

Piedmont Virginia Community College

Section VIII – Human Resources Policies

VIII – 8.0 Use of Volunteers and Unpaid Interns

Effective Date: March 2026

Last Revised: April 2026

Responsible Dept.: Associate Vice President, Department Human Resources

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the appropriate use, screening, and supervision of volunteers and unpaid interns at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC). This policy ensures compliance with applicable state laws, Virginia Community College System (VCCS) requirements, and College policies, while safeguarding students, employees, and the institution. It further clarifies roles, responsibilities, and limitations to ensure that volunteer and unpaid intern service supports the College's mission without displacing paid employees or creating an employment relationship.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Regulatory Requirements

Piedmont Virginia Community College is part of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and is governed on most matters of policy by the VCCS State Board for Community Colleges.

As a state agency, PVCC also follows the Code of Virginia, the official record of laws enacted by the Virginia General Assembly and signed by the Governor. The State Government Volunteers Act is published and publicly available at this link: *Virginia State Government Volunteers Act*.

Questions about this policy and/or its application at Piedmont Virginia Community College should be directed to the Responsible Department identified above.

PVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. View the full nondiscrimination statement and find contacts at pvcc.edu/nondiscrimination.

2.2 Authority

Code of Virginia – 2.2-3600 et seq – State Government Volunteers Act
VCCS Delegated Authority Agreement

3. Definitions

Supervisor: PVCC faculty or staff member responsible for supervising the volunteer or unpaid intern.

Volunteer: Any individual who, of their own free will, provides one-time or ongoing services to support PVCC's mission without promise, expectation, or receipt of financial compensation from PVCC.

Examples of volunteers and unpaid interns include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Volunteers supporting fundraising or special events
- b) Volunteers assisting with theatrical or performing arts productions
- c) Individuals performing non-recurring clerical tasks (e.g., envelope stuffing)
- d) Guest speakers or lecturers
- e) Unpaid interns participating in a bona fide academic internship (e.g., a UVA student receiving academic credit in lieu of pay for service at PVCC)

These individuals serve under the direction of a full-time PVCC employee (supervisor) and perform duties that supplement current staff's work. Volunteer service is ad hoc, time-limited, and generally non-recurring in nature, and may not under any circumstance supplant the work of a part-time or full-time employee.

Unpaid Intern: An individual participating in a bona fide internship program through an accredited institution, for which they receive academic credit in lieu of pay.

4. Applicability

This policy applies to all PVCC faculty, staff, students, and third parties who act as volunteers or unpaid interns on campus or who engage volunteers or unpaid interns on behalf of the College.

Exceptions: PVCC College Board and Educational Foundation Board members and individuals serving on committees, task forces, advisory panels, and academic-related committees are not considered volunteers or unpaid interns for the purpose of these guidelines.

Additionally, these guidelines do not apply to people contracted to provide services for the College or to events on campus that are sponsored by outside organizations.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Supervisor's Responsibilities

- a) Develop appropriate and meaningful opportunities for volunteers and unpaid interns involved in PVCC programs and services.
- b) Screen (which may include meetings, interviews, or resumé review as appropriate based on responsibilities) and approve all volunteers and unpaid interns to determine whether they are qualified to perform the service activities.
- c) Ensure that volunteers, unpaid interns, and staff understand their respective duties and responsibilities, their relationship to each other, and their roles in fulfilling departmental or event objectives.
- d) Inform volunteers and unpaid interns about PVCC's policies related to nondiscrimination, civility, visitors on campus, and sexual misconduct.
- e) Ensure completion of and forward the Volunteer/Intern Agreement to humanresources@pvcc.edu and receive approval from Human Resources before engagement begins.
- f) Retain all sign-in sheets and Volunteer/Intern Agreements for three (3) years.

5.2 Volunteer/Unpaid Intern Responsibilities

- a) Complete and sign the Volunteer/Intern Agreement and the Volunteer Status/Workers' Compensation Act form
- b) Acknowledge and comply with the policies outlined in the Volunteer Information Sheet prior to beginning service.
- c) Adhere to all applicable Commonwealth of Virginia, Virginia Community College System (VCCS), and Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) policies and procedures throughout the period of service.

5.3 Human Resources Department's Responsibilities

- a) *Review all required documents and determine whether a background check is required.
- b) Initiate and coordinate the completion of a background check when required.
- c) Verify whether the volunteer or unpaid intern is a minor and identify any additional required documentation, including parent or legal guardian authorization.
- d) Notify the supervisor when the volunteer or unpaid intern has been approved.

***Note:** Background checks are required for all volunteers and unpaid interns who may have in-person interaction with students, except for minors accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult.

6. Procedures for Implementation

6.1 Volunteer/Unpaid Intern Status and Restrictions

PVCC does not intend for volunteers or unpaid interns to perform or displace work presently being performed by employees. These arrangements may not be used to circumvent established processes that govern standard PVCC-authorized hires. Supervisors may not engage regular service volunteers or unpaid interns until they have received approval from Human Resources.

Volunteers and unpaid interns do not have an employment relationship with PVCC and are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act or Virginia wage laws, nor are they eligible for any PVCC benefits, including Workers' Compensation. PVCC retains full discretion to select volunteers and unpaid interns and to determine the duration and scope of their service.

Payment for services is not permitted under any circumstances. Volunteers and unpaid interns may be reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with PVCC activities, with advance approval. Any gifts or perks provided by PVCC must be reasonable and appropriate to the nature of the service performed, may not serve as a substitute for compensation, and may not be tied to productivity or performance.

Employees may serve as volunteers or unpaid interns; however, they may not volunteer unpaid time to perform the same duties for which they are employed.

6.2 Eligibility

Volunteers and unpaid interns under the age of eighteen (18) must have written consent of a parent or legal guardian before service and must comply with all appropriate laws and regulations on child labor.

Volunteers and unpaid interns must be at least fourteen (14) years old. Supervisors must consult with Human Resources prior to engaging minors.

If the individual is a current non-exempt PVCC employee, the services performed may not be the same as those for which the individual is employed, nor may they be used to fulfill regular job duties or performance expectations. Non-exempt employees may not volunteer unpaid time to perform their normal duties in lieu of overtime, nor may they do so following termination of employment. All hours worked by non-exempt employees must be compensated in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Volunteers and unpaid interns may not be engaged to perform work that duplicates employee duties or displaces existing employees.

6.3 Screening of Volunteers and Unpaid Interns

All volunteers and unpaid interns who will have in-person interaction with students are

required to complete a background check with the exception of minors in the company of parents or another responsible adult.

If required, PVCC's standard background check includes a seven-year history of the following: statewide criminal screening (Virginia), county criminal screening (outside Virginia), sexual-offender index check, social security verification, and residential history.

6.4 Required Forms

The supervisor and volunteer (or unpaid intern) must both sign the Volunteer/Intern Agreement. By signing, the individual agrees to abide by the policies outlined on the Volunteer Information Sheet.

The volunteer must also sign a form acknowledging ineligibility for Workers Compensation.

Forms can be found [here](#) and must be submitted each semester or per event during which a volunteer or unpaid intern engages with PVCC.

6.5 Parking

Parking passes may be requested from Campus Security by the supervisor with sufficient advance notice.

With advance notice, volunteers and unpaid interns can be issued a parking pass for the day; otherwise, they should park in a designated visitor spot.

6.6 Discontinuation of Service

Service at PVCC as a volunteer or unpaid intern is non-contractual. PVCC may discontinue the service of any volunteer or unpaid intern at any time, with or without cause.

7. Sanctions for Violation of Policy

Any PVCC employee serving as a volunteer or unpaid intern who violates any PVCC policy or procedure, or any local, state, or federal law, may be removed from service without warning or advance notice and may be subject to disciplinary action under PVCC policies.

Any PVCC employee who observes a volunteer or unpaid intern engaging in misconduct should contact the individual's supervisor. If the supervisor is unknown, the employee should contact the Office of Human Resources, who will relay the information to the appropriate supervisor.

Upon learning of misconduct, the supervisor may discontinue the volunteer or unpaid intern's service by providing written notice. The Department of Human Resources will retain a copy of the written notification for three (3) years for reference in connection with any future service requests.

PVCC reserves the right to refuse future service of any volunteer or unpaid intern previously removed from service.

8. Other General Information

N/A