

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**  
**Farm Service Agency (FSA)**  
**Supporting Statement**  
**OMB Number 0560-0232**  
**Volunteer Programs**

Purpose

FSA is requesting an extension with a revision of the currently approved information collection.

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 USDA. Each USDA agency is granted with the authority to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in non-pay status. USDA, Departmental Regulation-4230-1 requires documentation of service performed without compensation by persons who do not receive Federal appointment. This information collection request 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.

Volunteers are permitted to perform a wide range of activities to carry out programs of or supported by the Agency. While serving as Farm Service Agency (FSA) or Risk Management Agency (RMA) 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.

FSA Human Resource is responsible for determining how to document volunteer appointments (for examples, self-developed forms, letters, and so on). However, agencies must clearly inform volunteers of the nature of their appointment with respect to service credit for leave or other employee benefits. Agencies cannot use an official personnel folder for this purpose.

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

Those applicants who are accepted in the programs will complete the “Service Agreement and Attendance Record”. The programs will be used by FSA and RMA in Washington, DC, State, Local and Regional Offices. FSA and RMA will use the recorded information to respond to requests for information on volunteers from the USDA Office of Human Resources Management.

**Student Volunteer Program Service Agreement (AD-2022)** is used to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The volunteer reviews this form, 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. It is estimated 0.25 hours to complete the agreement.

**Individual Volunteer Program Service Agreement (AD-2023)** is used to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The volunteer reviews this form, 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. It is estimated 0.25 hours to complete the individual agreement.

**Sponsored Volunteer Program Service Agreement (AD-2024)** is used to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The sponsoring organization and the volunteer reviews this form, signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program's conditions of service. It is estimated 0.25 hours to complete the agreement.

**Volunteer Attendance Record (AD-2025)** is used 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. It is estimated 0.25 hours to complete the attendance record. The "Attendance Record" will serve as the volunteer's official attendance documentation.

**Volunteer Program Report (AD-2052)** is used to identify mid-year and annual volunteer hours and demographics. It is estimated 0.25 hours to complete the report.

The Human Resources staff requires 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 records of appointment of service.

The estimated number of respondents are 20 in this collection.

### **3. Use of information technology.**

Documents require signatures before customers will be required to send or deliver completed documents to appropriate office. The e-Forms website is at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eForms/welcomeAction.do?Home>.

### **4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

In compliance with OMB requirements, FSA is requesting approval of four forms which may be used by other entities. The 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 sponsored organizations). There is no additional burden being placed on a business of any particular size. FSA and RMA 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;

Volunteer attendance record will require 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 reports 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.**

The notice was published in the Federal Register (85 FR 68285) for public comment on October 28, 2020. The comment period ended on December 28, 2020. There were 1 comment received but it was submitted as blank.

FSA has consulted with the following individuals concerning the collection:

Tim Kinney – timothy.kinney@usda.gov

Alan Bengé – alan.benge@usda.gov

Toni Flax – toni.flax@usda.gov

#### **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. The social security number and date of birth blocks are not contained in the forms.

#### **11. Questions of sensitive nature.**

It is not expected that any questions on the required forms will be of a sensitive nature. The social security number and date of birth blocks are not included in the form.

#### **12. Estimate of burden.**

See the attached Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements sheet for the burden breakdown. The estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information is as follows:

Estimated Total number of respondents: 20.

Estimated Total Number per Respondent: 4.

Estimated Total Annual Responses: 80.

Estimated Average time Per Response: 0.25 hour.

Total annual burden hours: 20.

Respondent cost per hour was derived by using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2020, 11-9013 Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers. The U.S. mean household income, as measured by the Bureau of Labor, is \$41.35. Fringe benefits for all private industry workers are an additional 29.9 percent, or \$12.36, resulting in a total of \$53.71 per hour. The estimated cost is \$1,074.00 (\$53.71 x 20 burden hours).

Total annual respondent cost: \$1,074.00.

**13. Total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers.**

There are not capital or start-up cost associated with the information collection request.

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

**Summary of annualized cost to the Federal Government:**

Applications will be processed by Administrative Personnel, whose hourly rate of \$41.79 (GS-12 step 1, January 2021) will be used in this calculation. Fringe benefits for all government workers are an additional 31 percent, or \$8.43, resulting in a total of \$35.64 per hour. 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 50.217/hr x 20 applications = \$1,004.00.

The annualized cost to the Federal Government is \$1,004.

**15. Reason for changes in burden.**

The burden hours decreased by 10 due to the removal of travel times. The respondents go to the county offices to do regular and customary business with FSA; this means no travel

times is required specifically for the information collection and therefore, it is no longer included in the burden hour reporting

**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.**

The expiration date is being displayed in each of the form.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19  
“Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act.”**

FSA is able to certify compliance with all provision.