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PROBLEM CONTEXT

Over 6,500 Peace Corps Volunteers are currently serving in 65 countries around the world. Program Managers supervise the technical work of Volunteers, manage trainings, and provide technical resources and guidance to Volunteers on topics ranging from maternal health to permaculture to small business development. Program Managers do not focus on administrative tasks, but they do manage Volunteer annual leave requests. This process should be as simple as possible so both Volunteers and Program Managers can focus on their technical work and community development instead of administrative work.

The Peace Corps grants Volunteers 24 vacation, or annual leave, days per year. In order to request use of their annual leave days, a Volunteer must fill out a paper “leave request” form, or call, text, or send an email to their supervisor. The existence of multiple channels for submitting leave requests means that Program Managers have a difficult time keeping leave requests organized, responding in a timely manner, and putting leave requests into the Peace Corps volunteer location database. It creates unnecessary administrative burdens for both Volunteers and Peace Corps staff.

SOLUTION FUNCTIONALITIES

Create a solution that automates the process for Peace Corps Volunteers to submit annual leave requests and reduces administrative burdens for Program Managers. A solution to this kind of problem should contain these components:

- A channel for Volunteers to submit annual leave requests via any of:
 - SMS
 - Mobile Application
 - Responsive Website
- A central dashboard that displays annual leave requests to Program Managers
- Allow Supervisors to approve or disprove these requests
- A channel for informing Volunteers that their requests have been approved or disproved
- E-signature for both Volunteers and Supervisors

The Peace Corps already has an app and SMS platform called PC Medlink that fills a similar function for our Office of Health Services and Peace Corps Medical Officers. Please see the Github repo at <https://github.com/PeaceCorps> for more information.