

VOLUNTEER CHORE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2021



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Thank you for volunteering with the Volunteer Chore Program!

WHAT IS THE VOLUNTEER CHORE PROGRAM?

The Volunteer Chore Program is a network of volunteers from churches, senior centers, and student and community groups coordinated through The Volunteer Center of Whatcom County and the Opportunity Council to provide no-fee chore services to low-income seniors and disabled adults.

The Volunteer Chore Program provides assistance to disabled adults and persons over 60 so that they may remain independent in own homes. The Volunteer Chore Program provides services where other programs cannot.



NEEDS OF OUR CLIENTS

We all have basic needs such as essential transportation, shopping, household cleaning, laundry, yard work, household maintenance and repairs, communications, and moving assistance. Clients of the Volunteer Chore Program have these same needs, but often find it difficult to meet them independently. Your assistance with meeting these needs offers clients the chance to remain independent and in their own homes.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY IN THE VOLUNTEER CHORE PROGRAM

The Volunteer Chore Program provides volunteers to assist clients with chores, either on an on-going or a one-time basis.

The Volunteer Chore Program Specialist is notified of a client in need, contacts that person in order to get specific information about his or her chore needs, conceives of a potential match, and calls you, the volunteer, to offer a prospective client. If you are able to fill this particular need, you are given the confidential information and can then call your client to schedule a time to meet and assist him or her.

Any concerns you may have can be shared with the Volunteer Chore Program Specialist. If you are unable to fulfill your client's needs or are unavailable, please let the Volunteer Chore Program Specialist know so that other arrangements can be made.



WHAT A VOLUNTEER CAN DO FOR A CLIENT

Do call ahead of your appointment time to confirm your schedule.

Your client will come to rely on your contact and look forward to your visit.

Do be aware of your client's health. If he or she appears ill, encourage him or her to call his or her doctor and/or family. If you deem it necessary, contact the Volunteer Chore Program Director for additional assistance or re-assessment. If the situation calls for immediate action, you may call 911.

Do be a good listener. Remember that the time you spend with your client is very meaningful to them.

Do let your client know your time commitments/limits. Be assertive, but kind, about his or her expectations. It is okay to say "No".



Do consider contributing a written account of your volunteer

experience. The Volunteer Chore Program and the Volunteer Center of Whatcom County rely on true life stories for presentations to prospective volunteers and funders.

Do respect the confidentiality of your client for his or her safety, don't reveal client addresses or phone numbers. Your client may reveal personal information to you. Respect your client's privacy.

Do give the client the office phone number for the Volunteer Chore Program. If you are providing a one-time service, such as hanging curtains, you may not want to give out your home or work phone number. Instead, you may give the office phone number of the Volunteer Chore Program.

Do give your home or work phone number to your client only if you feel comfortable with this arrangement. This is not required of you.

Do ask your client if he or she would object to your children accompanying you before you bring them. Some clients are not comfortable with children in their homes.

Do tell others about the Volunteer Chore Program; we always have a need for more volunteers! Spread the word that you enjoy working with your client, and remember that your commitment allows your client to remain in his or her home.

WHAT A VOLUNTEER CANNOT DO FOR A CLIENT

Do not agree to assist beyond your comfort level (i.e., physical demands, time commitment, tasks that you do not enjoy doing, etc.)

Do not accept money from your client. If the client wants to pay something, suggest a donation to his or her favorite charity or to the Volunteer Chore Program.

Do not accept gas money. apply for mileage reimbursement instead. Do not transport a client if you do not have a current driver's license and auto insurance as required by law.

Do not recommend over-the-counter medications or home remedies. You may not be fully aware of your client's medical circumstances or his or her established medical program.

Do not help your client in taking any of his or her regular medications. You do not want to be responsible for your client taking the wrong medication or the wrong amount.

Do not assist with any personal care tasks such as bath assistance, bathing supervision, nail (hand or toes) care, hair washing, hair cuts or giving permanents. This cannot be emphasized enough. NEVER assist with any of the above tasks.

Do not assist with transferring a bed-bound or wheelchair-bound person. This could be dangerous to both you and the client.

Do not become involved in any way with your client's finances, such as bill paying. If you shop for your client, return both the change and receipt to the client.

IF YOU ARE EVER IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT ANY SITUATION, DO CHECK WITH YOUR VOLUNTEER CHORE PROGRAM SPECIALIST FOR CLARIFICATION.



SUPPLIES

Clients are expected to provide their own supplies and materials. The Volunteer Chore Program has some tools and supplies that can be used by volunteers providing Chore services.

Some of the supplies available are:

- Weeding tools
- Cleaning Supplies
- Rakes and Shovels

These supplies are available to be checked out from the Volunteer Center of Whatcom County during regular business hours. Please arrange a pickup with the Program Specialist.



REIMBURSABLE ITEMS

All volunteers can be reimbursed upon request for mileage for transporting a client, for using their car to provide a service to a client, and for transportation to and from the client's home. Please submit your mileage reimbursement request on your timesheet by the 30th of each month. The rate of reimbursement is variable and can change year to year. Refer to the Chore Specialist for current rates.



CONFIDENTIALITY

When a person calls the Volunteer Chore Program for assistance, personal information is shared so that we can best know what type of help is needed.

Information such as identity, income, medical conditions and age are to be confidential matters. In order to maintain the trust of our clients, we must strive to guard the dignity and privacy of everyone we serve.

Personal information may not be shared about a client unless absolutely necessary to better minister to their needs.

The only exception to this policy may occur if a client or volunteer has signed a release statement authorizing the Volunteer Chore Program to release the information to specific individuals or organizations.

To promote this trust which exists between volunteers and clients, we must make proper use of the personal information we are given. Those associated with the Volunteer Chore Program respect the confidential nature of any verbal or written information about clients, staff or other volunteers, both during and after the course of volunteer service.

ELDER/DISABLED ADULT ABUSE DEFINITION

Abuse and neglect of older persons and disabled adults include several categories of actions and/or omissions referred to as abuse, neglect, exploitation, and abandonment.

Some signs of potential abuse or neglect include an elderly person or disabled adult with bruises, welts, burns, or evidence of physical restraints, who appears over or under medicated, with inadequate food or water, or with unclean clothes or bedding, whose caregiver abuses alcohol or is emotionally unstable, who previously had excellent finances but now seems unable to meet expenses living in a family with a history of violence, who is not permitted visitors or direct, private communications with others.

If you suspect abuse or neglect...Call the Volunteer Chore Program at (360) 734-5121 ex. 172 or if the elderly person or disabled adult is in immediate danger call 911.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES & COVID19 PROTOCOL



COVID19 has changed so much about our program this past year, and we have needed to get creative with what we can and cannot do.

The Chore Program is currently assisting clients with:

- Dog walking
- Grocery shopping on clients behalf (doorstep drop-off)
- Essential errands on clients behalf (doorstep drop-off)
- Yard care
- Outdoor repair tasks
- Food Bank Deliveries to homebound individuals

Unfortunately we are unable to assist clients with:

- Cleaning or any indoor chores
- Transportation
- Moving assistance of any kind

In the upcoming months as more and more volunteers and clients become vaccinated, we will be making more changes to this plan.



Safety Procedures for Volunteering During COVID-19

Active volunteers:

If you are exposed to COVID19 or must get a test for any reason, please notify the Program Specialist



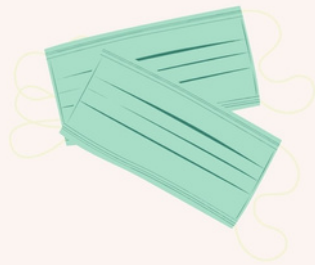
Do not volunteer if you are sick

If you have any symptoms of COVID19 or any other illness, please do not volunteer



Please wear a mask at all times when volunteering.

Please also request that any clients you come in contact with wear one too



Please do not enter the home of any client unless pre-approved by the Program Specialist



As a volunteer, you should understand that the Volunteer Chore Program cannot guarantee a volunteer/work environment which is free from the risk of exposure to infectious disease.

Please take great care when working with clients, as it is likely that many have compromised immune systems, and are at a much higher risk for COVID19 and other infectious diseases.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Admittance: If you are scheduled to be in a client's home and you are unable to gain admittance to the home, notify the Volunteer Chore Program immediately.

Illness/Injury: If a client is ill or injured, you should call the Volunteer Chore Program. If the client needs immediate assistance, contact his or her physician or call 911.

Death: If a client dies while you are in the home, or you are the first person to discover a client who has died, you should immediately call 911 and then notify the Volunteer Chore Program. Always remain at the home until the proper authorities arrive.

Fire: As a volunteer you should be familiar with the location of a telephone and all exits in the client's home. In case of a fire leave the premises with the client. DO NOT go back inside the house. Call the Fire Department from the nearest phone.

Call the Volunteer Chore Program as soon as possible to report the incident.

PROTECTION OF CLIENT FINANCIAL INTERESTS & LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Employees or volunteers of the Volunteer Center of Whatcom County who in the performance of assigned duties have reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult has suffered physical, sexual, mental, or emotional abuse, abandonment, exploitation or neglect, or is otherwise in need of protective services shall make an immediate oral or written report to the Volunteer Chore Program.

Reporting changes in the client's situation The Volunteer Chore Program volunteer may be the person who has the most regular contact with a client. As a result, you may be the first person to be aware of a deterioration in his or her physical or mental condition.

In most cases, the volunteer would report any changes to the Volunteer Chore Program Specialist who will then contact the person and/or agency who made the referral or the client's family.

Things to watch for:

Evidence of unopened mail, a stack of bills unopened, indications of unsafe food being used.

Any worsening condition of a client you are serving that concerns you should be reported to the Volunteer Chore Program.

In case of immediate problems or need for immediate care, call the client's family or designated contact personThe client's physicianIf an emergency call 911.

ETHICS POLICY

Acceptance or use of Client's money or property:

Employees and volunteers of the Volunteer Chore Program are not to accept cash gifts of any amount nor should they accept items of value (in excess of \$5) from clients.

Donations: If a client offers to reimburse you for your help or for gas used, etc., please explain to the client that this is a volunteer program and explain why you are offering to help. If the client seems to understand and wants to make a contribution to the program, please ask them to contact the Volunteer Center of Whatcom County.

Transactions Between Employees and Clients:

Employees and volunteers associated with the agency, and members of their immediate family, may not use any information obtained in the course of their employment/volunteer service for the purpose of private personal economic gain, and may not purchase from or sell to clients any real or person property or personal service except at fair market value through a broker or other independent third party, or at a price available to the general public, or in special circumstances with the prior express written approval of the Chore Program Specialist.

TRACKING YOUR TIME

Monthly Volunteer Timesheets:

Near the end of the month, you receive a link to a timesheet. This is where you report what you did for whom, and how much time, mileage, etc., was involved. See below for example:

Timesheet

Please submit your hours by the 30th or 31st of the month. Thank you for your service!

Name *

First

Last

Phone Number *

E-mail *

What program do you volunteer for? (Please choose one) *

- Chore Select "Chore"
 Other

ACTIVITY 1: Date, Client I Volunteered with, What I did, Hours and Mileage *

ACTIVITY 2: Date, Client I Volunteered with, What I did, Hours and Mileage

ACTIVITY 3: Date, Client I Volunteered with, What I did, Hours and Mileage

ACTIVITY 4: Date, Client I Volunteered with, What I did, Hours and Mileage

Any additional clients/activities, comments please specify here:



How do I count these hours? Your service hours begin from the time you leave your home, not just the time that you spend with your client. It is the total of the time that you set aside for your service.

As you record your hours, please keep track (to the nearest quarter hour) of the time you assist your client with each direct service task.

The total number of volunteer hours are reported to the State of Washington, enabling the Volunteer Chore Program to access the allocated funds to help pay for the program.

Volunteers who report hours are eligible to be reimbursed for their mileage.

Thank you for turning in your time promptly every month. Our funding depends on the numbers of hours generated by volunteers like you!

LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

We know this is a lot of information. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns after reading through this manual. We are so excited to have you as a new volunteer!

Contact us via email (quickest response): **chore@whatcomvolunteer.org**

Or leave a message on our voicemail for a call back: **360-734-5121 ext 172**