

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program



Volunteer Handbook

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is a program of **Senior Corps**, a division of the **Corporation for National and Community Service**.



Serving the Gateway and FIVCO counties consisting of:
**Bath, Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Greenup, Lawrence, Menifee,
Montgomery, Morgan, and Rowan Counties.**

Welcome!

On behalf of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program's staff and our local sponsor, **Morehead State University**, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Morehead State University Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). We at RSVP stand ready to provide you with any assistance you might need as you begin your adventure in volunteering. This handbook is a guide in helping you to understand what RSVP does and how you can help.

There exists today, perhaps more than ever before, a tremendous need for volunteers in many of the non-profit community agencies throughout the nation, and especially in our own community. Volunteers are needed to share their experience, time and expertise with others. Together we can work to build a better life for many in our community. Through your contribution of time and talent, you are sharing the most valuable gift of all **YOURSELF!**

RSVP can help you make volunteering a more meaningful experience by offering you information, support and guidance. The service you choose will be a significant contribution. MSU/RSVP looks forward to a long and rewarding relationship with you. This handbook has been written to acquaint you with RSVP and answer basic questions about the program.

We hope you will take the time to read this Handbook and feel free to openly share any hesitations or concerns with us so that we can respond to you in a helpful manner.

Thank you for your service!

Teresa Judd

Program Director

WHAT IS RSVP?

The **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program** is an invitation to serve. It is a national program designed to provide opportunities for persons 55 and older who want to continue to remain actively involved in the life of their community. Established in 1971 and now one of the largest senior volunteer organizations in the nation, RSVP engages approximately 400,000 people age 55 and older in a diverse range of volunteer activities.

Volunteers provide independent living services, tutor and mentor children, assist victims of natural disasters, help at food pantries, lead senior exercise classes and serve their communities in many other ways. RSVP volunteers choose how, where, and how often they want to serve, with commitments ranging from a few hours to 40 hours per week.

RSVP receives federal funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Qualifications

The RSVP program provides an opportunity for volunteers to put their skills, talents, and life experiences into motion for others. Sharing the skills they have spent years developing, RSVP volunteers put those skills into practice to improve the lives of community members throughout the service area.

In order to serve as an RSVP volunteer, a person must meet the following requirement.

- Be 55 years of age or older and in good general health
- Be flexible and available with service activity schedules
- Have dependable transportation available and be willing to travel in the service area
- Have compassion, patience, flexibility and respect for others
- Work well with diverse individuals, families, groups and organizations

No person may be excluded from membership or participation in the activities or the benefits of RSVP on the basis of race, sex, ethnicity, handicap, sexual preference or national origin.

Orientation

Volunteers work most successfully when they have a clear understanding of the RSVP program and their roles and responsibilities as volunteers. This Handbook serves as an orientation to RSVP policies and procedures.

Station Orientation

At the beginning of a volunteer assignment, volunteer supervisors introduce the volunteer to the procedures of the volunteer site and assignment. Volunteers must follow the station's policies and guidelines for staff and/or volunteers. Questions and concerns regarding the policies and

guidelines should be taken to the Station Representative. If concerns are not resolved, please contact the MSU/RSVP Director.

Station Tips

Volunteers should be informed about:

- ✓ The history of the Station
- ✓ The mission and purpose of the Station
- ✓ The volunteer's role at the Station
- ✓ What changes the station is working to create or the problems being addressed
- ✓ The types of clients the Station serves
- ✓ The supervisor and the Station staff
- ✓ What policies and procedures apply to volunteers (e.g., attendance, dress code, the check-in procedure, etc.). Be particularly aware of the Station's Emergency procedures.
- ✓ What volunteers are and are not entitled to while providing service to the Station
- ✓ The location of the restrooms, coat racks, workspace, parking area, the lounge or lunch area, etc.

WHAT IS A VOLUNTEER STATION?

“Volunteer Station” is a term that is used to refer to a non-profit community service organization that has a written agreement with RSVP to provide volunteer assignments for you. The site must provide a self-declaration of nonprofit status which meets the Senior Corps requirement that all volunteer stations, with the exception of proprietary health care facilities, must be public or private non-profit agencies or organizations.

A volunteer station's financial support of the Senior Corps project is not a precondition for that station to obtain volunteer service. The Morehead State University RSVP works with 40-60 volunteer stations in the FIVCO and Gateway service areas. For a list of stations in this area, stop by our office or give us a call. Each volunteer station has a station supervisor who will provide you with orientation and training for your particular work assignment and will be your regular contact person at the station. He/she will provide you with information about how you can be most helpful and in return, will attempt to accommodate your needs as a volunteer.

The relationship that develops between a volunteer and his/her station supervisor is an ongoing process of understanding and caring that enables you to grow and work together for the good of the community.

STATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- To provide safe working conditions for RSVP volunteers.
- Make final decision on placement of volunteers.
- To provide orientation and training.

- Provide supervision of volunteers on assignments.
- To collect and submit volunteers' hours.
- Not to displace a paid worker with a volunteer.
- To recognize the achievement of RSVP volunteers and identify them as RSVP volunteers.
- An RSVP Representative is to be contacted before any grievance or disciplinary action that involves an RSVP volunteer is taken. (A **Grievance Policy** is on file at the RSVP office). (**Disciplinary Procedures** – Procedures for behaviors that warrant disciplinary action up to and including dismissal will be governed by the “volunteer station supervisor” and a member of the RSVP staff).

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A RSVP VOLUNTEER

- To identify yourself as a RSVP volunteer by wearing your name badge whenever possible.
- To cooperate with your volunteer station supervisor, especially regarding confidential information. (**Confidentiality = Volunteers should be aware that certain client and agency information is confidential. Names, telephone numbers or any other information which might identify a client must never be released to others outside of the specific RSVP station, or the RSVP staff.**) Breach of confidentiality may consist of: Talking about a client to family members or friends; Talking about a client in an inappropriate place or to his or her family in an inappropriate place.
- To conduct yourself in a professional manner. Good human relation skills, with the ability to be objective and non-judgmental to respect and relate to people from diverse backgrounds in a variety of settings. (**RSVP volunteers should conduct themselves in accordance with the volunteer station guidelines. This may include requirements for training, attendance and dress codes. Federal guidelines mandate that RSVP volunteers shall NOT act in a way which results in RSVP being identified with political activities. Religious activities such as preaching, religious instruction, and worship service cannot be claimed as volunteer service hours for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.**)
- To avoid unsafe tasks, and advise your station supervisor of unsafe conditions.
- To report all incidents regarding personal injury to your station supervisor and RSVP promptly.
- To notify the volunteer station if you will not be available during your assigned shift.
- To “sign in” when you volunteer so that your time is recorded.
- To notify the RSVP office of changes in your mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address, driver's license expiration date, life insurance beneficiary or volunteer assignment.

- Consent to a background check if applicable to volunteer assignment (assisting vulnerable populations, volunteering in schools, assisting with CHIP program, etc.)

WHY DO WE NEED TO RECORD VOLUNTEER HOURS?

- The federal government requires us to keep track of all time spent volunteering as a means of assessing our performance.
- It indicates that you are an active RSVP volunteer and thus allows you to participate in our annual recognition event and receive our newsletters and service awards.
- It provides proof that you were volunteering in case of an insurance claim.
- It allows us to share with our funders required quantitative data.
- It provides information to our legislators about the types of volunteer work and number of hours of service. This information assists them in deciding the amount of federal monies appropriated for ALL RSVP projects in the U.S. (There are over 700 such projects).
- It helps RSVP promote seniors as active, contributing members of their communities.
- Hard data helps RSVP tell the “true story” of today’s seniors. It helps promote seniors as actively contributing member of their communities

Please do not report hours related to political or religious activities (not mission based) or family members, since reporting these types of volunteer activities are not allowed by RSVP’s grant.

RSVP ADVISORY COUNCIL.

The RSVP Advisory Council is made up of members selected from the community at large. The Council includes Volunteer Station representatives, volunteers, program staff, businesses, and other interested community members. We encourage and invite your participation. The Council’s role is to keep abreast of what is being accomplished at RSVP, to offer advice to RSVP staff, to advocate for RSVP in the community at large and to assist staff with certain activities, in particular, the annual recognition events.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

RSVP receives assistance from a federal agency, The Corporation for National and Community Service. 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.

Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against for any of the above reasons may receive information regarding how to file a grievance by contacting the RSVP Program Director. Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities will be made available upon advance notice for placements, meetings or conferences.

WITHDRAWAL FROM RSVP

Please contact the RSVP office if you are moving or would like to withdraw permanently from RSVP.

DISMISSAL FROM RSVP

Volunteers can be dismissed for the following reasons:

- Misconduct
- Breach of confidentiality
- Unsatisfactory performance
- Disregard for policies and procedures
- Health unacceptable to the point of being a hazard to self or others
- Extensive absences
- Suitable assignment not available or unlikely become available

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any RSVP volunteer who has a complaint about his/her volunteer work should seek satisfaction regarding that complain through discussions with the following persons in the order listed:

If the complaint is with the volunteer station:

- Speak with your site supervisor or RSVP coordinator within five (5) working days of the alleged occurrence or promptly if dealing with an ongoing problem. If the situation is not re- solved to your satisfaction
- Contact the RSVP Director. If the solution cannot be reached with the station, the volunteer will be offered another assignment. The RSVP Director will give a response to the grievant within five (5) working days.
- If this is not satisfactory, ask for an appointment with the chairperson of the RSVP Advisory Council. The chairperson will respond to set an appointment within five (5) working days. The chairperson will give a written response within five (5) working days of the appointment.
- If this still does not resolve the problem, a meeting may be requested with Advisory Council itself. The Advisory Council will meet with the grievant within a reasonable amount of time. A written response will be given within five (5) working days of the meeting. The response of the Advisory council will be final.

If the problem is related to a RSVP decision or staff person, the recommended order of contacts is as follows:

- The RSVP Director. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, proceed
- Ask for an appointment with the chairperson of the RSVP Advisory Council. The chairperson will respond to set an appointment within five (5) working days. The chairperson will give a written response within five (5) working days of the appointment. If this does not re- solve the problem, proceed to the next step.
- Ask to meet with the Advisory Council itself. The Advisory Council will meet the grievant within five (5) working days of the meeting.

PLEASE NOTIFY US

- About any accidents connected with you volunteer assignment, or with your automobile while you are on assignment
- If you change your address or phone number
- If you wish to change the beneficiary on you accident insurance
- If you will be unable to volunteer for a while, and wish to be placed on the inactive list
- If you wish to change your assignment, and add a new assignment or have problem at you assignment

RSVP exists to serve **YOU**, its **volunteers**. We are here to help make your service to the community as rewarding and as appropriate for you as possible. Please feel free to call at any time that you have any questions or special needs. A copy of Morehead State University Retired and Senior Volunteer Program “Policies and Procedures” is on file and maintained at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office.

Insurance Provided by RSVP

RSVP provides supplemental insurance coverage to all registered members, at no cost to the member. This coverage is effective to, from and during your involvement in RSVP related volunteers activities.

This policy does not take the place of your private insurance policy. It is a supplement to your own private insurance, designed to eliminate out-of-pocket expense for volunteer related accidents.

Coverage includes:

- **Excess Accident:** Covers personal injuries you receive during an RSVP related volunteer activity. Coverage includes medical treatment, hospitalization, and limited dental and eyeglass repair as a result of an accident.
- **Accidental Death/Dismemberment:** Covers loss of limb, sight or life as a result of a RSVP related volunteer activity. Loss of life benefit will be paid to your designated beneficiary.
- **Personal Liability:** Protects you from personal injury, bodily injury or property damage liability claims arising out of your performance as an RSVP volunteer, and provides for legal defense if necessary.
- **Excess Automobile Liability:** Protects you from bodily injury or property damage claims arising as a result of using your personal vehicle during a RSVP related volunteer activity.

NOTE: This coverage does not provide benefits for physical damage to your vehicle. Please see Insurance brochure attached.

IMPORTANT NOTICE RELATIVE TO INSURANCE COVERAGE

In order to minimize risks associated with volunteering, all non-profit agencies that utilize RSVP volunteers have signed an agreement to be an RSVP station. These agreements are kept on file in the RSVP office and updated every three years. While volunteering at these designated stations, your RSVP insurance is in effect. At times, you may want to take on additional work aside from your RSVP work. During any additional work not considered RSVP volunteer work **you will not be covered by RSVP insurance.**

Plan administered by:

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RSVP Office Location and Contact Information

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICE!

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