



RSVP

Lead With Experience

RSVP VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Spokane County

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Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 

Updated 2019

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Welcome to RSVP – The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program!

We are delighted that you have joined our growing organization. You are part of a growing number of active, healthy older adults who volunteer their time and talents to help build a healthier community. RSVP is a program of **Senior Corps**, administered by the **Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)**, which taps the skills, talents, and experience of more than 220,000 Americans age 55 and over to meet a wide range of community challenges.

RSVP offers you the opportunity to pass on your legacy of experience to future generations. It is our desire to assist and support you in any way we can, and to offer thanks and recognition for your generous contribution.

RSVP volunteers are active in various nonprofit and public organizations throughout Spokane County. We work in partnership with these agencies to meet the greatest local needs. **RSVP volunteers prove that seniors are a necessary part of community solutions to problems such as food insecurity, low academic engagement, social isolation, and inadequate access to clothing and other resources.** RSVP volunteers make a special difference in the lives of those they serve and enrich their own lives by doing so.

RSVP is here for you! We welcome your ideas, suggestions, and leadership in our organization. We offer membership benefits and many opportunities for involvement. RSVP membership and membership benefits cost you nothing, and there is no cost to the partner organizations we serve. This program exists purely to benefit senior volunteers and those in our community with the greatest need.

We are proud of our volunteers and our community partnerships, and we hope you will take pride in your RSVP membership.

Tell your Friends! We need more people just like you!



Justin Eisenstadt
Director
RSVP of Spokane County

RSVP Mission Statement

RSVP of Spokane County promotes volunteer opportunities for adults 55 and over to build a stronger community through partnerships that impact community needs.

RSVP Vision Statement

RSVP will build and engage a committed network of volunteers, advocates, and partner organizations in order to:

- 1) Adapt to the diverse and changing needs of our community, and
- 2) Champion the capabilities and contributions of adults 55 and over.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the most important aspects of the professional code in human services. As volunteers of RSVP, you understand that all information about the agencies and the clients you serve, as well as that of other volunteers, is privileged. Such information must, and will be, kept in the strictest confidence. You can expect the same of the RSVP staff. None of your personal information **WILL EVER** be given to anyone without your express permission.

RSVP Advisory Council

The RSVP Advisory Council is comprised of individuals who represent the volunteers and communities served by RSVP of Spokane County. Advisory Council members meet regularly and advise the RSVP staff through service on one of three committees: Marketing/Outreach, Volunteer Recognition, and Resource Development. **Community outreach and volunteer recruitment are the primary focuses of the Advisory Council.**

Their duties and responsibilities are outlined in RSVP's **Advisory Council Handbook**. **Information and applications for Advisory Council membership are available in the RSVP office and on the RSVP website.** Any volunteer is welcome at any time to observe an Advisory Council meeting or participate in a "committee-only" capacity.

Our Sponsor – YMCA of the Inland Northwest

The YMCA of the Inland Northwest has been the local sponsor of RSVP of Spokane County since 1975. Our sponsor provides the RSVP office space as well as fiscal and managerial oversight of the program and its staff.

The YMCA of the Inland Northwest's mission puts Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. The YMCA believes everyone deserves a safe place to learn, grow, and thrive.



STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNITY

The YMCA is a powerful association of men, women and children of all ages and from all walks of life joined together by a shared passion: **to strengthen the foundations of community.**

With a commitment to nurturing the potential of kids, promoting healthy living and fostering a sense of social responsibility, the Y ensures that every individual has access to the essentials needed to learn, grow and thrive. Anchored in more than 10,000 neighborhoods around the country, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.

Though the world may be unpredictable, one thing remains certain – the Y is, and always will be, dedicated to building healthy, confident, secure and connected children, families and communities.

Why Volunteer with RSVP

- To join other older adults who care about making a difference in their community and meeting new people with a lifetime of experience to share
- To find volunteer opportunities uniquely matched to your interests, skills, and availability
- To be part of a growing community of seniors and retirees who are making an important difference in the lives of others, and in the health of their communities, through RSVP
- To take advantage of benefits such as insurance, invitations to recognition events, and potential transportation reimbursement



SeniorCorps.gov/HealthyVolunteers

*Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Volunteers

Senior Corps study released February 2019

Eligibility

Any adult age 55 and over is eligible for RSVP membership. There are no requirements based on education, income, or experience. RSVP membership is open to all eligible individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military service.

Volunteer assignments are matched to the interests and abilities of volunteers. Some people enjoy sharing their skills and experience from past employment while others enjoy exploring something entirely different. When you register as a volunteer, you talk with a staff member who matches you with specific volunteer positions that interest you.

Enrollment

If you meet RSVP's eligibility requirements, you may become an RSVP volunteer. To join, complete and sign an **RSVP Volunteer Enrollment Form**, available in the RSVP Office or on the RSVP website. There are no enrollment or membership dues! RSVP membership costs you nothing.

Volunteer Assignments

During your RSVP membership orientation, RSVP staff will provide you with a list of available volunteer assignments that best align with your skills, experience, and interests. Most volunteer assignments will be carried out at a **volunteer station**, but there may also be opportunities to volunteer for RSVP itself or for our sponsor organization, YMCA of the Inland Northwest. RSVP staff may promote certain assignments over others depending on where the need is greatest; however, **it is ultimately your decision** to accept a particular volunteer assignment.

What is a Volunteer Station?

A **volunteer station** refers to any organization or agency that has a formal, written agreement with RSVP of Spokane County to work with RSVP volunteers. A volunteer station may be a public agency, secular or faith-based private nonprofit organization, or proprietary healthcare organization. Each station has a **volunteer supervisor** who acts as the primary contact person for that station. Along with other responsibilities to RSVP, volunteer stations agree to provide a safe environment, training, supervision, and support for RSVP volunteers.

Types of Volunteer Assignments

The details of your volunteer assignment will be determined by you and your volunteer station supervisor. The schedule, duration, and duties will vary according to the particular assignment. Below is a general overview of the types of volunteer assignments that may be available:

**Consult the
RSVP Volunteer Catalog
for a complete listing of current
volunteer stations and
opportunities!**

Aging in Place

- » Coach falls prevention classes for older adults
- » Deliver hot meals to homebound seniors and adults with disabilities
- » Transport seniors and adults with disabilities to medical and other appointments

Education

- » Tutor and mentor youth in reading and other subjects, in-school and after school
- » Teach financial literacy and entrepreneurship in the classroom
- » Facilitate youth activities like creative writing, songwriting, and roleplaying games to promote imagination and innovation

Food Security

- » Collect, sort, distribute and package food pantry donations
- » Serve meals at community meal sites

Nonprofit Capacity Building

- » Demonstrate leadership and apply your professional skills in areas like fundraising, outreach, volunteer recruitment, and database management

Training and Orientation

Once you have been referred to a volunteer station, you will be introduced to the volunteer station supervisor to discuss whether that station and assignment will be a good fit for you. **The decision to accept an RSVP volunteer is at the discretion of the volunteer station supervisor.**

NOTE: Once you have been accepted for an assignment at a volunteer station, you must complete any and all applications, trainings, certifications, procedures, etc. required by that organization. This includes criminal history or other background checks. **RSVP volunteers must adhere to the same policies and procedures as all other volunteers at the organization where they serve.**

Timesheets

RSVP volunteers are required to document their volunteer service hours. This helps maintain your active status as an RSVP member and your eligibility for membership benefits. It also provides valuable information about the significance and impact of our volunteers to federal, state, and local government agencies, businesses, foundations, and other supporters. This builds respect and credibility for older adults as important and valuable members of our community and helps build support for RSVP.

We are flexible about how you report your time. Some volunteer stations already collect the hours of their volunteers and simply send us a monthly report. You may also choose to send RSVP your timesheet directly by mail, fax, or e-mail. You can even report your hours by phone. Your volunteer station supervisor may also handle time reporting on your behalf. **Discuss with your volunteer station supervisor how your hours will be reported.**

NOTE: if you are requesting transportation reimbursement, you must submit a paper copy of your timesheet with both your signature and your volunteer station supervisor's signature.

Timesheets are available at your volunteer station and at the RSVP office, or you may request that we mail or e-mail them to you.

Supplemental Insurance

Each RSVP volunteer is covered by the following forms of insurance while traveling directly to and from, and while participating in, volunteer-related activities:

- Accident Insurance (up to \$50,000/accident with \$2,500 for AD&D)
- Personal Liability Insurance (up to \$1,000,000/incident)
- Excess Automobile Liability Insurance (up to \$500,000/accident)

Recognition Activities

You will be invited to RSVP's Annual Recognition event if you have recorded a minimum of 12 service hours in the preceding year, or an average of one hour per month. You will also receive an RSVP pin upon joining and special pins and certificates throughout your membership. RSVP also recognizes volunteers who have accumulated 4,000 hours or more of lifetime service with the President's Volunteer Service Award.

Transportation Reimbursement

Volunteers may apply for mileage reimbursement or bus fare reimbursement from their home to their volunteer station, and back home again. A minimum of three (3) hours of volunteer time must be completed on the day reimbursement is requested. To request mileage reimbursement, an Application for Transportation Reimbursement form needs to be submitted on a yearly basis. On your monthly timesheet you will document your travel costs, due by the 10th of the following month. A signature from your Volunteer Station supervisor is needed to validate the request.

Transportation reimbursement guidelines are as follows:

*****To receive transportation reimbursement, your annual income must meet the "low income" guideline (80% of the Median Family Income) as set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.*** *RSVP staff can help you make this determination.***

Mileage: \$0.20/mile, up to \$25.00 per month. *Reimbursement will accrue until the amount available totals at least \$5.00 before payment is disbursed.*

Bus Fare: \$1.00/day, up to \$25.00 per month. *Bus fare reimbursement is only for holders of Spokane Transit Reduced Fare Photo ID Cards or Paratransit Eligibility Cards. Reimbursement will only be provided for actual days of volunteer service. Reimbursement will not be provided for 31-Day Passes. Reimbursement will accrue until the amount available totals at least \$5.00 before payment is disbursed.*

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers have the right to meaningful assignments, respectful supervision, and recognition for their service. In return, volunteers agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, remain loyal to the mission and goals of their volunteer station, and to adhere to their volunteer station's policies and procedures.

Rights

As a volunteer, you have the right:

- To expect that your time will be used wisely
- To a mutually agreed upon volunteer assignment with clear expectations, responsibilities, duties, supervision, and time commitment
- To an appropriate workspace, equipment, orientation, training, feedback, and supervision for the position you accept
- To be informed how your assignment supports your volunteer station's mission and goals
- To have your suggestions heard in the planning and execution of your work
- To say "no" to volunteer assignments that you are not interested in filling
- To be considered for promotions, special assignments, transfers and a variety of experiences
- To an inclusive work environment that is respectful of all people, including those served, paid staff, and volunteers
- To participate in RSVP regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military service

Responsibilities

As a volunteer, you are expected:

- To support and remain loyal to the mission, goals, and philosophy of RSVP and the specific organization in which you are working
- To be open and honest about your intentions, goals, interests, and skills
- To carry out your assignment to the best of your ability and to follow your volunteer station's policies and procedures
- To accept guidance and direction from your volunteer station supervisor, to cooperate with teammates, and to discuss problems, concerns, and suggestions with your supervisor or RSVP staff
- To be open to feedback and to offer assistance in correcting problems or misunderstandings

- To participate in required orientations, trainings, or meetings
- To complete records or reports accurately and on time
- To ask questions and to ask for help if you are unclear or don't know how to proceed with an assignment or duty
- To respect the confidentiality of your volunteer station, the people served, and other staff and volunteers
- To respect all those you serve and serve with, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military service
- To be punctual and reliable, notifying your supervisor of absences as far in advance as possible
- To demonstrate professional, respectful behavior at all times, including when faced with challenging situations
- To be cooperative and to treat others with respect at all times, maintaining good working relationships

Volunteer Inactivity and Termination

Active/Inactive RSVP Volunteers

Volunteers must complete at least one hour of volunteer service every six months to remain active in RSVP. Active RSVP volunteers are eligible to receive all of RSVP's benefits.

If you are unable to complete at least one hour of volunteer service during a six-month period, you will become an inactive RSVP volunteer. **Inactive volunteers are NOT eligible to receive program benefits, except volunteer referral.**

RSVP understands that sometimes circumstances or situations prevent a volunteer from continuing in active community service for a period of time, or sometimes volunteers just need a break. **If you find you are unable to volunteer at least one hour during a six-month period, please contact an RSVP staff member.** RSVP will keep your enrollment information on file if you plan to volunteer again in the near future. RSVP staff will also help inactive volunteers find new volunteer assignments if needed.

Termination of RSVP Membership

If an inactive volunteer does NOT plan to volunteer again for at least one year, RSVP will terminate the volunteer's membership in the program. Additionally, when a volunteer is moved to inactive status, RSVP staff will attempt to contact the individual about his/her volunteer status. **After three unsuccessful attempts to contact an inactive volunteer, the volunteer's RSVP membership will be terminated.**

A terminated volunteer is able to join RSVP again depending on the circumstances. To re-enroll, a volunteer needs to re-apply with RSVP.

Volunteers may terminate their own membership at any time and for any reason. A volunteer can also be terminated for cause at the discretion of the RSVP Director. Such termination will only occur after all prior options for corrective action have been exhausted, as detailed below.

Corrective Action, Termination for Cause, and Appeal Process

Corrective Action

Corrective action may be taken if a volunteer's work or conduct is deemed unsatisfactory by RSVP staff or the volunteer station supervisor. Corrective action will occur in the following order:

1. Written or verbal communication on ways to improve the volunteer's performance;
2. Retraining;
3. Additional supervision;
4. Reassignment within the volunteer station;
5. Referral to another RSVP volunteer assignment;
6. Termination of RSVP membership.

Termination for Cause

Termination of RSVP membership for cause may occur solely at the discretion of the RSVP Director. Appropriate grounds for termination for cause include, but are not limited to:

1. Violation of a program policy or volunteer station policy;
2. Demonstrated inability to effectively carry out volunteer duties, tasks, or timelines;
3. Failure to complete required initial or ongoing training;
4. Falsifying volunteer enrollment forms, timesheets, or other documents; or misrepresenting facts during the screening process;
5. Violation of the program's or the volunteer station's nondiscrimination and/or sexual harassment policies;
6. Soliciting or accepting gratuities;
7. Neglect of duty or incompetence;
8. No contact with volunteer station staff for six months or more, including no reports to the office, no replies to letters or emails, and/or not returning phone calls from volunteer station staff.

Appeal Process

An appeal of membership termination must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the RSVP Advisory Council. The full Advisory Council will review and respond in writing. If the Advisory Council disagrees with the termination, they will state these reasons in writing and will recommend that the RSVP Director take action to correct the situation. The decision to reverse a termination remains at the discretion of the RSVP Director.

Prohibited Activities

The following are special limitations including prohibited activities to which RSVP staff, sponsors, volunteers, and volunteer stations are subject. In the event of a question as to the application of the following limitations, contact the RSVP staff. *Note: the term "grantee" refers to RSVP of Spokane County, its staff, and its sponsor, the YMCA of the Inland Northwest.*

- 1) Staff, sponsors, volunteers, and volunteer stations do not engage in, and grant funds are not used for, any of the following activities, to the extent they are prohibited in the applicable program regulations:
 - a. Electoral activities,
 - b. Voter registration,
 - c. Voter transportation to polls, and
 - d. Efforts to influence legislation.
- 2) Volunteers do not engage in any activity which would otherwise be performed by an employed worker or which would supplant the hiring of or result in the displacement of employed workers or impair existing contracts for service.
- 3) Neither the grantee nor any volunteer station requests or receives compensation from the beneficiaries of RSVP volunteers.
- 4) Financial support of the RSVP project from a volunteer station cannot be a precondition for that station to obtain volunteer service.
- 5) An RSVP volunteer does not receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, members of their family, or friends.
- 6) Grant funds are not used to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activities.
- 7) Project staff and volunteers do not give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytization as part of their duties and, if the sponsor or a volunteer station is an organization that conducts inherently religious activities, those activities are offered separately, in time and location, from the programs or services funded under the RSVP grant.

RSVP Contact Information

General Inquiries

Phone: (509) 344-7787

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RSVP Director

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RSVP Office Manager

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RSVP Office Location

Mailing Address:

1126 N Monroe

Spokane, WA 99201

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm

The RSVP office is within the Corporate Office of the YMCA of the Inland Northwest. Parking is by permit only but you can obtain a temporary permit from the Front Desk.

The YMCA of the Inland Northwest corporate office is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
President's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day



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