

United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency
Supporting Statement
OMB Number 0560-0232
Volunteer Programs

Purpose

FSA is requesting for an extension without change on this currently approved information collection.

Background

Section 1526 of the Food and Agriculture Action of 1981 [7 U.S.C. 2272] permits the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to use volunteers to perform a wide range of activities to carry out the programs of or supported by of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. 5 U.S.C. 3111 [as affected by Part 308 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations] grants agencies the authority to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in non-pay status. Documentation of service performed without compensation by persons who do not receive Federal appointment is required by Office of Personnel Management.

Volunteers are permitted to perform a wide range of activities to carry out programs of or supported by the Agency. While serving as an FFAS volunteer each individual is subject to the same responsibilities and guidelines for conduct to which Federal employees are expected to adhere. These program(s) will provide a valuable service to the Agencies while allowing the participants to receive training, supervision and work experience.

Agencies are responsible for determining how to document volunteer appointments (e.g., self-developed forms, letters, etc. However, agencies must clearly inform volunteers of the nature of their appointment with respect to service credit for leave or other employee benefits. Agencies can not use an Official Personnel Folder for this purpose.

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Section 1526 of the Food and Agriculture Action of 1981 [7 U.S.C. 2272] permits the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to use volunteers to perform a wide range of activities to carry out the programs of or supported by of the Department of Agriculture. 5 U.S.C. 3111 [as affected by Part 308 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations] grants agencies the authority to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in non-pay status. The Office of Personnel Management's, Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 33 and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Departmental Regulation 4230-1 requires documentation of

service performed without compensation by persons who do not receive Federal appointment. A copy of Chapter 33 and DR 4230-1 is included in this submission. This information collection is necessary in order to continue implementation of the programs, which allows Agencies to use volunteers to perform a wide range of activities to carry out the programs of or supported by the Agency.

2. Indicate how, by whom and for what purpose the information is to be used.

The programs will be used by FFAS in Washington, DC, State, Local and Regional Offices. Those applicants who are accepted for the Volunteer Programs will complete the “Service Agreement and Attendance Record”. The Agency will use the recording information to respond to the Department of Agriculture and the Office of Personnel’s request for information on Agency Volunteers. The following is a list of the collections and the estimated burden associated with each. A breakdown of burden hours for forms covered under existing collections is also listed on the attached FSA-85-1.

Student Volunteer Program Service Agreement: Required by the Agency to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The volunteer reviews this form and signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program’s conditions of service. This service agreement is only used for students without sponsorship. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

Individual Volunteer Program Service Agreement: Required by the Agency to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The volunteer reviews this form and signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program’s conditions of service. This service agreement is only used for individuals without sponsorship. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

Sponsored Volunteer Program Service Agreement: Required by the Agency to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The sponsoring organization and the volunteer reviews this form and signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program’s conditions of service. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

Volunteer Attendance Record: Required by the Agency to document time and attendance of the volunteer. Each volunteer completes top portion of this form and documents work dates, arrival and departure times, number of hours worked and duty location. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

The Volunteer Programs also require volunteers to read, sign and date a “Program Service Agreement” explaining the conditions or limitation of acceptance of assignments. The “Service Agreement” will serve as the volunteer’s official record of appointment of service. The “Attendance Record” will serve as the volunteer’s official attendance documentation. It is estimated that 60 respondents will be accepted into this program.

3. Use of information technology.

These forms are available on e-Forms website for public access to complete and print. Documents require original signatures therefore customers are required to mail or deliver completed documents to appropriate office. e-Forms website is at <http://www.forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/formsearchservlet>

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

The four forms may be used by other entities. However, FSA Human Resources Division has reviewed the information required under this collection to ensure that no extraneous or unnecessary duplicate information is being collected.

5. Methods to minimize burden on small business or other small entities.

The forms for this program are required of all volunteers (students, individuals and/or sponsored organizations). There is no additional burden being placed on a business of any particular size. FSA would be unable to document service performed without compensation by persons in the program if this information were not collected for each volunteer.

6. Consequences if information collection is less frequent.

The information collections will be required of all volunteers accepted into the program. The requirements have been kept to the minimum necessary to ensure accurate and reliable data. However, if the information were not collected for each volunteer, FSA would be unable to document service performed without compensation by persons in the program.

7. Special Circumstances.

- a. requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;

Collection of volunteer service agreement information will be required once each time they are accepted into the program. Volunteer attendance record will be required completion every time a volunteer reports to duty. Information collection from the participating employing office will be required each fiscal year.

- b. requiring respondents to prepare written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it.

Volunteer attendance record will require completion every time a volunteer report to duty. There are no other information collection requirements that

require reporting on more than a quarterly basis.

- c. requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;

This information collection requires only an original document.

- d. requiring respondents to retain records, other than health medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;

There are no such requirements.

- e. in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;

There are no such requirements.

- f. that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or

There are no such requirements.

- g. requiring respondents to submit propriety trade secret or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

There are no such requirements.

8. Federal Register notice, summarization of comments and consultation with persons outside the agency.

A Notice was published in the Federal Register for comment on February 7, 2008 and the comment period ended April 7, 2008. No comments were received.

FSA has consulted with the following individuals concerning this collection:

Mrs. Karen W. Johnson
9906 Jacqueline Drive
Fort Washington, MD 20744

Ms. Avon Hough
14263 Oxford Drive
Laurel, MD 20707

Ms. Angela Lucas
412 Hurtt Place
Fort Washington, MD 20744

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

Respondents will not receive payment, gift or remuneration for their responses.

10. Confidentiality provided to respondents.

All of the information collected by FSA will be treated as confidential in compliance with the Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

11. Questions of sensitive nature.

It is not expected that any questions on the required forms will be of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of burden.

See the attached Form FSA-85-1 for burden breakdown. The estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information is as follows:

Total number of respondents: 60

Total time per average response: .25 hour

Total travel time per respondent: 1 hour

Total annual burden hours: 30

Respondents cost per hour: \$12.28 (Average pay rate – Program will include the use of individuals working in a variety of positions which include clerical, professional and administrative professions.)

Total annual respondent cost: \$196.41

13. Total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers.

There is not capital or start-up cost associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.

Summary of annualized cost to the Federal Government:

The cost for creation and distribution of forms is \$.07 per form. Applications will be processed by Administrative Personnel, whose base hourly rate of \$27.65 (GS-12 step 1)

will be used in this calculation. The Administrative Personnel will review the application materials for approximately 2 hours to determine selection. An estimated 20 applications will be processed.

2 hours X 27.65/hr X 20 applications x .07 per form = \$7,742.00

It is expected that \$7,742.00 will be the annualized cost to the Federal Government.

15. Reason for changes in burden.

There are no changes to this information collection since the last OMB approval.

16. Tabulation, analysis, and publication plans.

There are no plans to publish the results of the information collected and no public disclosure of the information is anticipated.

16. Reason display of expiration date of OMB approval is inappropriate.

There are no reasons why display of the expiration date is not appropriate.

17. Exceptions to 83-1 certification statement.

There are no exceptions to this certification statement.

18. How is this information collection related to the Customer Service Center?

This information is collected through State, Local and Regional Offices. The collection is required from the public for use by Washington, DC office to respond to the Department of Agriculture and the Office of Personnel's request for information on Agency Volunteers.