# HRDG 4230 - Introduction

Last Modified:

**Subchapter 4230**
**Volunteer Service Program**
**Introduction**


- Purpose
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| **Purpose** | This Subchapter establishes procedures and guidelines for acceptance and use of volunteer services in Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP). The purpose of the program is to provide volunteers with an unpaid opportunity to develop valuable work place skills, connect and network with professionals in their specialized area(s) of interest, explore the federal work environment and learn about the mission and responsibilities of MRP and the Department of Agriculture. By providing structured, meaningful work assignments, volunteers can be an important component of marketing MRP as an employer of choice. |

# Subchapter 4230
# Volunteer Service Program
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**Authority**

This Subchapter must be used in conjunction with the laws, rules, regulations, and policy stated in **Departmental Regulation 4230-001, Volunteer Programs.**

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**Academic Standing** - Academic standing is comprised of both the minimum grade point average (GPA) and satisfactory academic progress as established by the academic program. A student is determined to be in good standing at the conclusion of any matriculated term in which the student has achieved:

- 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.

**Definitions**

**Half Time Enrollment Status** - The minimum hours or credit hours a student is required to be enrolled as certified by the educational institution to be eligible for non-paid student employment.

**Regular Volunteer** - Individual providing assistance to USDA, MRP programs under **7 USC 2272** without compensation.

**Student** - An individual who must be enrolled at least half time in a high school, trade school, technical or vocational institute, 2 or 4-year college or university or other accredited educational institution. Home schooled students may participate provided they are studying in an accredited home school or a home-school curriculum approved by their state.

**Student Volunteer Service** - Non-compensated service performed under **5 U.S.C. 3111**, with the permission of the academic institution at which the student is enrolled, as part of an agency program established for providing educational experience for students.

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- USDA, Marketing and Regulatory Programs are authorized to recruit, train, and accept volunteer services in carrying out programs of the Agency.
- Volunteer opportunities are open to all interested persons without regard to race, color, religion, age (except as provided by OPM and DOL regulations), sex (including pregnancy), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or any other non-merit factor.
- Volunteer service may not displace any employee nor may it be used to staff a position that is a normal part of the work force.
- Volunteer program participants may not receive salary payments, but regular (non-student) volunteers may receive payment of incidental expenses in accordance with USDA authorization **7 U.S.C. 2272a**.
- Volunteer contributions may be recognized with letters of appreciation, certificates of accomplishments, or other forms of non-monetary recognition. Management officials must adhere to all applicable MRP and USDA policy governing use of non-monetary recognition.
- Student volunteer service must comply with Department of Labor regulations, which place restrictions on the employment of individuals under the age of 18 years.
- Student volunteer service must comply with Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations governing student volunteers.
- Initial volunteer terms of assignments may be approved up to a year in duration. The volunteer assignment may be extended beyond the initial term for one additional year.
- Services of a volunteer program participant may be terminated at any time for any reason deemed appropriate by either party.

## Age

- In accord with USDA policy, the minimum age to serve as a volunteer with MRP is 14. Employment certificates or work permits required by state or local authorities must be obtained before the volunteer may begin the volunteer assignment. For

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