Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Volunteer Service Program
Security Process
Frequently Asked Questions

Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP) may accept volunteer services from students, the general public and current employees. Volunteers will follow security procedures outlined by Homeland Security Personnel Directive 12 (HPSD), which mandates that all government agencies maintain specific and consistent standards for physical and personnel identification systems. Below you will find a list of frequently asked questions pertaining to volunteering and the background/security process.

Q	Does the policy for fingerprinting and background checks apply to ALL volunteers?
A	Yes. Any person in any capacity supporting the USDA will be vetted and required to submit background security check. The background security check will be based on the nature, sensitivity of support the volunteer will provide, and the duration of time the person will be involved with USDA, MRP. Any person volunteering in support of MRP longer than 30 days will have an eQIP initiated for the position appropriate background (i.e., NACI, Public Trust, and National Security).

Q	What about individuals who are shadowing a MRP employee for a day?
A	If the visit is for **one** day, the person may get a Visitor's Badge. If the person will be a recurring visitor, the person will be required to submit a fingerprint card for a Special Agency Check (SAC) <u>one pay period</u> in advance of the first visit.

Q	Does this include student volunteers who are participating in externships with MRP agencies?
A	Yes, the policy for background checks and fingerprinting as appropriate applies to any person volunteering in support of MRP. The level of security check will vary dependent upon the assignment and duration of time the volunteer will support the agency.

Q	What are the specific requirements for fingerprinting?
A	Fingerprints are required to run the SAC, which is utilized for sponsoring a person for access to MRP facilities, computer systems, and issuance of a LincPass, <u>if required</u>. Individuals can have the fingerprints done at one of the MRP LiveScan electronic fingerprinting sites if they are in the local geographic area or they can visit their local police station and have them done at their cost. **The volunteer will not be reimbursed the amount paid for the fingerprints**. Once the fingerprints are completed, they should be sent to: USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD HRO Personnel Security (**ATTN**: *insert name of assigned HR personnel security service provider*) 250 Marquette Avenue, STE 410 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2329 The fingerprints will remain on file with the Personnel Security office. Please note: if a LincPass/PIV card is required, the volunteer will need to pass the IT Security Rules of Behavior (ROB) test prior to having access to computer systems and building spaces. The host supervisor of the volunteer will be responsible for ensuring the Security Test is submitted to the IT Point of Contact (POC) for grading as well as ensuring the 30 Day Exemption for system access is requested during the volunteer's tenure. Follow this link to access a list of designated HR Personnel Security service providers and telephone numbers. Follow this link to access a list of LiveScan operators and locations.

Q	Is there a method to reimburse volunteers for fingerprints or are they expected to cover that expense themselves?
A	MRP has several LiveScan electronic fingerprinting sites. If a volunteer is located near one of the LiveScan stations, we recommend they have their fingerprints taken electronically, as there will be no charge for the service. Otherwise, the prospective volunteer is responsible for paying the cost of the required fingerprints if they are unable to use a LiveScan station.

Q	Can the student wait until their first day of volunteering to be finger printed so an APHIS employee can accompany him/her to pay for the fingerprinting?
A	No. The fingerprints should be completed prior to the person arriving to begin the volunteer assignment. This gives the Personnel Security staff time to run the SAC **(takes a minimum of 48 – 72 hours)** and determine if there are any issues that would prevent the person from coming onboard or getting a LincPass. The cost of fingerprinting, if any, is the volunteer's responsibility.

Q	Can the prospective volunteer get their fingerprints done at the local sheriff's office?
A	Yes. The host program POC would provide the volunteer with the fingerprint card and once completed the volunteer or the host program representative will forward the card to USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD HRO (**ATTN**: *insert name of assigned personnel security service provider*), 250 Marquette Avenue, STE 410, Minneapolis, MN 55401-2329, for processing. Follow this link to access a list of designated HR Personnel Security service providers and telephone numbers.

Q	If a volunteer resides close to a LIVESCAN station, can they come in to that station to have fingerprints taken?
A	Yes. Appointments with the LiveScan station local operators should be made in advance. The host program representative should contact the LiveScan operator directly to schedule an appointment time for the volunteer to have the fingerprints taken. Follow this link to access a list of LiveScan operators and locations.

Q **Who receives the fingerprints for processing?**

A The fingerprint cards are sent to USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD HRO Personnel Security (**Attn**: *insert name of assigned personnel security service provider*) 250 Marquette Avenue, Suite 410, Minneapolis, MN 55401 for processing and running the SAC. The fingerprints will remain on file with the HR Personnel Security office.

Q **How far in advance does the background check have to be requested?**

A The background SAC based on the fingerprints should be requested a **full pay period** in advance of the selected start date. This will allow HR Personnel Security to run the SAC (results are returned usually within 48 – 72 hours after submission) and review the results to identify any potential information that could prohibit the person from supporting the USDA through volunteerism.

Q **Do we need to wait until the volunteer service agreement and the background/security check is complete before a volunteer on boards with the Agency?**

A Yes. The volunteer service agreement approval and the background security check must be complete before a volunteer on boards with MRP. A volunteer service agreement is required for all individuals who will participate in the MRP Volunteer Service Program. The volunteer service agreement must be reviewed and confirmed approved by the MRP Volunteer Service Program Coordinator (VSPC) prior to performance of volunteer service. An email confirmation will be sent to the sponsoring program representative from the VSPC once the review is complete and the volunteer service agreement has been validated. Once the proper documents are validated and the fingerprints and the SAC has processed and is cleared by

Personnel Security, the volunteer can begin the volunteer assignment. All required documents as outlined in the Volunteer Service Program Handbook should be submitted a minimum of one full pay period in advance of the proposed start date.

For general questions about the MRP Volunteer Service Program, please contact the MRP Volunteer Service Program Coordinator at: mrp.volunteer.program@usda.gov

If you still have questions regarding the security process, all inquiries may be directed to the HR Personnel Security staff. Follow this link to access a list of designated HR Personnel Security service providers and telephone numbers.