

RSVP of Columbia/Montour County Volunteer Handbook



Diakon Child, Family, and Community Ministries
RSVP of Columbia/Montour County
Penny Davis, Project Director
Selena Vivino, Project Coordinator
702 Sawmill Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
davisp@diakon.org
vivinos@diakon.org



WELCOME TO RSVP OF COLUMBIA & MONTOUR COUNTIES

Welcome to the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Columbia and Montour Counties. You have joined a nationwide program that has existed for 50 years. Members of RSVP give their time and talent to local non-profit agencies and organizations. This handbook was prepared by the RSVP staff and approved by the Advisory Council to help acquaint you with all aspects of our program. We hope you will find this manual helpful in answering your questions about RSVP.

HISTORY

RSVP is administered nationally by the Corporation for National and Community Service and is part of the Senior Corps. A federal program, RSVP is America's largest volunteer network for people aged 55 and over. Locally, we are sponsored by Diakon Child, Family, and Community Ministries in conjunction with County Area Agencies on Aging.

MISSION

RSVP's mission is to engage citizens aged 55 and over in volunteer service to meet critical community needs, strengthen communities, and provide a quality experience to our volunteers.

RSVP ADVISORY COUNCIL

The RSVP Advisory Council is made up of members selected from the community with knowledge our community's social needs. The Council also includes representatives from Volunteer Stations and RSVP volunteers themselves. The 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 the RSVP program in the community.

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, sexual orientation, disability, or political affiliation. RSVP strives to be supportive of the needs of each RSVP member and aims to make reasonable accommodations for all volunteers.

RSVP VOLUNTEER POLICIES

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

***Volunteers must complete and submit a minimum 2 hours each month or a total of 24 hours per year to remain active with RSVP. This requirement keeps you current for your supplemental insurance and the annual recognition event.

ON LEAVE

If you are unable to serve for any extended period of time, please contact the RSVP office. We will place you on the temporary inactive list so that you may continue to receive mailings and RSVP information. When you are ready to serve again, please call the office and we will be happy to adjust your status to active.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Every new RSVP enrollment will require a PA State Criminal History clearance before any placement is made. This ensures and maximizes the safety of volunteers and the clients served. Specific Volunteer Stations may also require additional levels of clearance. Instructions for completing the PA State Criminal History check online are included in your volunteer packet, or RSVP staff will be happy to complete one for you.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is the cornerstone of a trusting relationship between volunteers, clients, Volunteer Stations, and RSVP. Some volunteer opportunities involve knowing sensitive information about the individuals being served. Issues or concerns regarding clients should only be discussed with the station supervisor or the RSVP staff. It is important to never release the name, address, phone number or any other information that may identify the client to anyone except the Volunteer Station and/or the RSVP Staff. For your own safety, it is also important to only release personal details to RSVP and Volunteer Station staff.

VOLUNTEER SAFETY POLICY

Volunteer safety is important to RSVP. Concerns regarding safety at your volunteer station should be reported to the station supervisor and RSVP Director as soon as possible. If you are involved in an accident while on assignment, please notify the RSVP office within 24 hours. Should your medical, physical, or other conditions change at any time, it is the duty of the volunteer to inform the RSVP Director so that appropriate changes may be made with regard to the volunteer activity.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

The use or possession of illicit drugs or alcohol, while performing hours of service is strictly prohibited and shall be cause for termination of all volunteer placements throughout RSVP.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

- Hours served by RSVP volunteers at all approved RSVP stations and projects must be submitted to the RSVP office by the 7th business day of each month for grant and reporting purposes.
- Arrangements for recording volunteer hours vary between stations. Please check to see what is required in terms of signing in when you begin a new assignment.
- Notify RSVP of all volunteer assignments within the program. This ensures you are credited for all volunteer work.
- Notify all agencies where you volunteer that you are a RSVP volunteer. Wear your RSVP badge when possible.

PURPOSE FOR SUBMITTING HOURS AND OTHER IMPACT INFORMATION

The Federal Government requires RSVP to track all time spent volunteering as a means of assessing performance and continued funding. RSVP collects the number of people served as a means of measuring impact on community needs. The RSVP office uses this information to share with funders that require statistical and quantitative data.

SUBMITTING HOURS

Either the station or the volunteer may submit hours to the RSVP office. Please check with your service agency for clarification on this. Each volunteer is responsible for making sure that each activity, impact measurement, number of hours and activity description is accurate. Your signature on each time sheet indicates your authorization and should be co-signed by the station supervisor whenever possible. Volunteer Time Sheets should be received by the RSVP office no later than the 7th business day of the following month. There are multiple ways to submit the information:

Mail completed forms to:

Penny Davis, Director of RSVP
702 Sawmill Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

Scan and email completed forms to:

Penny Davis, Director of RSVP – davisp@diakon.org

RECORDING MILEAGE

There are a limited number of volunteer opportunities where mileage may be reimbursed, when funding is available. RSVP members may require mileage reimbursement if they use their own vehicles to perform their volunteer activity and must submit a driver's report no later than the 7th business day of the following month. Other eligibility requirements may be needed. Late submissions will have to wait until the following month for reimbursement.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

When accepting a volunteer assignment you are responsible:

- To attend any orientation or trainings held by RSVP or the Volunteer Station
- To know all policies and procedures of RSVP and the Volunteer Station
- To record and submit monthly hours to the RSVP office or station supervisor
- To call your station in a timely fashion if you are unable to volunteer
- To notify your station and the RSVP office if you expect to be away from your volunteer job for an extended amount of time
- To report all accidents. Secondary Insurance claims may be filed when appropriate
- To call the RSVP office if there are any problems that arise during a volunteer assignment or with a Volunteer Station as soon as possible
- To notify RSVP if there is a change in contact information or status
- To be respectful, maintain confidentiality as necessary, and conduct yourself in an appropriate businesslike manner
- To conduct yourself in accordance with the Volunteer Station's guidelines for staff and/or volunteers. Any concerns regarding the guidelines should be taken to the station supervisor. If concerns are not resolved, please contact the RSVP Director as soon as possible.

PROHIBITED VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Due to federal grant guidelines, RSVP members may not perform the following activities as a RSVP volunteer:

- Give religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in proselytizing
- Assist with electoral activities, voter registration, transportation to polls, or efforts that may influence legislation
- Engage in activities performed that displace paid workers
- Accept money or donation for their service

VOLUNTEER SEPARATION

Separation may be based on termination of volunteer assignment or when the volunteer assignment is no longer meaningful or satisfying to the RSVP volunteer. The RSVP Director and/or Volunteer Station may separate a volunteer from the assignment for cause, including but not limited to: Misconduct, unsatisfactory performance, breach of confidentiality, disregard of RSVP policies listed in volunteer handbook, health issues, extended absences without notification, inability to perform.

APPEAL PROCESS

Any appeal of an adverse action affecting a RSVP volunteer must be in writing to the RSVP Director. The RSVP Director will consult with the Chair of the Advisory Council and the local Sponsor to pursue an investigation with the necessary individuals making the appeal. A response in writing will be sent by the RSVP Director, The Advisory Council Chair or the local Sponsor within one month. The letter will state an agreement or disagreement with the findings for termination. In case of disagreement, a course of corrective action will be taken to correct the situation or to find a suitable and satisfactory solution.

RSVP Office

Penny Davis, Project Director
Selena Vivino, Project Coordinator
Diakon Community Services
Columbia County Area on Aging
702 Sawmill Road Suite 201
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
P: 570-784-9272
E: davisp@diakon.org | vivinos@diakon.org

RESOURCES:

Senior Corps of PA: www.seniorcorpsopa.org
Corporation for National and Community Service: www.cns.gov
CIMA Insurance: www.cimaworld.com

RSVP VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

As a RSVP Volunteer, you may choose from a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. Volunteering must be completed at an approved RSVP Volunteer Station or as approved by the RSVP Director. Please contact the RSVP office if you wish to change your assignment.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

RSVP volunteers may be eligible for reimbursement of mileage when using their own cars for pre-approved assignments, when funding permits. This policy may change at any time. Volunteers may request reimbursement as described herein. Reimbursement rates may change as funding permits.

RECOGNITION

It is our policy to make the general public aware of RSVP volunteer services through an on-going publicity program, including newspaper stories and photographs featured articles in local magazines and newspapers, along with other media sources. Additionally, as funding permits, RSVP traditionally holds an Annual Volunteer Recognition event sometime during the year. Volunteers who have maintained a current and active status will receive an invitation to the event.

SUPPLEMENTARY 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. While volunteering at these designated stations, your RSVP insurance is in effect. At times, you may want to take on additional volunteer work at non-RSVP locations. Under these circumstances, you will NOT be covered by RSVP insurance. All insurance provided by RSVP is secondary to your current provider.

ANNUAL CHECK-IN AND INFORMATION UPDATES

RSVP maintains the right to contact you throughout the year to keep an open communication between the staff and the volunteers. Around your birthday, we will check in to see if our information is current and what your satisfaction is with the program. Your assistance, help, and suggestions help keep RSVP meaningful, timely and relevant.

TIME SHEET FAQ'S

- **Who** must complete timesheets?
All RSVP volunteers.
- **What** assignments require a timesheet?
All assignments require a timesheet including: Meals on Wheels, PA MEDI, Healthy Futures, etc.
- **When** are timesheets submitted?
At the end of each month or by the 7th of the following month. (This is noted on the top of the timesheet.) For those who request travel reimbursement, your timesheet must be in the office by the 7th or your reimbursement check will be delayed until the next month.
- **Why** submit a timesheet?
In order to be covered by the excess liability insurance provided to you as a benefit, you submit timesheets. In addition, RSVP holds an annual recognition event for all volunteers. To be eligible, a volunteer must have a record of service hours. Timesheets are the official record of service hours. Volunteers who do not submit timesheets are not active RSVP volunteers.
- **Where** do I get timesheets?
A timesheet is provided in your handbook. Supervisors at volunteer stations provide additional timesheets to volunteers as needed. Stations needing additional timesheets may contact the RSVP Office.

AmeriCorps Seniors Pledge

I will get things done for America-to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

When faced with a pressing challenge, I will bring Americans of all generations together to strengthen our communities.

When faced with children at risk, I will help them stay in school and on track for a brighter future.

When faced with older adults in need, I will provide support and compassion so they may age with grace and dignity.

Working for the greatest good, I will use my lifetime of experiences to improve my country, my community, and myself through service.

I am a Senior Corps RSVP volunteer, and I will get things done.

**RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK
AND VERIFICATION OF
ALL INFORMATION THEREIN**

***Please be sure to read, sign and date this statement and return it to the RSVP
office along with your PA State Criminal Clearance.***

This form must be on file before any assignments may begin.

Thank you for your understanding and assistance.

- I hereby acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the RSVP Volunteer Handbook.
- I hereby understand the need for confidentiality and safe surroundings.
- I will submit a PA State Criminal Clearance to RSVP before I can be placed at any assignment.
- I hereby acknowledge that I have received the RSVP Volunteer Monthly Time sheet and will submit one in every month served within 7 business days of the following month authorized by a station supervisor whenever possible.
- I understand the prohibited activities of RSVP and will not include them in my submitted hours on the monthly time sheet.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Volunteer Name (Print): _____

Date: _____