

1 **Volunteers**

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4 Contact: [Risk Management](#)

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

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35 **Introduction**

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

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42 **Policy Statement**

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

48 **Definition of an ISU volunteer**

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

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

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60 **Limitations on who may volunteer**

- 61 • An ISU employee may not volunteer to perform services for the university that are
62 substantially 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
67 Sex Offender Public Website or for which they must register with the Iowa Sex Offender
68 Registry as required by Iowa Code Chapter 692A may not serve in a volunteer capacity for
69 Iowa State University or affiliated organizations. (See Resources section for links to sex
70 offender registries and relevant policies.)
- 71 • ISU does not allow a volunteer younger than fifteen years of age without the supervision of
72 their 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.,
74 "green 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
76 Office at isso@iastate.edu.

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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
82 the university, (such as visiting scientist, collaborator status, etc.) are not considered ISU
83 volunteers when acting in that capacity. They are eligible to become ISU volunteers for
84 purposes that are not related to the academic appointment.
- 85 • **Performing services for another entity.** An individual is not an ISU volunteer while
86 performing volunteer services for any other entity that is not a university department or
87 program (such as non-profit or government agency; contracted third parties; or affiliated
88 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
90 are not ISU volunteers if they are members of a group or organization which contracts with
91 ISU and receives payment to provide a service (such as a non-profit service organization
92 that provides a 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,
95 advisory board, or visiting committee.
- 96 • **Participant in human subjects research.** A person who agrees to serve as an
97 experimental subject in a research project or clinical trial. (Approval to enroll participants
98 requires prior review by the Office of Research Ethics. Participants may be required to sign a
99 detailed Informed Consent document before the research is initiated. See Resources section
100 below for link to the 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. Risk Management is available to assist
107 with the risk assessment process.

108 **Low Risk Services**

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

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

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117 **Higher Risk Services**

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

- 122 • Laboratory services (such as volunteer services in research laboratories or other facilities in
123 which biological, chemical or radiological material hazards are present)
- 124 • Professional services (such as services of accountants, architects, engineers, nurses,
125 physicians, attorneys, etc.)
- 126 • Travel of any kind (such as driver or passenger in ISU vehicle or personal vehicle on
127 university business)
- 128 • Services that involve contact with animals
- 129 • Services that involve financial or confidential matters
- 130 • Services that involve access to minors or vulnerable populations (such as daycare; youth
131 activities, pre-collegiate programs or camps, etc.)
- 132 • Services that involve possible contact with hazardous or potentially hazardous materials
133 (such as biohazardous material, infectious material, human blood, etc.)
- 134 • Services that involve access to keys for any university facilities

- 135 • Repetitive and/or ongoing services for a department/unit
- 136 • Preparing or serving food (such as in our dining facilities)
- 137 • Construction activities that do not involve operating heavy equipment, but may involve power
- 138 tools
- 139 • Physically exerting services such as planting trees, landscaping or grounds clean-up
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141 **Generally Prohibited Services**

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

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

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

166 **Volunteer Opportunity Registration**

167 All volunteer opportunities must be registered through Risk Management. Risk Management website
168 (see Resources section for link) provides details on how to register volunteer opportunities.

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

170 Special considerations apply when a department/unit engages volunteers who are youth under the
171 age of 18. Volunteers who are 15 through 17 years of age must have a parent or guardian sign the
172 volunteer service agreement prior to performing any volunteer services. Volunteers who are under
173 the age of 15 may volunteer under the supervision of their parent or guardian at all times while
174 performing volunteer services.
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176 **Responsibilities of department/units with ISU volunteers**

177 **Volunteer selection**

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

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

204 **Orientation and Training**

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

- 209 • Applicable university policies
- 210 • The services, responsibilities, risks, duration and expectations of the ISU volunteer service
211 opportunity
- 212 • The limits of the volunteer's approved services
- 213 • Applicable training concerning the volunteer's approved services
- 214 • Federal or state regulations that apply to the volunteer's service opportunity, including but
215 not limited to those of ethical behavior, confidentiality, financial responsibility, substance
216 abuse and use of university technologies

217 **Supervision of ISU volunteers**

- 218 • It is the responsibility of the department/unit to ensure the volunteer services being provided
219 are for and directly related to the business of the university.
- 220 • The supervisor is responsible for exercising reasonable care in planning and implementing
221 the volunteer experience and enforcing compliance with university policies and procedures
222 including but not limited to safety, health and other applicable regulations.

- 223 • The supervisor is responsible for the volunteer's training and direct day-to-day management
224 and must be available for consultation and assistance.
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226 **Request for vehicle use**

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

234 **Retention of Documents**

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

240 **Termination**

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

244 **Liability protection**

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

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

258 **Exceptions**

259 All requests for exceptions to this policy require the review and approval of Risk Management, which
260 may consult with other ISU departments (i.e., General Counsel, University Human Resources,
261 EH&S, etc.) as appropriate.
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263 **Resources**

264 **Related Policies**

- 265 [Children in the Workplace](#)
- 266 [Youth Activities, Pre-Collegiate Programs and Camps](#)
- 267 [Export Controls](#)
- 268 [Contracting Authority \(Non-employment Related\)](#)
- 269 [Fleet Safety and Vehicle Use/Rental](#)
- 270 [Confined Spaces](#)
- 271 [Human Subjects - Use in Research](#)
- 272 [Select Agents and Toxins](#)
- 273 [Records Retention](#)

274 **Offices**

- 275 [Risk Management](#)
- 276 [University Human Resources](#)
- 277 [Environmental Health and Safety](#)
- 278 [Research Ethics](#)

279 **Guidance, Forms, Training**

- 280 **ISU VOLUNTEERS WEBSITE** (management system, procedures, forms, FAQ)
- 281 [Visiting Scholars: Request, Approval, Responsibilities](#)
- 282 [Volunteer Service Opportunity Request](#)
- 283 [Human Subjects Guidance and Forms](#)
- 284 [Reimbursement Guidelines](#)
- 285 [Transportation Services – Van and Trailer Training](#)
- 286 [Motor Vehicle Record Checks](#)

287 **Sex Offender Registry**

- 288 [Sex Offender Registry, National](#)
- 289 [Sex Offender Registry, Iowa](#)
- 290 [Sex Offender Registry, Iowa Code Chapter 692A](#)