Volunteer Time Off (VTO) Policy Template

Below is a fill-in-the-blanks template to facilitate your drafting of a basic volunteer time off policy.

[Company name]’s Volunteer Time Off (VTO) policy is designed to [fill in goals - e.g., “encourage individuals and work teams to conduct volunteer projects that support community needs”]. Regular employees in good standing can use the VTO policy subject to supervisor approval. Supervisors have the right to deny a request on account of work demands.

Full-time employees can volunteer up to [insert hours; typical is 8-40] hours per calendar year using the volunteer paid time off policy. Part-time employees are eligible for the pro-rated number of hours if their regularly scheduled hours are 20 or more per week.

Volunteering conducted under VTO has to be under the direction of, and for the benefit of, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations or public school [adjust eligible organizations, as needed – some companies exclude schools and almost all companies exclude faith-based organizations], cannot be done in return for compensation (excluding pay from [company name]), cannot involve faith-based activities and cannot primarily benefit employee family members or friends [adjust eligible activities – some companies limit these to their signature cause, such as education or health]. Ineligible activities include teaching Sunday school (because it is faith-based), attending a child’s PTA meeting (because it primarily benefits the employees’ family) and mowing an elderly neighbor’s lawn (because it is not done through a nonprofit organization), for example.

The full balance of the VTO hours are available starting on January 1 of every year. Unused hours cannot be accrued or carried-over into the following year.

Prior to using the VTO policy, employees must obtain supervisor approval. The supervisor may consult with Human Resources with any questions or concerns before approving or denying the request. Approval is at the discretion of the supervisor. If relevant, employees using VTO should list those hours as “VTO” on their timesheet.

The following pages contain a sample of more detailed VTO policy for HIS Markit, a London-based company that provides information and analytics to businesses.

Looking for more assistance in developing a VTO policy? Contact us!
Sample Volunteer Time Off (VTO) Policy
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Volunteer Time Off (VTO) Policy

Purpose
IHS Markit encourages colleagues to participate in volunteer activities by providing the benefit of paid time off to volunteer, also referred to as Volunteer Time Off (VTO). Colleagues may use VTO to contribute their time and talents to recognized charities, causes and not-for-profit organizations that make a positive difference in deepening community connections. Community is not defined as just local community, but rather encompasses the global community.

Time
Colleagues may take up to three working days of VTO per fiscal year to use for volunteering for a qualified charitable organization or supported cause in accordance with IHS Markit Volunteer Policy. More than one organization may be chosen. To qualify as paid Volunteer Time Off (VTO) the volunteer work must be performed during the colleague’s working hours. However, in instances where the volunteer event is scheduled for non-working hours, the time can be accounted for as Paid VTO only where there is agreement in advance between the colleague and their direct manager, for time in lieu of a working day.

Framework
IHS Markit colleagues are encouraged to work together as a team by contributing their leadership, expertise and hands-on participation in areas that make a difference in tackling corporate sustainability priorities that focus on three key areas.

Live Well: Strengthening people and communities
IHS Markit colleagues can use their VTO to support programs and activities encouraging health and well-being in the community and the workplace, as well as human rights. For example, some colleagues participate in education and fundraising for health, safety and disease prevention charities and education, as well as gathering medical supplies or items for food banks.

Live Wise: Advancing education and economic development
IHS Markit colleagues can use their VTO to advance their communities and support education, especially for the benefit of youth. For example, some colleagues use their VTO to support science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) programs and promote equal access to education, regardless of race or gender. Among a host of activities, some colleagues support literacy or help to provide books and school supplies.

Live Green: Caring for the planet
IHS Markit colleagues strive to improve the environments in which we live, work and play. For example, some colleagues support programs for recycling in the workplace, cleaning a local beach or park, planting trees in their communities or supporting environmental education programs.

Eligibility
All IHS Markit regular full-time, part-time and fixed term colleagues, including internal temporary workers are eligible to use the VTO benefit. The IHS Markit contingent workforce, including consultants and contractors, are not eligible to participate. This Volunteer Time Off (VTO) allocation is refreshed at the beginning of each fiscal year or other annual period applicable in the country of the colleague, unless the program is amended or discontinued. The days do not carry over to the next fiscal year or time period. VTO is never paid out if it is not used. Usage of VTO or lack of usage does not affect the accrual of vacation or any other type of time off.
Exceptions: Colleagues on leave of absence of any kind may not participate. Any colleague who has been placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or has been subject to disciplinary action in the six month prior is not eligible to participate.

Tracking: The local HR system for requesting time off is used to track hours of VTO participation. Local sustainability champions gather and track additional necessary information regarding collective volunteer activities for IHS Markit, as well as use of the MySpark platform to capture additional information. Metrics are recorded for IHS Markit Corporate Sustainability reporting each year.

Reporting

Volunteer Time Off (VTO) requires manager approval and must be recorded in the applicable HR System. All IHS Markit colleagues are expected to adhere to the conditions defined in this document. The company uses the metrics in reporting to independent sustainability rating systems and the reports must be detailed and accurate. We capture both VTO and non-VTO time expended as a volunteer at IHS Markit supported or organized activities and events. Contact sustainability@ihsmarkit.com for additional information.

Approval

As with any paid time off, approval is at the discretion of each colleague’s manager. Managers retain the right to request documentation about the organization being served, as well as time volunteered and specifics of attendance.

Both VTO used to support a team project and individual volunteer activities require approval from the colleague’s manager. IHS Markit business takes precedence should there be a conflict with scheduling. If any concerns arise, the local HR contact should be contacted.

Important: VTO may not be used for organizations that discriminate based on creed, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sex, gender, identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy or any other legally protected classification.

Examples

Examples of projects managers previously approved for VTO:

- Donating time at a food bank
- Cleaning up a beach, highway or park
- Collecting items, then filling and distributing back to school packs
- Participating in a Multiple Sclerosis bike-a-thon fundraiser
- Organizing a Cancer walk or run
- Playing in a fundraising tournament
- Volunteering in a classroom or school field trip
- Volunteering at an animal shelter
- Helping with events for a hospital program on health and wellness
- Doing skills-based volunteering at a not-for-profit location
• Organizing any of these activities at IHS Markit locations

Examples of projects managers previously denied for VTO use:
• Attending a parent/teacher conference
• Attending professional or religious conferences
• Volunteering for a political campaign or issue
• Participating in neighborhood association events
• Giving ski lessons free while on a ski vacation
• Doing any fundraising that does not meet the guidelines
• Coaching or playing in adult sporting leagues with no charitable fundraising purpose

Document Management:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Name</th>
<th>Volunteer Time Off Policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Owner</td>
<td>Corporate Sustainability</td>
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<td>Applies To</td>
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<td>Related Documents</td>
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<td>Jane Okun Bomba, Chief Administrative Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supersedes</td>
<td>Volunteer Policy and Related Guidelines, Jan. 1, 2017</td>
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<td>Marilyn Johnson, Head of Sustainability</td>
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<td>or policy interpretation</td>
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