

GUIDANCE ON PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF VOLUNTEER STUDENT RESEARCHERS

PURPOSE:

On occasion, undergraduate and graduate students who are not currently students at South Alabama or may have already graduated want to participate in volunteer research with a USA faculty member. This Guidance provides the process for approval of the activity. This does not apply to research activities for which USA would otherwise pay an employee to perform.

WHO MAY VOLUNTEER?

- Graduate and undergraduate students enrolled at other universities or community colleges.
- High School students who are at least at the rising Junior level.
- Graduate and undergraduate students who have graduated from South Alabama but need to complete work on a project, thesis, or dissertation and presence on campus or in the field is required.

LENGTH OF VOLUNTEER WORK: There are no restrictions on the length of time a student may volunteer.

PROCESS FOR APPROVAL:

1. Faculty member who is supervising the student must request approval in writing from the Chair and Dean of the College. The request must include:
 - a) The location the student will be working,
 - b) The days/months the student will be on-campus,
 - c) The plan for supervising the student,
 - d) A description of the research in which the student will be involved.
2. A waiver of liability must be signed by the student. A student under age 19 must have the waiver co-signed by at least one parent or legal guardian.
3. A signed, electronic copy of both forms, once approved, must be filed in the Dean's office and the Office of Research and Economic Development (bsupchurch@southalabama.edu), and a copy provided to the student.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

The supervising PI must ensure that the student complete the required Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training found at:

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/research/compliance/responsible-conduct/policies.html>

Successful completion of additional training is required for specific research activities involving (i) human subjects, (ii) animal care and use, and (iii) biological hazard safety. These training requirements are enforced and overseen by the appropriate institutional review committee.

Prior to beginning any research, proof of the student's citizenship must be provided. If the student is a non-US citizen, the supervising PI must ensure that the student's research or

physical presence will not violate any federal or sponsor citizenship requirements for the research, or for any other research to which the student will potentially have access.

Students who volunteer when the University is not fully open, such as during a pandemic event, must follow all regulations set forth by campus leadership including:

- A research plan approved by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.
- Completion of a Health Survey and agree to all of the requisite requirements for entrance to campus.

Volunteer students may not be on campus during a period when campus is generally closed to faculty and staff without specific approval.

Research that involves biological hazards, human or animal studies must be submitted to the IBC and IRB.