

Section 6-5-336

Volunteers.

(a) This section shall be known as "The Volunteer Service Act."

(b) The Legislature finds and declares that:

(1) The willingness of volunteers to offer their services has been increasingly deterred by a perception that they put personal assets at risk in the event of tort actions seeking damages arising from their activities as volunteers;

(2) The contributions of programs, activities, and services to communities is diminished and worthwhile programs, activities, and services are deterred by the unwillingness of volunteers to serve either as volunteers or as officers, directors, or trustees of nonprofit public and private organizations;

(3) The provisions of this section are intended to encourage volunteers to contribute their services for the good of their communities and at the same time provide a reasonable basis for redress of claims which may arise relating to those services.

(c) For the purposes of this section, the meaning of the terms specified shall be as follows:

(1) **GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.** Any county, municipality, township, school district, chartered unit, or subdivision, governmental unit, other special district, similar entity, or any association, authority, board, commission, division, office, officer, task force, or other agency of any state;

(2) **NONPROFIT CORPORATION.** Any corporation which is exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. Section 501(a);

(3) **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.** Any organization which is exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. Section 501(c), as amended;

(4) **VOLUNTEER.** A person performing services for a nonprofit organization, a nonprofit corporation, a hospital, or a governmental entity without compensation, other than reimbursement for actual expenses incurred. The term includes a volunteer serving as a director, officer, trustee, or direct service volunteer.

(d) Any volunteer shall be immune from civil liability in any action on the basis of any act or omission of a volunteer resulting in damage or injury if:

(1) The volunteer was acting in good faith and within the scope of such volunteer's official functions and duties for a nonprofit organization, a nonprofit corporation, hospital, or a governmental entity; and

(2) The damage or injury was not caused by willful or wanton misconduct by such volunteer.

(e) In any suit against a nonprofit organization, nonprofit corporation, or a hospital for civil damages based upon the negligent act or omission of a volunteer, proof of such act or omission shall be sufficient to establish the responsibility of the organization therefor under the doctrine of "respondeat superior," notwithstanding the immunity granted to the volunteer with respect to any act or omission included under subsection (d).

(Acts 1991, No. 91-439, p. 781, §§1-4; Acts 1993, No. 93-614, p. 1006, §1.)