

Section A: Justification

1. Peace Corps uses the confidential reference form in order to learn from someone, who knows a volunteer applicant and his or her background, whether the applicant possesses the necessary characteristics and skills to serve as a Volunteer. *See* 22 CFR 305.4 (eligibility and selection standards for Peace Corps volunteer service.)
2. The Recruitment and Placement teams in the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection use the Confidential Reference Form as an integral part of the screening and selection process to determine whether an applicant is likely to succeed as a Peace Corps volunteer.
3. Peace Corps includes the Confidential Reference Form in its web-based application process. Applicants may send the Confidential Reference Form to their references electronically via the website. References may return the form electronically via the web service. Hard-copies are made available upon request in order to ensure equal availability of the form to those without computer capabilities. When an applicant requests that Peace Corps send hard copy Confidential Reference Forms, Peace Corps provides the references with postage-paid envelopes.
4. Information, from people familiar with an applicant's skills and characteristics is available nowhere else. In cases where an applicant has reapplied to serve as a Volunteer (either to serve an additional term, or because the applicant was not selected previously for any reason), the Placement and Recruitment staff can refer back to the references already on file, if the prior application is less than two years old and the application has remained active. Peace Corps requires that an applicant provide new references if the prior references are more than two years old, or if the file has become inactive. A file would become inactive (even if it is less than two years old) if the applicant voluntarily withdrew or if the applicant was given a temporary rejection by a recruiter due, for example to a lack of skills or work experience.
5. The collection of information from the Peace Corps Confidential Reference Form does not impact small businesses or other small entities.
6. If Peace Corps were unable to collect the reference information requested on this form, the agency would run the risk of sending poorly qualified or unqualified representatives into foreign countries. The communities where Peace Corps assigns Volunteers often observe closely the actions and behaviors of Volunteers, who are representatives of the United States. A Volunteer with poor performance, bad judgment, social inadequacy, or undesirable personal behavior easily may become an embarrassment to the United States. A poorly screened volunteer may create conflict and embarrassment for the United States by attracting negative media or political attention.

7. Peace Corps asks, but does not require, the applicant's reference to return the form within 7 days in order to benefit the applicant. Returning the form within 7 days allows Peace Corps to expedite an applicant's qualification and suitability review.
8. The agency's notice was published in the Federal Register on August 20, 2010, 75 Fed. Reg. 51502 (August 20, 2010). No public comments were received during the 60-day period.
9. No payment or gift is provided to respondents.
10. Respondents are informed that the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a(k)(5), provides that Peace Corps may keep their identity confidential, if so requested. The form has a box to check if the respondent does not authorize the Peace Corps to identify him or her as the source of the reference. The form also has a box to check indicating that the respondent authorizes the Peace Corps to identify the respondent as the source.

The agency's policy for responding to Privacy Act requests from individuals for copies for references is as follows:

- a. If one or more person in the group of an applicant's references requests confidentiality, no copies of the references are released. Since the applicants provide the names of the references, the applicants could determine who requested confidentiality. A reference summary is released with generic information, nothing identifiable. Appeal rights are provided.
- b. If requested, copies of all the references are released, but only if no one has requested confidentiality.

Privacy Act notices are printed on the form for assurance of confidentiality. It reads: (taken from the Reference Form)

The Privacy Act is a federal law that states that everyone has the right to know about and receive information about, or copies of, documents about them that are maintained by the federal government. This law provides that the Peace Corps may keep the identity of the source of this reference confidential only if you request that it be kept confidential. Please indicate below whether you do or do not wish your identity revealed to the applicant.

- I DO NOT authorize the Peace Corps to identify me as the source of this reference, nor do I authorize the Peace Corps to release a copy of this reference in its entirety to the applicant, I realize that a summary of this reference may be released without my approval.
- I AUTHORIZE the Peace Corps to identify me as the source of this reference and to release a copy of this reference, upon request, to the applicant.

11. No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.
12. Estimated burden (hours) of the collection of information:
 - a. Average Number of Annual Applicants
(complete the application process): 13,400
 - b. Number of reference required per applicant: 3
 - c. Estimated Number of reference forms received: 40,200
 - d. Frequency of response: One time
 - e. Completion time: 30 minutes
 - f. Annual burden hours: 20,100
 - g. Number of forms received electronically (97%): 38,994
 - h. Number of forms received hardcopy (3%) 1,206

PRA Violation:

Change Due to Adjustment in Agency Estimate:	
Annual Number of Responses	12480
Annual Time Burden (Hr)	6240
Previously approved burden	
Annual Number of Responses	27720
Annual Time Burden (Hr)	13860
Total change due to PRA violation	
Annual Number of Responses	40,200
Annual Time Burden (Hr)	20,100

B. There should be no cost to respondents.

13. There is no total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers.
14. Total annual cost to the Federal Government per annum (3% of 40,200 forms)

Printing <i>(includes cost of paper, ink, printing labor)</i>	\$ 975
Mailing out of form to references (\$0.44 (postage cost) x 1,206 (#of mailings))	\$ 531
Return postage costs (\$0.44 (postage cost) x 1,206 (#of mailings))	\$ 531
Analyzing information and processing (see table below for calculation of labor hours)	\$ 103,556
<hr/> TOTAL per annum	<hr/> \$ 105,593

Number of reference forms reviewed in Interview Phase by a Recruiter 457
(13,400 completed applications x 3 reference forms each / 88 Recruiters)

Average amount of time a Recruiter reviews reference forms 23 hours
(457 forms x 3 minutes per form / 60 minutes)

Labor cost for review by all Recruiter \$46992
(23 hours / 2087 hours per year = 0.01 of a Recruiters' annual salary
0.01 of a Recruiters' salary x \$53,350 annual salary of a Recruiter
\$534 x 88 Recruiters)

Number of applications moved to Placement Assistants for Nomination 8710
(65% x 13,400 applications)

Amount of time a Placement Assistant screens reference forms 87 hours
(8710 applicants x 3 references each / 10 Placement Assistants
2613 reference forms x 2 minutes per form / 60 minutes)

Labor cost for screening by Placement Assistants (PAs) \$17,060
(87 hrs / 2087 hrs per year = 0.04 of a PAs' annual salary
0.04 of a PAs' annual salary x \$42,637 annual salary of a PA
\$1706 x 10 PAs)

Amount of time a Placement Officer follow up with references (if needed) 104 hours
(5% of annual labor hours x 2087 hrs = 104 hrs)

Labor cost for follow up with references by Placement Officers (POs) \$39,504
(104 hrs / 2087 hrs = 0.05 annual salary of a PO
0.05 of a PO annual salary x 65,840 annual salary of a PO
\$3292 x 12 POs)

TOTAL LABOR HOURS **\$103,556**

15. Due to an increasing number of volunteer applicants; the number of reference forms sent out has increased. The annual burden hour has also increased in correlation to the increase in references.
16. This information will not be published.
17. N/A
18. A. The agency is able to certify compliance with all provisions under Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.

Section B: Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

The collection of information does not employ statistical methods.