



POLICY DIRECTIVE

Policy:	DOC 1.3.16 VOLUNTEER SERVICES
Effective Date:	11/01/1996 Page 1 of 3
Revision Date(s):	01/07/2015; 04/24/2026
Signature/Title:	/s/ Eric Strauss, Director

I. POLICY

The Department allows volunteers to provide important ancillary services in its facilities and programs for the benefit of staff and offenders. This policy does not apply to persons designated to serve on boards or advisory councils.

II. APPLICABILITY

Department-owned facilities and programs, and contracted facilities and programs as specified in contract.

III. DEFINITIONS (see Glossary)

IV. REQUIREMENTS

A. Volunteer Programs

1. Volunteer programs encourage increased personal contact for offenders, access to community resources, and increased public awareness.
2. Volunteers assist in meeting the needs of staff and offenders by providing a direct service and a valuable contact between correctional programs and the public.
3. Volunteers will not perform duties that are normally performed by paid staff.
4. Recruitment efforts for volunteers typically occur by making contact with potential candidates in the following areas:
 - a. the public or community at large;
 - b. the media;
 - c. civic organizations;
 - d. local educational programs or facilities;
 - e. public agencies; and
 - f. local businesses.
5. Students may volunteer without compensation as part of a recognized academic program in accordance with *DOC 1.3.17 Student Interns*.

B. Volunteer Coordinators

1. Each facility or program that uses volunteers will appoint a qualified and trained employee to serve as the volunteer coordinator.
2. The coordinator will arrange for the appropriate training and supervision of all volunteer activities and, where applicable, oversee the recruitment and screening of volunteers in coordination with Human Resources (HR).
3. When a volunteer is selected, the coordinator will contact HR to coordinate Workers' Compensation coverage and reporting.

C. Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants for volunteer positions must meet eligibility and screening criteria prior to approval that include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. must be 18 years of age or older, or be approved by the administrator;
 - b. must complete and return a volunteer application form specific to each division, facility, or program; and
 - c. must complete and sign an authorization to allow the Department to conduct background and criminal records checks on all applicants.
2. Relatives or victims of offenders may not provide volunteer services unless approved by the administrator.
3. Department employees must obtain a direct supervisor's written permission before the employee is assigned or trained for volunteer positions.
4. Volunteers may not be placed on an offender's visiting list at a facility where volunteer services are offered.
5. Volunteers may not correspond with offenders unless pre-approved by the administrator.
 - a. If approved, an established process will be developed by designated security and program staff.
6. Individuals previously under the care, custody, or supervision of the Department may be accepted as volunteers on a case-by-case basis, subject to the approval of the administrator.
7. Individuals may only act in the capacity of a professional service volunteer when certified or licensed to do so and only with the written approval of the administrator.

D. Training and Supervision

1. Volunteers must be trained on all rules and requirements applicable to the volunteer's effective functions and receive orientation and refresher training specific to the area, program, or facility where providing services.
2. Volunteers with direct and/or incidental contact with offenders must receive documented PREA training during volunteer orientation in accordance with *DOC 1.1.17 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)*.
3. Each facility or program will address the orientation and supervision of volunteers assigned to work with special needs offenders, such as mentally impaired or developmentally disabled offenders.
4. Volunteers must agree to abide by all rules, obligations, and written responsibilities by signing the *Volunteer Service Agreement*.
5. Short-term and guest volunteers may receive an abbreviated orientation of applicable facility or program policies and procedures; however, the volunteer expectations must be clearly stated in writing.
6. Each administrator will ensure volunteers are provided supervision appropriate to the volunteer's work settings.
7. Under no circumstances will volunteers transport offenders in the volunteer's personal vehicle.
8. The administrator may authorize pre-approved volunteers in good standing with the facility to provide transportation to adult offenders upon release from a secure facility.

E. Usage of State Property

1. Volunteers may use state property (including motor vehicles with written permission of the administrator and on a case-by-case basis) in the performance of volunteer activities.
 - a. If an accident occurs while the volunteer is operating state equipment, state insurance coverage is provided for the state and the volunteer against claims made by others who may have been injured or whose property may have been damaged.
 - b. The Department will not assume liability for medical expenses for an injury to a volunteer.

F. Incidental Expenses

1. Volunteers receive no salary but may be reimbursed for incidental expenses such as transportation, lodging, meals, and other volunteer-related costs when necessary and approved for the performance of the volunteer activity.
 - a. The authorizing document for reimbursement shall be the *Volunteer Service Agreement*.
 - 1) The State of Montana Travel Expense Voucher will be used for reimbursement. The current state rules for travel and mileage reimbursement are authorized.
 - b. Department lodging may be provided in lieu of reimbursement when the volunteer assignment requires overnight lodging.
 - 1) Department housing will not, however, be used to barter volunteer services.

G. Recognition

1. Programs or facilities utilizing volunteers are encouraged to provide special recognition for participants who exhibit extraordinary commitment or performance.
 - a. Recognition can be achieved through recommendations for federal, state, or local awards or letters of appreciation, institutional recognition events, etc.

H. Termination

1. The administrator may suspend or terminate an individual volunteer or volunteer program at any time with or without cause.

V. CLOSING

Provisions of this policy not required by statute will be followed unless the provisions conflict with negotiated labor contracts, which will take precedence to the extent applicable.

Questions about this policy should be directed to Human Resources.

VI. REFERENCES

- A. 2-15-112, MCA
- B. 4-4115; ACA Standards Supplement, 2008
- C. DOC 1.1.3 Organization and Responsibility; DOC 1.1.17 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA); DO 1.3.17 Student Interns; DOC 3.1.5 Secure Facility Entry and Exit
- D. State of Montana, Department of Administration, Volunteer Program Guide

VII. FORMS

Volunteer Service Agreement