

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
FOR ELIGIBLE REGULAR FULL-TIME FACULTY, STAFF and ADMINISTRATORS
IN THE UNIVERSITY GENERAL DIVISION and USA HEALTH**

PROGRAM POLICY GUIDELINES

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

University-community engagement is one of the University of South Alabama's (USA) strategic priorities and is articulated in the USA strategic plan as the intention "to define, support, and strategically advance the University of South Alabama's commitment to ongoing, permanent, sustainable, and mutually beneficial partnerships with the communities it serves." Volunteerism is one of the many ways that USA faculty, staff, and administrators engage with the community.

USA has long maintained a strong partnership with the United Way of Southwest Alabama. Historically, USA has demonstrated dedication to serving the Mobile community by consistently being a leading contributor to United Way's local Annual Campaign. To further advance the University's commitment to our community, we have developed the USA EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM for Faculty, Staff and Administrators in the University's General Division. This new program supports United Way of Southwest Alabama partner agencies and affiliate agencies by allowing **ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES** to use **VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE** annually to fulfill volunteer Needs of these organizations through SOUTH SERVES. This program will be administered by the USA Division of Academic Affairs through the Office of Community Engagement.

II. PROGRAM DEFINITIONS:

ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE (EMPLOYEE): An employee eligible to participate in the USA EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM must be a regular full time benefits-eligible faculty, staff, or administrative employee in the University of South Alabama General Division and in USA Health who is in good standing, and who has achieved at least one year of current service (based on most recent seniority date).

VOLUNTEER: A VOLUNTEER is an ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE participating in the USA EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER LEAVE PROGRAM.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE (LEAVE): Each fiscal year ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES will be granted up to EIGHT (8) hours paid COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE at their normal rate of pay.

UNITED WAY OF SOUTHWEST ALABAMA PARTNER AGENCY AND AFFILIATES AGENCY (AGENCY): A United Way of Southwest Alabama Partner Agency is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization who submits "through a comprehensive vetting process, during which they are examined and their by-laws, tax forms, and audits are reviewed by a panel of community volunteers. The agencies are also visited and evaluated as part of their application process." Affiliate agencies are 501(c)(3) nonprofit agencies who register with United Way of Southwest Alabama's Volunteer Connect web portal. Both **UNITED WAY OF SOUTHWEST ALABAMA PARTNER AGENCIES AND AFFILIATE AGENCIES** postings of agency descriptions, contact information, and requests for volunteers can be found on the SOUTH SERVES web portal.

III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

To enhance the University of South Alabama's commitment to serve the local community, the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM supports ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES of USA in providing volunteer service to the local community. Each fiscal year USA grants ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES up to eight hours (8) of paid COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE during their regularly scheduled work day to volunteer their time in service to a UNITED WAY OF SOUTHWEST ALABAMA PARTNER AGENCY.

IV. FACULTY PARTICIPATION:

University of South Alabama Faculty members are eligible to participate in the Employee Community Volunteer Program. They are permitted up to 8 hours annually (on a fiscal year basis) to volunteer through the program. Participation is contingent upon adequate coverage of responsibilities and requires Department Chair approval. Normally, leave for faculty for volunteer activities will not be approved if that leave reduces instructional contact hours or would otherwise negatively impact student learning. Faculty members should follow the program procedures by:

- 1) Seeking approval from their Department Chair to participate prior to volunteering with an agency through the SOUTH SERVES portal,
and
- 2) Reporting their hours on their monthly leave report submitted to their Department Chair.
Participation in this program does not limit or otherwise impact professional service provided by faculty members as required to fulfill their academic, faculty or professional activities reported on their Annual Faculty Activity Report.

V. EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS:

As members of the University of South Alabama community, ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES participating as VOLUNTEERS are expected to govern their actions appropriately while volunteering, including but not limited to, those related to behavior and confidentiality and should refer to the USA Staff Handbook/USA Faculty Handbook as appropriate for further guidance.

The volunteer service activities performed by VOLUNTEERS of the Employee Community Volunteer Program are beyond the scope of University of South Alabama employment.

A VOLUNTEER

- a. Is not performing duties for, or working on behalf of the University of South Alabama while on COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE.
- b. Is not covered for on-the-job injuries while on COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE.
- c. Must have written approval from his or her supervisor in advance of participating in the program.

- d. Must comply with all terms of the application process, and other applicable pre-volunteer service requirements of the AGENCY to be eligible to participate in the program which may include requiring the VOLUNTEER to undergo a background check, clearances and/or agree to agency specific waivers before volunteering.
- e. After completing the volunteer service, must submit the required Community Volunteer Program Form, signed/approved by the AGENCY's representative, to his or her supervisor to be eligible for COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE at the employee's normal rate of pay.
- f. With proper approvals, may provide volunteer service for up to eight (8) hours total over the course of a fiscal year. Unused volunteer hours may not be carried over into the next fiscal year. The volunteer service is to be provided to the organization on a volunteer's normal work day.

VI. PROGRAM RESTRICTIONS:

- a. Employees participating in the Employee Community Volunteer Leave program may not:
 - i. use University of South Alabama-owned vehicles to perform volunteer activities,
 - ii. use University of South Alabama-owned property, equipment and/or supplies for volunteer service,
 - iii. receive payment or reimbursement from the Agency for their time or travel,
 - iv. use LEAVE for the purposes of calculating hours worked during a pay period for overtime purposes.
- b. Employees may not use LEAVE to participate in:
 - i. partisan political activities,
 - ii. activities or services which are intended solely to support or promote a specific religious belief,
 - iii. fundraising for an individual, political party, or religious entity.
- c. LEAVE cannot:
 - i. be used for vacation, sick, or other administrative leave,
 - ii. be carried forward to the next fiscal year,
 - iii. be paid out upon termination of employment,
 - iv. extend beyond eight (8) hours per fiscal year (any employee who exceeds the 8 hours allotted in one fiscal year will have excess time converted to vacation or PTO time. If the employee does not have any vacation or PTO time available, the time used for volunteering will be unpaid time.

VII. LEAVE CERTIFICATION:

Employees must complete the University's **APPROVAL FORM AND CERTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE TO VOLUNTEER** and receive approval from their supervisor *prior to the leave being taken*. Supervisors should make every effort to approve the requested leave, however supervisors have the discretion to deny approval of the requested date of leave depending on the business needs of the department.

- After the leave request is approved, an official of the Agency must certify the Employee's participation as a Volunteer in writing or in the "Time Tracking" feature of SOUTH SERVES.
- Employees have up to one week following the leave to submit the completed and certified Community Service Volunteer Leave form to their supervisor. If the form is not submitted in a timely manner, the Employee will be required to use annual leave for the time off, or unpaid if leave is not available.

VIII. TRACKING OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE HOURS:

The University of South Alabama will track participation in the Employee Community Volunteer Program in order to determine the number of hours of service provided by USA employees participating in the program and the number of Agencies served by USA employees participating in the program on an annual basis.

In order to gather the information regarding the number of volunteer hours and Agencies served, the following steps will occur:

- 1) Each monthly and bi-weekly pay period, a report will be generated to track participation in the program, providing the participant's name, J number, USA email, home department, division, job title, FTE, number of hours charged to **VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE** for that pay period, cumulative hours of **VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE** hours used fiscal year-to-date, and timekeeping or leave reporting approver.
- 2) On a monthly basis, the Office of Community Engagement will send each Employee who participated a brief survey which will ask them to confirm their volunteer hours, the Agency for which they volunteered, and a general rating of their experience.
- 3) On a quarterly basis the Office of Community Engagement will audit 5% or 30 Volunteers, whichever is smaller, requesting a copy of their approval form from their supervisor.
- 4) The information gathered through the tracking process will be compiled and reported annually through the Office of Community Engagement Annual Report.

Procedure for Participation in the
USA EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER LEAVE PROGRAM
FOR ELIGIBLE REGULAR FULL TIME FACULTY, STAFF, and ADMINISTRATORS
In the GENERAL UNIVERSITY DIVISION and USA HEALTH

Faculty, staff and administrative employees interested in participating in the program:

1. Employees and supervisors should become familiar with the [Program Policy Guidelines](#).
2. Visit the Office of Community Engagement Website at: <http://www.southalabama.edu/departments/communityengagement/index.html> , go to the (faculty and staff tab, choose the button that reads *Employee Community Volunteer Program Faculty and Staff*, and follow the directions to access **SOUTH SERVES**.
3. Browse the available “Needs” (volunteer opportunities) from the list of Agencies in the SOUTH SERVES system.
4. Before “Responding” to fulfill a Need (or accept a volunteer opportunity) through SOUTH SERVES, **an Employee must do the following:**
 - a. Carefully consider your department/college/unit’s operational needs and/or teaching schedules before submitting your Community Volunteer Program Approval Form to your supervisor. Be mindful that volunteer times should be planned strategically to minimize office/operational disruptions.
 - b. Fill out the top section of the **Volunteer Approval Form and Certification of Administrative Leave** and submit it to your supervisor for approval. Supervisors may deny or postpone requests based on operational needs or job performance reasons. Do not Respond to a day/time to volunteer without prior supervisory approval. In the event of a workplace emergency, your volunteer service may need to be rescheduled and/or canceled.
5. After receiving approval from your supervisor, register (**using your USA e-mail**) for the approved volunteer opportunity through SOUTH SERVES.
6. Upon completion of the volunteer community service, the community organization will be required to sign off on the APPROVAL FORM AND CERTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE TO VOLUNTEER, verifying the date and time of volunteer services OR approve volunteer hours electronically through the “Time Tracking” feature on SOUTH SERVES. The Approval Form must be submitted to your supervisor immediately upon your return to work. Submission of the completed form is required to receive paid administrative leave at the employee’s normal rate of pay for the volunteer service.
7. After you have completed your volunteer service, you must return the completed APPROVAL FORM AND CERTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE TO VOLUNTEER to your supervisor within one week of your volunteer service. Your supervisor must retain the completed form in your employee personnel file. If your hours were certified electronically through Time Tracking, you may Export that information to submit to your supervisor. Go to your Profile at the top right side of the Dashboard (see your initials in a circle). Click the arrow for the drop-down menu and select Track Hours. Click “Add Hours” and the “Select a Need”. If needed, you may also print a date(s) from your Volunteer Resume from the Profile drop-down menu. Click View Profile; click the Volunteer Resume button, then enter the date you volunteered and GO.

8. Employees recording Volunteer Administrative Leave through Web Time Entry or Leave Reporting will record the hours under Volunteer Admin Leave-BW, if paid bi-weekly, or Volunteer Admin Leave-MO, if paid monthly. For eligible University General and USA Health employees using KRONOS, the employee will select the VOL code for "Volunteer Admin Leave-BW" to record volunteer hours.
9. Your supervisor is responsible for approving the correct VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE code (VOL for bi-weekly paid employees, and VAL for monthly paid employees) and the name of the Agency for which you volunteered in the comments field for Web Time Entry, KRONOS, or Leave Reporting.

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