

HERO Employee Volunteerism Policy (11/19/2018)

Policy Purpose

HERO is an organization devoted to advancing the health and well-being of employees, families and communities. This includes regularly hosting learning sessions, professional development opportunities, think tanks and research consortiums actively advocating for greater employer support of the psychosocial needs of their employees. Related to this, HERO has been an active research partner, via the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in exploring how companies can best advance the health of the communities they serve and from which they draw their workforce. This work is being carried forward by HERO's *Healthy Workplaces/Healthy Communities Committee* which continues to feature exemplary cases and explore innovative ways that companies contribute to community health. One of the most effective ways to advance such concepts is not only via studying together but also through what educators call the return demonstration teaching method. This simply means that walking the talk is a proven way to show mastery of a concept.

HERO's volunteerism policy is foremost designed to enable HERO employees to authentically contribute to the communities where we work and whom we serve. Secondly, having a robust volunteerism policy at HERO is one of the most effective ways to role model for our HERO members a prime example of what we mean by our vision of advancing well-being of employees and communities. Finally, HERO's scorecard findings are consistent with reciprocity principles that show that perceived organizational support increases employee and organization effectiveness. Our research and that of others shows that the more we support our employees with exceptional support, the more we can expect exceptional performance in turn. Accordingly, and consistent with SHRM guidelines, HERO encourages our employees to "enrich our surrounding communities" and to offer their voluntary support to "positively impact the quality of life within these communities."

Volunteerism Paid Time Off Annual Amount and Rationale

The HERO Volunteerism policy supports up to 40 hours per year of paid time off to volunteer for full time employees. We adjust this paid time off proportionally for part time employees (i.e. 20-hour-per-week employees receive up to 20 hours per year to volunteer). Volunteering fewer hours or not volunteering at all is perfectly acceptable and is not discouraged. Receiving more paid time off for volunteerism is negotiable.

Some would argue that if employees are paid during the time they are volunteering, then it's not truly voluntary. It's a fair point. Nevertheless, HERO believes there are enough benefits from employee volunteerism that we provide it as a way to both bolster HERO's reputation as a community steward and as a way to encourage the professional development and skills of our employees. What's more, as a small non-profit, HERO has yet to afford the training and development budget amounts that our talented employees could garner if they worked elsewhere.

Volunteerism Activities that are Encouraged and Eligible for Paid Time Off

Because we view volunteerism, in part, as a professional development opportunity for HERO employees, we support volunteerism activities, in particular, that can both serve the needs of our communities and can also stretch our employees with learning opportunities, leadership experiences and community awareness building projects that enhance their skills and experiences. These stretch opportunities would

include volunteer activities that are outside HERO employees' usual experience and training. Some examples: If an employee has considerable experience in healthcare, we encourage them to consider volunteering in other sectors such as education, transportation or housing. If an employee has specific training in program implementation or planning, we encourage them to volunteer in other functions such as teaching, direct service or writing. Similarly, if the employee is already an expert in research, we encourage non-research related volunteerism that emphasizes social interaction such as building affordable houses, reading to kids or improving the environment.

Volunteerism Activities Not Eligible for Paid Time Off

Political campaigns, political and social advocacy or most any activity that could be construed as controversial, socially polarizing or blatantly partisan are not eligible for paid time off.

Faith-based activities, church functions or any activity that would be considered a part of usual support many offer to religious organizations are not eligible for paid time off.

Volunteering or providing any kind of service to for-profit organizations would not be eligible for paid time off.

Volunteer Time Away Guidelines

From SHRM: "Volunteer time should not conflict with the peak work schedule and other work-related responsibilities, create need for overtime or cause conflicts with other employees' schedules.

Time away from work for volunteering purposes may occur during lunchtime, before work, after work or on weekends, depending upon the type of volunteer program the employee is involved in.

The time away from work policy allows employees to take up to 40 hours per year (for full time) which will usually be spread over the year. Using all of the 40 hours will usually be the least disruptive to work flow at HERO if it can be performed in no more than 4-5 hours each month to participate in their specific volunteer program.

Volunteer time should be regular and on a set schedule to help with the coordination of other work-related responsibilities."

As a small non-profit, HERO acknowledges that there are occasions when volunteer work is sporadic (e.g., annual fundraising event) and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Management Approval

Well in advance of serving in a volunteer capacity, employees should seek approval from their supervisor. This will usually involve a meeting to discuss the volunteer opportunity and to assure that the scheduling, timing and type of volunteer activity satisfy the HERO policy objectives and "volunteer time away guidelines" above.

References:

- Victor S., Terry, P.E., “Health and Life Purpose: What’s the Connection?” *The American Journal of Health Promotion*. November/December. 2014. DOI: 10.4278 /ajhp.29.2.v. tahp. P. 2-4.
- SHRM Volunteerism Policy: https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/policies/pages/cms_010487.aspx
- Terry, P.E., “Editor’s Desk: Well-being and Perceived Organizational Support.” *The American Journal of Health Promotion*. September/October. 2014. DOI: 10.4278 /ajhp.29.1.v. tahp. P.1.
- Eisenberger, R., Shanock, L., Terry, P., “An Interview on Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Well-Being.” *The American Journal of Health Promotion*. September/October. 2014. DOI: 10.4278 /ajhp.29.1.v. tahp. P.2-7.
- Terry, P.E., “Borrowing Ideas from a Sister Movement.” and “An Interview with Michelle Nunn, C.E.O., Points of Light.” *The American Journal of Health Promotion*. Nov.Dec. 2012. DOI: 10. 4278/ajhp.27.2 tahp. P. 1-5.
- Nunn, M., Terry, P.E., “Wellness Champions can be the Change.” *The American Journal of Health Promotion*. Nov.Dec. 2012. DOI: 10. 4278/ajhp.27.2 tahp. P. 6-9.