

IPS 2-21 Peace Corps Domestic Service of Volunteers

Effective Date: May 7, 2021

Responsible Office: Office of the Director

Issuance Memo (5/7/2021)

Attachment A *Volunteer Service Handbook for Domestic Service*

1.0 Purpose

This Interim Policy Statement (IPS) describes Peace Corps policies and procedures applicable to Peace Corps Response Volunteers (Volunteers) and relevant staff while participating in a domestic assignment during 2021 at the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

FEMA has mission-assigned the Peace Corps, under the Stafford Act (Mission Assignments), to deploy Volunteers in support of FEMA's U.S. COVID-19 vaccine distribution efforts. Volunteers will be assigned to FEMA-supported Community Vaccination Centers (CVCs), and perform a variety of non-clinical, administrative and logistical tasks at CVCs to which they are assigned in support of the functioning of CVCs and the distribution of vaccines. The Office of Peace Corps Response (PCR) will manage the various Mission Assignments for each state where Volunteers are assigned.

Peace Corps policies published in the Peace Corps Manual (Manual) and their implementing procedures describe the roles and responsibilities of Peace Corps employees and the obligations applicable to Volunteers who are serving at overseas posts. Many of those policies and procedures are inappropriate or inoperable in a U.S. context and must be adapted for domestic service.

Because of the emergency nature of the Mission Assignments, it is not feasible to develop a fully comprehensive set of specific revisions to the Manual Sections and their implementing procedures that would apply solely to this temporary, domestic service of Volunteers. This IPS provides the policy and policy implementation framework for this domestic service of Volunteers.

2.0 Applicability

This IPS applies only to Volunteers and Peace Corps staff participating or involved in domestic service during calendar year 2021 for the duration of the Mission Assignments.

3.0 Policy

Given the timing of and need for deploying Volunteers to FEMA-supported CVCs and determining appropriate policies and procedures applicable to their domestic service:

- (a) Application of the Manual as it applies to overseas service by Volunteers is suspended for domestic service by Volunteers, except as may be determined in accordance with the process described in subsection 3.0 (c), below.
- (b) Key policies and procedures, which Volunteers are expected to follow are set forth in the *Volunteer Service Handbook for Domestic Service (VSHDS)* and attached as Attachment A hereto. Any policy or procedure that may affect operational functions in connection with the domestic service of Volunteers may be amended or replaced in accordance with the process described in subsections 3.0 (c) and (d) below.
- (c) If there is uncertainty or there are questions regarding the application or absence of a policy during the domestic service of Volunteers, PCR, in consultation with the office or offices responsible for the policy and the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), will determine the appropriate action to be taken, including modification or replacement of the policy to be applied. All modified or replacement policies will be documented and communicated to Volunteers and appropriate staff. They may be applied retroactively to the commencement of activities in connection with the domestic service of Volunteers.
- (d) If there is uncertainty or there are questions regarding the application or absence of a procedure or there is any other instance in which modifications or replacement of procedures are needed during the domestic service of Volunteers, the office(s) responsible for the procedure(s) will determine the appropriate action to be taken, including modification or replacement of the procedure to be applied, and will consult with OGC as needed. Any such modification or replacement of a procedure will be documented by the responsible office(s) and, as appropriate, communicated to the affected Volunteers and employees.
- (e) In connection with the domestic service of Volunteers, the PCR Director and Chief of Operations, respectively, are delegated authority to take all appropriate actions, including re-delegation of authority, normally delegated to Regional Directors and Country Directors. The PCR Director and Chief of Operations will consult with relevant offices as needed and OGC.

4.0 Effective Date

The effective date is the date of issuance.

Given the temporary nature of the Mission Assignments, this IPS will be reviewed by the Senior Policy Committee within 12 months of its date of issuance to assess the need for any revisions to the policy and the time-frame for continued applicability.