



South Georgia State College

Volunteer Policy

Purpose

To establish guidelines and procedures for volunteering at South Georgia State College.

Definitions

Authorized Volunteer:

A volunteer is defined as the following:

1. An individual who provides services to the College for civic, charitable, educational, or humanitarian purposes — without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation — is considered a volunteer for the time spent performing such services.

During these volunteer hours, individuals are classified as volunteers and are not subject to Sections 6, 7, and 11 of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), provided their service aligns with Sections 3(e), 4(a), and 4(b) of the FLSA, as well as the guidelines outlined in this subpart.

2. A non-college employee, including students, may serve as a volunteer if their services are provided freely, without expectation of compensation, and align with FLSA volunteer guidelines. (Refer to procedural statement for exceptions regarding student roles and internship arrangements.)"

Procedural Statement

South Georgia State College benefits from the service of numerous volunteers who are external to the institution. As a state entity within the University System of Georgia, the College is covered under the Georgia Tort Claims Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-21-20 et seq.) ("GTCA"). However, this policy does not waive or extend the sovereign immunity of the College or its employees, agents, or volunteers, nor does it expand the coverage provided under the GTCA. These volunteers are important to the College's operations.

State Immunity: The College, being a state institution under the University System of Georgia, is protected under the Georgia Tort Claims Act (GTCA). This means that the state's sovereign immunity remains intact, and this policy does not waive that immunity for employees, agents, or volunteers.

Medical and Auto Coverage: Volunteers who are not part of the College must use their own medical insurance and auto coverage for any injury related to their activities or for any damage to their vehicles while volunteering.

No Compensation or Benefits: Volunteers are not entitled to compensation or benefits from the College. This includes not being eligible for worker's compensation.

Exclusion of Students: The term “volunteer” in these guidelines does not apply to SGSC (South Georgia State College) students who are participating in activities that are part of their course or program of study.

Criminal Background Check: All volunteers must complete a criminal background check and receive acceptable results before engaging in any volunteer activities. The volunteer may not begin duties until the Human Resources Department has confirmed that the background check is satisfactory. Volunteers working with animals or minors, must complete a Volunteer Release Agreement and undergo a Background Investigation, regardless of the length of their volunteer service.

Supervisor Guidelines:

Volunteer Qualifications:

To qualify as a volunteer, an individual must be willing to provide services in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

Volunteer Representation:

Volunteers act as representatives of South Georgia State College while performing their assigned duties. As such, they are expected to adhere to institutional policies and external regulations, including those related to ethical behavior, confidentiality, financial responsibility, and the illegal use of drugs. Volunteers are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are not considered employees. They are not entitled to institutional benefits, including Workers' Compensation.

Voluntary Service:

Individuals are considered volunteers only if their services are offered freely and without coercion, whether direct or implied.

No Compensation:

Volunteers must be informed that they will receive no compensation or institutional benefits in exchange for their services.

Volunteer Selection:

When selecting volunteers, supervisors must ensure that the individual has the necessary experience, qualifications, and training for the tasks they will perform. A Description of Volunteer Duties must be submitted to HR.

Volunteer Agreement:

The volunteer must complete and sign a Volunteer Release/Agreement Form. This signed form must be retained by the department for two years, with a copy sent to HR.

Returning Volunteers:

If a volunteer returns after a break of more than one year, all necessary forms and processes must be completed again, including a new background check.

Non-Contractual Service:

Volunteer service at South Georgia State College is non-contractual. The College reserves the right to terminate any volunteer's service at any time without prior notice.

Compliance with Wage and Overtime Laws:

Volunteer services may not be used to manipulate wage or overtime requirements.

Eligibility to Volunteer:

Anyone, including current or retired employees, students, alumni, or other individuals, may volunteer. However, employees may not volunteer in any capacity that is similar to their regular duties or within the same occupational category as their employment.

Prohibited Volunteer Activities:

Volunteers are prohibited from working in high-security or sensitive areas, and from performing the following activities:

- Operating heavy equipment
- Working with hazardous materials or in environments that pose physical risk unless trained by the supervisor
- Working with stored energy
- Entering contracts on behalf of the institution

Please Note: To ensure consistent application of this policy, it is required to contact Human Resources before allowing any individual to begin volunteering in the department. All individuals volunteer duties must complete a Volunteer Release Agreement and Background Investigation form.

Services Not Requiring a Background Investigation

The following volunteer activities do not require a Background Investigation; however, a completed Volunteer Release/Agreement form is still required:

- Volunteer fundraising activities
- Phone-a-thon volunteers
- Advisory council participation
- Commencement volunteers
- Gallery/program guides
- Public speakers
- Participation in all volunteer committees
- Ushering at campus events

Note: To ensure consistency in the application of this policy, please contact Human Resources before allowing any individual to begin volunteering within the department. All volunteers must complete the Volunteer Release/Agreement form.

Affected Stakeholders

Indicate all entities and persons within the College affected by this policy:

- ☐ Alumni
- ☐ Students
- ☐ Student employees
- ☐ Vendors/contractors
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Faculty
- ☐ Visitors
- ☐ Other Volunteers

Policy Attributes

Responsible office(s)	
Approving officer or body	Executive Team and Cabinet
Date Approved	
Last Review Date	3/19/2025
Next Review Date	3/19/2026