

Volunteer Fact Sheet – For Departments and Volunteers

Appropriate Responsibilities for Volunteers

A department should not rely on volunteers to perform duties that are typically performed by permanent employees—other than on a short-term basis. Volunteers should be supplementing the work done by employees, not replacing the need for paid staff.

Letter to the Volunteer

To avoid any confusion about the terms of the relationship, the department should send a letter to the volunteer spelling out the begin date, end date (if any), time commitment, responsibilities, who to contact with questions and information about insurance coverage and ID cards.

Insurance Issues

Liability protection is provided to all officers, employees and agents of the University under Wisconsin Statute, Section 895.46(1). Volunteers acting under the direction and control of the University and for its benefit are considered agents and thus covered. This statute authorizes the State to pay claims based on the negligent acts of employees or agents or to defend employees or agents against allegations of negligence, which may have caused injury or property damage to others *provided the employee or agent was acting within the scope of his/her responsibilities to the University*. It is important that volunteers acknowledge mistakes that could lead to potential liability claims and that such incidents be reported promptly by the department to the UW-Madison Risk Management Office.

Volunteers are not covered by worker's compensation, however. If injured during the course of their volunteer work, they would have the same legal rights as any visitor to the campus to seek compensation if the injury resulted from University negligence.

ID Cards

Retired University of Wisconsin-Madison employees (i.e., former employees eligible to receive WRS annuities) should retain their UW-Madison identification cards for access to university libraries, recreational, and other facilities. Retirees who wish to continue using the facilities should contact their department prior to their retirement date. The department will email the Office of Human Resources: retiredID@ohr.wisc.edu. Volunteers who are not UW retirees can only obtain an ID card if they are given a zero-dollar appointment.

Mandatory Reporting Requirement of Child Abuse and Neglect

Executive Order #54 (EO 54) requires the reporting of child abuse or neglect. As a UW-Madison employee, you are required by EO 54 and campus policy to immediately report child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement if, in the course of employment, you observe an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, or learn of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, and you have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur. If the abuse or neglect occurred in a

University program, on campus, or involved a University employee, volunteer, or agent, you must also notify the Office for Equity and Diversity. EO 54 does not apply to employees whose job requires them to comply with the mandatory reporter requirements in Wis. Stats. s. 48.981. Employees who learn about child abuse or neglect in a healthcare setting should only report as permitted by HIPAA. For more information, please see the University of Wisconsin - Madison Office of Equity and Diversity website at: <http://www.oed.wisc.edu/childabuse/>."

Criminal Background Checks

(Optional, please remove if not applicable) Your position has been identified as a position of trust with access to vulnerable populations. The University of Wisconsin - Madison requires that a criminal background check (CBC) be conducted [every four years on all current employees and volunteers who hold a position of trust with access to vulnerable populations] or [two years on all current employees and volunteers who hold a position with precollege camps]. It is also required that all employees and volunteers with this access, must self- report any criminal arrests, charges, or conviction (excluding misdemeanor traffic offenses punishable only by fine) to the divisional Background Check Coordinator [insert name]. This report must be made within twenty - four (24) hours or at the earliest possible opportunity. Please note that failure to make the required report would constitute a violation of this policy and may result in a disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. These requirements are to safeguard the campus community for students, employees and visitors.

***University of Wisconsin-Madison
Academic Personnel Office
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