Appendix 1

Peace Corps/Ghana

Close of Service Administrative Procedures Handbook for Volunteers

April 2007

## Updated by CFO/VPS and CFO/GAP

## March 2010

Note: All specific figures should be updated for each COS group.

The horizon leans forward, offering you a new space to place new steps of change.

*—Maya Angelou*

## Abbreviations:

COS Close of Service

DOS Description of Service

HOR Home of Record

VPS Volunteer & PSC Financial Services

OHJ Overseas Health Jacket

PCV Peace Corps Volunteer

RVS Returned Volunteer Services

RPCV Returned Peace Corps Volunteer

This is pretty serious, though only for experience sake...it’ll be interesting, you bet, and I’ll look back on it someday and feel sure I did the right thing and all, but not be sure exactly why I think so; full steam ahead.

From *The Sportswriter*, by Richard Ford

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|  | **VOLUNTEER****CLOSE OF****SERVICE** |

**INTRODUCTION**

 This handbook has been prepared to assist you in the timely planning of your scheduled departure upon Close of Service (COS). While the information provided here will not answer all your questions and concerns, it is intended to address the most pertinent administrative procedures of the Peace Corps agency and Peace Corps/Ghana. You should have ample opportunity to obtain further clarification of general and specific issues before, during, and after the COS conference.

 This handbook is an attempt to pull assorted information together. It is intended as a guide. Readers are encouraged to check other authoritative sources for complete information and developments that may affect their specific cases.

 The process of COS begins early. The COS conference, the COS physical, the paperwork required by Peace Corps/Washington, and travel and medical arrangements for the trip home all take place prior to your actual close of service date. The purpose of this booklet is to make the checkout process organized and efficient for you and the Accra office.

 Please take the time to review the information contained in this handbook. Upon completion of the reading, do not hesitate to request further information. Copies of the forms you need to complete are included in the back of this manual. The forms are important—a few of them provide information needed to order your U.S. Treasury payments from Washington. Always be sure to check the Peace Corps Intranet for the most up-to-date copies of each form. There is also a checkout list detailing the matters you must handle. Use it as a guide to organize your closeout.

 Please remember that most tasks take time and leaving them to the last minute can be stressful. As you make your plans, remember that no COS is completely smooth; checks can be delayed, officials may not be in their offices, you may have too much luggage, etc. Please make yourself a loose schedule and allow time to deal with unexpected snags and delays. You’ll do great! We’re here to help. Best of luck!

Thanks.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

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| **$** | COS Entitlements, Allowances, & Money Matters |

Your COS date is very important as allowances are calculated based on this date. In brief, you will be receiving the following allowances and settling the following financial accounts prior to your departure:

1. **Living Allowance**
2. **SPA/PCPP Projects Clearance**
3. **Leave Allowance**
4. **Allotments**
5. **All in-country accounts and debts**
6. **Plane Ticket or “Cash-in-Lieu”**
7. **Readjustment Allowance- “1/3 Payment”**

**Other Financial Matters you should keep in mind:**

1. **Cashing Checks**
2. **Taxes**
3. **Student Loan Deferments/credit card payments**

**COS Date Verification**

**YOUR GROUP’S COS DATE is August 17, 2007**

During your COS conference, you should be planning for your successful conclusion of service and transition to a new stage in your life. Your current COS date represents a commitment of service that has allowed us to program effectively, allowed our partners and counterparts to plan their work with you, and to communicate that each Volunteer is committed to two years of service. However, **in exceptional circumstances**, we can consider and approve a COS date that is earlier or later than your scheduled date.

**Moving the COS forward.** Advanced COS dates (early COS) can be granted, primarily, on the basis of (a) a Volunteer’s completion of primary and secondary activities and (b) concurrence of their host country supervisors, taken together with (c) an articulated need for closing service ahead of the scheduled date. Please consult with your APCD if you think you must seek an approval for an early COS and for guidance as to the appropriateness of the request. If the request is for 30 days or less, then your APCD recommendation and country director approval will be needed. For exceptionally difficult or urgent circumstances, we can recommend an early COS date of 31–90 days to the regional director for approval.

**Moving the COS back.** An extension of service can be granted for Volunteers who have remaining work responsibilities, provide unique importance to the total program and to the overall benefit of Ghana, and have the support of their supervisor and other host country officials. PC/Ghana will also consider the Volunteer’s motivation for seeking the extension, previous conduct, quality of service to date, and the total time the Volunteer will have served as a result of the extension. *A PCV extending six (6) months or more must have medical approval from the Peace Corps medical officer.*

A Volunteer may request permission to extend service by submitting a written request for their APCD’s recommendation for approval by the country director. *For administrative and medical purposes requests for extensions should be made at least three months before the established COS date.* In unusual situations an extension request made during the last two months of a Volunteer’s service may be considered for approval by the country director, in consultation with the APCD and administrative officer.

### Living Allowance

Your final living allowance will be calculated up to the end of the month of when you COS. If you leave earlier than originally scheduled, the Peace Corps will collect the unused daily living allowance from you in cash before you depart. If a change in your COS date is approved and you remain a PCV for several days or weeks after your specified date, PC will extend your living allowance for those days.

### SPA/PCPP Projects Clearance

PCVs with SPA or PCPP projects are reminded that prior to your COS all funds must be accounted for—including the submission of receipts and other relevant documentation required for project completion. If this is not possible, please talk with your SPA/PCPP program coordinator for other arrangements. There are special procedures for transferring the project to another PCV. Be advised that your SPA/PCPP closeout is part of your required COS checkout and must be cleared and signed by the SPA/PCPP coordinator. PCPP project receipts also require AO final clearance.

### Leave Allowance

Leave allowance is issued with your living allowance. It is calculated based on your scheduled COS date. If you plan to COS early, it is possible that you may need to pay back part of your leave allowance. Allowance is given as the local currency equivalent per month of $24 ($12 for the first 15 days of the month and $12 for the remainder of month).

### Allotments

If you are making regular monthly payments from your readjustment allowance (e.g., for credit cards or student loans), be reminded that the last allotment check will be mailed during the first week of the month in which you COS. An October allotment payment would, therefore, be the last allotment for PCVs COSing on or before the last business day in October.

U.S. Saving Bonds, purchased by allotment from your readjustment allowance during your Peace Corps service, will be mailed to your HOR after final payment of your readjustment allowance. For more information on savings bonds, see [www.savingsbonds.gov](http://www.savingsbonds.gov).

### In-Country Accounts and Debts

### Bank Clearance

### Property Return

**BANK ACCOUNT:** It is your responsibility to close your bank account and clear all phone bills or other in-country accounts before departure. **Proof of closure is mandatory prior to completion of the COS process. You must present a letter from your bank or a bank statement reflecting a “Zero” balance to the admin staff before you will be allowed to COS.**

Remember, closing accounts may take time and may not be as simple as one would like. Inquire now about closeout procedures with your bank or other service providers so you are prepared! Think about the arrangements that need to be made in case bills are delayed past your departure.

**DEBTS:** You will be required to sign a “Certificate of Non-Indebtedness and Accountability” upon your departure. This is a certified statement that you have no outstanding debts in Ghana.

**PROPERTY:** You will also be asked to return all Peace Corps/Ghana property for which you were accountable to the general services officer. PC property includes medical kits, dictionaries, books, bike helmets, etc. Please begin making arrangements with your APCD, Kwame, and/or the PCVL to transport any large items (which is Peace Corps’s property) back to Accra, Tamale, or Kumasi **PRIOR TO COS**. Our current policy allows for appliances and other miscellaneous equipment, as well as textbooks and resource materials to remain at site if a Volunteer is being replaced by a new Volunteer. Volunteers are required to inventory all PC/Ghana items and complete the attached property inventory form in duplicate: one copy for submission to the GSO/admin unit; a second copy to be left with items remaining at site. Items left for an incoming PCV must be secured. Consult with your APCD or the GSO staff if you believe it would be unwise to leave property under the care of someone at site.

The following items must be returned prior to COS. If they are not, you will be responsible for reimbursing Peace Corps/Ghana for them and the cost will be deducted from your readjustment allowance:

* Medical kit (replacement value $30 USD)

You may leave the following items at your site with written confirmation from your APCD that another Volunteer will replace you at your site. Otherwise, they must also be returned to Accra.

* Water barrel (replacement value $30 USD)
* Water filter (replacement value $30 USD)

### $ Plane Ticket or “Cash-in-Lieu” $

Travel back to the U.S. may be arranged in two ways. At the COS conference you will inform the Peace Corps which option works for you. Requesting EFT payment (electronic funds transfer) or ordering plane tickets takes time, **so your decision at the COS conference is final. You must declare at the COS conference that you would like cash-in-lieu. If the forms are not returned at the conference, then you will receive a plane ticket home**.

The options are:

1. **Plane ticket to your home of record**

PC makes the reservation, purchases the ticket, and provides you with an enroute allowance of $16 USD. Plane tickets can be picked up upon completion of the COS Checklist. (PC/Ghana does not have any special arrangement to guarantee reservations. We make reservations like any other traveler and are subject to space availability.)

#### OR

1. **Cash-in-Lieu of a ticket $$$**

This money is normally deposited in your U.S. bank account (based on the banking information provided during your COS conference); or, if you do not have a U.S. bank account, it comes in the form of a U.S. dollar Treasury check for an amount equivalent to what Peace Corps would pay to purchase a one-way ticket on a U.S. carrier to your home of record (HOR). No additional costs, including en route per diem, taxi from airport to HOR, check-cashing fees or other charges are to be included. This check is picked up in the admin unit with a memo allowing you to cash the check at Standard Chartered/High Street Branch in Accra.

Fares for cash-in-lieu are calculated on the amount of money Peace Corps would pay for a ticket to your home of record, not a full fare economy ticket. Also, fares are based on the cost of a one-way ticket, to the nearest airport to your home of record.

Should you decide to receive an EFT or U.S. Treasury check in lieu of the plane ticket, you are expected to make your own travel arrangements and pay all check-cashing fees (non-reimbursable). Volunteers who elect to receive an EFT/U.S. dollar Treasury check instead of a ticket are expected to use American flag carriers for all portions of their air travel where American carriers are available, per U.S. government regulations. In acknowledgment of this regulation, each Volunteer must sign the “Agreement to Fly American Flag Carriers for Return to Home of Record.” The Volunteer is solely liable for any infringement of this travel regulation.

Volunteers are responsible for the packing and shipment of all personal effects. The Peace Corps will assume no responsibility for accompanied or unaccompanied baggage, sea freight, etc., which is damaged, stolen, or lost. Volunteers are required to submit any claims directly to the carrier or, if applicable, to their insurance company.

Post-COS Travel Itinerary

Volunteers are requested to provide a projected travel itinerary and email contact information prior to departure. Family or friends may try to contact us in case of an emergency.

**Readjustment Allowance—“1/3 Payment” & “2/3 Payment”**

Volunteer readjustment allowance has been accruing at the rate of $225.00 per month from the first day of your staging event. This allowance is subject to deductions for federal income tax FICA (which is Social Security and Medicare), and life insurance.

Your readjustment allowance accrues for each month of service, and is pro-rated for any partial months of service (LWOA, EOD/COS dates). Your readjustment allowance is reported as income annually (on your W-2 form). If you have no other income than your Peace Corps living allowance and readjustment allowance income, you will be below the base salary level required to pay federal income taxes. Group life insurance premiums are also deducted unless you waived this insurance on the registration form that you submitted during staging. Also note, your net readjustment allowance might be reduced if any allotments or withdrawals were requested over the course of your service (credit card/loan payments/savings bond allotments).

**The 1/3rd:** You will receive 1/3 of your readjustment allowance at COS in the form of a U.S. Treasury check, or an electronic funds transfer (EFT) into your bank account at home. The remainder of your RA will be forwarded to the address in the United States that you specify (but it must be a U.S. address), or EFTed into your bank account. If you choose EFT for the 1/3, your 2/3s will also be EFTed. In the case of 1/3 RA check, it will be held by the admin unit until all COS requirements are met (a completed COS Checklist).

Note. If the 1/3 RA check is cashed and the money is lost or stolen, the Volunteer cannot be reimbursed for the loss. For this reason, PC/Ghana will not release the “1/3 Check” until right before your departure. Any unusual or dire circumstances requiring a PCV to request an early release of this check should be communicated to the country director and administrative officer. We strongly urge PCVs not to take the “Cash-in-Lieu Check” before you absolutely need it to pay for your tickets. Again, if the cash is lost or stolen, Peace Corps WILL NOT reimburse you. If you lose the 1/3 check, a report must be filed, the check must be canceled, and a new check ordered and sent to you at your HOR. This process has been known to take several months.

**The Final 2/3rds :**Within two business days of your actual COS date, Peace Corps/Ghana sends an official communication, including your COS date, mailing address, and possible RA deductions for CorpsCare, etc, to Peace Corps/Washington. With the information contained in this communication, PC/Washington begins to process the final two-thirds readjustment allowance paperwork. Your final 2/3 readjustment payment will either be EFTed to your bank account or physically mailed from the U.S. Department of the Treasury within four weeks of COS. This check will be sent to the address you specify at COS.

### $$Cashing Checks $$$

*The Standard Chartered High Street branch in Accra will cash U.S. Treasury checks into U.S. dollars, with a letter of request from the admin unit. Standard Chartered can also issue American Express traveler’s checks. PC/Ghana is not responsible for any transaction fees associated with cashing checks or in issuing traveler’s checks.* ***Be courteous and kind at the bank!*** *Bring a book and expect this transaction to take time. How you treat the bank staff affects how the bank staff will treat your fellow PCVs.*

### Tax Information—Save This Info!

Volunteer and PSC Financial Services (VPS) will send a copy of your W-2 earnings statement for your readjustment allowance directly to your Home of Record. Be sure to file it with your taxes. In order to figure out your in-country taxable income, please visit the following page on the Peace Corps website, and select the link for the current Tax Guide under “Tax Information for Peace Corps Trainees, Volunteers, and returned Volunteers”: ([www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=pchq.Policies.docs](http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=pchq.Policies.docs)).

If you have changed your home address since you departed for staging in the U.S., please be sure to go to the Peace Corps website and change your information prior to December 1, so your W-2 forms will be sent to the correct address.

**Deferment of Student Loans**

Pursuant to the deferment eligibility rules mandated by the Department for Peace Corps Volunteers, you are only eligible for loan deferment if you are actively serving.

You (or your Power of Attorney) are completely responsible for your loans. All matters of deferment, payment, reactivation, and cancellation of loans following your service are your responsibility. Please note that Peace Corps does not contact lenders on your behalf. If payments on educational loans were deferred while you were a PCV, you are responsible for notifying the lender(s) of your completion of Peace Corps service.

If your Perkins loan is eligible for partial cancellation, you will need to contact the Volunteer certification specialist at certifications@peacecorps.gov (or 1.800.424.8580, ext. 1770) in order to obtain this certification. You are responsible for contacting your lender for any forms that they may require for this process. After the requested information has been submitted to your lender, you must follow up with your lender to determine the status of your request.

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**Peace Corps Identification Card**

Peace Corps Volunteer identification cards are government property and must be returned. Volunteers who would like to keep their I.D. card as a souvenir can have it invalidated by PC/Ghana (admin unit) and returned.

**Passport**

Volunteer “no fee” passports are valid for 90 (ninety) days after official COS date (regardless of the actual passport expiration date listed in the passport). If you do not plan to return to the United States within the 90-day period, you should apply at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate for a regular tourist passport several weeks in advance.

If you have a tourist passport valid for travel at the time your service ends, as well as a Peace Corps “no fee” passport, you may retain the Peace Corps passport as a souvenir of your service. Volunteers who return to the United States on their Peace Corps passport may also retain it when their travel is complete. This can be used as proof of U.S. citizenship when applying for a passport in the future. Please do not send your passport to Peace Corps/Washington. If you apply for a new passport of any kind, you must turn in your Peace Corps passport to the office or embassy where you are applying for the new passport. The Peace Corps passport will be canceled and returned to you.

For those electing to travel after their COS, it is a good idea to have a photocopy made of your passport and WHO card and keep it separate from the original.

### WHO Card

The World Health Organization (WHO) card is a record of your immunization and should be kept for your records. This card is also necessary to prevent additional immunizations when you re-enter the U.S. or travel to other countries. Please get your WHO card from the medical unit prior to COS.

**Former Volunteers’ Claims For Unemployment Compensation**

Pursuant to a ruling by the Solicitor of the Labor Department, former Volunteers are not eligible for federal unemployment compensation. States will *not* credit Peace Corps service in determining compensation for any unemployment claim.

**Forwarding of Volunteer Mail**

PC/Ghana is **not responsible for forwarding mail** or packages to Volunteers after they COS. However, as a professional courtesy, PC will forward letters for one month after COS. Please speak with the mail clerk to inform him of your COS date and your forwarding address. Packages will not be forwarded. Please notify everyone of your change of address well before you leave. You should also make arrangements with friends and/or PCVs and have them collect and send mail and packages on to you. Friends should present a note signed by you if you wish them to pick up letters or packages remaining in the mailroom after your departure.

#### Rid Room

Many of you will be bringing big packages and Ghana Gucci Bags to send home. Please clearly mark all packages stored in the Rid Room. Have your name and estimated date of removal on the bag. Packages that are unmarked or kept more than 45 days after your COS date, will be purged.

**How to Organize My Transition Out of Accra**

There is a lot to do in the office before you can fly away. Please organize your time wisely and try to get as much done in advance as possible. Call and schedule appointments to see staff members, as they too are busy and/or in meetings. Per diem and lodging will be paid as follows:

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| **Day One:** **Travel Day**Arrive in AccraAllowed 75% meals per diem plus lodging | **Day Two:** **Close Out**Conduct businessFull per diem and lodging | **Day Three:** **Close Out**Finish businessFull per diem and lodging | **Day Four:** **COS Day**You are an RPCVAllowed 75% meals per diem |

Lodging may be at a place of your choice for these three nights as we realize that you will be carrying a lot of baggage, documents, and money. The PCV lodging reimbursement ceiling remains the same. If you arrive in Accra over the weekend, reimbursement for those days will be counted as part of the four days.

Please keep in mind that when you are in Accra, you will have a number of staff that you need to meet, and that fellow PCVs, who are also COSing, will be trying to meet the same staff. We will try to be as flexible with our schedules as possible, but you also need to be responsible in setting up meetings with staff members.

When you are in Accra for your COS medical, please take care of programmatic and administrative requirements as well.

**COS REQUIREMENTS**

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| * Medical and Dental Examinations
* Description of Service
 | * Certificate of Group Health Plan Coverage
* Housing Checkout
 | * COS Checklist
* Addresses
 |

**REMINDER:
MAKE APPOINTMENTS EARLY !**

If you show up at the office unannounced, you could expect to be frustrated or disappointed by staff absences.

### Medical Examinations

Prior to your COS date you must receive a termination medical examination. You will be asked to set appointment dates at the COS conference. Please contact the Peace Corps Medical Unit to change or arrange for additional appointments for your exam accordingly.

### Description of Service (DOS)

You should see your APCD for guidance in drafting a nonevaluative statement of your service in Ghana. It describes your training and overseas activities. Your DOS continues to be available to you as an RPCV, and with your consent, to prospective employers and school officials.

Write your DOS before you come for the final checkout. If you have access to email, send it to your APCD (as part of the text, not as an attachment). The APCD will edit the DOS and pass it on to the program secretary or program assistant for final typing. Two final copies will be produced on PC letterhead and given to the CD for signature. The documents will be ready at your exit interview.

Your DOS is an official certification of your Peace Corps service and should be held in safekeeping. When inquiries from employers and educational institutions interested in your work are made to Peace Corps/Washington, this is the only official statement Peace Corps will make concerning your experience. Copies are maintained at Peace Corps headquarters; however, please do scan a copy of your DOS electronically for your own records. Obtaining a copy of your DOS from HQ may take seven to 10 business days. Please keep this timeframe in mind when you submit a request for your DOS.

If you apply for a federal position, your DOS must be attached to your résumé, or SF-171 (the official, but not required, job application form for the U.S. government). Since the DOS is an official certification of your Peace Corps service, it should be composed carefully. Detail your work and other related activities in nonevaluative terms. Include secondary projects, fundraising activities, and Peace Corps Ghana-related activities, such as training. DOS should not be more than two typed pages in length. Your DOS will be reproduced on Peace Corps letterhead.

The signed original will be given to you by the country director during your exit interview before you leave Ghana. You may want to send a copy of this statement to your college placement office to be included with your credentials already on file (if applicable).

The following paragraphs are Federal Employment Tenure Benefits and Executive Order no. 11103. If you have satisfactorily completed your Peace Corps service this will be included at the end of your DOS statement.\* This order established special benefits for the employment of former PCVs to U.S. government positions.

*Pursuant to Section 5(f) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C.) 2504 (f), as amended, any former Volunteer employed by the U.S. Government following his/her Peace Corps Volunteer service is entitled to have any period of satisfactory Peace Corps service credited for purposes of retirement, seniority, reduction in force, leave and other privileges based on length of Government service. That service shall not be credited toward completion of the probationary or trial period of any service requirement for career appointment.*

*This is to certify in accordance with Executive Order (EO) 11103 of April 10, 1963, that \_\_\_\_\_ served successfully as a Peace Corps Volunteer. His/her service ended on \_\_\_\_\_. He/she is therefore eligible to be appointed as a career-conditional employee in the competitive civil service on a noncompetitive basis. This benefit under the Executive Order extends for a period of one year after termination of Volunteer service, except that the employing agency may extend the period for up to three years for a former Volunteer who enters military service, pursues studies at a recognized institution of higher learning, or engages in other activities that, in the view of the appointing agency, warrant extension of the period.*

\*Noncompetitive eligibility is a special mechanism through which RPCVs can be appointed to federal GS positions without competing with the general public in order to be hired. RPCVs may find that, at some agencies, their applications will not be rated by a panel prior to being invited to interview. An agency may, however, still require you to submit a Supplemental Statement. Federal agencies sometimes seek out noncompetitive RPCVs for employment. The primary advantage to the agency is the speed with which the candidate may be hired. Remember, noncompetitive eligibility is not a guarantee of a job. The agency is not required to hire a noncompetitive RPCV. You must always meet, and more often than not, exceed the minimum qualifications for a position.

### Certificate of Group Health Insurance Plan Coverage

You will be given a certificate during your COS checkout with the admin unit. This is evidence of health plan coverage under the health benefit plan for Peace Corps Volunteers and is used for Medicare Part B re-enrollment purposes. An example of the certificate is attached, for those on Medicare.

### Housing Checkout

In advance of your final departure, you should work with your APCD to ensure that formal notice has been sent to your organization and landlord stating the date you will vacate the premises.

You are required to present the administrative staff with a letter signed by your landlord, that states that the apartment/room/house you occupied during your service has been left in good order and that keys have been returned. Minor repairs should be completed prior to your departure from your site. If your host agency handles your housing, they should sign the clearance letter.

### Changing your Home of Record (HOR)

Your official Home of Record (HOR) is important for several reasons. First, your plane reservations or “cash-in-lieu” calculations, are based on this address. Second, all official mail, including “2/3 RA payment,” tax information, returned Volunteer (RPCV) information and the like will be sent to this address.

You **must submit** any requests for changes in your home of record through the country director **90 days before your COS date**. The official form must be filled out and submitted to the country director. This information is forwarded to Washington for approval. If you have questions about whether or not your requested change was approved, contact your APCD or the admin unit.

Requests will normally be approved when:

* A Volunteer who has married another Volunteer during the course of their Peace Corps service wants to return to the HOR of the spouse. Requests for a change of HOR under this condition must be accompanied by verification from the country director of the marriage.
* A Volunteer who has separated from or divorced another Volunteer during the course of his or her Peace Corps service wants to return to a location other than that of the spouse. Requests for a change of HOR under this condition must be accompanied by verification from the country director of the divorce or separation.
* The person, spouse, parent(s), sibling or child whose residence was designated as the permanent residence by the Volunteer before entering the Peace Corps has moved to a different U.S. address.
* The person, spouse, parent(s), sibling, or child whose residence was designated as the permanent residence by the Volunteer before entering the Peace Corps has moved outside the U.S., i.e., its territories and possessions. In such cases the Volunteer may receive transportation to the most appropriate U.S. port-of-exit for the foreign country to which that individual has moved or transportation to the foreign country, whichever is less.
* The Volunteer identified a parent’s, sibling’s, child’s, or other person’s address as the HOR, but actually resided at and was provided original transportation, at Peace Corps’ expense, from another location. The Volunteer now wishes to return to that original point of departure.
* The only surviving parent, spouse, sibling, or child who resided at the Volunteer’s HOR dies.
* There is an authorized emergency leave in conjunction with either an advance completion of service or close of service or early termination and the location of the emergency leave is different from the originally listed HOR.
* A Volunteer claims that the original HOR was only chosen as a place of contact. Requests for a change of HOR under this condition must be accompanied by proof of prior residence, such as a copy of tax forms, a driver’s license, or a voter registration card.

### Addresses—Release Form and Forwarding Mail

Please fill out yet more attachments. The first authorizes Peace Corps/Ghana to release your address to specified entities, such as family, friends, and prospective employers. Without this written consent Peace Corps/Ghana may not release your address to anyone. The second form gives Peace Corps/Ghana the address to which you want your mail redirected. Letters will be forwarded only for up to one month. Peace Corps/Ghana cannot forward packages, so if you have not received an expected package that is important to you, you must make prior, personal arrangements for forwarding the package. Return both forms to the admin unit. A copy of the Forwarding Mail form should also be handed to the mail clerk.

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| 🗐 | INSURANCE,Documents & Records |

## Insurance—Life and Health

**Peace Corps Group Life Insurance**—If you are insured by the $32,500 policy offered through the Peace Corps, this coverage will expire 60 days immediately following termination of service or upon your return to one of the states or the territories of the U.S., the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico, whichever is earlier. This insurance policy cannot be changed to another type of insurance.

**Health Insurance: CorpsCare**—All Peace Corps and Peace Corps Response Volunteers and trainees and all United Nations Volunteers who close service are automatically eligible for CorpsCare, a comprehensive health insurance policy specifically designed to meet Volunteers’ post-service health care needs.

After service, Peace Corps automatically enrolls Volunteers and trainees in a post-service health insurance plan known as CorpsCare and pays the first month’s insurance premium on their behalf.

CorpsCare was designed to fill gaps in post-service health benefits by complementing the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA) program. CorpsCare is private, comprehensive insurance that provides coverage for health conditions that:

* Existed before your Peace Corps service.
* Developed while you were on personal business in the U.S. during service.
* Arise after you have left Peace Corps service.

You may purchase up to 18 additional months of CorpsCare coverage. You can pay for the coverage by check, credit card, or a deduction from your readjustment allowance. You may purchase additional months (not to exceed the limit) once in the U.S. You may also shorten an elected coverage period and apply for a refund if needed. Eligible non-PCV spouses may also qualify. Married PCVs serving together must each purchase their own policy; one spouse cannot be covered as a dependent spouse under the other spouse’s policy. The PCV spouse may also have the premium deducted from their readjustment allowance.

To meet health care needs not covered by FECA during your post-service readjustment period, you are strongly encouraged to purchase this additional CorpsCare coverage when you complete your Peace Corps service. If you do not sign up for this extended insurance before the end of the 31-day coverage period, you forfeit your right to subscribe to it.

Volunteers returning home directly (within 72 hours) may be covered by FECA, *if* their injury was incurred or their medical condition began during, or as a result of, their Peace Corps service. If an illness or injury should occur during this time, seek prompt medical care, and within 48 hours, or as soon as possible, contact the Peace Corps Office of Medical Services (OMS), 1111 20th Street N.W., Washington DC 20526. (800.424.8580, ext. 1540). Be prepared to provide OMS with a detailed physician’s and/or hospital report and appropriate receipts.

## Medical Records

Your Overseas Health Jacket (OHJ) is kept at the Medical Office in Peace Corps Washington for one year and then it will be retired to a Federal Records Center, where it will be stored for **25 years**. This file contains a record of medical exams required for Peace Corps placement, record of immunizations, dental records, etc. Keeping your own copy is a good idea. If you would like a copy, please inform the Medical Unit at least three weeks in advance of your COS date so that the records can be finalized. Copies can also be requested from the Office of Medical Services, Peace Corps, 1111 20th St., NW, 3rd Floor., Washington, DC 20526. Phone number 1.800.424.8580, ext. 1500.

## Description and Verification of Service (DOS)

Your DOS is filed in the PC Office of Volunteer and PSC Financial Services in Washington for **60 years**. Copies are available by written request to VPS, Peace Corps, 1111 20th St. NW, Washington, DC 20526. The DOS is an official account of your responsibilities, duties, and accomplishments while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer. VPS will also provide written verification of service. The phone number is 1.800.424.8580, ext. 1770.

## PCV Administrative Files

Your **administrative file**, which consists of readjustment allowance information and official correspondence, is **kept in the Peace Corps/Ghana Office for one year** following your COS and then destroyed.

## Returned Volunteer Services

In Peace Corps/Washington, the Office of Domestic Programs maintains a Returned Volunteer Service staff who can provide you with up-to-date information in a variety of career, employment, and educational areas. Job counseling services are available by appointment or on the telephone, as well as access to computers, typewriters, and telephones for long-distance job searches. If you are in the Washington area, stop by this office to use these services, or call 1.800.424.8580.

## Career Resources Manual

Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) is the source of the comprehensive Career Resource Manual, which, among other things, explains the various services provided by RVS. This manual is a wealth of information on job-hunting, dealing with the Peace Corps bureaucracy, noncompetitive eligibility in civil service jobs, and many other subjects of interest to RPCVs. Because the manual is expensive, it cannot be replaced if lost, misplaced, or left behind. Therefore, we strongly urge you to carry it with you when you head for home or send it by airmail. You don’t want to have it shipped by sea if you may need it immediately. For more information regarding Career Manuals published by RVS and a helpful list of job-hunting websites, please refer to the returned Volunteers section of www.peacecorps.gov.

## HOTLINE

Hotline is an online bulletin of employment and educational opportunities for returned Peace Corps Volunteers that is published twice a month and resides on the Peace Corps website in PDF form ([www.peacecorps.gov/hotline](http://www.peacecorps.gov/hotline)). Returned Volunteers receive semimonthly Hotline alerts via e-mail for two years after Close of Service (COS). Expect to begin receiving these updates between two and six weeks after your Close of Service date. If you have not received an alert after six weeks, contact Returned Volunteer Services at 202.692.1430 or rvs@peacecorps.gov.

## RPCV Alumni Groups

These organizations can assist newly returned Volunteers with readjustment and job search issues. They provide a ready-made job network of people in different fields. Some groups consist of RPCVs in a given region or city, while other groups are national in scope, consisting of RPCVs who served in the same country. Many of these organizations are affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association. The NPCA and all of the individual RPCV groups are private efforts and independent of the Peace Corps.

## Staff Contacts

If you want to contact any Peace Corps/Ghana staff member following your departure (for recommendations, etc.), write to them in care of Peace Corps, CDU/Ghana Desk, Africa Region, 1111 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20526.

If you thought there was a lot of paperwork required to get into the

Peace Corps, you won’t believe the amount required to get out.

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

COS DATE:  *PC/GHANA • COS CHECKLIST*

MONEY OWED PEACE CORPS (if any)

Printed Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vol ID#:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The appropriate PC staff must initial and date prior to your departure. Please try to visit staff in the following order:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A. PROGRAM OFFICE - SEE APCDs:** | **Staff Initials** | **Date** |
| * Complete Description of Service
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Complete Site Evaluation/
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * History Report/APCD Interview
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * SPA Clearance Interview
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * PCPP Clearance Interview
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **B. SEE MEDICAL UNIT:** |  |  |
| * Specimens submitted
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Physical exam completed
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * WHO Card returned to PCV
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Medical Insurance coverage forms explained/issued to PCV
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Medical Kit returned to med unit
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **C. SEE RESOURCE CENTER MANAGER/GSO:** |  |  |
| * Return books and other program materials
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * “Where There is No Doctor”
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Return water barrel
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Return water filter
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **D. SEE COUNTRY DIRECTOR:** | **Staff Initials** | **Date** |
| * Departure Interview(make appointment with CD secretary)
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| *
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Receive signed DOS from CD
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **E. SEE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT: (we want all these forms)** |
| * Plane Ticket/Cash-in-Lieu Request
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Group Health Certificate Form delivered to PCV
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Housing Clearance & Release
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Utilities/Telephone Release
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Bank Account Closure-Receipt/Verification
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Non-Indebtedness/Accountability Statement
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Address Release and Forwarding Addresses
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Statement of No Financial Gain
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Notification on Insurance Termination
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Copy of DOS to Volunteer Records Clerk
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * PC ID returned (invalidated with hole punch)
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Passport returned to PCV
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * All items in safe removed
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Signed up for CorpsCare
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Living/Vacation Worksheet Reconciled
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * 1/3rd RA check released, *if paid by check*
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| * Airline ticket/cash-in-lieu released
 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **ALL SECTIONS Completed/File Complete and Approved by AO \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

Housing Clearance

Attestation at Quitting of Premises

I, the undersigned, owner of the house located at

Attest and affirm that vacated this lodging

on . The house and it’s inventory are in good condition, and

from this date I will make no further claim for damages of any kind from Peace Corps.

Name of Landlord

Signature

Date

Witness

Signature

Date

Name of Volunteer

Signature

Date

Peace Corps wishes to thank the landlord for the providing housing and services. Please contact our main office in Accra if you have any questions or comments. Thank you.

Peace Corps, P.O. Box 5796, Accra-North
Telephone: 021-775984



**Utilities Clearance**Attestation Upon Departure
(please have filled out where applicable)

We the undersigned:

 1) E.C.G.

 2) G.W.S.

 3) P&T

Attest that the Peace Corps Volunteer here named:

Upon departure of the residence at is fully up to date on all payments for electricity/water, or telephone service and is free of any liability for further payments owing for electricity/water or telephone charges at the above named residence.

1) Signature and seal:

Date:

2) Signature and seal:

Date:

3) Signature and seal:

Date:

I certify that I had no water/sewer, electrical, or telephone utilities accounts during my service.

PCV Name/Signature: Date:



**Bank Account Closure**

#### Attestation of Bank Account Closure

I, the undersigned, representative of Bank

Attest to the closing of account number \_\_\_\_

Held by Peace Corps Volunteer and that no further transactions or other charges remain outstanding.

Date

Name of bank representative

Signature and seal

Volunteer Name

Signature

Date

Peace Corps wishes to thank your bank for providing financial services to our Volunteers and your continued support.

Please contact our main office in Accra if you have any questions or comments.

Thank you.

Peace Corps, P.O. Box 5796, Accra-North
Telephone: 021-775984



**PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER CERTIFICATE OF
NON-INDEBTEDNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF PROPERTY**

I certify that, except as indicated below:

1. During my Peace Corps service I have not incurred any indebtedness overseas to any individual or entity (governmental, commercial, private or otherwise) which I now have not discharged in full.

2. I have returned or otherwise accounted for all records and property of the United Government or of the Government and/or entity and/or individual of the country in which I have been serving, and for which property I was responsible.

3. Exceptions:

I hereby authorize Peace Corps to withdraw from my Readjustment Allowance Account amounts sufficient to discharge any indebtedness or obligation listed under Item 3 above.

I understand that it is my responsibility to close my bank account(s) in Ghana prior to my COS date. In the event that I fail to close any of my accounts, I hereby authorize Peace Corps to deduct from my Readjustment Allowance or refer all bank claims to my home of record.

Volunteer Signature Date



**Authorization to Release Home Address**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize Peace Corps to release the following address:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

to all parties EXCEPT those listed below (or state you do not wish Peace Corps to release your address to anyone). Indicate name, company, office or other identifying information.

•

•

•

•

•

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I authorize Peace Corps to release my address.

Volunteer Signature/Date

or

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I do not authorize Peace Corps to release my address.

Volunteer Signature/Date



**Certification of No Financial Gain**

 I have been reminded that as outlined in PCMS 204, trainees and Volunteers may not accept payment for their services except from the Peace Corps, or engage in any activity for personal financial gain within the host country. This prohibition includes a ban on making investments within the host country, receiving payments for advice or lessons given during the Volunteer assignment, selling property and personal items, and receiving payment for written work or photographs relating to the Volunteer’s assignment during the period of Volunteer Service.

 By signing below, I certify that:

* I have not engaged in any activity for personal financial gain,
* I have not accepted payment for my services except from the Peace Corps or all payments that I have received have been reported to the Country Director and turned over as outlined in PCMS 204.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date

**CERTIFICATE OF GROUP HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE**

IMPORTANT—This certificate provides evidence of your prior health plan coverage under the health benefit plan for Peace Corps Volunteers authorized by Section 5(e) of the Peace Corps Act (22 USC §2504(e)). This coverage is *creditable coverage* for purposes of the group health market provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). You may need to furnish this certificate if you become eligible under a group health plan that excludes coverage for certain medical conditions that you have before you enroll. This certificate may need to be provided if medical advice, diagnosis, care, or treatment was recommended or received for the condition within the six-month period prior to your enrollment in the new plan.

The CorpsCare insurance administrator, Clements & Co., 1.800.872.0067 or 1.202.872.0006, will, upon request, issue a similar certificate to document the period of time you elected post-service health insurance coverage under that plan.

At this time, coverage under the health benefit plan for Peace Corps Volunteers is not creditable coverage that entitles you or your family to buy an individual insurance policy that does not exclude coverage for medical conditions incurred before you enroll unless your most recent prior creditable coverage was under a group health plan, a governmental plan, or a church plan as those terms are defined in 45 CFR §144.103, and followed your Peace Corps service without a break of more than 63 days.

If you become covered under another group health plan, check with the plan administrator to see if you need to provide this certificate.

1. Date of this certificate:
2. Name of Plan:
Health Benefit Plan for Peace Corps Volunteers under section 5(e) of the Peace Corps Act
3. Name of participant:
4. Identification number of participant:
5. Name and address of issuer responsible for providing this certificate:

Peace Corps

1111 20th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20526

1. For further information call: 1.800.424.8582, ext. 1540 or 1.202.692.1540
2. Date waiting period or affiliation period (if any) began: None
3. Date coverage began:
4. Date coverage ended:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Peace Corps Certifying Official (Name & Title)

**CERTIFICATE OF GROUP HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE INSTRUCTIONS**

This certificate must be given to each Volunteer or trainee as he or she leaves Peace Corps service.

**LINE 1:** This date will normally be the last date of the Volunteer or trainee’s (V/T’s) service but may be a later date if issued after the conclusion of service.

**LINE 3:** Enter the V/T’s name.

**LINE 4:** Enter the V/T’s social security number if the V/T is Medicare eligible. Enter the V/T’s Volunteer ID if the V/T is not Medicare eligible.

**LINE 8:** Enter the V/T’s enter-on-duty date.

**LINE 9:** This date will always be the date Peace Corps service ends.



**Inventory of Peace Corps Property at Site**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name Vol ID

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Site/Town/Region Today’s Date

1. **Non-Resource Materials** (Enter “N/A”—Not Applicable—if item not assigned)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item Description |  | PC/C Property No. |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Resource Materials**

(Textbooks, ICE materials, etc.—all items marked “Property of Peace Corps/Ghana,” or that were purchased with job related funds or Peace Corps money)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Text Book Title or Item Description | Quantity |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

I have left the items listed above in the custody of

Check one below:

 This responsible party will hold these items until the next PCV’s arrival, or…

 Peace Corps staff members should pick up these items at a later date.

PCV Signature:

Responsible party:

Witness:



# Living/Leave Allowance Reconciliation Worksheet

1. **Final deposit period covered**

 2007 to 2007

1. **Living Allowance**

PCV has been overpaid days and ­ months living allowance:

Calculation: = owes Peace Corps

1. **Leave Allowance**

PCV has been overpaid days and months leave allowance:

Calculation: = owes Peace Corps

PCV has been underpaid days and months leave allowance:

Calculation: = Peace Corps owes

1. **Other Payments**

PCV owes for the following:

Description:

PCV is owed for the following:

Description:

1. **Total amount owed by/owed to (circle one) PCV: =**
2. **Method of Payment**

 Payment of made to PCV on

 Payment of received from PCV on

 Deduct from Readjustment Allowance

Name Admin Officer

Signature Signature

Date Date

 

**Peace Corps/Ghana**

PLANE TICKET/CASH-IN-LIEU SELECTION

VOLUNTEER NAME:

 please print clearly

COS DATE: Vol ID:

CLOSEST AIRPORT TO MY HOME OF RECORD:

**SELECT ONE:**

(Please circle A or B)

A. Please provide me with a plane ticket for return travel to my Home of Record.

B. Please provide me with cash-in-lieu in the form of a U.S. Treasury check equivalent in amount to the cost an one-way economy class fare from Accra to international airport closest to my home of record.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT TO FLY AMERICAN-FLAG CARRIERS
FOR RETURN TO HOME-OF-RECORD

“I have been advised that Section 5 of the International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-623) is applicable to funds provided to me for air transportation. I understand that I may not use other than an American-flag carrier, except between points where no American-flag airline operates, or where other justification, such as unreasonable delay exists (see 6 FAM 135, Attachment to MS 812). Such use of foreign flag carriers may result in my being held personally liable for the cost of the unjustified foreign flag transportation.”

Volunteer Signature

Date

MS 218 –Revised 03/01