

# RSVP

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program  
Of Allegany and Garrett Counties

Sponsored by Allegany County HRDC



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VOLUNTEER STATION MANUAL

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## WELCOME TO RSVP OF ALLEGANY AND GARRETT COUNTIES

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a federal program administered by the Corporation of National and Community Service under the umbrella of Senior Corp. RSVP, one of the largest volunteer efforts in the nation, has matched local problems with older adults who are willing to help since 1971. RSVP is designed to provide individuals 55 years and better with the opportunity to share their abilities, interests, and experience with their communities. RSVP volunteers are eligible to receive accident, personal liability, and excess automobile insurance, as well as community recognition.



Locally, RSVP is sponsored by the Allegany County Human Resource Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC). HRDC is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of the people it serves. It is HRDC's mission to eliminate social and economic barriers to promote individual and community stability through services, advocacy and collaboration. RSVP and HRDC are a perfect fit as both strive to address community needs through community resources.

This Volunteer Station handbook is your guide to the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. Please read it and refer to it when necessary. If you need additional information or assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us at 301-777-5970.

# Program Eligibility

## RSVP Volunteers

- Must be at least 55 years of age
- Have time and skills they are willing to share to help solve problems in their community
- Are available on a regular basis and willing to accept supervision and training
- Want meaningful and well defined volunteer assignments designed to have a measurable impact on community needs

## RSVP Volunteer Stations

- A volunteer station is a public agency, secular or faith-based private non-profit organization, or proprietary health care organization located in Allegany or Garrett County that accepts the responsibility for assignment and supervision of RSVP volunteers. Each station must be licensed or otherwise certified, when required, by the appropriate state or local government agency.
- Volunteer assignments located in proprietary health care organizations or facilities must be limited to those which provide direct and traditional assistance to patients, such as visiting, teaching, counseling, entertaining, etc. Placements must not displace paid employees and must avoid other staff or clerical assignments which would accrue to the profitability of the organization or facility.
- Individual private homes may not be volunteer stations. In-home assignments are made only through a volunteer station.
- Volunteer stations may have multiple sites where volunteers work.
- Volunteer stations should have a good system of volunteer management in place that provides orientation, training, job descriptions, supervision, recognition and safety to its volunteers.

## **Responsibilities of Volunteer Stations**

All volunteer stations enter into a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (see appendix 1) with the local RSVP sponsoring agency, HRDC. In general, stations are responsible for the following:

- Developing written volunteer assignments (see Appendix 2) that impact critical human and social needs, and regularly assess those assignments for continued appropriateness.
- Assigning a staff member responsible for day to day oversight of the placement of RSVP volunteers within the station and for assessing the impact of volunteers in addressing community needs.
- Obtaining a Letter of Agreement (see Appendix 3) for an RSVP volunteer assigned in-home.
- Keeping records of volunteer hours and reporting to RSVP monthly. (see Appendix 4)
- Complying with all applicable civil rights laws and regulations including reasonable accommodation for RSVP volunteers with disabilities.
- Providing volunteers with orientation to station procedures and in-service training to enhance performance of assignments.
- Recognizing volunteers for their contributions.
- Assuring a safe working environment for volunteers.
- Investigating and reporting, in writing, any accidents and injuries involving RSVP volunteers immediately to the RSVP office.

- Some volunteer stations will be selected as Programming for Impact sites. Selection is based on the community need being addressed, the anticipated impact, and the measurability of the impact. At least 50% of RSVP volunteers must be placed in “impact” based job assignments. An impact based assignment is one in which the volunteer is making a direct, quantifiable impact on the community.
- Volunteer stations will be responsible for conducting background checks of volunteers as necessary for assignments to specific jobs.
- Maintaining Driver’s License and Insurance records for volunteer assignments that require driving.

### **Benefits of Becoming a Volunteer Station**

- Increased outreach to potential volunteers. RSVP will recruit, interview, and refer RSVP members to the station based on the stated needs of the station.
- RSVP will develop publicity/marketing materials to attract more volunteers to RSVP and as a result, to the stations.
- Less time spent recruiting volunteers.
- RSVP will sponsor recognition activities or events that may result in increased volunteer recruitment and volunteer satisfaction.
- RSVP will provide personal accident, public liability and supplemental liability automobile insurance, as required.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

- **What if there are current volunteers at the station who qualify to be RSVP volunteers?** Such volunteers should be informed of the RSVP and, if interested, referred to RSVP for enrollment. An assignment description should be signed and forwarded to the RSVP office.
- **If a station has a need for volunteers for a one-time event, can RSVP help?** At the time of enrollment, volunteers have the option to register for a special on-call list. RSVP will draw from this list when a non-profit agency requests volunteer assistance with special events. Given adequate notice, RSVP may be able to assist the station in recruiting volunteers with specific skills needed for the event.
- **What are some examples of in-kind matches or donations that stations should report on the monthly report?** When a station provides an RSVP volunteer with transportation, meals, training, or a recognition gift, the station is requested to report the fair market value to RSVP each month. In-kind donations provide a portion of the required community match support for the RSVP federal grant. If you are not sure if an item is considered “in-kind”, please call our office.
- **Can RSVP volunteers be required to engage in religious activities?** Religious organizations may serve as volunteer stations but cannot utilize RSVP volunteers to proselytize, convert non-believers, etc. Most religious organizations are involved in projects designed to address social and economic problems and RSVP volunteers may assist with such projects.
- **The Programming for Impact Addendum is confusing. Can RSVP provide any assistance?** Any station that is uncertain of how to fill out this form or any other RSVP form is encouraged to contact the RSVP office for assistance.

- **What if there are problems between a station and an RSVP volunteer?** RSVP expects that there will be open and ongoing communication between stations and volunteers. Occasionally, problems may arise that require the assignment be terminated. Regardless of the reason for terminating an assignment, the decision should be made jointly by RSVP and volunteer station staff, with full consideration given to the volunteer, including placement with another volunteer station, if appropriate.