

Volunteer Health Care Provider Sponsor Entity Fact Sheet

Volunteer Health Care Provider Program

The Volunteer Health Care Provider Program (VHCPP) hopes to increase volunteerism by competent health care professionals by providing legal protection to Individual Volunteer Health Care Providers and Protected Clinics providing the free, uncompensated health care services.



The VHCPP is established in Iowa Code 135.24 and Iowa Administrative Rules can be found in 641-Chapter 88. The Volunteer Health Care Provider Program is administered by Iowa Department of Public Health.

Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic

What is a Sponsor Entity or a Sponsor Entity Clinic?

- A Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic is a hospital, clinic, free clinic, health care facility, health care referral program, charitable organization, or field dental clinic with a fully executed Sponsor Entity Agreement for the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program.
- The Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic enables an Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider to deliver health care services at the Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic to uninsured and underinsured persons.
- While performing VHCPP related services, a provider is considered an employee of the state and receives defense and indemnity protections accordingly.

What is a Sponsor Entity Agreement?

The Sponsor Entity Agreement is a signed contract between the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program and a hospital, clinic, free clinic, health care facility, health care referral program, charitable organization, or field dental clinic.

- The agreement indicates Sponsor Entity awareness and approval of the VHCPP activities occurring at the facility.
- The agreement allows the Sponsor Entity to encourage volunteering by providers.
- The malpractice claim rate thus far is low for the VHCPP.

Why is there a need for the Sponsor Entity Agreement for the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program?

A Sponsor Entity Agreement allows an Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider to deliver free health care services through the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program at the Sponsor Entity location as an employee of the state.

Can a Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic charge for volunteer health care services provided?

- No. The Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic must not charge or accept direct monetary compensation for health care services provided under the VHCPP by the Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic.
- For health care services to qualify as volunteer, uncompensated services the Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic must receive no compensation for any services provided and must not bill or accept compensation from the person, or any public or private third-party payor, for the services provided by the Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider.

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What information is required to apply as a Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic for the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program?

The following information must be submitted:

- Volunteer Health Care Provider Program application/agreement
- Proof of current licensure to the extent required by law for the facility
- Proof of 501(c)(3) status (Internal Revenue Code), if applicable
- Proof of current general liability insurance

When does the Sponsor Entity or Sponsor Entity Clinic Agreement expire?

The agreement is effective for two years from the date of Iowa Department of Public Health signature on the agreement.

Additional Volunteer Health Care Provider Program Questions

Are hospitals with a signed Sponsor Entity Agreement indemnified by the state?

No, a Sponsor Entity is not indemnified by the state. A Sponsor Entity must complete a Sponsor Entity Agreement in order for the Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider to receive the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program protection.

Does a Specialty Health Care Provider Office have to enroll as a Protected Clinic or Sponsor Entity in order for the Specialty Health Care Provider Office and the Specialty Health Care Provider to be indemnified?

Yes. In order for the Specialty Health Care provider to receive the benefits (defense and indemnification) as an Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider, each location at which the Specialty Health Care Provider provides the free health care services must have a fully executed Protection Agreement or Sponsor Entity Agreement.

Has the website been updated, or when will it be updated?

The website, application materials, and fact sheets are updated to reflect the rule changes.

What does defense and indemnification mean?

- The state will pay for the defense of the Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider and Protected Clinic.
- The defense will be provided by the Iowa Department of Justice/Attorney General's Office at no cost to the Individual Volunteer Health Care Provider or Protected Clinic.
- The state will pay the cost of the claim, in the event of a malpractice finding.

