the acquisition of a new job. In

every instance, when the volunteer's service ends, the supervisor should evaluate the volunteer with fairness and the volunteer should be given an opportunity to evaluate the volunteer program on the basis of his/her experience. If the volunteer intends to use the work experience as a means of qualifying for a particular job, he or she may request a letter from the supervisor verifying the type of work performed. Completion of service should be noted on the volunteer agreement.

16. Recognition and Awards *(See DO-7, § 16)*

Recognition is an important part of the VIP program and you are strongly encouraged to recognize and reward VIPs regularly. Use good judgment and provide proper justification to ensure an effective and successful VIP recognition program.

The 1992 Departmental Appropriations Bill (Public Law 102-154, Sect. 115) provides permanent authority to use appropriated VIP funds to buy non-monetary gifts/awards of nominal value for volunteers as tokens of appreciation: "...appropriations or funds...may be used to provide non-monetary awards of nominal value to private individuals and organizations that make contributions to Department of the Interior programs."

In a memo dated February 3, 1993, the Associate Director for Budget and Administration provided clarification on the definition of the word "nominal" as used in PL 102-154. "The consensus that has been reached regarding the definition of "nominal" is that in most cases, awards should stay within the limit of approximately \$100. This does not mean that the volunteer who contributes an unusual number of hours and/or substantially benefits the service should not be given something beyond the \$100 value. Using good judgment and providing proper justification and documentation should allow for the flexibility needed to ensure an effective and successful volunteer program."

17. Termination *(See DO-7, § 17)*

If necessary, you can fire a volunteer. The NPS is not obligated to keep a VIP on the rolls if he/she is not performing satisfactorily. The supervisor should terminate the agreement if the volunteer repeatedly does not fulfill responsibilities, and attempts to correct the situation have failed. Terminating an unsatisfactory volunteer can be an awkward situation. When a problem first appears, the supervisor should bring it to the attention of the volunteer (and the volunteer coordinator) and work with the volunteer to find a solution. If problem-solving measures do not improve the situation and the volunteer cannot be assigned to another project or task without repeat of the problem, he or she should be given notice (unless circumstances warrant immediate termination) that his or her services will no longer be needed. Just as in an employment situation, adequate notice gives people a chance to adjust their schedules with babysitters, carpools and other family members. Even in cases of required termination, the supervisor should evaluate the volunteer with fairness if requested, and the volunteer should be given an opportunity to evaluate the program.

Evaluation

Frequent, informal evaluations can be helpful to your VIP program. Conduct an informal interview with each new VIP after the first month. This will help identify potential problems and provide a chance to review the job description. VIPs should receive a written evaluation when a

project is finished, when a VIP terminates his/her services, when the NPS terminates a VIP's services, or annually for continuing volunteers. Evaluations should be brief and refer to the tasks defined in the job description. Written evaluations provide a basis for your decision to continue or discontinue a VIP's services and provide the VIPs with feedback. The VIP can use the evaluation as a reference for future employment or volunteer work.

Ask your VIPs to evaluate your program at the same time they are being evaluated. They can provide you with helpful, constructive information.

There is no standard volunteer evaluation form for the NPS VIP program. Develop a format that best suits your needs. This should be in a format that will be useful as a reference to the VIP, and as a record for your files.

Volunteer Management Resources

The following list of publications includes a basic cross section of topics on volunteerism and volunteer program management.

***Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All The Resources of the Community.* Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch**

This book is a basic text on operating a volunteer program. It provides an excellent, readable guide to effective volunteer management from planning for a volunteer program, creating volunteer jobs and recruitment to screening, training and empowering volunteers through supervising, retaining and recognizing an organization's volunteers. \$25.00 Available from: Points of Light-www.pointsoflight.org

***Handling Problem Volunteers,* Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard**

A how-to for solving the problem of the troubled or troublesome volunteer. \$17.95 Available from: Points of Light at www.pointsoflight.org; or Energize, Inc. at www.energize.com

***Episodic Volunteering: Building the Short-Term Volunteer Program,* Nancy Macduff**

This book is about developing effective strategies to recruit short-term volunteers by developing a renewable "episodic" volunteer program. To do so, the author stresses the necessity of viewing this as a different type of volunteering. \$7.95 May be available through Amazon.com

***101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment,* Sue Vineyard and Steve McCurley**

101 Tips covers all aspects of recruiting volunteers, from planning the general recruitment campaign to specific tips for recruiting seniors and youths. It even suggests ways to recruit for the most impossible or difficult volunteer positions. A complete and informative guidebook to finding the volunteers you need in the quantities you have to have. \$11.95 May be available through Amazon.com

***The Volunteer Recruitment Book,* Susan J. Ellis**

This book covers all of the bases for recruiting volunteers. It provides fresh ideas about volunteer sources, how to design volunteer jobs, how to diversify your volunteer workforce, etc. It's a "must read" for any volunteer administrator. \$18.95 Available from: Energize, Inc.-energize.com

Children as Volunteers: Susan Ellis, Anne Weisbord and Katherine Noyes

Designed both for leaders of volunteer programs and leaders of children, this book focuses on how to adapt volunteer management principles to work effectively with children as volunteers. Going beyond involving children in large events, the book presents a myriad of ideas on how to involve children creatively and how to solicit and use their input. Available from: Energize, Inc.-
energize.com

Websites

Independent Sector

<http://www.independentsector.org/>

Value of VIP hours, articles on trends in volunteerism

Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network

<http://www.pointsoflight.org/>

The Marketplace: on-line catalog

US Freedom Corps: <http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/>

Take Pride In America: <http://www.takepride.gov/>

Volunteer.gov/gov

Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA)

<http://www.avaintl.org/index.html>

Energize Inc. -especially for leaders of Volunteers

<http://energizeinc.com/>

IRS Publication 526-Charitable Contributions

<http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>

Charitable Contributions: Substantiation and Disclosure Requirements

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1771.pdf>

NPS International Affairs – International Volunteers (IVIP)

<http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/ivip.htm> [public site]

<http://inside.nps.gov/programs/program.cfm?div=28&prog=242&Page=Home>

NPS Volunteer site [public site]

<http://www.nps.gov/volunteer>

NPS InsideNPS

Volunteer-In-Parks Program site: [Internal]

<http://inside.nps.gov/programs/program.cfm?prog=169&div=43&page=home>
News, forms, award calls, reports, contacts, etc.

Annual End of Year VIP Report: <http://inside.nps.gov/volunteers/index.cfm>

Safety

<http://inside.nps.gov/programs/division.cfm?div=46&page=home>

<http://www.nps.gov/riskmgmt/>

Safety Management Information System

<http://www.smis.doi.gov/>

Partners

Telecom Pioneers of America

1-800-872-5995

Kari Biesendorfer, 303-571-9262

www.telecompioneers.org

Senior Corps

www.seniorcorps.org

RSVP (the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) is part of Senior Corps

Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement (EASI)

www.easi.org

Federal Interagency Team on Volunteerism

<http://www.volunteer.gov/fitv/>