

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Operating Manual Update

# The Guide to Processing Personnel Actions

Update 89 – Chapter 33

## ***Notice***

This Guide and its Updates are available for viewing/printing on the [OPM.gov website](https://www.opm.gov). In lieu of contacting OPM, agency Human Resources representatives responsible for processing personnel actions should follow the instructions on the web site if interested in signing up to automatically receive Updates electronically.

**Distribution:** Operating Manual, The Guide to Processing Personnel Actions

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**Summary of Changes, Chapter 33 (Update 89)**

<b>Removed Pages</b>	<b>Identification</b>	<b>Insert Page</b>	<b>Explanation of Changes</b>
33-1 thru 33-4	N/A	1 thru 4	Chapter 33, in its' entirety has been updated, to include: (1) reformatted page numbers from 33-1, 33-2, 33-3, etc., to new format of 1,2,3, etc.; (2) added a footnote to each page to reflect Chapter number and title of guide; (3) reformatted text from column to paragraph to meet 508 compliance requirements; (4) distinguished new text changes and/or additions in <b>&gt;dark red font surrounded by angled brackets&lt;</b> ; (5) distinguished deletion/removal of text with <b>*** in green font</b> ; and, (6) removed all symbols annotating historical changes throughout the chapter.

**Listing of Specific Changes to Chapter 33**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page Number(s)</b>	<b>Explanation of Changes</b>
33	Various	Incorporated or updated regulatory hyperlinks throughout Chapter 33.
33	2	3. Documentation of Volunteer Service: -Removed "appointment" -Added "service" -Removed "with respect to service credit for leave or other employee benefits." -Added "with respect to the availability of any employee benefits." -bullet 1 – added: "programs to encourage commuting in other than single occupancy vehicles"

# Chapter 33: Documentation of Volunteer Service

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New text changes and/or additions are distinguished in **>dark red font surrounded by angled brackets<**. Deletion/removal of text is distinguished with **\*\*\* in green font**.

## 1. Coverage

This chapter provides instructions for documenting service performed without compensation by persons who *do not* receive a Federal appointment.

## 2. Definitions

- a. **Student volunteer service** is service performed under [5 U.S.C. 3111](#), with the permission of the institution at which the student is enrolled, as part of an agency program established for providing educational experience for the student.
- b. **Other volunteer service** under programs for persons other than students is defined in the individual laws and regulations authorizing those programs.

## 3. Documentation of Volunteer Service

Volunteers do not receive Federal appointments, so their service is not reported to Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI). Therefore, the personnel action instructions in Chapters 1-32 of this **Guide** are not applicable. Agencies are responsible for determining how to document volunteer service (e.g., self-developed forms, letters, etc.) An SF-50 cannot be used to document volunteer **\*\*\*>service;<** however, agencies *must* clearly inform volunteers of the nature of their **\*\*\*>service<** with respect to **\*\*\*>the availability of any employee benefits.<** To fulfill this requirement, we recommend that the written communication of your choosing contain language such as:

- Under [5 U.S.C. 3111](#), a student volunteer is not a Federal employee for any purposes other than injury compensation, **>programs to encourage commuting in other than single occupancy vehicles,<** and law related to the Tort Claims Act. Service is not creditable for leave or any other employee benefits" (for student volunteers); or
- Volunteer service is not creditable for leave or any other employee benefits" (for volunteers other than students.)

In addition to the above requirement, agencies will determine what, if any, additional information is to be documented to aid in responding to

future requests for service documentation. In that regard, we recommend that the written communication also include the following information:

- a) name of agency;
- b) position title;
- c) office title and duty location; and
- d) days/hours on duty

Likewise, when a volunteer's service is concluded, we recommend some form of written communication that include the following:

- a) inclusive dates of service;
- b) total hours or days worked; and
- c) guidance on how the agency may be contacted regarding future requests to obtain documentation of volunteer service.

#### **4. Agency Agreements with OPM**

All previously negotiated agreements with individual agencies regarding their volunteer programs are void. These agreements are no longer necessary as agencies are responsible for determining the practice to be utilized. As such, agencies may opt to continue the practices in those agreements or change them as deemed appropriate.

#### **5. Responsibility for Responding to requests for Service Documentation**

Agencies, not OPM nor the National Personnel Records Center, are responsible for responding to requests from former volunteers for documentation of volunteer service.

#### **6. Official Personnel Records**

Agencies are responsible for determining the method utilized for long term filing/recordkeeping with respect to documents used to record volunteer service. Agencies *cannot* use an Official Personnel Folder for this purpose. Agencies will determine their own disposition schedule with

respect to these documents. Notwithstanding the filing system utilized, OPM's Governmentwide systems of records notice for [OPM/GOVT-1](#) will continue to cover volunteer service records for purposes of the Privacy Act.