

**Peace Corps
Volunteer Recruitment and Selection
Peace Corps Volunteer Application Form
OMB Control Number 0420-0005
Supporting Statement**

Section A: Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

The Peace Corps Act, in 22 U.S.C. 2504(a), gives the Peace Corps the authority to set the terms and conditions for enrollment of individuals as Peace Corps Volunteers. Further description of those terms and conditions, in 22 CFR Part 305, include the need for particular skills, experience, medical condition, and other characteristics.

The Peace Corps Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) is responsible for recruiting individuals to serve in the Peace Corps. The Volunteer Application is the mechanism by which interested members of the public apply to serve in the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps uses the Peace Corps Application as the tool to collect information from the applicant that it will use to determine whether an individual has the qualifications to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

The Peace Corps Volunteer Application is divided into several sections:

- Peace Corps Mission and Core Expectations
- Reasons for applying

These questions are aimed at collecting information the Peace Corps can use to target future recruitment activities.

- Contact Information

This information is collected to ensure that the Peace Corps is able to contact applicants during the application process.

- Eligibility

This section includes questions aimed at collecting information on a number of subjects that are relevant to determining whether applicants have the proper qualifications for Peace Corps service:

Information about applicants' marital and family status and plans to serve with or without their spouse are necessary for purposes of assignment and placement; the questions are also designed to ensure that applicants have considered the many complicated issues that can arise for married couples serving as Peace Corps Volunteers.

Information about applicants' existing financial and other legal obligations is necessary to ensure that such obligations can be satisfied while an applicant serves overseas for two years.

Information about an applicant's military history is necessary to ensure that there are no inconsistent obligations.

Information about applicants' legal/criminal history is necessary to ensure that they have no outstanding obligations or responsibilities to the justice system, and for purposes of the statutorily required background check, per 22 USC § 2519.

Information about drug and alcohol use is necessary to evaluate applicants' maturity and ability to effectively represent the United States overseas while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Information about an applicant's intelligence background is necessary to implement the Peace Corps' longstanding policy of maintaining separation between itself and agencies engaging in intelligence activities.

- Skills and Experience

This section includes questions about the applicants' employment, education, and other volunteer, community or practical experience history and language skill levels. This information is used to determine whether the applicants have adequate skills and experience, and to determine the types of volunteer positions to which applicants could be assigned.

- Interest and Availability

This section asks about the geographic areas and assignment areas applicants are interested in, as well as the timing of their availability. This information is used in determining appropriate placements for applicants.

- References

The information from references is necessary to provide outside verification of qualifications.

- Essay Questions

The two essay questions are aimed at providing the Peace Corps with information about two key qualifications: sincere desire to serve and understanding and/or experience about living in and adapting to other cultures.

- Attachments

This section lists the required documentation related to the questions described above.

- Request to Racial and Ethnic Data (optional)

This information is used for statistical purposes only.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The information collected by the Volunteer Application is used by the Peace Corps to collect essential information from individual applicants, including technical and language skills, and availability for Peace Corps service. The information is used by the Peace Corps Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) in its assessment of an individual's qualifications to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer, including practical and cross-cultural experience, maturity, motivation and commitment. Selection for Peace Corps service is based on that assessment.

The Peace Corps has collected similar information for many years. The Peace Corps has historically received more applications than it has Peace Corps Volunteer positions to fill. The information in the application has been (and is being) used by VRS staff to evaluate the qualifications of applicants and to make selection decisions.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

The Volunteer Application is primarily an electronic document accessed through the Peace Corps website. Volunteers apply on-line. The information provided by the applicant is collected electronically and becomes part of the applicant's record. Details on the Peace Corps' Privacy Impact Assessment are attached to this document, and are available on the Peace Corps website at www.peacecorps.gov/foia. Applicant data captured in the Peace Corps Application is stored in a Type 2 data center, in compliance with SAS 70 Type II.

Entire sections of the Volunteer Application were previously created by applicants and collected by Peace Corps staff only in hard copy. The Volunteer Application now employs the use of information technology to make the transmission and collection of that data electronic, reducing time for applicants and the use of agency resources. Drop-down and cascading menus will also reduce burden to applicants and staff because it will allow for the uniform indication of select names, titles, universities, etc. Staff will no longer spend time reconciling individual applicants' selections that could otherwise be stated in a variety of ways (for example, OSU versus Ohio State University versus The Ohio State University). In addition, the proposed application is designed to make responses easier by allowing individual applicants to easily skip sections that are not applicable to them. It also is designed to improve the quality of the information collected, by ensuring that the same information is received from all applicants.

For those people who do not want to or who cannot submit the application electronically, a hard copy version of the application will be available.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

The Application is the only document of its type used by the Peace Corps and is the initial interaction with individuals interested in applying to the Peace Corps. The current Peace Corps Application is OMB-approved through November of 2012 but the Peace Corps will no longer use that application once the revised version is approved.

Peace Corps Response is a separate Peace Corps-related volunteer opportunity for short-term volunteer assignments. These assignments are typically reserved only for applicants who had previously served as Peace Corps Volunteers and most assignments are 3-6 months in duration. Peace Corps Response has a separate application with questions that are better suited or more appropriate for applicants entering short-term assignments than questions in the Peace Corps Volunteer application that are meant to assess someone's qualifications for 27-month assignments.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

NA

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Countries overseas request the Peace Corps to provide particular types of trained Volunteers to serve in their countries. Those Peace Corps Volunteers represent the United States in those countries overseas. In order to ensure that the applicants selected as Volunteers have the appropriate skills, experience and other qualifications from among the many individuals interested in Peace Corps service, the Peace Corps uses the Volunteer Application as the mechanism to collect information, to select the best Volunteers, and to identify the assignments in the best interests of the Volunteers, Peace Corps, and the host countries.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- * requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- * requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- * requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- * requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**
- * 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;**
- * requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**

*** 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**
*** requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, 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.**

No special circumstances exist that require the information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

The agency's notice was published in the Federal Register on July 11, 2011, 76 FR 40755. The Peace Corps received one comment in response to its 60 day Federal Register notice. The EEOC commented that questions about criminal history may not be used in a manner that is not "job related [or] consistent with business necessity. The EEOC states that if the Peace Corps plans to exclude applicants because of convictions no matter when they occurred, it is unlikely that the Peace Corps' decision would be job related. The EEOC requests that the Peace Corps ensure that the conviction information is related to "the specific positions in question" and that the conviction has occurred within the last seven years.

The EEOC also noted that arrest records “are unreliable indicators of guilt for several reasons,” since an arrest is not a conviction and the arrest record may be inaccurate. So the EEOC recommends limiting arrest record information to arrests and charges that are related to the specific position in question.

The Peace Corps notes that an indication that an applicant has an arrest or conviction is never an automatic screen out for a Volunteer applicant. But it is a source of information about applicants, who, if they become Volunteers, will go overseas as representatives of the United States Government twenty-four hours a day during their assignments in developing countries. In most circumstances, a Volunteer’s assignment is to live unsupervised in a community distant from the Peace Corps’ country offices. In light of this, when the Peace Corps receives arrest or conviction information from an applicant, the Peace Corps considers the nature of the offense, how long ago it occurred, and what the applicant did in the interim. The Peace Corps needs to be sure before sending anyone overseas that he or she has no outstanding legal obligations regardless of when the legal obligation arose. It’s important to note that there is only one position for applicants to apply to – Peace Corps Volunteer – rather than individual job postings with individual eligibility requirements.

Additionally, if an applicant has an arrest or conviction within the past year, the Peace Corps may delay consideration of the application until a year has passed since the arrest or conviction, depending on what the offense was. The Peace Corps will not automatically reject the applicant on that basis. However, if an applicant is eventually rejected on the basis of any arrest or conviction, he or she always has the opportunity to appeal the decision and/or to reapply at a later date.

Finally, the Peace Corps crosschecks the arrest and conviction information that an applicant provides against information that the Peace Corps receives through the National Agency Check. If the Peace Corps has a basis for concluding that an applicant intentionally left off arrest or conviction information that should have been included, then the Peace Corps may reject an applicant for non-disclosure per 22 CFR § 305.2(i).

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees.

There is no payment of gift provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

No assurance of confidentiality beyond that provided by the Privacy Act is provided to respondents. Please see the attached Privacy Impact Assessment for more detailed information.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

The Peace Corps asks the following questions which can be considered of a sensitive nature. The Peace Corps believes that these questions allow the agency to accurately determine whether applicants are properly motivated, committed to the Peace Corps, and emotionally mature enough for 27 months of service. They also provide applicants with the opportunity to consider some of the challenges associated with Peace Corps service. In addition, these questions provide opportunities for the Peace Corps to best inform individual applicants on the realities of Peace Corps service, including potential challenges, based on their marital status, existing financial obligations, etc. Some of these questions also make it possible for Peace Corps to determine whether the applicant might be neglecting legal responsibilities while serving as a Volunteer.

- Select your current marital status.
- How long have you been married? Have you ever been apart during your marriage? If so, how long? What impact did this have on your marriage?
- What impact do you expect a 27-month separation will have on your marriage?
- How do you expect to communicate with each other? How often, and by what means? How do you plan to make important decisions about your future and family while in the Peace Corps?
- What are your expectations of seeing each other during the 27-months of Peace Corps service?
- What do you view as the biggest challenges Peace Corps service will present to you as a couple? Have you confronted similar challenges in your relationship in the past? If so, how did you overcome them? If not, what relevant experience have you shared as a couple that will be helpful in meeting these challenges?
- What are your expectations about serving in the Peace Corps as individuals and as a couple? What are your expectations about serving in the Peace Corps as individuals and as a couple?
- Couples must be prepared to live and train in separate communities during the three-month pre-service training, as couples typically serve in different Assignment Areas requiring separate trainings in community-based locations. Additionally, couples must be prepared to endure periods of separation during service due to service-related duties, medical issues, etc. Such periods of separation may be difficult for newly married couples, as well as more

established couples. Please describe how you think you would cope with separation from your spouse during pre-service training, as well as during your service, while keeping in mind communication options may be extremely limited even within your country of service.

- Upon completion of pre-service training, couples will be placed in the same community and share a household together. Typically, such households will have 2-3 small rooms, although some may be limited to one small hut or living space. Living quarters may feel cramped at times in comparison to housing standards in the United States. Additionally, many couples will find they share workspace and spend a significant amount of time together while collaborating on community work activities. At times, it may be difficult for individuals in a couple to find adequate time, or space, where they can be alone. Please describe how you think you may cope with living in close quarters with your spouse, and how you may cope with limited options for spending time alone.
- Many cultures are characterized by clearly defined gender roles that differ from those in the U.S. How do you believe you will deal with situations that may cause strain on you as an individual, and on your relationship? For example, the credit for a wife's work may be attributed to her husband, or a husband may be teased for washing dishes or clothes, as this is considered "women's work."
- Date of divorce, legal separation or death
- Are any persons partially or totally dependent upon you for support, whether or not they are living with you?
- Name of Child, Address of Child, Date of Birth of dependent children.
- Do you have any financial obligations, including student loans?
- Amount, Type and Description of Financial Obligations.
- Applicants with any alcohol or drug-related citations, arrest, or convictions in their legal history will not have their application considered for Peace Corps service until one year has passed from the date of arrest or conviction, whichever is later. Have you had any alcohol or drug related citations, arrests or convictions within the past year?
- Have you ever been found guilty of an offense under section 404 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 844), while under the age of 21?
- Have you ever been cited for, arrested, charged with, or convicted of any offense(s)? Exclude traffic fines less than \$300 unless the violation was alcohol and/or drug related.
- Are there currently any charges or probation pending against you for any criminal offense?
- Have you ever been subject to a court martial or other disciplinary proceedings under the Uniform Code of Military Justice? (Include non-judicial, Captain's mast, etc.)
- Are you currently a party in a civil suit?
- Are you expected to be a witness in a court or other proceeding during the time you would be serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer?
- Have you or a family member ever been employed by or connected with an intelligence agency, or engaged in intelligence activity or related work?
- Are you currently applying for employment with an intelligence agency or other

organization associated with intelligence activities?

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should: * Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.

*** If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**

*** Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 13.**

a. Estimated number of respondents	14,000
b. Estimated average burden per response	6 hours
c. Frequency of response	one time
d. Annual reporting burden	84,000 hours
e. Number of applications received electronically (99%)	13,860
f. Number of applications received in hard copy (1%)	140

The average burden per response was estimated using feedback from a small (less than 10) sample population. The estimated total reporting burden is simply the estimated number of respondents multiplied by the estimated average burden per response.

The average reporting burden per section was estimated using feedback from a small (less than 10) sample population. We estimate that it will take more than one hour for each applicant to complete the Essay Questions section of the Volunteer Application. We further estimate that it will take between four and five hours total for each applicant to complete the remaining sections of the Volunteer Application.

If an application is completed in hard copy, the data from the application will be inputted into Peace Corps' system by staff, and the original copy of the application will be scanned and attached to the applicant's electronic record.

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

*** The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.**

*** If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collections services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.**

*** Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

There will be no cost to respondents.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies may also aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

Estimate of the annualized cost to Federal Government:

Printing (1% of 14,000 applications) (includes cost of paper, ink, printing labor)	\$ 100
Mailing out of application to 1% of respondents \$0.88 (postage cost) x 140 (#of mailings)	\$ 123
Return postage costs (\$0.88 (postage cost) x 140 (#of mailings))	\$ 123
Analyzing information and processing (see table below for calculation of labor hours)	\$ 259,218
TOTAL per annum	\$ 260,126

Number of applications reviewed in Interview Phase by Recruiter 14,000

Amount of time Recruiters review applications 2,333 hours

((10 minutes per application x 14,000 applications) / 60 minutes)

Labor cost for review by Recruiters \$47,662

(2,333 hrs / 2087 hrs per year = 1.12 of a Recruiters' average annual salary

1.12 of Recruiters' salary * \$42,637 average annual salary of a Recruiter)

Number of applications moved to Placement Office after Nomination 9,100

(65% * 14,000 applications)

Number of applications reviewed by Placement Assistants 6,370

(70% * 9,100 applications)

Amount of time Placement Assistants review applications 6,370 hours

(6,370 applications * 60 minutes per application = 382,200 min.

382,200 min. / 60 minutes)

Labor cost for review by Placement Assistants (PAs) \$130,138

(6,370 hrs / 2087 hrs per year = 3.05 of a PAs' average annual salary

3.05 of PAs' average annual salary * \$42,637 annual salary of a PA)

Amount of time Placement Officers review applications 3,185 hours

(6,370 applications * 30 minutes per application = 191,100 min.

191,100 min. / 60 minutes)

Labor cost for review by Placement Officers (POs) \$81,418

3,185 hrs / 2087 hrs = 1.53 annual salary of a (POs)

1.53 of (POs) average annual salary * \$53,350 average annual salary of a PO)

TOTAL LABOR HOURS \$259,218

Capital and start-up cost estimate to the Peace Corps: \$496,500.00 per year.

This figure contains costs associated with the annualized total capital and start-up expenses (\$324,000.00) as well as the annual maintenance costs to the Peace Corps from its contractor (\$172,500.00). The capital and start-up costs include both payments to the contractor to design/develop/test and deploy the application as well as costs of Peace Corps employees. The annual operation and maintenance costs include all upgrades, hosting by the vendor, and Peace Corps staff costs.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

The Volunteer Application Form will be electronic, which will mean considerable savings in personnel costs. There will be a significant reduction in expenses from the elimination of printing, mailing and hard copy storage of the Volunteer Application. The revised version of the Volunteer Application Form includes new and updated text, including the inclusion of questions that recruiters may have in the past collected on an ad hoc basis outside of the Volunteer Application, and new functionality including drop-down and cascading menus.

Any changes or adjustments are a result of three factors. 1) Some salaries have been recalculated since the previous OMB submission. 2) The number of applications used to calculate burden reflects the number of applications that have typically been completed. 3) The reporting burden on applicants has been reduced from 8 hours per response to 6 hours per response because individual applicants will now be able to skip sections that are not applicable to them. 4) Capital and start-up costs were not associated with the previous Volunteer application.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

The information collected will not be quantified and/or published.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

NA

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.

NA

Section B: Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

This collection of information does not employ statistical methods.