

USF Staff Mission Integration and Community Engagement Policy

Effective Date:	January 1, 2021
Last Updated:	June 20, 2023
Responsible University Officer:	Donna Davis, Vice President and General Council
Policy Owner:	Diane Nelson, Assistant Vice President, Human Resources
Policy Contacts:	Diane Sweeney, Director of Benefits Jill Bouchard, Leave Manager

Policy Statement

In furtherance of USF's mission, to promote learning in the Jesuit Catholic tradition, USF encourages staff to volunteer and experience mission activities. Therefore, USF will provide one paid day of leave per year to participate in a USF Day of Mission Integration and Community Engagement.

Reason for Policy

As the first university in the City of San Francisco, we have a commitment to the common good of all San Francisco residents. The Jesuit tradition of higher education sees the university as a source of social transformation. Therefore, our hope is that staff are able to develop long-term reciprocal partnerships with community-based organizations as they explore their own values in relationship to the core values of the university. As an institution that values transformative solidarity and integral human development, we encourage cultural humility and discernment before, after, and during the day of Mission Integration and Community Engagement.

Who Should Read this Policy?

All full-time (.8 FTE or greater) non-collectively bargained employees, full-time employees in the Public Safety Officers Association (PSOA), full-time employees in the United Service Workers West (USWW), and full-time employees in the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU), and full-time Librarians in the USFFA are eligible to participate in a USF Day of Mission Integration and Community Engagement.

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Policy Text

This program is designed for staff who want to engage in any way to serve a community service organization or to participate in any USF sponsored spiritual retreat or mission-related activity. Participation in these programs strengthens and builds community partnerships and the USF identity while addressing community priorities and needs.

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Upon the supervisor's approval, as detailed below, eligible employees may take a maximum of one day per calendar year of paid release time for community engagement with a service or community organization or to participate in a USF sponsored spiritual retreat or mission-related activity. The length of the paid time is determined by the employee's FTE. Volunteering/mission activities do not need to be completed in one day.

Staff members wishing to participate in this program do so with the understanding that the university is granting them paid release time as personal leave to do community engagement or mission-related activities. As such, it is not a work assignment. Participating employees personally assume any risks associated with their selected service or mission activity. As such, employees will need to complete and sign a Mission Integration and Community Engagement Agreement in order to participate.

Both exempt and non-exempt participating employees must request paid release hours via USFWorks as Community Engagement/Mission Hours, at least 2 weeks in advance. Note that any time spent in community or doing mission-related activities that extends beyond an employee's normal workday is not counted as paid release time under this program. Employees are only eligible for paid release time under this program for time volunteered or served that takes place during the employee's normal workday.

Procedures

Approval for release time for specific days and times is required by the employee's immediate supervisor. Eligible staff members must make specific service day requests in writing to their supervisor at least two weeks prior to the requested time-off. Department workloads and business needs vary and will affect whether it is possible or prudent to release a staff member during a particular workday. Employees may not exceed one day of community service release time per calendar year. Employees are, of course, encouraged to volunteer for additional days but paid release time will only be provided for this one day. The employee should upload the agreement into USFWorks when requesting time off.

USF is recognized as exempt from federal income taxation as an organization described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; and as such, is prohibited from engaging in certain political activities. Due to this restriction, employees may not use community service release time when volunteering for the benefit of any candidate, political party or piece of legislation.

Related Information

Type Name and Location

USF [Time Away from USF](#)

USF [Time Off and Leave of Absence Requests Job Aid](#)

Definitions

Paid Time Off – a USF provided benefit that grants employees compensation for time away from USF for vacation, sick leave, paid family leave, holidays, bereavement leave, and other types of leaves.

Additional Contacts

Erin Brigham, Executive Director of the Joan and Ralph Lane Center for Catholic Social Thought and the Ignatian Tradition

Derick Brown, Senior Director of the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service & the Common Good

Donal Godfrey, Associate Director for Spirituality

Community Engagement Opportunities

We invite staff into this work as a way to deepen your understanding of social issues and the university's commitment to solidarity. There are many programs at USF and in the surrounding Bay Area community that provide opportunities for engagement that strengthen community partnerships and contribute to the common good.

Staff may find opportunities via:

[Volunteer Match](#)

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[Bay Area Progressives Directory](#)

[Hands On Bay Area](#)

[St. Anthony Foundation](#)

[Glide](#)

[The Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good](#): follow social media for posts that include volunteer opportunities with partner organizations.

[Engage San Francisco](#): USF's commitment to working with our neighbors in the Western Addition/ Fillmore. Follow social media for posts that include opportunities with partner organizations.

[San Francisco Education Fund](#) is always looking for long-term volunteers to work in SFUSD schools. Note: this is longer than a 1-day commitment.

Mission Integration Opportunities

The work of Mission Integration is inclusive of spirituality, community engagement, and the promotion of justice, equity, and inclusion.

[The Mission Council](#) has a menu of opportunities for faculty and staff.

[University Ministry](#) offers weekly service activities and events.

[The Lane Center](#) provides opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding and commitment to the core values of the University in relationship with their colleagues and the larger community.

Resources

For any questions, please contact Jill Bouchard, Leave of Absence Manager, at jkouchard@usfca.edu

Forms

USF Staff Mission Integration and Community Engagement Agreement

This USF Staff Mission Integration and Community Engagement Agreement should be used in all instances in which an employee is requesting a paid Day of Service or Mission.

This agreement is between the University of San Francisco and _____ (“you”), and must be approved in USFWorks by the employee’s supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the employee’s **Mission Integration and Community Engagement** work. This Agreement specifically states that the employee is taking a paid release day, such that the employee may provide service of their choice to an organization or a mission activity of their choice. The employee agrees that no services provided during the release day benefit any candidate, political party or piece of legislation.

The employee assumes all risks associated with their selected service or mission activity.

- A. We (USF and you) agree that you will serve for _____ [name of organization] on _____ [date].
- B. You understand that this service arrangement is between you and _____ [name of organization] and that USF bears no responsibility related to the voluntary or mission activity you have chosen.

UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED:

Employee Signature

Date

Print Name/Title

Responsibilities

Employee

Interested staff must follow the policy and procedure and meet required deadlines.

Supervisor

The staff member's supervisor must afford the employee time away if departmental work allows.

Administrative Office

The Office of Human Resources will oversee this policy.

President/Vice Presidents, Deans

Cabinet and LT Members will encourage supervisors to allow staff to use this paid leave if departmental duties allow.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does my service or mission work need to be in 1 day?

No. Service/mission work may be completed over multiple days.

Q: May I volunteer for my child's school or classroom?

Yes.

Q: May I volunteer at a nursing home?

Yes.

Q: I want to volunteer for a political campaign, but I have been told that that work cannot count as community engagement hours. Why not?

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Q: I do not live in the Bay Area. Does my Community Engagement have to be in the Bay Area?

No.

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Q: My colleagues and I would like to do a project together as a team-building exercise. Can we use our Community Engagement hours for that?

Yes, please refer to the websites above or any other service or mission organization of interest.

Q: Is there any associated reading or resources that I should look at before I do my community engagement? How can I prepare?

Please contact the sponsoring organization for suggested readings.

Q: Is there a workshop or place I can go to discuss community engagement?

Yes. USF offers brown bag lunches upon request with the Leo T. McCarthy Center staff where you can talk about preparing for and reflecting on community engagement