

# MS 235 Volunteer/Trainee Losses of Property and Cash

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**Effective Date:** April 13, 2012

**Supersedes:** 09/27/07; 03/31/99, 03/04/88, 11/23/83

**Responsible Office:** Office of the Chief Financial Officer/Global Accounts Payable

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Issuance Memo April 13, 2012

Issuance Memo

MS 235 *Procedures*

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## Attachments

Attachment A Non-evacuation Volunteer/Trainee Property Claim Form

Attachment B Non-evacuation Volunteer/Trainee Cash Claim Form

Attachment C Evacuation Volunteer/Trainee Property and Cash Claim Form

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## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Manual Section is to set out the policies governing the loss of personal property or cash belonging to a Volunteer. For purposes of this Manual Section, the use of the term Volunteer includes a Trainee. Procedures implementing this Manual Section are set forth in the MS 235 Procedures. This Manual Section does not apply to the loss of Peace Corps Partnership Program funds or grant funds administered by a Volunteer. The procedures for such losses are addressed in the respective handbooks for such programs.

## 2.0 Authority

22 USC 2504 (a), (b) and (c)

## **3.0 Policies**

### **3.1 Safeguarding Property and Cash**

Volunteers are personally responsible for safeguarding their personal cash, living and other allowances, personal property, and Peace Corps property in their possession. Volunteers should bring to their host country only the amount of personal property and cash that is necessary for them to maintain a modest standard of living. They should not bring excess cash or expensive or valuable items. Whenever feasible, Volunteers should keep their cash in a bank account. The Peace Corps will not replace or reimburse a Volunteer for property or cash lost, damaged, or stolen, except as provided in this Manual Section and the Procedures.

### **3.2 Insurance of Volunteer Property and Cash**

The Peace Corps does not insure a Volunteer's property and cash and recommends that Volunteers consider the purchase of personal property insurance. The Peace Corps will provide personal property insurance information to Volunteers and will, upon request, arrange a withdrawal from a Volunteer's readjustment allowance account to pay the insurance premiums. In the limited circumstances when Peace Corps may replace or reimburse a Volunteer for losses under this Manual Section, no claim will be approved for insured property unless the insurer has first denied the claim.

### **3.3 Replacement or Reimbursement for Loss**

The Peace Corps may replace or reimburse a Volunteer for property or cash of the Volunteer that has been lost, damaged, or stolen, but only if the Country Director determines that:

- (a) The item of property (excluding cash or allowances) is essential to the health, welfare, or continued service of the Volunteer;
- (b) The Peace Corps has assumed custody of the Volunteer's property or cash in accordance with Peace Corps policies and procedures;
- (c) It is a loss of some or all of the Volunteer's living/walk-around allowance prior to receipt of the next allowance;
- (d) The unusual circumstances surrounding the Volunteer's loss of an allowance (other than a living allowance) lead the Country Director to determine that full or partial reimbursement is appropriate and fair; or
- (e) The loss resulted from Peace Corps evacuation of the Volunteer's host country, an event that is often uninsurable.

### **3.4 Custody of Volunteer Property and Cash**

Peace Corps employees and contractors must not take custody of Volunteer property or cash without the Country Director's written approval. Absent the Country Director's approval, such

employees and contractors may be personally liable for the loss of any Volunteer property or cash for which they assumed custody.

The Country Director may authorize Peace Corps employees and contractors to take custody of a Volunteer's property, such as passports, plane tickets, and cash only under the following circumstances:

- (a) An unforeseeable emergency (e.g., medevac or emergency leave) provides the Volunteer with no opportunity to make arrangements for safeguarding property or cash; or
- (b) Exceptional, individual cases in which the Country Director believes that Peace Corps custody is essential to safeguarding the property or cash.

### **3.5 Procedures**

Procedures implementing the policies in this Manual Section are set forth in the Procedures. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer may revise the Procedures and attachments to this Manual Section after review and approval by the Office of Global Operations and the Office of the General Counsel.

### **4.0 Effective Date**

The effective date is the date of issuance.