

# 1 **Volunteers**

2 Approved: April 11, 2013

3 Contact: [Office of Risk Management](#)

4 **For information about the Volunteers process, contact the Office of Risk Management at 515-**  
5 **294-7711**

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## 37 **Introduction**

38 Iowa State University (ISU) is pleased to have the assistance of the many individuals who volunteer  
39 their services to help the university accomplish its mission. This policy and related procedures are  
40 designed to establish the relationship of volunteers to the university for the purpose of minimizing  
41 risk and providing protection for the interests of the volunteer, the university, the State of Iowa and  
42 the community.

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## 44 **Policy Statement**

45 Departments/units are responsible for oversight of all volunteer services and activities and for  
46 assessing risk associated with volunteer services. All departments/units must comply with the  
47 requirements and approval process for volunteer services, regardless of whether those services are  
48 provided on-campus or at an off-campus location, as outlined in this policy and in the related  
49 procedures (see Resources section below).

## 50 **Definition of an ISU volunteer**

51 A volunteer is an individual who performs services in furtherance of the humanitarian, educational, or  
52 service mission of the university. A volunteer performs services without promise, expectation or  
53 receipt of compensation, benefits or consideration for the services provided. Although compensation  
54 for volunteer services is not allowed, ISU volunteers who have received prior department/unit  
55 approval may be reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses following university reimbursement  
56 guidelines (see Resources section below).

57 An ISU volunteer may be a member of the public, ISU employee, or student who is enrolled at ISU  
58 and wishes to volunteer to an ISU department, unit or program. When providing volunteer services,  
59 a volunteer is not acting as an ISU employee, is not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act  
60 (FLSA), and is not eligible for university benefits or workers' compensation.

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## 62 **Limitations on who may volunteer**

- 63 • An ISU employee may not volunteer to perform services for the university that are identical or  
64 similar to his/her duties as an employee.
- 65 • A person is not considered a volunteer when the decision to volunteer such services was not  
66 made freely, without pressure or coercion.
- 67 • A person may not volunteer if the person would displace or replace an employee position.

- 68 • An individual who has been convicted of an offense for which he/she appears on the National  
69 Sex Offender Public Website or for which he/she must register with the Iowa Sex Offender  
70 Registry as required by Iowa Code Chapter 692A may not serve in a volunteer capacity for Iowa  
71 State University or affiliated organizations. (See Resources section for links to sex offender  
72 registries and relevant policies.)
- 73 • ISU does not allow a volunteer younger than fifteen years of age without the supervision of  
74 his/her parent or guardian. (See below: "Special considerations when volunteers are minors")
- 75 • Foreign nationals who do not possess the proper visa or other legal authorization permitting  
76 them to work or volunteer at the university may not volunteer.

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## 78 **Persons not covered by this policy**

79 The following individuals are not considered ISU volunteers as referenced in this policy when  
80 providing services in the capacities listed below:

- 81 • **Unpaid academic appointment.** Individuals who have unpaid academic appointments to the  
82 university, (such as visiting scientist, collaborator status, etc.) are not considered ISU volunteers  
83 when acting in that capacity. They are eligible to become ISU volunteers for purposes that are  
84 not related to the academic appointment.
- 85 • **Performing services for another entity.** An individual is not an ISU volunteer while performing  
86 volunteer services for any other entity that is not a university department or program (such as  
87 non-profit or government agency; contracted third parties such as SMG Management Company;  
88 or affiliated organizations such as ISU Daily, ISU Foundation, Iowa Public Radio, etc.).
- 89 • **Performing services as a member of a group contracted by the university.** Individuals are  
90 not ISU volunteers if they are members of a group or organization which contracts with ISU and  
91 receives payment to provide a service (such as a non-profit service organization that provides a  
92 **post-game clean-up service for Athletics as a fundraiser**).
- 93 • **Guest lecturer.** An individual who is invited to speak at an ISU class or program.
- 94 • **Public member of a committee.** An individual serving on an institutional committee, advisory  
95 board, or visiting committee.
- 96 • **Participant in human subjects research.** A person who agrees to serve as an experimental  
97 subject in a research project or clinical trial. (Approval to enroll participants requires prior review  
98 by the Office of Responsible Research. Participants may be required to sign a detailed Informed  
99 Consent document before the research is initiated. See Resources section below for link to the  
100 Human Subjects Guidance and Forms.)

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## 102 **Assessing risk factors for ISU volunteer services**

103 Prior to approving volunteer services, the university department/unit must evaluate the services that  
104 a volunteer is expected to provide. The following lists of services should not be considered  
105 comprehensive or exhaustive; they are intended to provide examples and guidelines for assessing

106 the risk level of the services to be provided by a volunteer. The Office of Risk Management is  
107 available to assist with the risk assessment process.

108 The department/unit must classify the services to be provided in one of the following three  
109 categories based on the varying level of risk:

### 110 **Low Risk Services**

111 Volunteer service opportunities are classified as low risk if they do not meet the criteria of higher risk  
112 or generally prohibited services. Examples of Low Risk Services include:

- 113 • Commencement volunteers
- 114 • Gallery/program guide
- 115 • Phone-a-thon volunteers
- 116 • Greeting or directing individuals in a department or unit or at a university event
- 117 • Distribution of materials at fairs or special events

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### 119 **Higher Risk Services**

120 Volunteer service opportunities may be classified as higher risk due to potential liability issues.  
121 These services may include criteria that require review by other departments (such as  
122 Environmental Health and Safety, Office for Responsible Research, University Counsel, etc.).  
123 Examples of Higher Risk Services include:

- 124 • Laboratory services (such as volunteer services in research laboratories or other facilities in  
125 which biological, chemical or radiological material hazards are present)
- 126 • Professional services (such as services of accountants, architects, engineers, nurses,  
127 physicians, attorneys, etc.)
- 128 • Travel of any kind (such as driver or passenger in ISU vehicle or personal vehicle on university  
129 business)
- 130 • Services that involve contact with animals
- 131 • Services that involve financial or confidential matters
- 132 • Services that involve access to minors or vulnerable populations (such as daycare; youth  
133 activities, pre-collegiate programs or camps, etc.)
- 134 • Services that involve possible contact with hazardous or potentially hazardous materials (such  
135 as biohazardous material, infectious material, human blood, etc.)
- 136 • Services that involve access to keys for any university facilities
- 137 • Repetitive and/or ongoing services for a department/unit
- 138 • Preparing or serving food (such as in our dining facilities)
- 139 • Construction activities that do not involve operating heavy equipment, but may involve power  
140 tools
- 141 • Planting trees, landscaping or grounds clean-up

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143 **Generally Prohibited Services**

144 Services with substantial risk to the volunteer, the university or the community are generally  
145 prohibited. Departments/units may contact the Office of Risk Management to request an exception to  
146 the prohibition. After consultation with the appropriate college, department or unit, the Office of Risk  
147 Management may grant an exception for ISU volunteer services in this highest risk category. The  
148 following list of generally prohibited services should not be considered comprehensive:

- 149 • Services that involve electrical or maintenance/repair activities that would require university  
150 lockout/tagout procedures
- 151 • Service/maintenance procedures that require an individual to place any part of his or her body  
152 into an area where an associated danger zone exists
- 153 • Any activity that requires the use of fall protection or safety restraints
- 154 • Entry into identified confined spaces (see Resources section for link to Confined Spaces Policy)
- 155 • Any activity that is considered inappropriate for employees
- 156 • Entry into any contract or making a commitment or expenditure of university funds, including  
157 access to or use of P-Cards. Individuals who volunteer to ISU may not sign a contract on behalf  
158 of the university (see Resources section for link to Contracting Authority Policy).
- 159 • Services that involve export controlled materials, information, commodities, technology, and  
160 software (see Resources section for link to Export Controls Policy)
- 161 • Operation of construction-type heavy equipment (i.e. skid loader, backhoes, dump trucks, fork  
162 trucks, scissor lifts, mechanized farm equipment)
- 163 • Services that involve Select Agents (see Resources section for link to Select Agents and Toxins  
164 Policy)
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166 **Volunteer Registry**

167 **Low Risk Services**

168 All ISU volunteers in this category must complete, at a minimum, the **Approved ISU Volunteers**  
169 **Roster** before starting volunteer service. This roster initiates communication regarding university  
170 policy and understandings related to volunteering at ISU; indicates the scope of approved volunteer  
171 services; and provides data for ISU's comprehensive volunteer registry. If the ISU department/unit  
172 prefers, volunteers for low risk services may alternatively complete the **ISU Volunteers Registration**  
173 **and Agreement** through the **ISU Volunteers management system**.

174 **Higher Risk Services**

175 ISU Volunteer Coordinators will post all higher risk volunteer opportunities on the ISU Volunteers  
176 management system.

177 All ISU volunteers in this category must apply through the **ISU Volunteers management system**.  
178 Each volunteer opportunity identifies scope of service, indicates who will supervise the volunteer's  
179 performance and serves as an agreement between the department/unit and the volunteer by  
180 outlining agreed conditions when volunteering at ISU.

181 **Generally Prohibited Services**

182 Upon written review and approval of a request for an exception to allow a service that is generally  
183 prohibited, all ISU volunteers in this category are required apply through the ISU Volunteers  
184 management system and may receive additional opportunity-specific correspondence to review and  
185 sign before beginning service.

186 **Special considerations when volunteers are under age 18**

187 Special considerations apply when a department/unit engages volunteers who are youth under the  
188 age of 18. Volunteers who are 15 through 17 years of age must provide a signed parental consent  
189 form prior to performing any volunteer services. Volunteers who are under the age of 15 may  
190 volunteer under the supervision of their parent or guardian and must have a parental consent  
191 agreement signed by their parent or guardian.

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193 **Responsibilities of department/units with ISU volunteers**

194 **Volunteer selection**

- 195 • It is the responsibility of the department/unit to be certain the volunteer has adequate  
196 experience, qualifications, and training for the task he or she will be required to perform. The  
197 degree and type of screening for volunteer services should be based upon the risk category,  
198 type of services being performed, and the degree of supervisory control provided.
- 199 • All volunteers must be assigned to and serve under the supervision of a department or unit. The  
200 approval of volunteers to the department or unit may be authorized only by the department chair  
201 or unit director or his/her designee.
- 202 • Departments/units may not discriminate in selecting or terminating volunteers based on race,  
203 color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information,  
204 marital status, disability, status as a U.S. veteran or other legally protected groups.
- 205 • When potential exists for volunteers to be involved with or in contact with vulnerable populations,  
206 the department/unit must verify that the individual is not on the Iowa Sex Offender Registry and  
207 complete any further background check that is appropriate.
- 208 • When volunteers will be involved with youth (under age 18), the department/unit must comply  
209 with the Youth Activities, Pre-Collegiate Programs and Camps policy and procedures (see  
210 Resources).
- 211 • During completion of the ISU Volunteers Registration and Agreement, applicants consent to the  
212 possibility of a background check. A background check may be required for proposed volunteers  
213 with responsibilities including but not limited to minors or vulnerable populations, access to keys  
214 to university facilities, or access to financial or confidential matters.

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216 **Approval of ISU volunteers**

217 An individual becomes an approved ISU volunteer when the required ISU procedures are completed  
218 by the proposed volunteer and department/unit and approval is received from the chair or director of  
219 the university department/unit or his/her designee.

## 220 **Orientation and Training**

221 The department/unit shall provide the volunteer with an orientation prior to beginning services. The  
222 type of services will dictate the level of detail needed in the orientation. The supervisor is responsible  
223 for developing and documenting appropriate training. At a minimum, departments and units must  
224 facilitate orientation, which includes the following:

- 225 • Applicable university policies
- 226 • The services, responsibilities, risks, duration and expectations of the ISU volunteer service  
227 opportunity
- 228 • The limits of the volunteer's approved services
- 229 • Applicable training concerning the volunteer's approved services
- 230 • Federal or state regulations that apply to the volunteer's service opportunity, including but not  
231 limited to those of ethical behavior, confidentiality, financial responsibility, substance abuse and  
232 use of university technologies

## 233 **Supervision of ISU volunteers**

- 234 • It is the responsibility of the department/unit to ensure the volunteer services being provided are  
235 for and directly related to the business of the university.
- 236 • The supervisor is responsible for exercising reasonable care in planning and implementing the  
237 volunteer experience and enforcing compliance with university policies and procedures including  
238 but not limited to safety, health and other applicable regulations.
- 239 • The supervisor is responsible for the volunteer's training and direct day-to-day management and  
240 must be available for consultation and assistance.

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## 242 **Request for vehicle use**

243 In some instances, with approval of the Office of Risk Management, ISU volunteers may drive Iowa  
244 State University vehicles. Departments/units requesting permission for ISU volunteers to drive Iowa  
245 State University vehicles must complete the approval steps outlined in the Fleet Safety Policy. A  
246 satisfactory review of the individual's motor vehicle record must be verified through the ISU  
247 Volunteers management system. Volunteers driving large passenger vans or vehicles towing trailers  
248 must be at least 20 years of age and are required to successfully complete the related ISU  
249 Transportation Services' training.

## 250 **Retention of Documents**

- 251 • ISU Volunteer documents will be saved on the ISU Volunteers management system.
- 252 • Documents for minors (under the age of 18) shall be saved until the individual is 20 years of age.

253 **Termination**

- 254 • Renewal of volunteer service opportunities must be reviewed annually and approved through the  
255 ISU Volunteers management system.
- 256 • The department/unit may end a volunteer's service at any time and without prior notice.

257 **Liability protection**

258 Approved ISU volunteers are provided personal liability protection by the Iowa Tort Claims Act, Iowa  
259 Code Chapter 669, and the Federal Volunteer Protection Act, 42 United States Code Chapter 139,  
260 while acting within the scope of their volunteer services. The State will defend, indemnify, and hold  
261 ISU volunteers harmless against a tort claim caused by an act or omission of the ISU volunteer  
262 unless the act or omission of the volunteer involved intentional or criminal misconduct, a knowing  
263 violation of the law, a transaction from which the volunteer derives an improper personal benefit or  
264 the volunteer does not cooperate with an investigation of the incident or transaction that led to the  
265 claim.

266 **Exceptions**

267 All requests for exceptions to this policy require the review and approval of the Office of Risk  
268 Management, which may consult with other ISU departments (i.e., University Counsel, University  
269 Human Resources, EH&S, etc.) as appropriate.

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271 **Resources**

272 **Related Policies**

- 273 [Children in the Workplace](#)
- 274 [Youth Activities, Pre-Collegiate Programs and Camps](#)
- 275 [Export Controls](#)
- 276 [Contracting Authority \(Non-employment Related\)](#)
- 277 [Fleet Safety and Vehicle Use/Rental](#)
- 278 [Confined Spaces](#)
- 279 [Human Subjects - Use in Research](#)
- 280 [Select Agents and Toxins](#)
- 281 [Records Retention](#)

282 **Offices**

- 283 [Risk Management](#)
- 284 [University Human Resources](#)
- 285 [Environmental Health and Safety](#)
- 286 [Responsible Research](#)

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290 **Guidance, Forms, Training**

291 [\*\*ISU VOLUNTEERS WEBSITE\*\*](#) (management system, procedures, forms, FAQ)

292 [Visiting Scholars: Request, Approval, Responsibilities](#)

293 [Human Subjects Guidance and Forms](#)

294 [Reimbursement Guidelines](#)

295 [Transportation Services – Large Passenger Van Training](#)

296 [Transportation Services – Motor Vehicle Record Checks](#)

297 **Sex Offender Registry**

298 [Sex Offender Registry, National](#)

299 [Sex Offender Registry, Iowa](#)

300 [Sex Offender Registry, Iowa Code Chapter 692A](#)

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