

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

The Student Volunteer Program (SVP) offers unpaid training opportunities to enrich the student's educational experience and provide opportunity to explore career options as well as develop personal and professional skills. Student volunteer assignments should be made compatible to the academic aims of the student and the educational institution. The volunteer assignments for these individuals are a means of acquainting students with the mission of MRP, and familiarize them with the various occupations available with Federal employers. The experience gained through this program may be credited as related experience under examination rating procedures should the student pursue employment with the Federal Service.

Criteria for Participation

The student volunteer---

- ♦ must be at least 14 years of age;
- ♦ must have permission of the institution at which he/she is enrolled to participate in the program **if** the student is to receive course credit for the related assignment;
- ♦ must be enrolled not less than half time in a course of study related to the assignment to be performed;
- ♦ must be currently attending a high school, trade school, technical or vocational institute, junior college, college, university or other accredited educational institution;
- ♦ must meet academic standing requirements as follows:
 - a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale; or
 - the minimum GPA requirements of the academic program in which the student is enrolled if greater than 2.0; or
 - the minimum academic requirements based on the grading system established by the qualifying academic program in which the student is enrolled (i.e. vocational or business school); and
 - the student meets all requirements established by his/her academic institution to be considered in good academic standing.
- ♦ recognize that the services performed will not be compensated by the agency;
- ♦ must be willing to sign a volunteer service agreement between MRP, the student, and his/her educational institution outlining the responsibilities of each.

Student Volunteer Status

- ♦ Student volunteers are not considered to be a Federal employee for any purposes other than:
 - Federal Tort Claims provisions in 28 U.S.C., 2671 through 2680
 - Title 5.U.S.C. Chapter 81, relative to compensation for injury during the performance of work assignments.
- ♦ Student volunteers are neither covered by nor entitled to:
 - annual or sick leave;
 - life or health insurance;
 - retirement benefits;
- ♦ Service under this program may be terminated at any time for any reason deemed appropriate by either party to the agreement.

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continued

Role of Educational Institution

- ♦ Provide school requirements concerning attendance and performance or other requirements, if the student is to receive course credit for the related assignment.
- ♦ Assist in coordination of the volunteer assignment and academic experience to ensure that the student is receiving the maximum benefit from participation in the Student Volunteer Service Program and work with MRP to strengthen the work-study relationship.
- ♦ Inform the sponsoring program representative of any changes in the student's status that would disqualify the student from participation in the Student Volunteer Service Program.
- ♦ Complete and sign the stipulation of understanding contained in the student volunteer agreement.

Application Procedure

The sponsoring supervisory program official will provide the student a statement of assignments that will explain the tasks to be performed.

To participate in this program, the student must complete and submit the following documents:

- ♦ Cover letter describing the individual's interests including an explanation of what they might want to do as a volunteer with USDA, Marketing and Regulatory Programs. The letter should also include approximate dates that the individual will be available for volunteer service:
- ♦ Current Resume
- ♦ Current Transcript (unofficial)
- ♦ Certification of academic standing
Note: Signature of the education institute representative on the student volunteer agreement certifies the student's enrollment in school and that the student's academic record is in good standing.
- ♦ If selected for participation in the program, the student must complete the Student Volunteer Service Agreement.

Please note: All of the above information **must** be submitted to the Volunteer Service Program Coordinator (VSPC) **Judy Craney** @ judy.e.craney@usda.gov, at a minimum of 3 business days **prior** to onboarding the volunteer, for review and approval of volunteer service.