

**RSVP of Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming Counties
Volunteer Handbook**



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WELCOME TO RSVP OF Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming Counties

Welcome to the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming counties (RSVP). You have joined a program that exists all across the United States. Members of RSVP give their time and talent to local non-profit agencies and organization. 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. If you have any concerns or question about your volunteer service, please feel free to contact the RSVP office.

HISTORY

RSVP is administered nationally by the Corporation for Nation 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 the United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties.

MISSION

RSVP's mission is to engage citizens age 55 and over in volunteer service to meet critical community needs, strengthen communities and to provide a quality experience that will enrich the lives of the volunteers through significant and rewarding community service work and personal development.

RSVP ADVISORY COUNCIL

The RSVP Advisory Council is made up of members selected from the community and includes representatives from Volunteer Stations, RSVP volunteers and other individuals with knowledge of community social needs. 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, handicap, or political affiliation. RSVP strives to be supportive of the needs of each RSVP member and strives to make reasonable accommodations for all volunteers.

OFFICE LOCATION

RSVP
615 Jefferson Ave
PO Box 526
Scranton, PA 18501

RSVP STAFF

Alvaro Garcia, RSVP Director
Email: agarcia@uwlc.net
Stephanie Miller, RSVP Field Coordinator
Email: smiller@uwlc.net

Ph: 570-343-1267 ext 312 Fx: 570-969-2977

Web: www.uwlc.net/rsvp

RSVP VOLUNTEER POLICIES

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers must complete and submit at least 2 hours each month or a total of 24 hours per year to remain active with RSVP. This minimum 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 change your status to active.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Federal regulations provided by CNCS strongly encourage background checks to be conducted on every volunteer serving vulnerable populations. Effective January 1, 2013, every new enrollment will require a PA State Criminal clearance before any placement is made. This ensures and maximizes the safety of volunteers and the clients served. Specific Volunteer Stations may also require addition levels of clearances.

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 of or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence of the same, while performing hours of service is strictly prohibited and shall be cause for termination of all volunteer placements through the RSVP of Monroe County.

RSVP VOLUNTEER POLICIES

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

VOLUNTEER HOURS

- Hours served by RSVP Volunteers, at all approved RSVP stations and projects need to be submitted to the RSVP office for grant and reporting purposes

- Arrangements for recording volunteer hours vary between stations. Be sure that you check to see what is required in terms of signing in when you begin a new assignment.
- Notify RSVP of all volunteer assignments so that we can make sure you are credited for all volunteer work.
- Notify all agencies, where you volunteer that you are an RSVP volunteer. Where 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 now 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. Overall, it helps RSVP demonstrate older adults as active and contributing members of the community. Beginning with the month in which a volunteer signs up with RSVP, a cumulative record of time contributed to all approved RSVP stations and projects is kept on file in our office. Internally, it also helps us determine who is active and can be used to verify your status for insurance purposes.

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 10th business day of the following month. There are multiple ways to submit the information:

Mail the completed form to RSVP, 615 Jefferson Ave, Scranton PA 18501

Email the completed form as an attachment to agarcia@uwlc.net

Fax the completed form to RSVP at 570-969-2977

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 10th 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 procedure of RSVP or the Volunteer Station
- To record hours so that they can be submitted monthly to the RSVP Office
- To call your station if you are unable to volunteer on a certain day in a timely fashion

- 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 the 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 an 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 STATIONS

Volunteer Stations are public agencies, private non-profit organization or proprietary health-care agencies that accept the responsibility for assignments and supervision of RSVP volunteers. Volunteer Stations sign a Memorandum of Understanding with RSVP outlining the responsibilities of each party. These agreements are valid for 3 years and may be renewed. Volunteer Stations provide orientation, training, in-service instruction, and other education as needed. RSVP welcomes conversations with local organizations that are interested in becoming RSVP Volunteer Stations. Volunteer Stations will be approved based on program goals, funding guidelines and community needs. Information to measure the impact the RSVP Program and its volunteers have on the community and those served may be provided by the Volunteer Station as required by the RSVP program for funding purposes.

Volunteer Stations agree to abide by all current Federal non-discriminatory regulations and be handicapped accessible, or provide reasonable accommodations for volunteers.

VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS

RSVP has hundreds of volunteers donating thousands of service hours in participating Lackawanna / Wayne county public or private non-profit agencies and senior proprietary health care organizations. A wide variety of opportunities are available to utilize your talents and explore new interests. Some volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to, tutoring, mentoring, tax counseling, veteran's assistance, serving on boards and councils, and assisting homebound residents with groceries, meal deliveries and friendly visits. Volunteering can be done once a week, once a month or as needed to work with your flexible schedule.

IN-HOME ASSIGNMENTS

RSVP volunteers may volunteer in individual homes when referred through participating agencies of RSVP (i.e., grocery shopping, friendly visiting, respite care, minor home repair, etc.) All In-Home assignments must have a signed release by the individual in need, or a legal representative of that individual. In all cases, confidentiality must be maintained for the security of the individual.

VOLUNTEER SEPARATION

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
- Inappropriate behavior
- Disregard of policies and procedures
- Health issues that may be a hazard to self or those being served
- Extensive/unauthorized absences
- Inability to perform assignment or accept supervision
- Suitable assignment not available at the time

Separation may also be based on termination of volunteer assignment or when the volunteer assignment is no longer meaningful or satisfying to the RSVP Volunteer.

APPEAL PROCESS

Any appeal of an adverse action affecting an RSVP volunteer must be in writing to the RSVP Director. The RSVP Director will consult with the Chair of the Advisory Council/or 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 actions will be taken to correct the situation to find a suitable and satisfactory solution.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

As an 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 or add the volunteer site. Volunteers with emails will receive a monthly on-line newsletter listing current volunteer opportunities. Opportunities can also be found weekly through the Pocono Record Community pages and through the Senior Times Express, a newsletter offered by the Area Agency on Aging.

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 service through an on-going publicity program, including newspaper stories and pho-

tographs, featured articles in local magazines and newspapers and other media sources. Additionally, as funding permits, RSVP traditionally holds an Annual Volunteer Recognition event in the fall. 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 volunteer, 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 locales. Under these circumstances, you will NOT be covered by RSVP insurance. All insurance provided by RSVP is secondary to your current provider. A copy of the insurance policy is included in your volunteer package.

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.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

RSVP of Lackawanna / Wayne county: <https://www.uwlc.net/rsvp>

Senior Corps of PA: www.seniorcorpsopa.org

Corporation of National and Community Service: www.cns.gov

CIMA Insurance: www.cimaworld.com

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 surrounding. Therefore, I will submit to RSVP a PA State Criminal Clearance before I can be placed at any assignment.
- I hereby acknowledge that I will have the volunteer station supervisor or myself declare my monthly volunteer hours no later than 10 business days of the following month. Hours can be sent via email, fax, in-person, or mailed. Timesheets could be requested or found on our website.

Volunteer Signature _____

Volunteer Name (Print) _____

Date _____