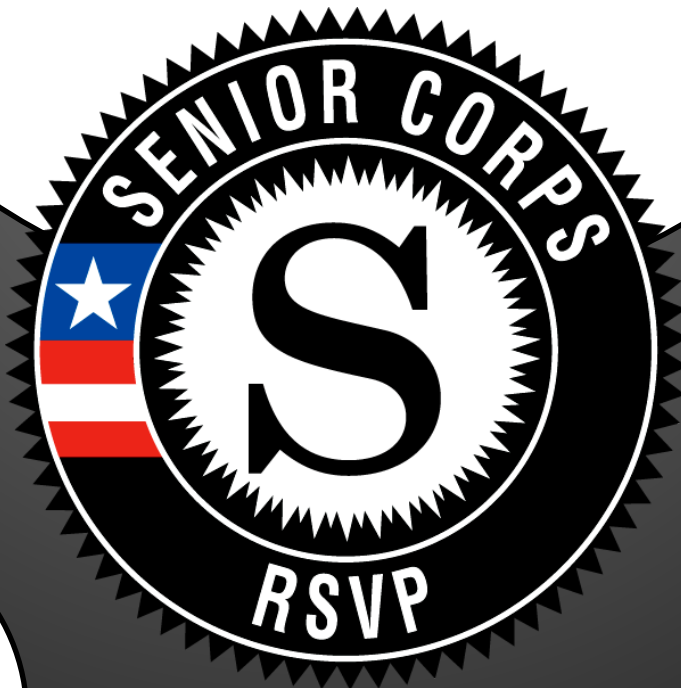


RSVP

Lead With Experience

VOLUNTEER MANUAL



Dear Volunteer,

Welcome and thank you for your service to The Volunteer Center's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). RSVP is a national service program that recruits and supports volunteers 55 and older in enriching service to solve national and community challenges. Volunteers like you are at the heart of this mission.

The materials enclosed in this handbook are designed to:

- Orient you to RSVP and the Whatcom Volunteer Center
- Inform you about policies and procedures that apply to your service as an RSVP Volunteer
- Educate you about your rights, responsibilities, and benefits as an RSVP Volunteer

As a member of RSVP, you are part of a national network of volunteers 55 and older, leading with experience to ensure that our neighbors have enough nutritious food to eat, that our children have the opportunity to succeed in school and life, that our seniors can live decently and safely in their homes, and so much more.

Thank you for your part in helping us achieve this vision.

Mel Monkelis

RSVP Program Director

Telephone - (360) 734-5121 Ext. 174

Email - MelM@WhatcomVolunteer.org



The Volunteer Center Mission

The mission of the Volunteer Center of Whatcom County is to:

- *mobilize volunteers to meet community needs*
- *build capacity of organizations to effectively engage volunteers*
- *inspire support for community service*

Our Vision:

Everyone contributes to and gains from volunteering to build community vibrancy.

RSVP Mission and History

RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) is a national service program that recruits and supports volunteers 55 and older in enriching service to solve national and community challenges.

RSVP is funded by Congress through the Corporation for National and Community Service. Today there are more than 500,000 RSVP volunteers in over 750 projects across the nation using their talents and time in service to others.

Your RSVP is focused on ensuring that our community members can build a healthy future. This includes helping neighbors live independantly, ensuring that everyone has access to nutritious food, and building and supporting health education initiatives.



Network of National Service Volunteers

Established in 1993, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its core programs- Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Social Innovation Fund-- and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.

As the nation's largest grantmaker for service and volunteering, CNCS plays a critical role in strengthening America's nonprofit sector and addressing our nation's challenges through service.



CNCS harnesses America's most powerful resource- the energy and talents of our citizens- to solve problems. We believe that everyone can make a difference and that all of us should try. From grade school through retirement, CNCS empowers Americans and fosters a lifetime of service.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can join RSVP?

Any person 55 years or older may join RSVP. There are no other requirements for eligibility. Eligibility to be an RSVP member is not restricted on the basis of race, color, national origin, (including individuals with limited English proficiency), sex, age, political affiliation, religion, or disability. RSVP strives to be supportive of the needs of each RSVP member and to make reasonable physical accommodations for all volunteers.

What opportunities do I have?

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Helping neighbors with chores and home repairs
- Delivering food to those in need
- Volunteering at your local food bank
- Driving veterans and seniors to medical appointments and essential errands
- Helping a student succeed in school and life
- Educating the community about how to prepare for and respond to disaster
- Educating the community about how RSVP is helping build a healthy, vibrant community for all

What is prohibited as a volunteer?

Due to federal grant guidelines, RSVP members cannot perform the following activities as part of their RSVP service:

- Give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytizing.
- Assist with electoral activities, voter registration, and transportation to polls 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.



What are my rights as a volunteer?

As a volunteer, you do enjoy rights that should be recognized by the managers and staff members of all stations.

- You should be treated as a co-worker by staff members at the volunteer station
- You should be given assignments that utilize and develop your skills
- You should be given adequate information and training to carry out your assignments
- You should be told about the organization, its policies and programs as they relate to your tasks
- You should receive guidance and supervision by a staff member
- You should feel free to discuss problems, ask questions, or make suggestions.
- You should receive recognition for a job well done

What are my responsibilities as a volunteer?

Volunteers have responsibilities both to the volunteer station where they work and to RSVP. As a volunteer, you are free to set your own schedule, but you must be prepared to fulfill the commitments you make.

- You must be dependable, reliable, and abide by the agreement made with the volunteer station.
- You must notify the volunteer station if it is not possible to meet your commitment or to complete your assignment as planned.
- You must notify RSVP if you change or terminate your position with a volunteer station.
- You must speak up about problems and concerns so that they may be discussed and resolved. Be sure to ask questions about things you don't understand.
- You must offer constructive suggestions about matters involving your work. Don't merely criticize.
- You must cooperate with the staff.
- You must be sure to keep a record of your volunteer hours and submit your time sheet to the RSVP office by the end of the month.



What are the rules and procedures for supplemental insurance?

At no cost to you, RSVP provides supplemental accident, personal liability and automobile liability insurance while you are volunteering and traveling to and from your RSVP assignment. The insurance is in excess of other insurance you may have. Benefits are payable only if we have a monthly report showing your volunteer activity on the day of the injury or property damage.

You are covered by:

- **Accident insurance for personal injury** while you are traveling between your home and place of RSVP volunteer job, during meal periods while serving as a volunteer, and while attending RSVP-sponsored activities such as recognition, orientation and Ambassador meetings. It does not duplicate expenses covered by Medicare or any other valid and collectible insurance.
- **Personal liability insurance** provides economic protection for you if you accidentally injure another person or damage another person's property. This coverage is in excess of any other valid and collectible insurance coverage.
- **Automobile liability insurance** covers bodily injury or property damage claims arising out of the use of your own automobile in connection with your RSVP assignment. It covers RSVP members who drive their cars to and from their volunteer jobs. This coverage is in excess of the insurance you carry, or the limits of the state financial responsibility law, whichever is higher. To be eligible for this coverage, you must have your driver's license number on file in the RSVP office. This insurance does not apply to damage to the volunteer's automobile.



What do I do in case of an accident?

In case of worksite or auto injuries, your worksite supervisor should take care of your injuries and medical needs as appropriate. You or your worksite supervisor should contact the RSVP office as soon as possible within 48 hours to report the injury and details surrounding the injury, including date, time, place and cause. RSVP staff will submit the initial claim for to CIMA companies, INC.

After you have received treatment, any medical bills should be copied and originals filed by you through your medical carrier. Copies of bills and Explanation of Benefits (EOBs) need to be submitted by you to:

CIMA Companies, INC.

2750 Kilarney Drive, Suite 202

Woodbridge, VA 22192

Attn: Claims Department

Claims are accepted within 52 weeks from the date of the accident. If a reply from our insurance company is not received within 45 to 60 days of submitting a claim, please notify the RSVP office. The insurance company does not automatically notify the RSVP office. The insurance company does not automatically notify RSVP regarding claims, so we depend on you to let us know if there are any problems. For insurance coverage details, please visit the CIMA Volunteers Insurance Program webpage:

www.cimaworld.com/nonprofits/volunteer-insurance-access-for-insurance-agents/

How do I report my hours?

Volunteers report their hours of service on a monthly basis, usually through the volunteer station. Once you have chosen a volunteer position, your station supervisor will let you know how to report your hours.



What should I do for In-Home Assignments?

When RSVP members enter a person's home for volunteer service, a Letter of Agreement needs to be signed by the volunteer, the person being visited, the volunteer's supervisor and an RSVP staff person. This document will be provided by the agency where you are serving. This document will be kept on file at the partner agency.

What do I need to receive mileage support?



Mileage reimbursement is available for RSVP members at \$0.20 per mile for transportation to and from their volunteer job site not to exceed 300 miles per month. Mileage will only be reimbursed for more than ten miles driven in a month. Volunteers may request reimbursement for public transportation not to exceed the price of a WTA bus pass in any one month.

Volunteers requesting public transportation reimbursement must keep track of the number of trips made for volunteering purposes and the

per-trip price. If they pay for a bus pass, they should submit a copy of the receipt each month.

In order to receive transportation support, you must fill out the RSVP reimbursement application when you begin your service and the insurance update form at the beginning of each year. You must fill out the timesheet and mileage form completely each month. You and your volunteer supervisor must sign the timesheet and the hard copy must be submitted to Whatcom Volunteer Center RSVP by the 8th of the following month. Reimbursement checks will be mailed after the 20th of the month. Mileage requests received after the 8th of the month may be reimbursed the following month, at the discretion of the RSVP director.

Volunteer Opportunities

Help a Senior in your Neighborhood with Housework

Seniors and adults with disabilities need assistance with the everyday household tasks that we take for granted. Choose to volunteer on a monthly or weekly basis and choose what times/days work best for you. Chore will match you with a client according to your preferences. We reimburse 25 cents per mile driven to, from, and during volunteering. Make a difference in a senior's life by volunteering a few hours of your time.

Keep Seniors Safe- Help With Small Home Repairs

If you are handy with a hammer or can wield a wrench, the Volunteer Chore Program needs you! Our program helps low-income, isolated seniors live independently. Many seniors need assistance with building wheelchair ramps, fixing a leaky faucet, installing grab bars, etc. Hours and days are flexible- volunteers only take on projects that interest them. Supplies are provided by the client.

Help your Neighbor in Need Clean up their Yard

Volunteer Chore Program clients find themselves unable to maintain their lawn and they do not have the funds to pay for service. Volunteers are needed to mow, rake, or pull weeds for isolated seniors and adults with disabilities. Your assistance keeps our neighborhoods looking nice and our seniors living at home. Use VCP's equipment or your own. Help one-time or on-going, individually or with a group. Perfect opportunity for families, too.

Shop for a Senior on Your Schedule

Volunteers with their own vehicles and insurance are needed to grocery shop for isolated, low-income seniors and adults with disabilities. These clients typically cannot drive and have difficulty bringing bags of groceries onto the bus. Volunteers determine when and where they volunteer. VCP will reimburse for mileage. Potential volunteers are welcome to shadow other volunteers to determine if it is the right fit.



Deliver Food to Homebound Seniors

VCP is in need of volunteers with their own vehicle and insurance to transport items from the Bellingham Food Bank to nearby seniors and adults with disabilities. This route would require 1-2 stops, and the volunteer time commitment is 1/2 hour to 1 hour per week. We serve seniors who are unable to get to the Food Bank, wait in line, or carry items. Deliveries are Thursdays at 11am. Please contact VCP for more information. Potential volunteers are welcome to shadow other volunteers on their route to learn more.

Help Students with Homework Blaine, Ferndale, Bellingham, Lynden, Lummi

Every day the Boys & Girls Club runs a homework and education space called Power Hour. Positive adult volunteers are needed to assist our staff as they make sure every student gets the help and encouragement they need with completing their homework, and with other learning activities. Students in the group range from 1st - 8th grade.

Tutor a High School Student

Are you patient, flexible, and organized? Do you have one hour a week to make a big difference in the life of a high school student?

Learn more about tutoring and mentoring opportunities through Communities in Schools!

Help a Student Stay on Track to Graduate!

Help develop a student's individual graduation plan. Support a student academically in a one-on-one relationship. Assisting with organizational skills: note-taking tips, keeping track of student assignments, study plans or techniques, prioritizing, and supporting student in seeking further school resources, if needed. Encourage college/career exploration.

2 hours of training provided.

Opportunities available at Sehome, Bellingham, and Nooksack High School.



Bellingham Food Bank driver needed! Help feed isolated seniors

The Volunteer Chore Program is in need of a responsible, reliable volunteer to transport 2-4 boxes of food to low-income, homebound seniors. These boxes are a lifesaver for our clients that are unable to stand in line or lift 40 lbs. of food onto the bus.

Volunteer requirements: Your own vehicle (\$0.20/per mile reimbursement), valid driver's license, current insurance, ability to pass a background check, and allow us to check three references. Youth are welcome with an adult, though this opportunity occurs during the school day.

Details: Deliveries are only on Thursdays at 11am, excluding holidays. Route is for York St and Fraser St. Total shift is typically less than 1 hour.

Volunteer Chore Program provides: mileage reimbursement at 25 cents/mile, letters of recommendation, a dolly for transporting boxes.

School Garden Assistants

We are looking for volunteers to help our garden educators with learning opportunities in school gardens! The time commitment, as well as the location, is flexible. We are looking for volunteers with an interest in teaching, education, and gardening who would like to help teach children about where food comes from, and show how great it is to get your hands in the dirt! Please let us know when you are available, and if there is a particular school garden you would like to assist with. Take a look at where we're growing! Whether you're interested in volunteering close to home, or at a particular time, we probably have a great opportunity for you!

Staff the Volunteer Mobilization Center (VMC) in time of disaster.

The VMC is a processing center for spontaneous volunteers in times of disaster in Whatcom County. We interview, assess, and ensure all the forms are filled out before letting volunteers go out to the areas of disaster where they are needed the most. Think of it like working in an office setting during times of disaster recovery.



Contact Information

For more information or to schedule a one-on-one orientation contact:

Mel Monkelis

MeIM@WhatcomVolunteer.org

(360) 734-5121 Ext. 174

Address:

The Volunteer Center of Whatcom County
1419 Cornwall Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

Hours:

Monday-Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

Open to the public & walk-ins welcome



Handbook Acknowledgement

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the RSVP Volunteer Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to become familiar with all contents of the Handbook and to abide by the policies and procedures listed therein. I recognize that failure to abide by, or abuse of, any of the policies or procedures could lead to termination of volunteering. I understand that nothing in the Handbook is intended to create a contract between the Volunteer Center and me and that neither of us is obligated to continue the volunteer relationship for any specific period of time. I also understand the Volunteer Center reserves the right to modify, suspend, revoke, terminate or change any or all of the plans, policies or procedures in the Handbook at any time.

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

