



**Nevada Rural Counties
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Inc.
RSVP
Volunteer Handbook**

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CEO

Dear Valued Volunteers:

Welcome to Nevada Rural Counties Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. We hope that your experience with us will be pleasant and will help to make your life even more fulfilling. We are extremely flexible and will work with you to find meaningful volunteer opportunities to suit your available time and diverse talents. You can volunteer as little or as often as you like!

This handbook is designed to provide you with the information that you need about one of the most important volunteer programs in the nation and will be a guide moving forward to make the most of your precious volunteer time. Please read it carefully and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask as we will be happy to answer all of your questions about being a RSVP volunteer.

RSVP volunteers tell us that “I get more out of the program than I give. Knowing that I am an important contributing member of society and my community is what keeps me going”. Studies show that volunteer service helps us to live longer, healthier, more meaningful lives.

Thank you for giving of your time and talents to help others. RSVP volunteers are part of the heritage that makes this country the greatest in the world.

With RSVP “Caring is Giving”. Thank you for giving of something really wonderful – a little bit of you!

Sincerely,

Susan C. Haas
Executive Director & C.E.O.
Nevada Rural Counties RSVP Program, Inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The RSVP volunteer board oversees our organization's operations and makes sure that its staff and volunteers act legally and ethically.

Jerry Thurman	President
Caroline Punches	Vice President
Kevin Kirkeby	Treasurer
Stacey Giomi	Secretary
Allan Ward	Board Member
Abby Wheeler	Board Member
Nick Marano	Board Member

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook has been prepared to inform you about RSVP's history, philosophy, practices, and policies. Of course, no volunteer handbook can answer all the questions you might have about our programs. It is in our person-to-person orientation that we can better get to know each other and express our views.

We hope this Handbook will allow you to feel comfortable with us. We depend on you – your success is our success. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. We will gladly answer them. We believe you will enjoy your volunteer work and your fellow volunteers here. We also believe you will find RSVP a good place to volunteer. Tell your friends and neighbors about your volunteer experience. After all, you are an RSVP ambassador!

We ask that you read this Handbook carefully and refer to it whenever questions arise. We also suggest that you take it home so that you and your family and friends can become familiar with RSVP and our programs.

ABOUT RSVP

Rural RSVP is a Senior Corps Program and is part of the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency established by Congress in 1971 (then Action) to motivate retired citizens to remain active, contributing members of their communities through volunteer service.

Since 1971, RSVP organizations across the country have enabled older Americans to continue making significant contributions to others long after their professional careers have ended. More than 600,000 volunteers serve in over 850 RSVP Programs, urban and rural, large and small, throughout the United States. Older men and women are offered meaningful, active volunteer opportunities putting, their talents and experience to work in community-defined, community-supported projects and independent living programs with the goal of assisting seniors and disabled persons to remain independent and in their own homes with dignity.

Rural RSVP is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) Corporation – Community Service Organization - that has been serving the elderly and other citizens in need of assistance throughout Nevada for more than 45 years. Formed in 1973 to serve 5 counties, the program has significantly expanded and today serves in 16 of the 17 counties in Nevada.

RSVP's mission is to help frail, homebound, and low income seniors remain independent by providing high quality programs, which allow them to stay in their own homes with dignity. Additionally, RSVP coordinates a volunteer network of seniors who use their skills to provide support to community agencies and address community needs through service.

As a volunteer, you will be working with people who appreciate the gifts you have to share and who will be glad to see you. In addition, while improving their lives, did you know you will be improving your own as well? Research has shown that providing regular volunteer work increases quality of life, helps with longevity and increases vitality!

RSVP has a variety of volunteer opportunities for seniors that provide independent living programs to help keep low-income seniors and adults living with a disability to remain self-sufficient and in their own homes, including:

1. Home Companion Program offering companionship
2. Lifeline or Freedom Alert provides a Personal Emergency Response System for seniors living alone
3. Resistance Exercise Training Program that keeps seniors fit and active
4. Escorted Transportation Programs provide critical care trips
5. Respite Care program provides volunteers to relieve primary caregivers on a regular basis
6. Veterans VIP program to help Veteran's access medical services and provide suicide prevention and awareness, socialization and other essential purposes such as referrals and respite care
7. The CARE Law Program provides pro bono legal services to low-income seniors
8. Farmer's Market Nutrition Program gives seniors access to fresh fruits and vegetables
9. Homemaker Services provide frail seniors with a clean, hygienic environment.

The Benefits of Volunteering

Welcome to the RSVP Family and congratulations on making the important decision to become a volunteer! Staff and other volunteers will be proud to work with you and to count you among our growing family members. One of the best reasons for seniors to volunteer is one of the simplest: **Because it feels good to be active, to be involved, and to be needed.**

RSVP provides a variety of opportunities for people to participate in the life of their community through significant volunteer service. The program helps to increase the public's awareness of the vast knowledge, experience, expertise and love found in volunteers.

Volunteers will find a rewarding and enriching experience when they discover that our elders have amazing life stories and life experiences to share. Spending time with a senior not only provides them with their immediate needs, whether it be transporting them to a critical doctor's appointment, or spending time

with them at home, it also allows for much needed socialization and quality time. We all benefit when seniors remain independent and active members of our communities.

Funding

RSVP is funded partly by the federal government and partly by the State of Nevada and local community. About 14% of RSVP's budget is funded under the Corporation for National & Community Service. The other 86% comes from fundraisers and grants.

Advisory Councils

RSVP has Advisory Councils in selected communities we serve. The Councils advise and assist RSVP and Staff, and provides independent guidance and support to RSVP. Each Advisory Council is comprised of community leaders, business professionals, representatives from volunteer stations, and RSVP volunteers. In addition to advising and supporting RSVP, the Councils are an important link to the community, helping to generate community support for RSVP. Some counties have more informal groups who assist RSVP. Check with your Field Representative about a Council or group in your community.

VOLUNTEERING WITH RSVP

Anyone can be an RSVP volunteer regardless of income, race, religion, creed, color, national origin, political affiliation, physical challenge or sexual orientation. An RSVP volunteer must be willing to accept training and supervision as required, and be capable of performing the desired assignment. Volunteers do not receive a salary or other compensation, except for mileage reimbursement and occasionally meals. **RSVP accepts volunteers over the age of 25** who desire to volunteer.

Volunteers can expect RSVP to:

- Value and appreciate their time, talent and expertise
- Treat all volunteers with respect and decency
- Provide a broad range of rich and enjoyable programs
- Inspire every individual to work together respectfully
- Protect their privacy and not release their contact information without their permission
- Maintain a positive work environment
- Provide trainings and materials necessary for participating in programs

We expect Volunteers to:

- Keep safety as your top priority
- Consider volunteer work a professional commitment
- Represent RSVP and our agency partners in an appropriate and responsible manner at all times
- Be non-confrontational while performing RSVP duties
- Be prompt, reliable, and follow through on all commitments
- Be positive and helpful!

RSVP members serve through a variety of non-profit social service or governmental agencies and non-profit service organizations and institutions designated as volunteer stations. The stations include schools, libraries, day-care centers, hospitals, nursing homes, senior centers, local and state government and other community service organizations. Please call us to receive a list of the volunteer stations in your area.

As a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to make your own schedule. You choose the number of hours and days you want to serve each month. Some volunteers work several days each week, others less. **A minimum of one hour of service per quarter (90 days) is needed to be considered an active volunteer** in our program. This is critical for your insurance to remain in force. You may choose from many different kinds of volunteer placements and if you need a new challenge, you may change your volunteer job or station whenever you wish.

You have the right to refuse to serve in unsanitary or unsafe conditions. If you encounter unsafe or unsanitary conditions at your station or at client's home, notify RSVP immediately.

Volunteer Hours

RSVP volunteers donate more than 100,000 hours each year to community service in the counties we serve. Every hour you work is a valuable contribution and needs to be reported. Our funding sources require that we compile statistics on what our senior volunteers are doing in the community. This is also important in our efforts to recognize our volunteers' contributions at our various recognition events. *PLEASE FILL OUT YOUR TIMESHEET and turn it in each month so that we can collect your valuable hours and continue to provide excellent programs for elders in the community.*

Every RSVP volunteer, whether you volunteer one hour or one hundred hours a month is responsible for reporting volunteer hours to the RSVP office by the 3rd of every month. Hours are recorded on separate time sheets for each agency or program where you work. Do not report hours for more than one month or one station on a time sheet. Count your time beginning when you arrive at your station and ending when you leave. Hours spent working on your volunteer assignment at home count as well.

Time sheets are available from your Field Representative, in the RSVP office and at your workstation. When you need more time sheets, call our office, or write us a note when you send in your last time sheet, and you will be sent several more.

Do not report time spent volunteering in political organizations, or private for-profit organizations. Government regulations limit RSVP volunteers' activities in these areas. If you have a question about an organization, RSVP office staff can clarify it for you.

If you are requesting mileage reimbursement you must indicate this on your time sheet with your field representative or supervisor's signature for each station or it will not be reimbursed. Remember to sign your name on the line provided on the timesheet.

Training

RSVP volunteers receive training and orientation from the Field Representative, Volunteer or Staff Interviewer. After placement, volunteers receive training and supervision from the station (workplace) and/or Field Representative, annual Elder Abuse Prevention Training and if you are a driver for RSVP; driver training to include: emergency procedures, safe driving techniques and passenger assistance. After your initial driver training you will receive refresher courses annually.

Mileage and Meals

Depending on funds available, reimbursement for mileage and meals is available for RSVP volunteers whose income is such that the extra miles driving to and from volunteer stations (or a meal) are a financial burden. Requests for reimbursement should be made when you submit your time sheets. Volunteers can receive reimbursements for out of pocket expenses for meals and mileage. Mileage reimbursement are paid quarterly during the 4th week of the following month.

Mileage reimbursement is calculated at 40 cents (\$0.40) per mile and covers only the round trip miles from your home to the volunteer agency or the home of the person you are providing care for, as well as any local trips you make for the agency. The actual cost of a meal, not provided by the station can be claimed if you are on assignment 3 hours or more in a day and including a meal period. Any mileage that is not reimbursed by RSVP can be claimed on your tax return. Check with your accountant. No checks are issued for less than two dollars (\$2.00). You are not under any obligation to drive for the station, especially mileage above what RSVP reimburses.

Insurance

RSVP provides various free insurance that covers all volunteers while doing volunteer work. This insurance coverage begins when any other insurance you may have is exhausted. For more details, please see the brochure included in your enrollment packet.

Volunteers, who drive their own vehicle to and from their volunteer assignment, and/or serve as a volunteer driver, are required to keep in effect the minimum automobile liability coverage required by state law.

Recognition

RSVP holds special recognition events every other year to recognize the contribution of our volunteers. In addition, most counties hold a Christmas party for volunteers.

Further Involvement

Want to help RSVP in other ways?

- Join the Advisory Council Committee
- Volunteer at the RSVP office
- Make a donation to RSVP in memory of a friend or remember us in your will.
- Offer your ideas at any time, in person or by phone. They are welcome.

Limitations to Placement of Volunteers

As a volunteer, you need to know that RSVP regulations reference the following prohibited activities for all volunteers:

- Volunteer shall not be assigned to or permitted to engage in work for political organizations.
- Volunteer shall not give religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in any form of proselytization as part of his/her duties.
- Volunteer shall not be used to displace Station employees or contractors.
- Volunteer shall not accept tips, gifts, loans or fees from RSVP clients, their legal guardian, members of their family, or friends. **However, donations to**

RSVP are gratefully accepted.

- Volunteer shall not smoke in clients' homes or while transporting clients'.
- Volunteer shall not purchase alcohol or illegal substance for clients.
- Volunteer shall not borrow the clients' car or other personal belongings.
- Volunteer shall not bring family members, other people or pets to the clients' home without the clients' permission and supervisory approval.
- Staff shall not eat the clients' food.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Be Dependable

If you say you will be somewhere on a certain date and time, please be there! Our clients depend upon you for valued services. Commitment to your agreed upon assignment is essential. If you are unable to make your commitment, please call your station supervisor as soon as possible as to why you cannot report for volunteer work.

Be professional

Treat clients with courtesy and dignity. *A Code of Ethics is included in your Volunteer Package and must be signed and returned to the RSVP office before you are assigned a station.*

Communicate your Needs

If you are not clear about your job duties, or have concerns about your station, speak up! Most often, you will find that the agency staff is eager to accommodate your needs. If, after talking to your supervisor, a better arrangement cannot be made, RSVP staff will intervene and resolve the situation, or find another placement that better suits your needs. Never just walk away from an assignment that you are unhappy with. RSVP has vast volunteer opportunities and certainly can find one you will like and enjoy.

Keep RSVP Informed

- Let RSVP know when you do not want to accept an assignment. You are a volunteer. There is no set day or time that you have to volunteer. It is entirely up to you!
- If you are planning to go on vacation, spend the winter somewhere warm, do some traveling, or just take some time off, please let the RSVP office know ahead of time. It is helpful for your Field Representative to plan around your

temporary absence.

- If you change your address or telephone number, let RSVP know at once. Otherwise, you will not receive correspondence and/or reimbursement checks in a timely manner.
- If your times of availability change, or you no longer wish to, or are no longer able to volunteer, for whatever reason, please notify the RSVP office as soon as possible.
- If you have an on the job accident while volunteering, or a vehicle accident, the accident must be reported to the RSVP office at once.
- Wear your RSVP nametag while volunteering.

RSVP POLICIES

Non-Discrimination Policy

RSVP will not discriminate in the selection of volunteers or those to receive services based upon race, color, creed, belief, religion, sex, national origin, age, political affiliation or past participation in the discrimination complaint process. Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities will be made available upon advance notice for meetings, hearings, or conferences.

Harassment

RSVP will not tolerate any form of harassment. By this policy, RSVP prohibits comments, gestures and conduct which might not violate state or federal law, but which are inappropriate in our workplace. No person in this organization is exempt from this policy.

If you believe that you have experienced unlawful harassment by any volunteer, employee, supervisor, manager, client, or that any such person's comments, gestures, or conduct are objectionable, you should immediately report the matter to your Supervisor or the Program Director at the Carson City RSVP office.

In addition, if you believe that another person in our organization has experienced unlawful harassment or objectionable comment, gestures or conduct by any volunteer, employee, supervisor, manager, client or other person doing

business with or for RSVP, you should immediately report the matter to the Program Director at the Carson City RSVP office.

After an investigation of any report or complaint of harassment, if RSVP determines that harassment has occurred, RSVP will take the necessary remedial action.

RSVP prohibits any reprisals or retaliation against any individual for reporting or making a complaint of harassment or of any otherwise objectionable comments, gestures or conduct, or for participating in an investigation of any such report or complaint.

Internet and E-Mail Use Policy

RSVP provides some of their volunteers with Internet access and electronic communications services as required for the performance and fulfillment of their responsibilities. Some volunteers at the various Stations may also have this access.

Volunteers must understand that this access is for the purpose of increasing productivity and not for non-business activities. Also, any connection to the Internet offers an opportunity for non-authorized users to view or access company information.

To that end, volunteers of RSVP and/or Stations should have no expectation of privacy while using company-owned equipment. Information passing through or stored on company equipment can and will be monitored.

The RSVP electronic mail (e-mail) system is the agency's property. The e-mail system is maintained for business use only. The e-mail system may not be used to transmit any message, file, image or sound that may be offensive, derogatory, defamatory, obscene or otherwise inappropriate, or unrelated to the agency's business.

Termination of Volunteer Services

Volunteers may be removed from service for cause. Grounds for termination of volunteer services include but are not limited to: extensive and

unauthorized absences; misconduct; inability to perform assignments; and failure to accept supervision. However, a station may not directly terminate a volunteer. The station may request that RSVP terminate a volunteer. The parties will then hold a termination conference to clarify reasons for termination. RSVP may recall a volunteer or a volunteer may resign from an assignment or RSVP at any time. If you believe that your termination from service was unwarranted, please follow the grievances and complaints procedures, below.

Grievance Procedures

If you ever feel that you have not been treated well or fairly or have been discriminated against by RSVP staff or your station personnel, or if you believe that your termination from service was unwarranted, please put your grievance or complaint in writing. Describe fully the reason for or incident giving rise to the grievance or complaint. List the reporting or complaining party's information as well as information on any witnesses. If the grievance or complaint is against an RSVP volunteer or employee, include the volunteer or employee's name. If the complaint involves more than one incident, list each incident separately and send it to the RSVP Executive Director, P.O. Box 1708, Carson City, NV 89702. Your grievance or complaint will be acknowledged within one week of receipt. The Executive Director will call you and/or meet with you to work out a resolution that is acceptable to you. All proceedings will be kept strictly confidential. Call RSVP at 775-687-4680 x6 to request an *ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS, GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS* report form.

Drug and Alcohol Use

RSVP provides a drug-free, healthful and safe environment. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted while volunteering only if it does not impair the volunteer's ability to perform the tasks effectively and in a safe manner.

Confidentiality and Code of Ethics

Many of you will be working with clients or processing information that must be kept strictly confidential by federal and/or state statutes. Your cooperation in this area is essential. *A Confidentiality Agreement and RSVP Code of Ethics form is included in your Volunteer Package and must be signed and returned to the RSVP office before you are assigned to a person or project.*

RSVP will never give your personal telephone number, address, or other information to any party without your permission. RSVP is required to provide client information to the Division for Aging and Disability Services through the SAMS (Social Assistance Management Software) Program and volunteer information is maintained in Volunteer Reporter for the purpose of documenting service and to obtain federal and state grants and funding for RSVP. If you do not wish your personal information entered into Volunteer Reporter Program, inform RSVP in writing.

RSVP recommends that you do not give clients your personal telephone number. However, it is your choice whether and when you share your telephone number or address with a client.

ELDER abuse

You will receive training on how to recognize and report Elder Abuse during your orientation and on an annual basis thereafter.

Elder Abuse is a felony, and includes neglect, exploitation, isolation, or coercion of a senior. Though the vast majority of abusers are family members, many abusers are seniors themselves. *A copy of the Elder Abuse Statute is included in your Volunteer Package.* You will receive training on how to recognize Elder Abuse and what to do if you suspect Elder Abuse; during your Volunteer Orientation and annually thereafter.

RSVP's mission is to help seniors, not to place them in circumstances which put them severely at risk or to subject them to abuse or exploitation. When a volunteer forgets this, it puts our entire program at risk.

As RSVP volunteers you have a duty to be compassionate but maintain a professional distance. You cannot become personally involved in our clients lives. You **cannot** become what is known in Elder Abuse circles as the client's "new best friend".

- If a client offers you money or an inheritance, you must refuse. (The client may donate money to RSVP. Donation envelopes are available from RSVP.)

- If a client asks you to mediate between her and her family, you must refuse.
- If a client starts seeing you as the daughter, son, brother or sister she never had, you must start putting distance between you and the client.
- If a client asks you to do more than what is allowed under RSVP's guidelines, you must refuse.
- If the client begins depending on you for nearly everything or to make decisions for him, you must immediately put distance between you and the client.
- If the client becomes romantically attached to you, transfer the client's case to another volunteer.
- **Do not give medicine, change bandages, lift, assist with bathing, toileting or provide other medical or personal care services of any kind to a client, even if you are a nurse.**
- Do not use your personal funds to pay clients' bills, or other expenses.
- If the client has a guardian, you cannot visit or transport the client without the guardian's approval. Only the guardian has the authority to agree to any services to be provided to a senior under a guardianship.

Do not take it upon yourself to do something which you should not be doing for the client. Do not put yourself, or RSVP, at risk of an Elder Abuse charge. Always contact RSVP if you have any questions or if any of the above situations arise or if you are not sure where to draw the professional line. RSVP staff will work to get the client the support and care that they need. DO NOT CROSS THE MEDICAL BARRIER – do not administer medication, lift the client or provide toileting.

This can be difficult because some of our clients have no one else to depend on. However, there are programs available to seniors through the local senior centers and Division for Aging and Disability Services, Department of Welfare, Elder Protective Services and more, which will help clients when you are unable to. Call the RSVP office for referral numbers. Don't step over the line. Use your head.

If you are unsure whether you are crossing the line between help and abuse, call RSVP **BEFORE** you act. Don't risk your reputation by doing something inappropriate. Don't risk RSVP's reputation by putting our clients at risk.

RSVP staff and volunteers are mandatory elder abuse reporters and must report suspected elder abuse within 24 hours. If you suspect one of our clients is

being abused or exploited, call **Elder Protective Services at (775) 688-2964** to file an abuse report. Your report is confidential. There is no liability for making a report. A listing of Elder Abuse Factors is included in your volunteer Package.

Holiday Schedule

RSVP observes twelve (12) holidays during the year. Services are not provided on these holidays.

- January 1 – New Year’s Day
- Third Monday in January – Martin Luther King Day
- Third Monday in February – Presidents Day
- Last Monday in May – Memorial Day
- July 4 – Independence Day
- First Monday in September – Labor Day
- October 31 – Nevada Day
- November 11 – Veterans Day
- Fourth Thursday in November – Thanksgiving Day
- Friday following the Fourth Thursday in November – Family Day
- December 25 – Christmas Day

RSVP PROGRAMS

PHILIPS LIFELINE/FREEDOM ALERT PROGRAM

Philips Lifeline is a personal emergency response system (PERS). RSVP Lifeline Program volunteers install and maintain Philips Lifeline units in homes of low-income elderly seniors many of whom who live alone and have no immediate family living nearby. Philips Lifeline units provide immediate emergency response to persons in life-threatening situations who cannot access the telephone or other assistance because of a fall or other situation. Philips Lifeline units contain a button on a chain worn around the neck or on a wristband that can be pushed to obtain assistance at a moments notice. Each client can have three people who are the first point of contact “responders.” If more serious help is needed, Philips Lifeline or the responder will call law enforcement personnel or emergency medical service.

Philips Lifeline gives the elderly and disabled the confidence and freedom to live on their own. Learning to install and maintain the units is simple and rewarding. RSVP Philips Lifeline volunteers are thoroughly trained to install and maintain the Philips Lifeline units.

The Philips Lifeline Program is a separate program, coordinated through the Home Companion Program. *There is a monthly service fee.* The fee amounts to about \$1.00 per day.

If an elder is not able to afford the Lifeline monitoring fee, they may be eligible for **FREEDOM ALERT at no charge. Contact the RSVP office for details.**

If a senior has a court appointed Guardian, the senior legally cannot execute any contract or agreement with RSVP. Only the guardian has the authority to agree to any services to be provided to the senior under the guardianship. If you find out after the fact that a senior has a guardian, you must contact the guardian immediately. The guardian then has the right to either continue the services by signing the contract herself, or terminate the services.

Home Companion Program

The mission of the Home Companion Program is to link volunteers with the elderly, disabled and others in need of short- and long-term supplementary services with the goal of helping them remain at home rather than prematurely placed in a care facility.

Since its beginning in 1984, the Home Companion Program (HCP) has relied on volunteers to carry out its mission of meeting essential and supplementary needs for Nevada's rural elderly. HCP volunteers provide the emotional support and assist with the supplementary tasks that are so necessary to confined persons. These are duties that might be performed by family members were they readily available. Examples of HCP duties include: crafting and art cares classes, visiting clients, reading to clients, and telephoning to check on well-being.

All Home Companion Program volunteers who have direct access to clients or client information must agree to and allow a background check. There is no cost to the applicant. If the background check returns a record of criminal history and the employee or volunteer indicates that the record is incorrect, he/she will be given 30 days to correct the record prior to any action being taken to suspend or terminate volunteerism, and you must agree to be directly supervised during the 30-day period of review. The volunteer service provided to the client is documented in RSVP's client database, for funding purposes and to track client care and volunteer service hours. In addition to the regular information requested for time sheets, HCP volunteers must include the client's name beside the date and hours for each assignment.

If a client has a medical emergency or falls when you are with them, do not attempt to lift or treat the client. We do not want you to injure yourself or the client. **Call 911 immediately.** If the client has a Lifeline, assist the client in pushing the Lifeline button for a responder.

Although there is a need for house cleaners and cooks RSVP does not ask the HCP volunteers to perform these activities through our Companion Program. Rather, these services are available on a limited basis through our Homemaker Program. If you wish to prepare a meal now and then for a client, please feel free to do this. However, RSVP will never relegate housekeeping or cooking duties to

you as part of an assignment.

Clients are asked to call to request services at least *3 BUSINESS DAYS* in advance and preferably as soon as they know they will be in need of HCP services. As soon as the client's request is received, RSVP will begin locating a HCP volunteer to assist the client. Because not all our transportation vans are wheelchair equipped RSVP is unable to accommodate everyone for rides. However, most drivers are able to assist clients into vans or automobiles. (Not all counties have an RSVP van assigned to them.) Field Representatives screen a client's ability to walk and lift themselves from chairs so the HCP volunteer will be fully informed when they accept an assignment. If not able to walk and lift themselves, clients must be accompanied by a personal assistant to do so.

Homemaker Program

The RSVP Homemaker program helps help low-income seniors who are struggling to live safely and comfortably by providing them with a clean, hygienic environment. RSVP Homemakers perform general cleaning, prepare meals, (if home-delivered meals are unavailable), washing and drying clothes, and other essential household tasks as defined in the client's service plan. Seniors have the peace of mind knowing that, if needed, homemakers can also pick up their prescriptions or groceries for the week. Senior's spirits are lifted as they enjoy a clean and comfortable home.

Independent contracts provide this service. As independent contractors they do not receive a salary, health benefits, paid vacations or holidays or a retirement plan. No taxes are withheld from their paychecks. Independent contractors are strictly work-for-hire and as such are responsible for paying their own taxes.

Resistance Training Exercise Training

Resistance Training helps keep seniors active by providing exercise through light weights training. This is done in group settings or for individual homebound persons. RSVP's Resistance Training Exercise Program was designed by Dr. Maria Fiatarone of the University of Harvard's medical school to improve the strength, coordination and balance of seniors, thus improving their ability to ambulate and remain independent and in their own homes as long as possible. It is a proven system using repetitive sets of exercises with light arm or ankle weights

three times a week.

Research has shown that sedentary people start losing their muscle/bulk strength, balance and coordination, and their aerobic capacity in their late 20's and 30's. By age 55-60 they have lost about 40%. They become more frail and unsteady on their feet and much more susceptible to falling with serious injuries, thus causing many to be institutionalized prematurely. Resistance training participating seniors report increased flexibility and muscle strength resulting in the ability to maintain their health and safety and assist in the prevention of strokes, heart attacks, arthritis, diabetes and other disabling ailments and to help improve cognitive ability and quality of life.

Home Companion Transportation Program

The Transportation Program provides critical care trips to medical and dental appointments. Not all services are available in all counties. The RSVP transportation program provides door-to-door escorted transportation services for low-income, elderly persons and disabled persons in the rural counties, where no other appropriate transportation is available. Our volunteer drivers use RSVP vans or their own vehicles to take clients to medical, dental and eye appointments, socialization and to pick up prescriptions. All these are vital to the isolated and confined elderly and disabled.

Driver Information: Driving a homebound senior is an extremely valuable service. Many of our clients rely upon us to assist them with their basic needs so that they can remain independent and in their own homes as long as possible. Just that little bit of help can make all the difference. Typically, we provide clients with rides to all types of medical appointments. Based on driver availability, we help clients with rides to pick up prescriptions, grocery shopping, banking and various other activities such as a visit to the library or to visit a friend. When we call to request your services as a driver, we will go over exactly what the client would like to do, the times of service requested and any special needs that the client may have.

Every volunteer driver will receive a background check and must have a valid driver's license or Nevada Identification Card on file with RSVP. If you renew your driver's license or identification cards, provide a copy of the new license or card to RSVP as soon as possible. All RSVP drivers must submit a copy of your

3-year driving record from the Department of Motor Vehicles to the RSVP office prior to commencing volunteer driving activities. There is a fee for obtaining your record - and you will be reimbursed for this expense.

- All volunteer drivers must provide proof of minimum automobile liability insurance coverage. It is your responsibility to notify RSVP of any changes in your insurance.

We do not charge for Home Companion Transportation services however, contributions are gratefully accepted. You will be provided with contribution envelopes. When a client wants to donate, we ask that you accept the monies and let the clients know that you will forward it to RSVP's office for the Home Companion Transportation Program as a Contribution that stays in their county to help others.

To ensure safe driving while acting in the capacity of a RSVP volunteer, RSVP requires the following:

- Use RSVP vehicles for official RSVP business only
- Wear your seat belt and require passengers to wear seat belts at all times
- Obey all traffic laws
- Always have your driver's license with you when driving as well as proof of automobile insurance
- Keep doors locked when driving and while parked
- Do not drive when tired, drinking or taking medication that causes drowsiness
- Do not smoke or allow passengers to smoke in vehicles
- Do not drive impaired by texting or cell phone use
- **DO NOT LEAVE a client that you are transporting alone in the vehicle at any time.** If you have RSVP business to attend to, i.e. picking up supplies, or dropping time sheets at the RSVP office, do so before or after you have provided transportation to the client.

As an RSVP volunteer driver, you choose when and how often you would like to drive. Rides are typically scheduled Monday thru Friday between 9:00am and 3:00pm. Exceptions may occur, but we try to keep the appointments during those hours. Typically, we do not schedule rides on the weekends, holidays and during RSVP volunteer appreciation events. However, if there is a need and you are willing to provide the rides, you may do so in coordination with the RSVP

office or your local Field Representative.

Prior to your driving assignment, you will be asked to provide a copy of your driver's license, proof of insurance and a DMV driver history. You will be asked to update your driver information if it changes. **You will be asked to provide your DMV driver history annually.** RSVP will reimburse you for the cost of your DMV driver history. Additionally, you will receive driver safety training prior to your assignment and annually thereafter.

If you accept a driving assignment, it is extremely important that you let us know AS SOON AS POSSIBLE if for any reason you have to cancel. We will try to find another driver. As you can imagine, clients depend greatly on their drivers to be there at the appointed time and place. We ask that you call the client the day before the ride is scheduled to confirm. Please verify the address and time of pick-up and the destination. When you take a client to a Doctor's appointment, please walk them in, verify how long the appointment will be and either wait or be back in the waiting room when they have completed their visit so that you can walk them back to the van or your car.

We recommend that drivers NOT give out their personal address and telephone numbers to clients. If someone asks you for this information and you are not comfortable giving this information, just let them know that is RSVP's policy not to do so. Ask them to contact the RSVP office if they want to schedule or cancel a ride.

You will be provided with as much information about the client as we can legally give. If for any reason you find that you are not comfortable driving someone, let us know immediately and we will find another driver to work with that person and someone else for you to drive. We want to make the Home Companion Transportation experience pleasant for all concerned.

If there is an emergency situation call 911. If you suspect that there is elder abuse; you are a mandatory reporter. You are required to report Elder Abuse to the Division on Aging Services, Elder Protection Division (775) 687-4210.

The Care Law Program

Provides pro bono legal services for low-income seniors. The main areas of focus are: estate planning (wills and trusts); Medicaid and nursing home planning; guardianships; debt and consumer issues; social security and Medicare issues; powers of attorney and advance directives; homesteads and real property issues; and elder abuse issues. The Care Law program is an independent program of RSVP and is the only known legal services program sponsored and operated by a RSVP chapter. The Care Law program is dependent upon donations and grants.

Volunteer Stations

RSVP members serve through a variety of non-profit social service or governmental agencies and institutions designated as volunteer stations (workplaces). The stations include schools, libraries, day-care centers, hospitals, nursing homes, senior centers, local and state government and other community service organizations. Volunteer activities include crime prevention, adult literacy tutoring, environmental surveys and education, hospital volunteer service, center based nutrition programs, public museum docent services, library services for the community and homebound, computer assistance for the elderly and needy, veterans' memorial services, homeless shelter and food bank services, USDA commodity foods distribution, free senior farmer's market produce coupon distribution and many more.

Veterans VIP Program

RSVP and the Carson City Sheriff's office have partnered to provide service to Veterans, including:

- Wellness Checks
- Emergency Medical Transportation
- Referral System
- Suicide Prevention and Awareness

Home Companion Respite Program

Respite helps families avoid premature institutionalization of their loved ones by providing respite and caregiver support services to Nevada's rural senior and disabled population. Caregivers often succumb to stress and exhaustion before

the loved one if never given a break from the overwhelming 24/7 responsibility. Our mission to provide respite and caregiver support services to Nevada's rural senior and disabled population by helping families avoid premature institutionalization of their loved ones, thereby allaying the terrible fear of the elderly and afflicted that they will not be able to remain in their own homes where their possessions, family and memories all help alleviate their condition. This respite program gives direct relief to those who care for their family members.

RSVP is dedicated to providing Independent Living Programs to promote quality of life and to assist Nevada's elders to remain independent and in their own homes for as long as possible.

We provide a good neighbor approach. Our goal is to listen carefully to each person we serve; be sensitive to their unique needs; respect and preserve their dignity; and compassionately provide them with respite care by giving them a break so that they can attend to their own needs and have some personal time to interact with friends and the community.

We do not charge for Respite Care services however, contributions are needed and gratefully accepted. You will be provided with marked envelopes. When a client wants to contribute we ask that you accept the monies and let the clients know that you will forward it to RSVP's office for the Home Companion/Respite Program as a Contribution that will stay in their county to help others.

The respite system gives families a chance to: Take a break from their jobs as full-time caregivers; enables them to attend to their own needs, and relax so that they can be better caregivers to their family members. It is a sad fact that over 40% of caregivers pre-decease the person that they are taking care of, mostly because of the overwhelming stress.

Respite focuses on care that: Enhances the quality of remaining life; provides relief or comfort; and supports the client and family. Through appropriate care, Respite allows the client and family members the breaks they need.

RSVP offers care to clients at no cost. Donations are gratefully accepted but not required. If you receive donations, turn them in to the Program Coordinator at the RSVP office or your local Field Representative. Clients who wish to use

donations as a tax write off may do so. Our Controller will provide a letter verifying the contributions made upon request. Pick up the donation envelopes at the Carson City office or from your local Field Representative. You can leave the envelope with your client and if they wish to donate, great. If not, that is perfectly fine.

In Respite, we do not focus on medical issues of the client and their disease. We focus on what is important to the client and family. Our goal is to improve the client's care through help to the families by providing relief.

Home Companion Respite Care – Principles of Respite

1. Offer quality home care personalized for the individual's needs
2. Fostering as much independence for each client as he or she wants and is capable of
3. Treating each client and family with dignity and respect
4. Respecting the individuality of each client and family
5. Supporting each client and family choice of care and lifestyle
6. Protecting each client and family's right to privacy
7. Nurturing the spirit of each client and family
8. Involving family in care planning
9. Providing a safe environment
10. Making respite a valuable community asset.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Prohibitions of Respite

1. Respite volunteers do not give medications to their clients.
2. Volunteers do not provide lifting, ambulating or transferring to their clients.
3. Volunteers do not provide toileting or bathing to their clients.
4. Volunteers shall not operate as the clients' legal guardian or executor.
5. Volunteers shall not become involved in the clients' personal financial affairs or estate.
6. Volunteers shall not become involved in issues related to criminal matter.
7. Volunteers shall not influence consumer choice.

We are not nurses or professional in-home nurses' aides. We can assist, give a steady hand or arm but we are not trained for or insured to provide the services of social workers or professional in-home health care providers. We are volunteers. If you have any questions about what you can or cannot do to provide assistance to your client, contact the Program Coordinator or Program Director for guidance.

Respite Care givers offer choice, provide a safe environment and help clients and families maintain dignity and promote individuality. Offering choice enables a client to have a degree of control over their lives. By offering choices to clients, you encourage independence by involving them in decisions about their time and their care.

The Respite Care provider respects the dignity of clients. Helping to maintain a client's dignity involves showing respect. Clients need help in some very personal and private ways. Respite care givers must honor a client's dignity. For example, never call a client "honey" or "sweetie".

Training/Reflective sessions will be held on a quarterly basis to further communicate best practices, share experiences and provide valuable information to assist you and your clients. These training sessions are *mandatory* in order to remain in the program.

Each time you provide Respite Care to a client, log it in on your timesheet. Clearly write Respite on the Description of Service. Note the date, hours of service, client's name and caregiver's name, and miles travelled.

You must provide hours of service in order to receive a stipend for the month.

If you provide volunteer hours for RSVP in a different program, such as driving clients to the doctor, or installing a Lifeline, **PLACE THESE HOURS ON A SEPARATE TIMESHEET.**

Place all of your Respite volunteer hours on a separate timesheet(s) to avoid confusion in the office. We work to log your hours into the databases which record your valuable time and help to justify the funding of our Programs. As a Respite Care provider, you are asked to commit to 8 to 10 hours of Respite, attend Respite Training Sessions or provide community outreach each week.

You will be provided with a background check, monthly stipend (as long as you serve Respite hours, attend quarterly training, or community outreach for the month) and you will be reimbursed for mileage from your home to the client's home and return, for training mileage and community outreach mileage. Please submit your timesheets to the RSVP office or your local Field Representative no later than the 5th day of each month. Timesheets not received in the RSVP Carson City office by the 5th day of the month will be carried over to the next month. We make every effort to have your stipend ready within a day or two after the 5th of each month along with your mileage reimbursement.

You can serve your 8 to 10 hours per week by working with your local Field Representative or Program Director to assist with our community outreach efforts. Your time providing community outreach should be noted on your Respite timesheet along with your mileage and clients. In the description of service column write "community outreach – dropped flyers off at St. Peter's church". Describe what you did. If you hang Respite flyers up on the grocery store bulletin board, etc. Talk to your local supervisor to find out how you can help distributing brochures and flyers to get the word out about our program and if you have questions about your stipend or mileage reimbursements.

Once you have established a client and a schedule of care please contact your Field Representative or the Carson City Program Director so that we can note your days and times of service. If you have to cancel please notify us immediately so that we can work to find a substitute during your illness or vacation time. Our clients rely on us greatly so please allow us enough time to find a replacement.

Read your Orientation Manual and note any questions you have. You may contact us immediately or bring them up during the quarterly Training and Reflective sessions.

Be sure that you find out when the quarterly sessions are held and mark your calendars. **Attendance of the quarterly Training and Reflective Sessions are mandatory and a condition of remaining in the program.** We require your attendance so that we can share best practices, bring you up to date on the latest research and developments as well as report your on-going training to our funding sources.

Please contact us if you have questions about any of this information.

Thank you for volunteering to provide this valuable and meaningful service. Assisting caregivers by giving them a break from the sometimes overwhelming task of 24/7 care of their loved ones is one of the most meaningful volunteer endeavors that we provide.

Definitions

Station: An agency or business that has entered into an agreement with RSVP for placement and supervision of volunteers. The place where you volunteer will be “your station”.

Agency Supervisor: The person you report to at your station.

Volunteer or Staff Interviewer: The person who enrolls you in RSVP, provides you with orientation, and assists you in finding a volunteer assignment or station.

Field Representative: The Field Representative is the person responsible for coordinating RSVP within your community; under the direction of the Nevada Rural Counties RSVP Program’s central office.

Time Sheet: The monthly record of your time, mileage and activities performed as a volunteer. These time sheets are critical and enable us to continue to provide services in your area.

Thank You!

RSVP’s Main Office is located in Carson City. If you have questions or need to contact your local Field Representative you may contact our Program Director at (775) 687-4680.

Again, congratulations on becoming an RSVP volunteer. We look forward to a long and rewarding relationship.