



MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEER POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy is designed to enable the University to accept volunteer service, reduce volunteer risk, and protect the interests of the University, its volunteers, and the community it serves. This policy applies to the participation and activities of any individual acting as a volunteer on behalf of and under the supervision of Michigan Tech.

A University Volunteer is defined as an uncompensated individual who performs services directly related to the business of the University, to support the educational and research activities of the University, or to gain experience in specific endeavors. To qualify as a University Volunteer, an individual must be willing to provide services according to the accompanying procedures. An individual who provides services for an entity that is not directly related to the business of the University (e.g., a government or public agency), is not considered to be a University Volunteer for the purposes of this policy. However, an individual who performs volunteer services in the community on behalf of and at the request of the University when there is no outside agency involved is considered a University Volunteer.

Individuals who have unpaid academic appointments to the university are not considered volunteers when acting in that capacity. They are, however, permitted to volunteer their services according to the terms and conditions set forth in this document.

POLICY STATEMENT

Michigan Tech accepts university volunteer support to accomplish its missions of education and research and wishes to ensure that the relationships that volunteers have with the University are clearly established and understood by both parties. Payment for volunteer services is not allowed. However, university departments may reimburse university volunteers for actual and reasonable expenses, following standard university reimbursement guidelines.

REASON FOR POLICY

The University recognizes the need for balance between several factors: the desirability of volunteer service, the need to protect volunteer interests, and the need to minimize risk to the volunteer and the University.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Responsibilities of the University Department Utilizing Volunteers

It is the responsibility of the individual unit to ensure that volunteers are aware of the unit's rules and regulations and comply with them. Volunteers must have the necessary training and/or supervision to safely carry out volunteer work. Depending on the particular function performed, the volunteer must meet appropriate license requirements and have a good driving record.

Michigan Tech departments must keep records of volunteer names, dates of service(s), and services performed. Departments or units are responsible for proper screening, engagement, and training of volunteers.

Responsibilities and Rights of the University Volunteer

University volunteers are expected to abide by the University policies, and regulations and laws that govern their actions, including but not limited to those relating to ethical behavior, safety, confidentiality, financial responsibility, sexual harassment, diversity, non-discrimination, drug and alcohol use, acceptable use of information technology resources, and vehicle use. Volunteers are also expected to comply with any rules and regulations specific to the department for which they are volunteering.

Volunteer arrangements may not be used to circumvent the established processes that govern standard University-authorized hires. University volunteers do not have an employment or agency relationship with the University on any grounds or for any reason and are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act or Michigan wage laws, and are not eligible for any University benefit, including Worker's Compensation, or any insurance coverages.

Who May Volunteer

Anyone who is at least 16 years of age, a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, including current or retired employees, students, alumni, may volunteer to provide services to the university. The following restrictions apply:

- A non-University student under the age of 18 may only become a university volunteer for services for which a Volunteer Agreement is not necessary, and only with parental consent if between the ages of 16 and 18. (See the "Activities Not Requiring a Volunteer Agreement" section of this document.) Volunteers who are between the ages of 16-18 need to abide by Michigan Law with respect to Work Permits.
- An employee may not become a volunteer at the University in any capacity in which he or she is employed at the university, or which is essentially similar to the individual's regular work at the University. *Non-exempt employees can only volunteer for service that is completely unrelated to their ordinary work.*
- Individuals in the following categories are eligible to volunteer in most circumstances. Please check with International Programs and Services regarding students or Immigration Services in Human Resources regarding faculty and staff for individuals in specific categories.
 - F-1 Full-time students
 - F-2 Dependents of F-1 full-time students
 - J-1 Exchange visitors who could be full-time students, professors, researchers, or visiting scholars
 - J-2 Dependents of J-2 visitors
 - H-1B Michigan Tech employees in particular occupations
 - H-4 Dependents of H-1B employees

Who Is Not Eligible to Volunteer

- **Visitors who are in the process of changing their immigration status:** A temporary visa holder who has applied to change status and whose employment authorization from the original status has expired must wait for the new status to be approved to resume employment. Such an individual must not "volunteer" anywhere at Michigan Tech while waiting for a decision on the change of status application.
- **A temporary visa holder working at Michigan Tech on an Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** whose document has expired must stop employment and must not volunteer in the position previously held or another similar position. This individual must wait until receipt of the new EAD card to resume employment.

- **A temporary visa holder who has applied for an immigration benefit such as for permanent resident status** and whose previous status has expired, may not volunteer in the position for which they previously held employment, but must wait for receipt of the permanent resident card.
- **For all of the examples above:** Volunteering to continue to perform the duties, or a portion thereof, of the previously held position can be viewed as unauthorized employment and is not allowed.

NOTE: B-1 Visitors for Business and B-2 Visitors for Recreation/Travel are NOT eligible to volunteer.

Contact the Department of Risk Management with questions, or for additional information, about the classification and eligibility of a university volunteer.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The following, based on the varying degrees of risk associated with each, illustrates those activities that do not require a Volunteer Agreement; those activities that require a Volunteer Agreement; and prohibited activities. The lists that follow are not exhaustive; they are intended to provide guidelines when considering university volunteer engagement.

Activities Not Requiring a Volunteer Agreement

The following activities are generally considered low risk and do not require a completed Volunteer Agreement. However, volunteers under the age of 18 must complete a Parental Consent Volunteer Service Agreement and Release.

- Advisory council participation
- Commencement volunteer
- Theater/Gallery/Program usher or guide
- Museum docent
- Phone-a-thon volunteer
- Public speaker

Activities Requiring a Volunteer Agreement

- *Laboratory work
- *Field work
- *Professional services, such as those performed by accountants, architects, engineers, consultants, etc.
- Travel of any kind
- Working with confidential information
- Working with minors, if those minors are other than full or part-time enrolled Michigan Tech students
- Serving in any capacity aboard a University research vessel
- Ski Patrol
- Medical First Responders
- Working in the University Gardens

*For laboratory work, field work, and professional services, enrolled students that volunteer within their department or curriculum, or within a related curriculum that provides a comparable knowledge base and training, do not need to complete the volunteer application and service agreement, upon approval of the Department Chair in which the enrolled student is volunteering.

Prohibited Activities

- University volunteers cannot replace an employee position or impair the employment of a University position
- Operating heavy equipment (for example, earth moving equipment, loaders, excavators, etc., or any equipment that requires special licensing, training or certification)
- Activity considered inappropriate for any employee
- Entering into any contract on behalf of the University
- Representing themselves as anything other than a volunteer

TRAINING

Volunteers must have all safety and health training that would be required for a Michigan Tech employee doing similar work.

Volunteers who will be granted university computer access must successfully complete the Information Technology Security Training and any other specified training that is required for the activities that will be performed. Contact the Information Compliance Office in the Department of Information Technology for a list of the required training needed.

Volunteers driving 15 passenger vans must successfully complete the Van Safety Driving training. Contact Fleet Services to schedule training.

Volunteers whose activities involve working with minors must successfully complete the training required by University policy 1.02 Minors Involved in University-sponsored Programs or Programs Held in University Facilities, and to report known or suspected abuse or neglect of minors as outlined in the policy.

All volunteers whose activities involve the following must have prior approval from the Office of Compliance Integrity and Safety and meet additional training requirements as outlined below:

- Infectious Materials (bacteria, viruses, human blood, etc.): – Volunteers working with infectious agents must have documented, lab-specific training, including a review of the hazards and risks associated with the agent and all standard operating procedures pertaining to the safe storage, use and disposal of the agent. Additionally, volunteers working with human blood, cells or tissues, must complete Blood Borne Pathogens training. For additional information Contact the Biosafety Office in the Office of Compliance, Integrity and Safety.
- Chemicals - Volunteers must complete hazard communication training and have documented training that includes review of all regulations, safety data sheets and standard operating procedures pertaining to the storage, use and disposal of materials they will be using.
- Working with Live Vertebrate Animals – Volunteers must complete the required training as specified by the Office of Compliance Integrity and Safety, as well as specific course work related to the animal species and/or procedures involved. Training materials are available online through citiprogram.org. Contact the Office of Compliance, Integrity and Safety for additional information.

This policy does not apply to Human Subjects Research. Those volunteering for Human Subjects Research do so through the Principal Investigator of the specific project. Volunteers will be provided with any required information and a consent form to participate in the project.

Graduate Students should have permission of their advisor/Principal Investigator, department chair or the graduate program director. Graduate students should be cautioned that volunteer work or other work that interferes with their ability to make continual good progress toward their degree risk having their financial support terminated and/or becoming subject to academic sanction. Graduate students who receive financial aid (e.g. GRA, GTA and others) must not let their volunteer activities interfere with either their academic progress or the duties for which they are receiving support.

For volunteer assignments that involve working with minor children, money or access to confidential employee, student, health, financial, etc. information, a criminal background check will be required prior to commencing the assignment.

Volunteers may use their own vehicles during their assignment. The University's auto insurance will not cover personal vehicles. The owner's auto or other insurance will be the only coverage for liability and collision damage and for bodily injury.

Volunteers may not receive any institutional marketing materials reflecting their name and the University logos such as business cards, letterhead, etc. unless approved by University Marketing and Communications.

PAYMENTS TO UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEERS

A volunteer is an individual who performs a service of her/his own free will without any remuneration. Volunteers are considered to be freely assisting with a project or service as a personal choice and do not receive any monetary compensation.

Payment for volunteer services is not allowed. However, university departments may reimburse university volunteers for actual and reasonable expenses, following standard university reimbursement guidelines. Reimbursement cannot be used as a substitute for compensation, nor can it be linked to the volunteer's productivity.

NOTE: Foreign nationals on non-immigrant visas may NOT be paid any remuneration as this would be considered employment.

DISMISSAL

You may end a university volunteer's term of service at any time and without prior warning.

UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEER INDEMNIFICATION

Indemnification for claims against volunteers arising out of and in the course of volunteer activity will be provided in accordance with University Policy. In order to ensure adequate documentation, it is important that the department or unit engaging the university volunteer provide a copy of the Volunteer Agreement to the Department of Risk Management and the original to Human Resources.

FORMS

Form	Use
Volunteer Application	Provides necessary information to individuals who wish to engage university

	volunteers
Volunteer Service Agreement	Ratifies the engagement of certain university volunteers
Parental Consent Form	Establishes parental permission for university volunteers between the ages of 16 and 18 years of age.
Authorization for Release of Information for Background Check	Required for volunteers who volunteer for assignments that involve working with minor children, money or access to confidential employee, student, health, financial, etc. information