

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



Standard Operating Procedures and Guidance  
on  
**EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**



~ **HELPING YOU - HELP THEM** ~

**HUD HANDBOOK 610.01**

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Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer  
Policy Development and Advisory Division

August 2011

Standard Operating Procedures and Guidance on

## **EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

### **Introduction:**

Giving of oneself freely by volunteering is a caring, selfless and noble quality, and one that HUD whole-heartedly supports and appreciates. While Federal agencies can not be financially supportive of all employees' volunteer activities, this guidance reflects our desire to provide assistance where feasible to our employees' volunteer activities and promote the foundation of "*Helping You – Help Them*".

### **HUD's mission is to:**

- **Increase homeownership opportunities**
- **Promote decent, affordable housing**
- **Strengthen communities**
- **Ensure equal opportunity in housing**
- **Embrace high standards of ethics, management and accountability**
- **Promote participation of faith-based and community partnerships**

This mission is an enormous responsibility and the Department welcomes all the assistance we can get from our employees in the form of volunteerism to accomplish our mission. Additionally, often there are initiatives, causes, special programs and/or national interests that the Secretary endorses and sponsors and which the Department would also welcome employee participation. A good example of this would be our participation in Veterans programs. The Secretary wants to show the Department's appreciation and support of our troops, especially our men and woman that have been wounded protecting our country.

For the purpose of this guidance, volunteerism is considered an outside activity that an employee has chosen to participate in for personal reasons.

Activities in support of Department initiatives or interests, that an employee is requested to participate in, or attend on behalf of the Department are not considered "volunteer" activities, but are considered assigned duties. If these activities are outside the normal business hours, compensation shall be awarded as required by governing laws, rules and regulations.

Employees may not participate in volunteer activities that would create a conflict of interest with their official duties.

Employees **must** obtain approval on the “**Administrative Leave Request and/or Ethics Certification for Employee Volunteer Activities**” form HUD 71, from an Agency Ethics Official **if** the employee serving in the volunteer position will:

- Serve in a position of authority such as an officer, director, trustee, or general partner of **any** organization that directly **or** indirectly receives assistance from HUD, or;
- The volunteer activity could create an actual or apparent conflict of interest with the employee’s official duties, or;
- The volunteer activity is with a state or local government; or;
- The volunteer activity is in the same professional field as that of the employee’s official position.

If you are not sure if the voluntary activity would create a conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest, the employee should consult with an Agency Ethics Official.

### **Background:**

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) allows Federal agencies to utilize a number of leave options in order to encourage Federal employees’ participation in volunteer activities. Use of these leave flexibilities were especially highlighted and utilized after Hurricane Katrina and continue to be utilized for the latest disasters.

### **General Information:**

While OPM does not require Federal agencies to make use of these flexibilities, HUD encourages management at all levels to allow for and accommodate these work schedule and leave flexibilities when possible. Managers and supervisors must consider all requests for changes in work schedule and absences from the office in relation to current workload and deadlines for completion of assignments. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of each manager and supervisor to balance support for employees’ volunteer activities with the need to ensure that employees’ work requirements are fulfilled and that Department operations are conducted efficiently and effectively. There are several work schedules and leave options to consider for granting time off which are described below, along with other pertinent information.

### **Alternative Work Schedules**

An employee may consider requesting a change to an Alternative Work Schedule to accommodate a regular recurring volunteer activity that occurs during normal work hours. These schedules include **flexible work schedules** and **compressed work schedules** options.

Information about these schedules may be found in the current appropriate work schedules and leave options policy or guidelines.

Eligibility: All employees. Managers and supervisors will follow current work schedule policies mandated by Department officials.

Volunteer Activities Criteria: None

Request Process: Follow the process specified in the current appropriate work schedules and leave options policy or guidelines.

Time Limitation: None - with management approval. Management retains the right to manage work schedules in order to effectively manage an office.

### **Leave Options**

There are several leave options an employee may want to consider. These options may be used solely or together with appropriate approvals.

**Credit Hours:** Earning credit hours is another tool available to allow employees to participate in volunteer activities during normal work hours. Additional information may be found in the current appropriate work schedules and leave options policy or guidelines.

Eligibility: All employees - except employees on a compressed work schedule and SES employees. Managers and supervisors will follow current work schedule policies mandated by Department officials.

Volunteer Activities Criteria: None

Request Process: Follow the process specified in the current appropriate work schedules and leave options policy or guidelines.

Time Limitation: Yes – employees may not work more than three (3) hours per day and may not carry more than 24 hours on their time and attendance record. See the above cited guidance for more detailed information.

**Annual Leave:** Employees may request use of annual leave to participate in local, national, and international volunteer activities.

Eligibility: All employees including managers and supervisors.

Volunteer Activities Criteria: None

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Request Process: Submit a leave request in WebTA for Annual Leave”. *If the request requires clearance from the Agency Ethics Officer, an “**Administrative Leave Request and/or Ethics Certification for Employee Volunteer Activities**” form HUD 71, must be submitted and approved by the Ethics Officer only.*

Time Limitation: None - with management approval. Management retains the right to manage work schedules and leave in order to effectively manage an office.

**Leave without Pay (LWOP):** Employees may request leave without pay to participate in local, national, and international volunteer activities.

Eligibility: All employees including managers and supervisors.

Volunteer Activities Criteria: None

Request Process: Submit a leave request in WebTA for LWOP. *If the request requires clearance from the Agency Ethics Officer, an “**Administrative Leave Request and/or Ethics Certification for Employee Volunteer Activities**” form HUD 71, must be submitted and approved by the Ethics Officer only.*

Time Limitation: None - with management approval. Management retains the right to manage work schedules and leave in order to effectively manage an office.

**Compensatory Time Off:** Employees that have earned compensatory time in exchange for performing an equal amount of time in irregular or occasional overtime work may request to use compensatory leave.

Eligibility: All employees including managers and supervisors.

Volunteer Activities Criteria: None

Request Process: Submit a leave request in WebTA for compensatory time off”. *If the request requires clearance from the Agency Ethics Officer, an “**Administrative Leave Request and/or Ethics Certification for Employee Volunteer Activities**” form HUD 71, must be submitted and approved by the Ethics Officer only.*

Time Limitation: None - with management approval. Management retains the right to manage work schedules and leave in order to effectively manage an office.

**Administrative Leave (Excused Absence):** The Department has the discretion to excuse employees from their duties without loss of pay or charge of leave. Following OPM guidelines, the Department will consider granting Administrative Leave for volunteer activities for organizations that meet the criteria below and which emulates OPM guidance. Managers and

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supervisors may contact the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, Policy Development and Advisory Services Staff, for assistance or guidance in making this determination, if needed. Additionally once the determination is made, a copy of the form should be forwarded to the Department Volunteer Coordinator in the Office of Human Capital Services.

Eligibility: All employees including managers and supervisors.

Volunteer Activities Criteria: Administrative Leave will be considered providing one or more of the following provisions are met:

1. The voluntary activity is directly related to the Department's mission.
2. The voluntary activity is in response to an emergency, disaster, or any other situation officially sponsored or sanctioned by the Department. .
3. The voluntary activity will clearly enhance the professional development or skills of the employee in his or her current position.
4. The voluntary activity is brief and is determined to be in the interest of the Department.

The volunteer activity is not limited by location. See Attachment A for examples of what might or might not be considered volunteer activities for Administrative Leave.

Request Process: Submit leave request in WebTA for administrative leave. Unlike the other leave options, a request for Administrative Leave must provide detailed information and must be submitted on the “**Administrative Leave Request and/or Ethics Certification for Employee Volunteer Activities**” form HUD 71. If necessary, the form should be cleared by the Agency Ethics Officer. Additionally, the request must be submitted to the approving official at **least three (3) weeks in advance** of the leave. However, this requirement may be waived by the supervisor. Managers and supervisors will respond to these requests within one week.

Time Limitation: Up to 96 hours per year - from the date that it was used.

Note: For emergency situations such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks, etc., the Department will consider granting additional hours of administrative leave in accordance with any applicable laws, regulations, Executive Order or any similar directive.

# ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE REQUEST and/or ETHICS CERTIFICATION for Employee Volunteer Activities

**THIS FORM DOES NOT REPLACE OR SERVE AS A SUBSTITUTION FOR** requesting the appropriate leave in the WebTA system. This form is to be retained by the supervisor and a copy forwarded to the Department Volunteer Coordinator in the Office of Human Capital Services.

EMPLOYEE NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE, SERIES & GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

REQUESTED LEAVE DATES: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Number of Hours** \_\_\_\_\_

## TYPE OF REQUESTED LEAVE

Annual Leave, Credit Hours or Compensatory Leave does not require the use of this form UNLESS Ethics approval is needed.

ANNUAL LEAVE # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  CREDIT HOURS # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  COMP. LEAVE # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPLETE INFORMATION IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS MANDATORY.

### REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE (Excused Absence)

Sponsor Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Location of the Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

What specifically will you be doing: (add additional pages if needed)

Which provision(s) is your request based on: *(Mark all that apply)*

- The volunteer activity is directly related to the Department's mission.
- The volunteer activity is officially sponsored or sanctioned by the Department.
- The volunteer activity is in response to an emergency or disaster situation as endorsed by the Secretary.
- The volunteer activity will clearly enhance your professional development or skills in your current position.
- The volunteer activity is brief and is determined to be in the interest of the Department.

HOW: (add additional pages if needed)

Have you used Administrative Leave in the past 12 months for volunteer activities?  YES  NO  
IF YES: When \_\_\_\_\_ How many hours? \_\_\_\_\_

I certify the information provided on this request is correct AND that this activity will NOT create a conflict of interest with my official duties and is in accordance with the ethics criteria in the Employee Volunteer Activities Standard Operating Procedures. Additionally, if I am not sure if there is a conflict – I will consult with an Agency Ethics Officer and obtain approval on this document.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ETHICS - If Required:  APPROVED  DISAPPROVED

AGENCY ETHICS OFFICER SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### APPROVING OFFICIAL (Usually Supervisor)

APPROVED  DISAPPROVED Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMPLES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE DETERMINATIONS

The examples below are just that, examples. Each situation may lend itself to a different outcome – so all factors must be taken into consideration.

An Important factor in the determining applicability also includes the duties of your current position.

### Volunteer Activities that MAY meet the Eligibility Criteria for Administrative Leave

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	REASON
Assisting in organizing, clean up, etc. in a disaster area sanctioned by the Secretary.	<b>This effort is endorsed by the Secretary, because it's of nationwide impact.</b>
Participating in home building functions with non-profit organizations.	<b>In line with the mission of the Department.</b>
Providing specialized services to public housing communities, tribal councils, elderly facilities, etc.	<b>In line with the mission of the Department.</b>
Working with faith-based organizations or non-profit organizations on community development activities and initiatives.	<b>In line with the mission of the Department.</b>
Traveling with your church to depressed communities to assist in community development activities.	<b>In line with the mission of the Department.</b>
Providing tax guidance to the elderly.	<b>This could be In line with the mission of the Department and/or a special program the Department may be supporting at the time and/or may enhance the skills of the employee or it may be in the best interest of the Department to participate</b>
Speaking at local community service organizations.	<b>This could be In line with the mission of the Department and/or a special program the Department may be supporting at the time and/or may enhance the skills of the employee or it may be in the best interest of the Department to participate.</b>

Attending a Boy Scout/Girl Scout community service effort.	This situation would depend on what the effort entails. If the troop is going to assist in building homes, or working in Section 8 communities – this would probably be in line with the mission of the Department. This is one of those situations where the factors have to be considered. This determination would change to NOT meet the Eligibility Criteria if the troops were selling Girl Scout cookies in a public housing community. All factors must be considered which is why it is important that the employee provide a detailed justification.
Volunteering at homeless shelters.	In line with the mission of the Department.

### Volunteer Activities that may NOT meet the Eligibility Criteria for Administrative Leave

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	REASON
Reading to your child’s kindergarten class	This does not meet any of the required criteria.
Assisting with your Homeowners Association.	This does not meet any of the required criteria.
Visiting patients at hospitals.	This generally would not meet the required criteria – however this is one of those situations where the factors have to be considered. This determination could change if these patients were soldiers at a military hospital, or this may fall under one of the Faith-based initiatives. All factors must be considered which is why it is important that the employee provide a detailed justification.
Coaching your local school or synagogue’s soccer team.	This does not meet any of the required criteria.
Cleaning up your child’s school yard after the “Spring Fair”.	This does not meet any of the required criteria.
Washing Cars to raise funds for your church picnic.	This does not meet any of the required criteria.
Attending a Boy Scout/Girl Scout Camp-Out.	This does not meet any of the required criteria.