

VOLUNTEERS IN RESEARCH

Date: September 23, 2020

Policy No.: 2.300

Status: Final

Contact Office:

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Office for Research
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Applies to:

Any individual, aged 16 or older, who wishes to observe or assist in research (in a capacity other than a research subject) at the University of Virginia, School of Medicine, regardless of the length of their volunteer experience. This policy does not apply to: UVA employees (including wage employees) or postdoctoral fellows, or other individuals with a paid or contractual relationship with the University (including non-paid faculty, visiting graduate researchers, and visiting faculty and scholars); UVA undergraduate students performing research for academic credit at UVA; clinical research subjects; or volunteers in the Medical Center.

Reason for Policy:

Qualified volunteers can provide meaningful assistance in laboratory, clinical, or translational research. Volunteers should be protected from injury or illness while serving the University without the protection of workers' compensation. This policy outlines the conditions that must be met in order to ensure that both the individual and the institution are protected in this situation.

Policy Statement:

Anyone observing or assisting in research on behalf of the University, and not referenced in the above categories excluded from this policy, is considered a volunteer. Individuals are permitted to perform volunteer research provided that they have authorization from the University. Visiting professionals who are not paid by the University should be appointed as postdoctoral fellows, non-paid faculty, visiting graduate researchers, or visiting faculty and scholars by the responsible department for the duration of their stays.

Documentation of permission to serve as a volunteer is required. Such documentation shall indicate a volunteer's status as an agent working on behalf of the University in order for the Commonwealth to provide legal defense and insurance protection for the

45 volunteer.

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47 Individuals who have pending employment may not volunteer for work. This includes
48 persons who are awaiting final visa approval or who wish to work prior to their official
49 start date. It is a violation of the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour regulations for
50 an employee to work without compensation.

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52 **Authorization**

53 Departments or centers that wish to allow individuals to serve as volunteers must
54 request authorization by completing and receiving prior approval of a volunteer form
55 (see link under "Related Documents"). Prospective volunteers who will work in sensitive
56 activities must provide two references whom the department may contact before
57 accepting that volunteer. Sensitive activities include, but are not limited to, access to
58 equipment covered by federal export control regulations, or sensitive animal research.
59 For visiting faculty or visiting scholars, the volunteer form and appointment
60 documentation should be initiated simultaneously. Volunteers may be approved for an
61 initial period not exceeding one year. Extensions may be requested by e-mail to the
62 Office for Research.

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64 **Responsibilities of faculty/staff hosts of volunteers**

65 Responsible faculty/staff shall: ensure that volunteers receive training and personal
66 protective equipment appropriate to their responsibilities; restrict the volunteer to
67 activities listed on the volunteer form; and provide direction and guidance to the
68 volunteer as appropriate. Questions concerning the engagement of volunteers or host
69 responsibilities should be discussed in advance with the Office of Property & Liability
70 Risk Management (UVA) or the Office for Research (SOM).

71

72 **Dependent family members of non-immigrant aliens**

73 Visas held by non-immigrant aliens restrict their employment. Unauthorized employment
74 of such individuals violates federal law, with potential liability for both the dependent
75 family member and the University. These individuals may not volunteer at the University
76 for activities that normally are performed by employees.

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78 **Completing the volunteer form**

79 The items below correspond to the information required on the "Form for Volunteers
80 Participating in School of Medicine Research Activities," which must be approved
81 prior to the onset of work in University facilities:

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83 1. Volunteer's complete legal name and complete address. If his or her permanent
84 home and local address differ, both addresses and phone numbers shall be
85 listed. The volunteer's cell phone or other contact number and e-mail address
86 also are required.

87

88 2. Volunteers must carry personal health insurance to protect themselves against

89 the cost of medical expenses due to injuries and illnesses that may occur.
90 Provide the name of the volunteer's health insurance carrier. The department
91 may require and retain a copy of a valid insurance card.
92

- 93 3. Check appropriate boxes describing the status of the volunteer.
94
- 95 4. Describe the volunteer's work status and whether they are under 18 years of
96 age. Citizens of Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, or Syria must be vetted by the
97 UVA Office of Export Controls; the host department or Office for Research can
98 initiate that request.
99
- 100 5. Provide the volunteer's emergency contact information.
101
- 102 6. A complete and accurate description of the volunteer's activities is required.
103 There should be no confusion about what the volunteer will be authorized to do
104 on behalf of the University. Document any restrictions or limitations on the
105 volunteer's activities.
106
- 107 7. Give the start and end dates for the period that the individual is authorized to act
108 on behalf of the University in a volunteer capacity. If this time frame changes for
109 any reason, a request for changes must be forwarded to the School of Medicine
110 Office for Research.
111
- 112 8. The volunteer's safety and health are important to the University. Supervising
113 faculty must educate volunteers about any foreseen hazards they may encounter
114 during their research activity. Volunteers must be instructed in the appropriate
115 departmental and institutional safety guidelines applicable to their activities. See
116 "Overview of Research Safety Guidelines and Necessary Training &
117 Certification."
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- 119 9. Provide any additional information that the supervising faculty member wishes to
120 have documented on this form.
121

122 The volunteer form must be signed by the faculty member responsible for the
123 volunteer's activities and the volunteer. In the event that the volunteer is under 18
124 years of age, his or her parent or guardian must also sign. Documents must be kept on
125 file by the department for three (3) years from the time the volunteer activity ends.
126

127 **Related Documents**

128 Form for Volunteers Participating in School of Medicine Research Activities:

129 [https://med.virginia.edu/office-for-research/resources-and-collaborators/forms-and-
131 documents/](https://med.virginia.edu/office-for-research/resources-and-collaborators/forms-and-
130 documents/)

132 HRM-001, Authorization of Volunteers in the Work Place

133 <http://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/HRM-001>

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135 MC 0315, Management of Observers

136 <file:///C:/Users/pe8n/Downloads/0315%20Management%20fo%20Observers.pdf>

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138 **Next Scheduled Review:** September 2023

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140 **Revision history:** Implemented October 8, 2002; revised 11/13/02, 12/4/06, 1/25/10,
141 2/14/2011, 4/16/13, 8/10/17, 9/23/20

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143 **Approved 9/23/20 by:**

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147 David S. Wilkes, MD

148 Dean, School of Medicine