



New Hanover County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program



New Hanover County
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

Meeting the Challenge
Serving New Hanover County

Purpose of RSVP

- The purpose of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is to provide meaningful opportunities for persons' age 55 and older to use their life experience and skills to participate more fully in the life of their community through significant volunteer service.
- RSVP matches the varied interests and skills of volunteers with community needs by offering a diversity of volunteer service opportunities through a wide range of placements.

History of RSVP

- Initially, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) was authorized in 1969 under Title VI, Part A of the older Americans Act, as amended. Following the transfer of RSVP to the Federal Agency ACTION, Public Law 93-113, the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, was enacted October 1, 1973. RSVP along with other domestic volunteer programs, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions is under the Corporation for National and Community Service.

- RSVP of New Hanover County was first funded in January 1973 and sponsored by Wilmington-New Hanover Committee for Services to the Aging. In July 1983, RSVP was transferred to the current Sponsor New Hanover County and is a part of the New Hanover County Senior Resource Center.
- Currently New Hanover County RSVP has over 800 active volunteers contributing in excess of 138,000 hours of service annually.

Funding

- New Hanover County RSVP receives an annual Federal Grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service; New Hanover County funds the remainder of the project costs, fulfilling the local support requirement.

Program Characteristics

- RSVP matches the varied interests and skills of volunteers with community needs by offering a diversity of volunteer service opportunities through a wide range of placements.

Volunteer Eligibility and Enrollment

- RSVP is designed for persons' age 55 and older. The only requirement is to have time and love that you are willing to share. There are no limitations based on education, income, or experience. Although there is no minimum number of hours per week required, most volunteers serve at least one half day per week at their stations. A volunteer is deemed inactive if they have not logged any volunteer hours in a 6-month time period.
- During Enrollment, potential volunteers fill out an RSVP Application Package and a volunteer file is created. This includes:
 - An Application with contact info, volunteer areas of interest, emergency contact info, and beneficiary

- A Confidentiality Statement
 - Photography Release Form
 - Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities
 - Copy of Driver's License
- Volunteers should alert RSVP staff if contact or other pertinent information has changed.
 - Potential volunteers then meet with a RSVP staff member to discuss volunteer interests. Based on these interests, volunteers are put in contact with the Volunteer Coordinators of interested stations. The Coordinator at each station handles specific training and orientation based on volunteer position.

Volunteer Benefits

Volunteer Insurance

All volunteers enrolled in RSVP are covered by the following insurance, at no cost to the volunteer.

Accident Insurance: This covers you, the volunteer, for a personal injury arising from your volunteer activities. This insurance applies while you are traveling directly to and from, and participation in an activity sponsored by RSVP. Specific limits of coverage are provided by the policy. This insurance does not duplicate expenses paid by Medicare or other valid and collectible insurance coverage.

Personal Liability Insurance: All registered volunteers are provided protection against a personal injury or property liability claim arising out of the performance of the volunteer's duties, subject to the policy limits. This coverage is in excess of and non-contributing with any other valid and collective insurance the volunteer may have.

Excess Automobile Liability Insurance: This coverage protects the volunteer for a bodily injury or property damage automobile liability claim arising out of the related volunteer activities, including driving directly between the volunteer's residence and work station. This automobile liability insurance will not apply unless the liability insurance on the automobile you

are driving at the time of the accident is inadequate to take care of all claims. This excess protection is provided subject to the policy limits.

All volunteer work related accidents should be reported immediately to the supervisor at your volunteer station and to the RSVP Coordinator/Manager.

Recognition

Appropriate recognition for service is provided for RSVP Volunteers, supporters, and benefactors of the project. RSVP holds recognition events throughout the year for all RSVP volunteers. These events are to thank the volunteers for their commitment to the RSVP program and as a social event to meet other volunteers in the program.

Timesheets

Keeping track of volunteer hours is very important. Measuring your service to the community is important for many reasons. The information we receive from the timesheets gives us information about how many hours are being served at each volunteer station and the types of assignments that are being performed. The hours and types of activities the volunteers are doing are reported to the Corporation for National and Community Service and our sponsor New Hanover County. Tracking of your volunteer hours, as well as travel time, to and from your volunteer site is a requirement to be eligible for supplemental accident/liability insurance.

Code of Ethics

Volunteers are expected to respect the policies of the Volunteer Stations and perform their assignments in a business like way. The business of the Volunteer Station should be treated as confidential and all volunteers must sign a Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement which will be kept in their file. Cheerfulness and consideration of co-workers are musts in a volunteer's attitude toward his/her assignment. Volunteer Stations are expected to show the same respect and supervision to volunteers as to paid staff.

Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

- A right to meaningful work at the available volunteer station of your choice
- Complete the volunteer application and orientation process with the RSVP team at the Senior Center
- Represent yourself, the Senior Resource Center, and your volunteer station in a professional manner
- Regular communication, including signing in to track volunteer hours, with your volunteer station and/or coordinator

Termination of Volunteers

A RSVP volunteer can be terminated from service for cause. Causes for termination can be extensive and unapproved absences, not able to perform the volunteer assignment, poor performance, and failure to accept supervision. A RSVP volunteer can be terminated for other causes at the discretion of the RSVP Program Manager. If a volunteer is terminated from a volunteer station, that volunteer has a right to appeal the termination.

Volunteer Dismissal Policy

Justifiable causes for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- A volunteer refusing to provide adequate services or creating a discriminatory environment based on gender, race, nationality, color, age, disability, religion, creed, or sexual orientation
- A volunteer representing the Senior Center in an unfavorable or unprofessional manner
- A volunteer acting inappropriately based on reports of misconduct, which have been investigated and found to be factual
- A volunteer repeatedly failing to respond to a stations request for participation; for example, not returning phone calls

- A volunteer failing to get along well with coworkers and/or the public, failing to comply with station management or volunteer coordinators directives

Volunteer Appeal Policy

In the case that a volunteer is dismissed from a volunteer station, they have a right to appeal. To do so, the volunteer must follow these steps.

- A volunteer grievance must be put in writing and submitted to the RSVP Program Manager no later than 30 days past the date of dismissal or incident.
- The RSVP Program Manager will review the grievance and if a satisfactory solution for both parties (volunteer and Station) cannot be determined, then the grievance is brought before the RSVP advisory Council.
- The Advisory Council will review and vote on the issue. Their determination is final.

When serving as an RSVP volunteer the following activities are prohibited:

- Electoral activities
- Voter registration
- Voter transportation to the polls
- Efforts to influence legislation
- Giving religious instruction, conduct worship, or engage in proselytization

- 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.
- SRC employees, RSVP staff, nor any volunteer station managers will request or receive compensation from the beneficiaries of RSVP volunteers.
- Financial support from a volunteer station is not a precondition for a station to obtain volunteer service.

- RSVP volunteers do not receive compensation or a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family and friends.
- RSVP funds are not used to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activity.
- Laborers and mechanics employed for construction, alteration, or repair of facilities are paid prevailing rates as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the amended Davis-Bacon Act.
- RSVP staff or volunteers do not give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytization as part of their duties.
- RSVP follows the County's hiring and nepotism policies. Additionally, part-time employees will be required to reveal blood or marriage relationships. The Program Manager will notify the NC State Office of the Corporation for National & Community Service of the potential hiring of any person selected for project staff who are related by blood or marriage to other project staff, SRC staff, Advisory Council Members, or members of SRC's Board prior to officially making a job offer.

If an RSVP volunteer does engage in any of the above activities, it is cause for termination from the RSVP Program

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Administrative Offices

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