

1 **Volunteers**

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4 Contact: [Office of Risk Management \(ORM\)](#)

5 **For information about the Volunteers process, contact the Office of Risk Management at 515-294-**
6 **7711**

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36 **Introduction**

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

43 **Policy Statement**

44 Departments/units are responsible for oversight of all volunteer services and activities and for assessing
45 risk associated with volunteer services. All departments/units must comply with the requirements and
46 approval process for volunteer services, regardless of whether those services are provided on-campus

47 or at an off-campus location, as outlined in this policy and in the related procedures (see Resources
48 section below).

49 **Definition of an ISU volunteer**

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

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

60 **Limitations on who may volunteer**

- 61 • An ISU employee may not volunteer to perform services for the university that are substantially
62 similar to their duties as an employee.
- 63 • A person is not considered a volunteer when the decision to volunteer such services was not
64 made freely, without pressure or coercion.
- 65 • A person may not volunteer if the person would displace or replace an employee position.
- 66 • An individual who has been convicted of an offense for which they appear on the National Sex
67 Offender Public Website or for which they must register with the Iowa Sex Offender Registry as
68 required by Iowa Code Chapter 692A may not serve in a volunteer capacity for Iowa State
69 University or affiliated organizations. (See Resources section for links to sex offender registries
70 and relevant policies.)
- 71 • ISU does not allow a volunteer younger than fifteen years of age without the supervision of their
72 parent or guardian. (See below: "Special considerations when volunteers are minors")
- 73 • Foreign nationals who do not possess the proper visa or other legal authorization (i.e., "green
74 card holders" or "lawful permanent residents") may not volunteer. For questions about
75 volunteering regarding non-U.S. citizens, contact the International Students and Scholars Office
76 at isso@iastate.edu.

77 **Persons not covered by this policy**

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

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

97 by the Office of Research Ethics. Participants may be required to sign a detailed Informed
98 Consent document before the research is initiated. See Resources section below for link to the
99 Human Subjects Guidance and Forms.)

100 **Assessing risk factors for ISU volunteer services**

101 Prior to approving volunteer services, the university department/unit must evaluate the services that a
102 volunteer is expected to provide. The following lists of services should not be considered comprehensive
103 or exhaustive; they are intended to provide examples and guidelines for assessing the risk level of the
104 services to be provided by a volunteer. The Office of Risk Management is available to assist with the risk
105 assessment process.

106 **Low Risk Services**

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

- 109 • Commencement volunteers
- 110 • Gallery/program guide
- 111 • Phone-a-thon volunteers
- 112 • Greeting or directing individuals in a department or unit or at a university event
- 113 • Distribution of materials at fairs or special events

114 **Higher Risk Services**

115 Volunteer service opportunities may be classified as higher risk based on the type of services involved.
116 These services may include criteria that require review by other departments (such as Environmental
117 Health and Safety, Office of Research Ethics, University Counsel, etc.). Examples of Higher Risk
118 Services include:

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

137 **Generally Prohibited Services**

138 Certain services are generally not appropriate for volunteers and thus are prohibited (see the list below).
139 Departments/units may contact the Office of Risk Management to request an exception to the
140 prohibition. After consultation with the appropriate college, department or unit, the Office of Risk
141 Management may grant an exception for ISU volunteer services in this category.

142 The following list of generally prohibited services should not be considered comprehensive:

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

159 **Volunteer Registry**

160 **Volunteer Opportunity Registration**

161 All volunteer opportunities must be registered through the Office of Risk Management. The Office of Risk
162 Management website (see Resources section for link) provides details on how to register volunteer
163 opportunities.

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

165 Special considerations apply when a department/unit engages volunteers who are youth under the age
166 of 18. Volunteers who are 15 through 17 years of age must have a parent or guardian sign the volunteer
167 service agreement prior to performing any volunteer services. Volunteers who are under the age of 15
168 may volunteer under the supervision of their parent or guardian at all times while performing volunteer
169 services.

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

171 **Volunteer selection**

- 172 • It is the responsibility of the department/unit to be certain that volunteers have adequate notice
173 of the needed experience, qualifications, and training for the service they will be asked to
174 perform. The degree and type of screening for volunteer services should be based upon the risk
175 category, type of services being performed, and the degree of supervisory control provided.
- 176 • It is the responsibility of the department/unit to be certain that volunteers are aware of the unit's
177 and university's applicable policies and rules (see Orientation and Training, below).
- 178 • All volunteers must be assigned to and serve under the supervision of a department or unit. The
179 approval of volunteers to the department or unit may be authorized only by the department chair
180 or unit director or his/her designee.
- 181 • Departments/units may not discriminate in selecting or terminating volunteers based on race,
182 color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information,
183 marital status, disability, status as a U.S. veteran or other legally protected groups.
- 184 • When volunteers will be involved with youth (under age 18), the department/unit must comply
185 with the Youth Activities, Pre-Collegiate Programs and Camps policy and procedures (see
186 Resources).
- 187 • During completion of the Volunteer Service Agreement, applicants consent to the completion of
188 a National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) background check at a minimum. A higher level of
189 background check may be required for proposed volunteers with responsibilities including but
190 not limited to minors or vulnerable populations, access to keys to university facilities, or access
191 to financial or confidential matters.

192

193 **Approval of ISU volunteers**

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

197 **Orientation and Training**

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

- 202 • Applicable university policies
- 203 • The services, responsibilities, risks, duration and expectations of the ISU volunteer service
204 opportunity
- 205 • The limits of the volunteer's approved services
- 206 • Applicable training concerning the volunteer's approved services
- 207 • Federal or state regulations that apply to the volunteer's service opportunity, including but not
208 limited to those of ethical behavior, confidentiality, financial responsibility, substance abuse and
209 use of university technologies

210 **Supervision of ISU volunteers**

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

218 **Request for vehicle use**

219 In some instances, with approval of the Office of Risk Management, ISU volunteers may drive Iowa
220 State University vehicles. Departments/units requesting permission for ISU volunteers to drive Iowa
221 State University vehicles must complete the approval steps outlined in the Fleet Safety Policy. A
222 satisfactory review of the individual's motor vehicle record must be verified prior to an ISU volunteer
223 driving Iowa State University vehicles. Volunteers driving large passenger vans or vehicles towing
224 trailers must be at least 20 years of age and are required to successfully complete the related ISU
225 Transportation Services' training.

226 **Retention of Documents**

- 227 • Departments/units are required to retain all documentation related to volunteer service
228 opportunities for at least three years for volunteers who are 18 years of age and older at the time
229 of service.
- 230 • Documents for minors (under the age of 18) shall be saved for at least three years after the
231 minor turns 18 years old, i.e., until the volunteer turns 21 years of age.

232 **Termination**

- 233 • Renewal of volunteer service opportunities must be reviewed annually and approved through the
234 Office of Risk Management.
- 235 • The department/unit may end a volunteer's service at any time and without prior notice.

236

237 **Liability protection**

238 Subject to the determination of the Iowa Attorney General, Chapter 669 of the Code of Iowa provides for
239 defense and indemnification of Iowa State University approved volunteers while they are acting within
240 the scope of their authorized volunteer duties, and while under the direction and supervision of the
241 university. Pursuant to Chapter 669, the State will defend, indemnify, and hold ISU volunteers harmless
242 against a tort claim caused by an act or omission of the ISU volunteer acting within the scope of their
243 authorized volunteer duties, and while under the direction and supervision of the university, unless the
244 act or omission of the volunteer involved intentional or criminal misconduct, a knowing violation of the
245 law, a transaction from which the volunteer derives an improper personal benefit or the volunteer does
246 not cooperate with an investigation of the incident or transaction that led to the claim.

247 Volunteers are not covered by workers' compensation disability benefits and are generally not covered
248 by university insurance policies. As such, volunteers should expect that any injuries incurred during
249 services must be covered through the volunteer's private health insurance.

250 **Exceptions**

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

254 **Resources**

255 **Related Policies**

256 [Children in the Workplace](#)
257 [Youth Activities, Pre-Collegiate Programs and Camps](#)
258 [Export Controls](#)
259 [Contracting Authority \(Non-employment Related\)](#)
260 [Fleet Safety and Vehicle Use/Rental](#)
261 [Confined Spaces](#)
262 [Human Subjects - Use in Research](#)
263 [Select Agents and Toxins](#)
264 [Records Retention](#)

265 **Offices**

266 [Risk Management](#)
267 [University Human Resources](#)
268 [Environmental Health and Safety](#)
269 [Research Ethics](#)

270 **Guidance, Forms, Training**

271 **ISU VOLUNTEERS WEBSITE** (management system, procedures, forms, FAQ)
272 [Visiting Scholars: Request, Approval, Responsibilities](#)
273 [Volunteer Service Opportunity Request](#)
274 [Human Subjects Guidance and Forms](#)
275 [Reimbursement Guidelines](#)
276 [Transportation Services – Van and Trailer Training](#)
277 [Transportation Services – Motor Vehicle Record Checks](#)

278 **Sex Offender Registry**

279 [Sex Offender Registry, National](#)
280 [Sex Offender Registry, Iowa](#)
281 [Sex Offender Registry, Iowa Code Chapter 692A](#)