Volunteer General Information and Instructions
(5/4/12)

Definition of a volunteer for Workers’ Compensation Coverage
A volunteer is or can be a person who:
• performs a service that is primarily a benefit to the university
• does not receive remuneration for that service, other than meals, transportation, lodging, or reimbursement for incidental expenses, if appropriate
• is a UC employee, but volunteering outside their job description
A volunteer is not a:
• person who is receiving class credit for their participation
• person who is participating because of their own educational or research priorities
• UC employee working within their job description

When does a volunteer become a volunteer?
When you ask the person to perform a volunteer activity.

What makes a person an NRS volunteer?
If the volunteer service is associated with a reserve activity, the volunteer would sign up as an NRS volunteer, no matter which department administers the funds associated with a particular project. If the volunteer service is associated with the reserve director’s or other personal research and is funded by a department other than the NRS, even if the work takes place on the reserve, the volunteer is a volunteer with the department administering the research funds and they must sign up as a volunteer with that department.

When should a volunteer fill out a reserve Waiver Form?
All volunteers must sign reserve Waiver Forms. The reserve director is responsible for maintaining Waiver Forms at the reserve for the appropriate length of time.

When should a volunteer fill out a Workers’ Compensation Volunteer Form?
Not all volunteers are eligible for Workers’ Compensation. Only submit a Volunteer Form if the person is eligible for Workers’ Comp. The definition of a volunteer is different for Workers’ Compensation Coverage. Read the requirements on the Volunteer Form posted on the Staff Webpage. If you are still not clear whether or not a person is eligible, contact the Workers’ Comp campus office in Environmental Health and Safety for clarification.
What if the volunteer is eligible for Workers’ Compensation?
Fill out a Volunteer Form for them and submit it to the Workers’ Comp office by email, fax, or mail. Provide the volunteer with a copy of the Form so there is no confusion about what duties the reserve has approved for an individual volunteer. Approved duties, as reflected on the Volunteer Form, should be appropriate to the skills and abilities of the volunteer. Forms should be submitted in advance of the volunteer service date, whenever possible. If this is not possible, Forms can be submitted up to a week after the event as long as the description of the activity has been pre-approved by Mari Tyrrell-Simpson in the Workers’ Comp campus office. To obtain pre-approval, email a description to Mari for approval. When approved, as long as you use that same description, a Form can be turned in after the event. Keep copies of Mari’s emails approving your descriptions in your files.

Why does the volunteer have to sign a Workers’ Comp Volunteer Form and a Waiver Form?
Often, University policy requires that volunteers sign both forms. The University requires this because, on the one hand, it is providing a non-required benefit (coverage under the University's Workers' Compensation Program)—hence the Volunteer form—while, on the other hand it requires the volunteer to waive any other remedies against the University. In other words, the waiver protects the university from claims as they relate to "personal injury." However, this does not invalidate the person's rights under Workers Compensation laws in California.

How long must I keep Volunteer Forms?
A copy of the Volunteer Form should be kept on file at the reserve for six months after the activity has ended and then can be destroyed.

What should I do if the volunteer is injured?
Immediately seek whatever medical help the volunteer needs then report the incident by calling: 877-682-7778. Fill out an incident report and submit it to Deby at the NRS campus office.

When should a volunteer have a background check?
Volunteers who work in critical positions must undergo fingerprinting and a Department of Justice Background Check. Key Critical Positions include: 1) responsibility for handling cash, working directly with children or the general public, 3) access to keys to reserve buildings.