



AmeriCorps
Seniors

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program

RSVP

Station Handbook

St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services
P.O. Box 653
41780 Baldrige Street
Leonardtown, Maryland 20650
301-475-4200 ext. 1653 or 1650
www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging
RSVP@stmaryscountymd.gov

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“Providing Choice, Independence, and Dignity to older adults and their families.”

St. Mary’s County Department of Aging & Human Services, sponsor of the St Mary’s County RSVP, welcomes you to our program.

We hope that being an RSVP Volunteer Station will enrich your programs and the lives of those around you in the St. Mary’s community.

We invite you to visit our website at www.smaryscountymd.gov/aging to learn of the wide variety of programs and services offered to the county’s older adult residents.

The St. Mary’s County Department of Aging & Human Services works collaboratively with the many public and private non-profit agencies and proprietary health care providers in St Mary’s County and welcomes questions regarding our older adult programs and activities.

Lori Jennings-Harris, Director
St. Mary’s County Department of Aging & Human Services

The RSVP Staff welcome you as a member Volunteer Station to our program.

We are the only RSVP in St Mary's County. Our mission is to provide quality volunteer experiences for our 55 and over adult community. We focus on helping you fill your volunteer needs by recruiting and referring older adult volunteers to appropriate volunteer opportunities at your agency.

One of the major roles of RSVP is to effectively work with agencies, also referred to as Volunteer Stations, so that we may help you in the management of RSVP volunteers and effective communications with the RSVP Staff.

This handbook answers any basic questions or concerns you may have as an enrolled RSVP Station. Being aware of the benefits and policies will enable you to have enjoyable experiences as a Volunteer Station with RSVP.

We always welcome ideas and suggestions about improving our program here in St. Mary's County.

RSVP Project Manager
St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION:

RSVP Project Manager, Monika Williams
Monika.Williams@stmaryscountymd.gov
301-475-4200 ext. 1653

RSVP Senior Office Specialist, Caroline Massetti
Caroline.Massetti@stmaryscountymd.gov
301-475-4200 ext. 1650

General Email: RSVP@stmaryscountymd.gov

RSVP History

RSVP is one of three branches of AmeriCorps. The two other branches are Foster Grandparents Program and Senior Companions Program.

RSVP is the only one of these programs that does not have income requirements and does not pay a stipend to its volunteers. AmeriCorps also runs VISTA and the Learn and Serve America Programs. Information about these programs is available at www.cns.gov.

RSVP was established to help local communities by encouraging people ages 55 and over to volunteer. RSVP membership has no restrictions based on income, education, experience, race, gender, or physical disabilities. Through volunteer coordination, RSVP enables seniors to lead active lives in the community service of their choice.

Continued activity in the senior years has been medically proven to affect health in a positive way. RSVP gives the opportunity for seniors to enrich their lives by offering volunteer placements that enable new and existing skills and interests to be used in the community. Through RSVP, public awareness is increased about the vast resources of knowledge, experience, and skills that seniors have to offer.

RSVP and the Department of Aging & Human Services

The St. Mary's County RSVP began in the late 1980's under the sponsorship of the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services. RSVP is now a division of the Department of Aging and is an essential part of the Department's vision for the future, which includes partnerships with organizations in the community to meet identified needs. St. Mary's County RSVP volunteers usually give more than 28,000 hours annually to local county agencies, non-profit groups, and community service organizations.

Funding and Operation

AmeriCorps oversees the administration of RSVP grants. The sponsor agencies are legally responsible for all programs and financial aspects of the RSVP.

The program manager secures funding by way of grants and in-kind donations to meet budgeted needs for the program.

The operation of the St. Mary's County RSVP is a team effort that involves all aspects of the community and AmeriCorps. The need is evidenced by the number of non-profit and community service organizations which request help from RSVP Volunteers.

The RSVP staff work with non-profit organizations and leaders in the community to determine community and volunteer needs. RSVP staff recruit and interview potential volunteers and place them with agencies of the volunteer's choice.

The Community Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Community Advisory Committee is to assist and advise the RSVP Program Manager and the sponsor in forming local planning priorities, promote community support for the program, and appraise the program on an annual basis.

The Community Advisory Committee is made up of nine members from the community, including RSVP Volunteers, community stakeholders, professionals, and representatives from Volunteer Stations.

The Community Advisory Committee meets quarterly.

Volunteer Membership

Anyone 55 years or over may become an RSVP Volunteer. There are no restrictions for joining. By becoming a volunteer in the RSVP, older adults have an opportunity to donate time, enthusiasm, talents, and expertise to the community and make an impact on the lives of those who need help the most.

A brief orientation in policies and procedures for the program and the Department of Aging is given, and yearly training is also provided to volunteers to keep people informed about any changes to the program, etc. There are no fees required to join the RSVP.

If you have existing volunteers at your agency that are over 55, encourage them to join the RSVP, and both the volunteer and the agency will receive credit for the hours performed.

Agencies or “Stations”

When an agency or organization requests a volunteer from RSVP or when a volunteer desires to work in a specific location, the agency or the organization may become a station for RSVP. Stations must be a public or private (501 C) non-profit entity or a proprietary health provider. Stations that are faith based can still be part of the RSVP but cannot use volunteers for political or religious purposes. Every station that joins RSVP is required to fill out a Station Application form and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU is a written agreement between the station and the RSVP, explaining the responsibilities of both the RSVP staff and the station. This document is renewable every three years. The Station Application form is located in the back of this handbook.

Benefits of RSVP Membership

The RSVP Staff will assist in recruiting volunteers.

The RSVP Staff will provide training for volunteer supervisors on such topics as volunteer management and reporting procedures for the RSVP.

The RSVP provides a free supplemental insurance policy that covers all registered volunteers while they are on a volunteer assignment and traveling to and from assignments. This is a requirement of AmeriCorps and a benefit to RSVP Volunteers.

The RSVP volunteer pool offers valuable experience to volunteer stations.

Requesting a Volunteer

Once determining a need in your agency for a volunteer, you should submit an RSVP Volunteer Assignment form. A copy of the form is in the back of this handbook. Please be as specific as possible when filling out this form. It is the primary tool we use to recruit volunteers. If you need “One-time Event” volunteers, please submit your request at least one month in advance of the activity.

Volunteer Position Description

A volunteer position description is a must whenever anyone needs a volunteer. It should be an explicit statement of what is involved in the role of the volunteer staff member, how the volunteer is to interact with paid staff, and his/her relationship to the organization. Considerable care should be given to writing the position description as it is the basis for the recruitment of potential volunteers for your agency.

No volunteer position should duplicate a paid staff position, though it may contain distinct tasks also performed by paid staff.

A copy of the Position Description can be found in the back of this handbook.

Grievances

If a Volunteer Station has a grievance against an RSVP volunteer that cannot be resolved by speaking with the volunteer, they should initiate the following procedures:

Contact the RSVP Manager and discuss the problem.
Request a meeting of all concerned parties.

Request a meeting with the RSVP Manager's Supervisor.

Any concern expressed by a Volunteer or Volunteer Station will be treated with appropriate confidentiality and expedited as rapidly as practicable.

Volunteers with Disabilities

Every effort is made to develop volunteer assignments that are accessible to persons with diverse physical limitations. The St. Mary's County RSVP complies with all aspects of the Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and will provide reasonable accommodations for volunteers with disabilities.

RSVP Volunteer Station Responsibilities

RSVP Stations agree to:

Treat all RSVP Volunteers with respect.

Conform to all health and safety laws.

Provide meaningful opportunities which allow volunteers to utilize their knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as to serve their interests.

Provide orientation and training as needed for volunteers to satisfactorily perform their assignments.

Provide the volunteer with a position description of each volunteer assignment.

Provide effective supervision, guidance, and support of the volunteers.

Assist volunteers in reporting their monthly volunteer hours to the RSVP Office.

In cases of emergencies, disagreements, or misunderstandings relating to RSVP Volunteers or their assignments, Station Supervisors will contact the RSVP Office as soon as possible.

Have a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on file, which outlines RSVP and the station responsibilities.

Provide accessible sites for volunteers with diverse physical limitations.

Ensure that volunteers are not assigned to activities which would displace employed staff.

St. Mary's County RSVP

Station Application

To qualify for consideration as an RSVP Station, an applicant agency must:

- Provide meaningful and challenging volunteer assignments which address current national, state, and local needs.
- Have a designated Volunteer Coordinator or a person to supervise volunteers.
- Be a public agency or a private nonprofit organization, or a proprietary health care agency.
- Be physically located in the service area of RSVP (St. Mary's County)
- Fill out all paperwork completely (Station application, job description and copy of 501 C status).

Agency Information

Date: _____

Agency Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Name/Title Volunteer Coordinator: _____

Agency Mission Statement:

Please indicate your agency category:

501 (C) _____ Public Agency _____ Proprietary Health Care _____

If you are a 501 (C) please attach a copy of your registration of charitable status.

How do you evaluate the effectiveness/impact of your program/services?

RSVP has a requirement to provide information to its funding bodies about the impact that RSVP volunteers make in the community. Can we have access to your impact reports/information that relates to volunteer involvement? Yes ___ No ___

Volunteer Program Descriptions

Please indicate which services you are requesting RSVP to help you with:

Recruiting volunteers age 55 and over: Yes___ No___
Finding volunteers with special skills: Yes___ No___
One time events/special projects: Yes___ No___
Training/assistance with volunteers Yes___ No___

List all volunteer positions that you would like RSVP to recruit for:

Do you currently have a volunteer program at your agency? Yes ___ No ___
Do you have an on-site Volunteer Coordinator? Yes ___ No ___
Do you honor your volunteers with a recognition event? Yes ___ No ___
Do you provide travel costs for volunteers? Yes ___ No ___
Do you provide free parking for volunteers? Yes ___ No ___
Do you provide free meals to volunteers? Yes ___ No ___

Are there any other benefits you provide to your volunteers?

How many volunteers are in your total volunteer corp? _____

What percentage would you expect RSVP volunteers (55 and over) to represent:

75% or more _____ 50%-75% _____ 25%-50% _____ Less than 25% _____

What schedule would you require RSVP volunteers to work:

Weekdays: AM ____ PM ____ Full day ____ (please indicate which are applicable)

Times per Week: _____ Hours per shift: _____

How do you think joining the St. Mary's County RSVP will help your agency improve/impact your services:

Please sign this application and attach your volunteer job descriptions(s), along with a copy of your 501 (C) status, if applicable, and any brochures or information about your agency to:

RSVP Project Manager
St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services
P.O. Box 653
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Signed : _____ Date: _____

RSVP Volunteer Position Description

Volunteer Station: _____

Title of Volunteer Position: _____

Station Volunteer Supervisor: _____

Qualifications: RSVP volunteers must be aged 55 years or older. Volunteers are to record their hours on the RSVP Timesheet. The RSVP Timesheets must be signed and submitted by the **station volunteer supervisor** every month.

Are there any qualifications required by the volunteer station?

Basic volunteer duties involved with this assignment:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Who will be served by this assignment?

What is the anticipated benefit of this volunteer service to those receiving the service?

What specific skills will the volunteer need? (Include any requirements for lifting, standing, or other physical requirements.)

Describe the environment in which the volunteer will work. Please provide details on expected days and hours of service.

Will the volunteer receive any training? If so, please describe.

RSVP of St. Mary's County Volunteer Information

RSVP Volunteer Code of Ethics

Volunteers are expected to respect the policies of the volunteer station and perform their assignments in a business-like manner. The business of volunteer stations and their clients should be treated as confidential. Federal guidelines mandate that RSVP volunteers shall not act in any way which results in RSVP being identified with political activities. Religious activities such as preaching, religious instruction or worship services cannot be counted as volunteer service hours for RSVP.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Report all incidents regarding personal injury to your station supervisor and RSVP promptly. Notify the volunteer station if you will not be available during your assigned shift. Remember to "sign in" when you volunteer so that your time is recorded. 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.

Non-Discrimination

All RSVP Volunteer Stations have agreed to not discriminate against RSVP volunteers or in the operation of their programs on the basis of race; color; national origin, including limited English proficiency; sex; age; political affiliation; sexual orientation; religion; or on the basis of disability, if the volunteer is a qualified individual with a disability. If you feel that you have been subject to discriminatory practices, you have the right to file a written complaint with the RSVP Project Manager within 180 days following an alleged discrimination. Your identity shall be kept confidential to the extent possible to investigate the complaint and take corrective action if necessary.

Americans with Disabilities

With respect to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we will consider reasonable accommodations when requested. All RSVP stations are required to complete a survey to determine their accessibility. Please ask your RSVP Project Manager to identify the level of accessibility of a station if required.

Volunteer Separation and Appeal Process

Though it rarely occurs, RSVP may separate a volunteer for causes including, but not limited to, extensive or unauthorized absences, misconduct, or inability to perform assignments or accept supervision. If the volunteer wishes to appeal the separation, a written appeal may be submitted to the RSVP Project Manager for review; the volunteer will be notified of the decision within thirty days of receiving the request for appeal.

What legal limitations apply to the operation of the RSVP Program? (45 CFR §2553.91)

1. Volunteers can 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; 2. Neither the grantee nor any volunteer station requests or receives compensation from the beneficiaries of RSVP volunteers; 3. A RSVP volunteer station may contribute to the financial support of the RSVP Program. However, this support shall not be a required precondition for a potential station to obtain RSVP volunteers; 4. A RSVP volunteer does not receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family, or friends.

RSVP of St. Mary's County

Mailing Address: Department of Aging and Human Services, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650

Office Address: Loffler Senior Activity Center, 21905 Chancellors Run Road, Great Mills, MD 20634

Phone: 301-475-4200, x 1653 or 1650 Email: RSVP@stmaryscountymd.gov

St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services At A Glance

Lori Jennings-Harris, Director

Mission

Provide an array of programs and services that foster continued physical and mental good health and promote healthy aging within the senior community.

Program Descriptions

Senior Information and Assistance (Senior I&A) – Provides important and up-to-date information as it relates to senior services, benefits, and assistance programs. Appointments are available for persons aged 60 and over who require assistance applying for property tax credits, energy assistance programs, and other financial assistance programs. One-on-One Health Insurance Counseling is available to assist individuals in the areas of Medicare, Medicare Part D, Medigap policies, and other insurance plans. Suspected cases of fraud and abuse under the Medicare and Medicaid Programs are assisted through the Senior Medicare Patrol Program.

Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) - Consists of seven programs providing the following services: Guardianship for individuals aged 65 and over, Medicaid Waiver for Older Adults Program, Long Term Care Ombudsman, Senior Care Program, Senior Center Plus and Caregiver Support. The ultimate goal of these programs and services is to enable the older adults of St. Mary's County to live independently for as long as possible in their community.

Senior Centers – Three county senior centers and one nutritional site are venues for older adults to participate in activities, events, exercise programs, and congregate meal programs providing a lunch time meal in the company of other seniors.

Home Delivered Meals – A service for seniors 60 and over who show a moderate to severe disability that prevents them from shopping or cooking for themselves, and who have no one to prepare meals. Depending on the need, a hot or frozen meal may be provided five days a week. A health assessment tool is used to determine eligibility.

Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP) - Offering persons 55 years of age or older an opportunity to donate their time, talents, enthusiasm, and expertise in the local community, by volunteering their services to non-profit, private, and public organizations.

Community Programs and Outreach – Provides important and up-to-date information to the senior community through a bi-monthly newsletter, website updates, local and state-wide events, and local media sources.

Contact Information

Website: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging

Phone: 301-475-4200 ext. 1053

Fax: 301-475-4503

Address: 41780 Baldrige Street, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650

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41780 Baldrige Street
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Tel: 301-475-4200 ext. 1053

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Brought to you by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County:

for St. Mary's County:

James R. Guy, President

Michael R. Alderson, Jr., Commissioner

Eric Colvin, Commissioner

Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner

Scott R. Ostrow, Commissioner

and the Department of Aging & Human Services