



**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
POLICY # VS-16003
'HEALTH SHARE' VOLUNTEERS IN
MEDICINE ACT POLICY**

Approval:	 Sidney Barrett, General Counsel	7.30.2012 Date
	 Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, Commissioner	8/13/2012 Date

1.0 PURPOSE

The General Assembly has determined that a significant proportion of Georgia residents who are uninsured or Medicaid recipients are unable to obtain needed health care because health care providers fear the risk of liability. The General Assembly enacted the "Health Share Volunteers in Medicine Act" in 2005 to improve access to medical care by indigent patients by providing governmental protection to health care providers and volunteers who offer free quality services to underserved populations of the state.

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for enlisting and using both health care providers and lay volunteers under that Act. In order to facilitate the use of lay volunteers in operations of the health districts, this policy delegates authority to District Health Directors to enlist lay volunteers under the Act without the prior approval of the Department.

1.1 AUTHORITY – The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) 'Health Share' Volunteers In Medicine Act Policy is published under the authority of DPH and in compliance with the following:

Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA), Sections 31-8-190 through 201

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all of the Department of Public Health.

3.0 POLICY

The policy of the Department of Public Health is to facilitate the use of lay volunteers in operations of the health districts.

3.1 ACCOUNTABILITY

3.1.1 This policy delegates authority to District Health Directors to enlist lay volunteers under the Act without the prior approval of the Department.

Department of Public Health POLICY AND PROCEDURES	Policy No.	VS-16003		
	Effective Date:	02/11/12	Revision #:	1
'HealthShare' Volunteers In Medical Act	Page No.	2 of 4		

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 DPH – Georgia Department of Public Health

4.2 DHD – District Health Director

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The DPH Division of General Counsel is responsible for issuing and updating procedures to implement this policy.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 USE OF 'HEALTH SHARE' VOLUNTEERS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

6.1.1 "VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE "HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS".

Volunteers who are "health care providers" as defined by O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(5) shall be enlisted by signing DPH Form VS16003A. The definition of "health care providers" includes a duly licensed or certified ambulatory surgical center, hospital, nursing home, physician, physician's assistant, osteopathic physician, osteopathic physician's assistant, chiropractic physician, podiatric physician, physical therapist, registered nurse, nurse midwife, licensed practical nurse, advanced registered nurse practitioner, midwife, speech-language pathologist, audiologist, optometrist, professional counselor, social worker, marriage and family therapist, psychologist, dietician, pharmacist, health maintenance organization, safety net clinic, dentist, or dental hygienist.

6.2 LAY VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers who are not "health care providers" as defined by O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(5) shall be considered "lay volunteers" and enlisted by signing DPH Form VS16003B. The duties of lay volunteers shall be limited to clerical, computer, or administrative assistance. A lay volunteer must be at least sixteen years old.

6.3 The Manager/Supervisor shall be responsible for enlisting both health care provider volunteers and lay volunteers for DPH under this subsection.

6.3.1 Before using the services of such volunteers, the Manager/Supervisor shall ensure that the volunteers:

6.3.1.1 understand their duties and responsibilities;

6.3.1.2 are aware of and will follow all applicable health and safety rules, regulations, and procedures;

Department of Public Health POLICY AND PROCEDURES	Policy No.	VS-16003		
	Effective Date:	02/11/12	Revision #:	1
'HealthShare' Volunteers In Medical Act	Page No.	3 of 4		

6.3.1.3 are given appropriate oversight and guidance in the performance of their volunteer services; and

6.3.1.4 have signed DPH Form VS16003A, if they are "health care providers as defined by O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(5), and DPH Form VS16003B if they are not "health care providers."

6.3.2 Completed volunteer forms shall be maintained in alphabetical order. If the volunteer later withdraws from the program, the date of withdrawal shall be noted on the form.

6.4 USE OF 'HEALTH SHARE' VOLUNTEERS BY HEALTH DISTRICTS

6.4.1 The Department hereby designates each of the Health Districts to serve as "government contractors" in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(4) for the purpose of enlisting volunteers pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-195 to provide clerical, computer, or administrative assistance to public health programs.

6.4.2 The District Health Director appointed pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 31-3-5 shall have the sole and exclusive authority to recruit, train, and accept the services of lay volunteers under this subsection. The District Health Directors may delegate this authority to persons under their supervision.

6.4.3 Before using the services of such volunteers, the District Health Director shall ensure that the volunteers:

6.4.3.1 understand their duties and responsibilities;

6.4.3.2 are aware of and will follow all applicable health and safety rules, regulations, and procedures;

6.4.3.3 are given appropriate oversight and guidance in the performance of their volunteer services;

6.4.3.4 are at least sixteen years old, and

6.4.3.5 have signed DPH Form VS16003C.

For additional information or assistance, please contact the Division of General Counsel at (404) 657-2700.

Department of Public Health POLICY AND PROCEDURES	Policy No.	VS-16003		
	Effective Date:	02/11/12	Revision #:	1
'HealthShare' Volunteers In Medical Act	Page No.	4 of 4		

7.0 REVISION HISTORY

REVISION #	REVISION DATE	REVISION COMMENTS
0	February 11, 2012	Initial Issue
1	July 20, 2012	Annual review and update. Reformat to new template

8.0 RELATED FORMS

VS16003A *Georgia Department of Public Health Volunteer Health Care Provider Agreement*

-- *This form is to be used by DPH to enlist a volunteer who is within the definition of "health care provider" under O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(5).*

VS16003B *Georgia Department of Public Health Lay Volunteer Agreement*

-- *This form is to be used by DPH to enlist a volunteer who is not within the definition of "health care provider" under O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(5), and who is to provide clerical, computer, or administrative assistance.*

VS16003C *Health District Lay Volunteer Agreement*

-- *This form is to be used by District Health Directors to enlist a volunteer who is not within the definition of "health care provider" under O.C.G.A. Section 31-8-192(5), and who is to provide clerical, computer, or administrative assistance.*