

## **GUIDANCE ON PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF VOLUNTEER STUDENT RESEARCHERS**

### **PURPOSE:**

On occasion, undergraduate and graduate students who are not currently students at South Alabama or may have already graduated want to participate in volunteer research with a USA faculty member. This Guidance provides the process for approval of the activity. This does not apply to research activities for which USA would otherwise pay an employee to perform.

### **WHO MAY VOLUNTEER?**

- Graduate and undergraduate students enrolled at other universities or community colleges.
- High School students who are at least at the rising Junior level.
- Graduate and undergraduate students who have graduated from South Alabama but need to complete work on a project, thesis, or dissertation and presence on campus or in the field is required.

**LENGTH OF VOLUNTEER WORK:** There are no restrictions on the length of time a student may volunteer.

### **PROCESS FOR APPROVAL:**

1. Faculty member who is supervising the student must request approval in writing from the Chair and Dean of the College. The request must include:
  - a) The location the student will be working,
  - b) The days/months the student will be on-campus,
  - c) The plan for supervising the student,
  - d) A description of the research in which the student will be involved.
2. A waiver of liability must be signed by the student. A student under age 19 must have the waiver co-signed by at least one parent or legal guardian.
3. A signed, electronic copy of both forms, once approved, must be filed in the Dean's office and the Office of Research and Economic Development ([bsupchurch@southalabama.edu](mailto:bsupchurch@southalabama.edu)), and a copy provided to the student.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

The supervising PI must ensure that the student complete the required Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training found at:

<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/research/compliance/responsible-conduct/policies.html>

Successful completion of additional training is required for specific research activities involving (i) human subjects, (ii) animal care and use, and (iii) biological hazard safety. These training requirements are enforced and overseen by the appropriate institutional review committee.

Prior to beginning any research, proof of the student's citizenship must be provided. If the student is a non-US citizen, the supervising PI must ensure that the student's research or

physical presence will not violate any federal or sponsor citizenship requirements for the research, or for any other research to which the student will potentially have access.

Students who volunteer when the University is not fully open, such as during a pandemic event, must follow all regulations set forth by campus leadership including:

- A research plan approved by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.
- Completion of a Health Survey and agree to all of the requisite requirements for entrance to campus.

Volunteer students may not be on campus during a period when campus is generally closed to faculty and staff without specific approval.

Research that involves biological hazards, human or animal studies must be submitted to the IBC and IRB.

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA  
RELEASE FROM LIABILITY FOR VOLUNTEER RESEARCH**

To be signed by all participants who are 19 years of age or older. If Participant is under 19 years of age, Participant's parent or guardian must also sign this release. Participant/Guardian must each sign in the presence of one (1) witness.

**TO THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA:**

Participant has requested that he/she be allowed to conduct research in \_\_\_\_\_  
**(USA department or facility name) (hereafter "Facility") at the University of South Alabama campus**  
**from \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_ (time period) with a research focus in**  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Participant will be conducting the research in a purely voluntary capacity.** As such, **Participant/Guardian** understand that Participant is not receiving any wages from the University of South Alabama in exchange for his/her participation in this research activity, and that Participant is not considered a student, employee, agent or servant of the University of South Alabama for any purposes with regard to this research activity. Participant agrees to follow all oral or written instructions of safety, security, property protection, and other directions given to me by any USA employee or that may be posted on the premises, and Participant will also follow all applicable laboratory safety protocol, whether communicated to me or not.

In consideration of the University of South Alabama permitting Participant to conduct research in the Facility, Participant/Guardian, in full recognition and appreciation of any and all risks, hazards, or dangers inherent in this activity, including those risks specifically associated with working in the Facility to which Participant may be exposed, does hereby agree to assume all of the risks and responsibilities surrounding participation in such activity. Participant/Guardian understands that the University of South Alabama, its trustees, officers, agents, servants and employees assume and accept no liability for personal injury or loss of life or damage to personal property. Participant/Guardian understands that Participant **IS NOT** covered by any University of South Alabama liability insurance.

Participant/Guardian does for him/herself, his/her heirs, and personal representatives, hereby defend, hold harmless and indemnify, release and forever discharge the University of South Alabama, its trustees, officers, agents, servants and employees from and against any and all claims, demands and actions or causes of action on account of or resulting from my use of the Facility during the period of participation as aforesaid.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have caused this release to be signed on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT'S WITNESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT'S WITNESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF GUARDIAN  
(if Participant is under 19 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF GUARDIAN'S WITNESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF GUARDIAN

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF GUARDIAN'S WITNESS