Policy

UNIVERSITY POLICY HR-25.00-09/26

TO: The University of West Florida Community

FROM: President Manny Diaz, Jr.

SUBJECT: Volunteers

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Human Resources

I. Purpose

The University of West Florida ("University" or "UWF") recognizes the vital role volunteers play in supporting the mission of the University. This policy establishes a protocol for the engagement of Volunteers and is designed to clarify the relationship between UWF and its Volunteers, in order to minimize risk and provide protection for the interest of the Volunteers, UWF, and the community.

II. Definitions

Responsible Faculty/Staff Person: The UWF employee designated as responsible as a point of contact for Volunteers or the UWF employee designated to provide onboarding, supervision, advising, and/or training of Volunteers.

Volunteer: Any person, including current or retired employees, students, alumni, or others, who, of their own free will, provides goods or services, to UWF with no monetary or material compensation, except for nominal reimbursements (e.g., travel or meals) as approved by the University, which shall not be considered wages, on a continuous, occasional, or one-time basis.

Volunteer Service: Service to UWF, under the direction of a Responsible Faculty/Staff Person, provided freely without contemplation or receipt of compensation. This service is not considered employment with UWF, does not displace regular employed workers, and does not include work that would otherwise be performed by regular employees.

III. Policy

A. Scope

This policy applies to all Volunteers. For purposes of this policy, individuals are not considered Volunteers when utilized in the following capacities:

1. Courtesy faculty as defined in University Policy HR-27, Courtesy Faculty Appointment.

2. Performing services for another entity: An individual is not a Volunteer while performing Volunteer Service for any other entity that is not a UWF department or program (such as non-profit or government agency).
3. Performing services as a member of a group contracted by UWF: Individuals are not Volunteers if they are members of a group or organization which contracts with UWF and receives payment to provide a service.
4. Guest lecturer: An individual who is invited to speak at a UWF class, program, or event is not a Volunteer.
5. Participant in human subject research: A person who agrees to serve as an experimental subject in a research project or clinical trial is not a Volunteer.
6. Interns/Externs: A person who is completing a paid or unpaid internship/externship or an internship/externship for academic credit is not considered a Volunteer.

B. Volunteer Eligibility

1. All Volunteers must be at least 14 years of age.
2. Volunteer Service is restricted to individuals who hold valid U.S. citizenship, permanent residency, or a visa status that expressly permits volunteer activity under federal law.
3. A person is only considered a Volunteer if services are rendered of their own free will, without pressure or coercion.
4. A UWF employee may not serve as a Volunteer to perform services for the University that are identical or similar to their duties as an employee.
5. A recently separated/former UWF employee may not serve as a Volunteer to perform services for UWF that are identical or similar to their duties when an employee.
6. Potential new hires awaiting completion of pre-employment or new hire essential documents are not permitted to serve as a Volunteer.
7. A Volunteer may not be used as a replacement of an employee position, to displace a regular employed worker, or perform work that would otherwise be performed by regular employees.
8. Any individual who appears on the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders and Predators List, Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website, or the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Online Wanted Persons Search shall not serve in a Volunteer capacity for UWF or affiliated organizations.

   Individuals appearing on the Florida Department of Corrections Offender Network may be required to engage in an interactive process with Human Resources. This interactive process will involve an individualized assessment to discuss the criminal record directly with the potential prior to a denial of Volunteer Service. This process

allows the Volunteer to provide an explanation, contextualization, or correction of inaccurate records focusing on nature of the offense, time passed, and relevance to proposed Volunteer Service.

C. Requirements

UWF departments and academic units that utilize Volunteers must submit a volunteer agreement form annually in order to document the engagement of the Volunteer. Volunteer Service expires annually, 365 days from service start date. Departments and academic units are responsible for oversight of all Volunteer Service, as well as for assessing risk associated with Volunteer Service.

Departments and academic units that engage Volunteers must adhere to the following requirements:

1. Recruitment: Volunteers must be chosen based on qualifications and skills for the service they are being asked to perform.
2. Screening: Background checks may be required for a Volunteer, when applicable or at any time in accordance with federal laws, state laws, UWF policy, or based on the nature of the Volunteer Service and/or assignment. A Volunteer who refuses to submit to a background check will be disqualified from further consideration for Volunteer Service.
3. Training: The Responsible UWF Faculty/Staff person must ensure that the Volunteer is instructed/trained as necessary to ensure the person has the knowledge and skills needed to perform their assigned duties and activities.
4. Responsibility: The Responsible UWF Faculty/Staff should communicate to the Volunteer expectations for attendance, performance of activities, and compliance with UWF policies and applicable laws, and record the number of hours, location, and duties of the Volunteer. The Responsible UWF Faculty/Staff must require the Volunteer to review and agree to adhere to the UWF Drug Free Workplace Policy Statement and UWF Policy P-10, Detection, Reporting, and Investigating Fraud and Misconduct.
5. Utilization: A Volunteer may be engaged under circumstances deemed appropriate by the Responsible Faculty/Staff Person. Any faculty or staff person that has concerns about the engagement of a Volunteer in a situation should discuss such concerns in advance with Human Resources.
6. Supervision: The Responsible Faculty/Staff Person should provide direction and guidance to the Volunteer as appropriate.
7. Release: The department or academic unit, in consultation with Human Resources, may release a Volunteer at any time, for any reason and without prior notice.
8. Minors: Volunteers who are under the age of 18 must provide parental consent on the submitted volunteer agreement form.

D. Nepotism

University Policy HR-15, Employee Code of Conduct, specifically prohibits a UWF employee from appointing, employing, promoting, advancing or advocating for the appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement, in or to a position at UWF a person who is a relative of the UWF employee. This extends to the approval of Volunteer Service. *See* HR-15 Employee Code of Conduct.

E. Protections

1. A Volunteer shall be covered by the State of Florida workers' compensation program and State of Florida liability protection in accordance with Florida law.
2. Transportation reimbursement may be furnished to Volunteers whose presence is determined to be necessary to UWF. Volunteers may utilize UWF vehicles in the performance of Volunteer Service, provided they possess a valid, current driver's license.
3. Volunteers shall be covered by the Florida Volunteer Protection Act.

Approved by: _____ **Date:** 9/30/26
President Manny Diaz, Jr.

Authority: Florida BOG Regulation 1.001, University Board of Trustees Powers and Duties
§ 110.504, Florida Statutes
§ 440.02, Florida Statutes
§ 768.28, Florida Statutes
§ 768.1355, Florida Statutes
§ 893.147, Florida Statutes

Cross Ref.: UWF/REG-5.017 Alcoholic Beverages on Campus Property
UWF Policy P-10 Detection, Reporting, and Investigating Fraud and Misconduct
UWF Policy HR-15 Employee Code of Conduct
UWF Policy HR-27 Courtesy Faculty Appointment

History: Created September 2026

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