

RSVP

Retired Senior Volunteer Program

Lead With Experience

Volunteer Handbook

Updated June 2020

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Mountainland Association of Governments Retired & Senior Volunteer Program! We are excited that you have chosen to become a member of the largest Senior Service Corps program in the United States. Each member's individual service adds up to an astounding amount of good being accomplished across the nation. Recent statistics show that 300,000 RSVP volunteers contributed 60 million hours of service during the year! As a member of RSVP, you'll put the skills and talents you acquired to good use as you improve the lives of those you serve. Many local agencies and organizations depend on the dedicated service of RSVP volunteers to improve our communities. This handbook is designed to help acquaint you with all aspects of our program. We hope you will find this manual helpful in answering any questions you may have about the program.

If you have any concerns or questions about your volunteer service, please feel free to contact our office at any time. Our staff would welcome the opportunity to be of assistance to you!

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OFFICE INFORMATION

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) promotes the concept of productive aging, providing individuals, age 55 and older, with meaningful work while utilizing them as community builders. RSVP seniors, through a variety of volunteer opportunities, provide major cost savings to agencies and municipalities and make a significant impact on critical community needs.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Advisory Council's role is to assess the RSVP program, offer advice to the staff, assist with special events, and help promote, publicize and advocate for RSVP in the community. The council consists of twelve individuals drawn from active RSVP members. The individuals on the council serve two-year terms and may serve up to three consecutive terms. The council meets nine months of the year, excluding June, July and December. For a list of current members, contact the RSVP office. Individuals interested in serving on the council may submit their name for consideration by the RSVP staff.

RSVP HISTORY

In 1969 the United States Congress passed legislation under the Older Americans Act creating the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. Modeled after a project called SERVE (Serve and Enrich Retirement by Volunteer Experience), RSVP has grown from the original eleven sites to over 707 programs operating in all fifty states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

RSVP is administered nationally by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Locally, we are sponsored by Mountainland Association of Governments and the Area Agency on Aging.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Eligibility to be an RSVP member is not restricted on the basis of formal education, experience, citizenship, race, creed, belief, color, national origin, sex, political affiliation, sexual orientation, religion, or on the basis of disability, if the volunteer is a qualified individual with a disability. RSVP strives to be supportive of the needs of each RSVP member and strives to make reasonable accommodations for all volunteers.

RSVP VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

CHOICE OF ASSIGNMENT

As an RSVP volunteer, you may choose from a wide variety of volunteer opportunities such as transporting seniors to medical appointments, delivering meals to homebound individuals, providing one-on-one tutoring to help children improve reading skills, assisting seniors with insurance questions, friendly visiting, utilizing computer skills and much, much more. Volunteering must be completed at an approved RSVP Volunteer Station. Please contact the RSVP office if you wish to change or add more sites.

RSVP recognizes that a volunteer may wish to change or add an assignment. They may wish to try out new skills or advance to more difficult tasks. Whatever the reason, RSVP will accept a request for a change at any time. The volunteer may either make a selection from existing opportunities or suggest specific interests and let RSVP do the legwork.

PROHIBITED VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Due to federal grant guidelines, RSVP volunteers **cannot** perform the following activities:

- Give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytizing.
- Assist with electoral activities, voter registration, transportation to polls, lobbying or efforts to influence legislation.
- Engage in activities that displace paid workers.
- Accept money or donations from their service recipients, or relatives and friends of service recipients.
- Report volunteer hours for duties and/or services for which they receive salary or wages.

RSVP MEMBER POLICIES

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Members must complete and submit at least one volunteer hour every 12 months to remain active with RSVP. This minimum requirement keeps you current for your supplemental insurance and on the mailing list for the newsletter and the annual recognition events.

ON LEAVE

If you are unable to serve for more than 12 months, please contact the RSVP office. We will place you on the inactive list. When you are ready to serve, just call and we will happily return you to the active list.

INACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

It is federal policy that volunteers be placed on the inactive list after 12 months of inactivity. If you or your Volunteer Station have not submitted hours/mileage to the RSVP office you will automatically be placed on the inactive list.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Hours served by RSVP volunteers at all approved RSVP stations and projects need to be submitted to the RSVP office for grant and reporting purposes.

Reminder: Travel to and from home to the volunteer assignment and meal times that are *not* part of the assignment description, are *not* to be included in hours of service. If traveling to a location is part of the assignment, that travel time may be counted.

Arrangements for recording volunteer hours vary between stations. Be sure that you check to see what is required in terms of signing in when you begin a new assignment.

Notify RSVP of all volunteer assignments so that we can make sure you are credited for all volunteer work.

Notify all agencies, where you volunteer, that you are affiliated with RSVP.

PURPOSE FOR SUBMITTING HOURS

The federal government requires RSVP to track all time spent volunteering as a means of assessing performance. The RSVP office uses this information to share with funders that require statistics and quantitative data. Overall, it helps RSVP demonstrate older adults as active and contributing members of their communities. Beginning with the month in which a volunteer signs up with RSVP, a cumulative record of time contributed to all approved RSVP stations and projects is kept on file in our office. Internally, it also helps us determine who is an active member and, for insurance purposes, it can verify your status if you file an insurance claim.

SUBMITTING HOURS

Either the station or the volunteer will submit hours to the RSVP office. Please check with your service agency for clarification on this step. To receive credit for hours and mileage reimbursements the Volunteer Service Record form must be received. Please make sure that you record each volunteer day, activity and, if necessary, mileage. The RSVP member and station representative must sign the form for accountability purposes.

RECORDING MILEAGE

RSVP volunteers are eligible to receive reimbursement for travel to and from their station for up to 150 miles per month. Those volunteers providing transportation for two or more other volunteers to their work site or other RSVP functions, may be reimbursed for all miles driven. For information on the current reimbursement rate or to obtain mileage sheets, please contact RSVP.

MILEAGE CHECKS

The RSVP office receives many requests for mileage reimbursement and needs time to process the checks. Our goal is to mail checks out within 30 days of receiving the mileage request. Per IRS guidelines, the reimbursement money that you receive as an RSVP member does not need to be counted as income for your taxes. This information comes from the IRS:

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p17/ch05.html>

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend orientations and trainings held by RSVP and/or your volunteer station.
- Arrive on time.
- Sign in so volunteer hours can be accurately recorded.
- Call your station if you are unable to volunteer on a certain day. Please give as much notice as possible so that a substitute can be called.
- Notify your station if you expect to be away from your volunteer job for an extended period of time.
- Ask questions of your volunteer supervisor if you don't understand any particular aspect of your volunteer assignment.
- Report all accidents. Remember RSVP carries excess volunteer insurance and would be happy to file a claim on your behalf if notified of the accident. This insurance is secondary to the insurance that you already carry.

(Volunteer Responsibilities Continued)

- Keep confidentiality. All information on clients, patients, and agency business is private and must not be discussed.
- Call RSVP if you have any problem regarding your volunteer assignment that cannot be resolved with your station supervisor, or if you would like to change or add to your assignment.
- Call if you have a change of address, telephone number or email address.

VOLUNTEER STATIONS

Volunteer Stations are public agencies, private non-profit organizations, or proprietary health-care agencies or organizations that accept the responsibility for assignment and supervision of RSVP members. Volunteer Stations sign a Memorandum of Understanding with RSVP outlining the responsibilities of each party. These agreements are valid for three years with the opportunity to renew. Volunteer stations provide orientation, in-service instruction, and special training for RSVP members as needed. RSVP welcomes conversations with local organizations that are interested in becoming RSVP Volunteer Stations. Volunteer Stations will be approved based on program goals, funding guidelines and community needs. The Volunteer Station will not discriminate against RSVP volunteers in the operation of its program on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), sex, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, religion, or on the basis of disability, if the volunteer is a qualified individual with a disability. The Volunteer Stations will provide for adequate safety of all volunteers.

VOLUNTEER WORK

RSVP members may choose from a list of agencies in Utah, Wasatch and Summit Counties that have a signed agreement with the RSVP office. The signed agreement is necessary for mileage reimbursements and to maintain a member's supplemental insurance.

RSVP members will receive a detailed written description of their volunteer work assignment for the volunteer station where they are assigned.

Contact the RSVP office for a list of volunteer stations and opportunities. If you would like a particular volunteer position that is not on our list, please ask. We would be happy to investigate for you and to set up new volunteer opportunities whenever possible.

VOLUNTEER SEPARATION AND APPEAL PROCESS

Volunteers who are consistently inactive for twelve months or longer may be withdrawn from active volunteer status. These volunteers may be re-activated upon resumption of volunteer service.

The RSVP Coordinator may separate a volunteer from the program for cause, including, but not limited to, extensive or unauthorized absences, misconduct, inability to perform assignments, or inability to accept supervision.

A volunteer station may separate, or ask the RSVP Coordinator to separate, a volunteer for cause, including, but not limited to, extensive or unauthorized absences, misconduct, inability to perform assignments, or inability to accept supervision. Separation may also be based on termination of volunteer assignment or when the volunteer assignment is no longer meaningful or satisfying to the RSVP volunteer.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Any appeal of an adverse action affecting an RSVP volunteer must be in writing to the RSVP Coordinator with a copy to the Chairperson of the Advisory Council.

The Chairperson of the Advisory Council will conduct an investigation with the necessary individuals, including the RSVP director and the volunteer making the appeal. Other persons involved may be included as well as other volunteers at the station involved, RSVP staff, and station personnel.

The Advisory Council Chairperson will respond in writing to the appealing volunteer within three weeks. The Chairperson will state that they either agree with the findings for termination, or disagree. Should the Chairperson state that they disagree with the findings, they will also state what action is to be taken to correct the situation. This procedure applies to volunteer assignment situations only. Other concerns can be directed to the RSVP Coordinator or the Advisory Council Chair.

RSVP MEMBER BENEFITS

RECOGNITION

It is our policy to make the general public aware of RSVP volunteer service through an on-going publicity program. This includes newspaper stories and photographs, feature articles on individual volunteers, as well as radio and television spots.

Beginning with the month in which a volunteer signs up with RSVP, a cumulative record of time contributed to all approved RSVP stations and projects is kept on file in our office. Additionally, all active members will receive an invitation to the free recognition event, traditionally held in March. Pins are awarded to volunteers according to years of service in five-year increments.

NEWSLETTER

The RSVP newsletter is mailed to all members and volunteer stations three times a year. It contains information on service opportunities and helpful information for seniors. RSVP members are encouraged to submit articles, poems, stories, etc. for publication. Requests for information on specific topics are also welcomed.

FREE EVENT TICKETS

In appreciation for your many hours of service you will have access via email only to free Sharetix event tickets such as: Utah Symphony, Scera, Hale Center Theater, Utah Jazz, college sports, and more. Be sure we have your email address on file.

INSURANCE

In order to minimize risks associated with volunteering, all non-profit agencies that utilize RSVP volunteers have signed an agreement to be an RSVP station. These agreements are kept on file in our office and updated annually. While volunteering at these designated stations, your RSVP insurance is in effect. Time spent volunteering at a station that is not registered with RSVP will not be covered by RSVP insurance unless we are notified by you, and the station understands you are there as an RSVP volunteer. All insurance provided by RSVP is secondary to your current provider. Please see the ***Insurance Information section (pages 22-23)*** for more details.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

(See page 13 for details on reimbursement policy)

CIMA INSURANCE INFORMATION

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

RSVP volunteers are covered for personal injury that occurred during their volunteer assignment(s). The insurance applies while traveling directly to and from the assignments and while participating in an activity sponsored by RSVP. This includes actual volunteer service, meal periods while volunteering, and attending recognition, orientation, training and Advisory Council meetings. The medical indemnity portion of the accident insurance covers medical or surgical expenses incurred for one year from the time of injury, provided treatment begins within 60 days after the accident. There are also benefits for injury to teeth, dentures and eyeglasses. These benefits apply only in excess of those provided by your primary insurance.

PERSONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

All registered volunteers collectively are provided additional liability per occurrence for a personal injury or a property damage liability claim arising from the performance of the volunteer's duties. This non-contributing coverage is in excess of any other valid and collectible insurance the volunteer may have.

Principal Exclusions to Personal Liability Insurance:

This insurance does not apply to:

Injury or damage arising out of the use of an automobile, aircraft, or watercraft.

Personal injury resulting from assault and battery committed by or at the direction of the volunteer.

Property damage to property in the care, custody, or control of the volunteer.

EXCESS AUTO LIABILITY

Protection under this form of insurance covers you for bodily injury or property damage liability resulting from the use of your own auto in connection with RSVP volunteer work. The limit includes driving directly between the volunteer's residence and workstation. The amount of protection is a \$2,000,000 combined single limit Bodily Injury and Property Damage for each accident. This insurance is in excess of an amount equal to the applicable limits of liability of any other insurance collected by the insured.

Principle exclusions to Excess Automobile Liability Insurance: This insurance does not apply to damage to the volunteer's automobile.

HOW TO FILE A CLAIM

The volunteer or the Volunteer Station representative reports the claim to the RSVP Coordinator.

The RSVP Coordinator completes and signs the Proof of Loss form and sends it to CIMA.

Any medical bills should be copied and originals filed by the volunteer through their medical carrier.

A copy of Explanation of Benefits should be submitted with the Proof of Loss form to CIMA.

Claims are accepted within 52 weeks from date of accident.

CIMA Companies, Inc, 2750 Kilarney Drive, Suite 202, Woodbridge, VA 22192 Attn: Claims Department.

**We are here to help you as you help others!
Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions,
concerns, and suggestions.**

RSVP Staff

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This handbook was prepared by the RSVP staff and approved by the RSVP Advisory Council.