

SUNY Cobleskill AG & TECH

Volunteer Policy

Type of Policy: Human Resources

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Reason for Policy: This policy is important because it provides clear guidance on how volunteers are recruited, supported, and managed within an organization. It helps ensure consistency, fairness, and safety for everyone involved, while also outlining the rights and responsibilities of both volunteers and the organization. Having a clear policy builds trust, reduces misunderstandings, and promotes a positive and professional volunteering experience.

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent standards and procedures for the recruitment, engagement, and management of volunteers at SUNY Cobleskill Ag & TECH. Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the College's mission to provide experiential learning, foster community engagement, and promote student and institutional success.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who volunteer their time and services to SUNY Cobleskill Ag & TECH without expectation of compensation. It covers volunteers supporting academic programs, research, student activities, athletics, outreach, and community service initiatives.

A. This policy does **not** apply to:

1. SUNY Cobleskill AG & TECH employees performing duties within their regular employment scope.
2. Interns or students earning academic credit; or

3. Individuals engaged through external partnerships or paid contracts.

Definition of a Volunteer

- A. A **volunteer** is an individual who freely provides services to SUNY Cobleskill AG & TECH without compensation or promise of future employment, and who performs such services under the direction of an authorized College representative.
- B. Volunteers are not considered employees for any purpose and are not entitled to wages, benefits, or workers' compensation.

Eligibility

- A. To serve as a volunteer, an individual must:
 1. Be at least 18 years of age (exceptions may be made for supervised youth programs).
 2. Must be approved by a sponsoring department or unit. Must have Campus contact **and** VP, Dean or Director's signature (**Can not** be the same person)
 3. Complete **all** required forms (Volunteer Application, Background Check, Confidentiality Agreement, and State Employee Statement In lieu of Oath Pursuant to Civil Service Law §62 and the Public Officer's Law §78 Certificate).
 4. Comply with all SUNY Cobleskill AG & TECH and SUNY system policies, including but not limited to those on nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, confidentiality, and campus safety.

Volunteer Approval Process

- A. **Department Request:** Departments seeking volunteer assistance must complete a Volunteer Request Form outlining duties, duration, and supervision.
- B. **Screening:** The sponsoring department will review the individual's qualifications.
- C. **Documentation:** Approved volunteers must sign **all** required volunteer forms.
- D. **Orientation:** Departments must provide appropriate orientation and training regarding campus policies, safety procedures, and assigned tasks.
- E. **Approval Authority:** Final approval of volunteer service rests with the appropriate department head, supervisor, or designated campus administrator.

Supervision and Conduct

A. Volunteers must:

1. Work under the supervision of a designated College employee.
2. Follow all applicable College rules, regulations, and standards of conduct.
3. Wear identification when required; and
4. Refrain from representing themselves as college employees.

B. Any misconduct, breach of confidentiality, or unsafe behavior may result in immediate termination of volunteer service.

Duration and Termination

Volunteer service is temporary and may be ended at any time by the volunteer or the College, with or without cause or notice. Volunteers are not guaranteed continued placement.

Risk Management and Insurance

Volunteers are covered under SUNY's liability protection while performing authorized volunteer duties in good faith. However, volunteers are not covered under workers' compensation or employee benefit programs. Volunteers are encouraged to maintain their own health insurance coverage.

Recordkeeping

Human Resources will maintain records of all volunteer applications, agreements, and approvals for at least three (3) years after the end of service, in accordance with SUNY records retention schedules.

Policy Administration

This policy is administered by the Office of Human Resources in coordination with sponsoring departments. Questions about volunteer eligibility, approval, or compliance should be directed to HR.

Attachments:

Request for Volunteer Service

<https://www.cobleskill.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/pdf/Volunteer-Service-Packet.pdf>