



Retired & Senior Volunteer Program

RSVP

Volunteer 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

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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 Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), welcomes you to our program. We hope that being an RSVP Volunteer will enrich your life and the lives of those around you in the St. Mary’s community.

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

We encourage you to make the Department of Aging & Human Services a regular part of your senior years, whether you attend one of our senior centers on a daily basis or use some of our many services and programs like the RSVP.

The St. Mary’s County Department of Aging & Human Services provides the county’s older adults with the perfect way to stay in touch with friends and remain involved in your community.

Thank you for giving of your time and talents as an RSVP Volunteer.

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

The RSVP staff welcome you as a newly enrolled volunteer of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

There are many unmet needs in St. Mary's County that can best be filled by people like you. The experienced adult often has skills and interests that can be a valuable asset to the local community and make a difference in the lives of many of its citizens. Therefore, you have something valuable and unique to share... yourself!

Just as RSVP stresses the importance for volunteer stations to share policies and procedures with volunteers, RSVP has the same responsibility to provide this information to you, the volunteer. This handbook was created for that purpose.

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

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

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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RSVP

RSVP is one of three branches of the AmeriCorps Seniors program, which is part of the national AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps Seniors includes RSVP, Foster Grandparents Program, and Senior Companions Program.

RSVP is the only one of these AmeriCorps Seniors programs that does not have income requirements and does not pay a stipend to its volunteers.

RSVP was established to help local communities by encouraging people aged 55 and over to volunteer. Other than the minimum age requirement, 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 through service.

Continued activity in the senior years has been proven to affect health in a positive way. RSVP gives seniors the opportunity to enrich their lives by using their interests, skills, talents, abilities, and time in volunteer service in the community. Through RSVP, public awareness is increased about the vast resources of knowledge, experience, and skills that seniors have to offer.

Funding

AmeriCorps is a federal agency that oversees the administration of the national RSVP program including its policies, procedures, operations, and funding. AmeriCorps headquarters is based in Washington, D.C., with federal portfolio managers in key regions throughout the country. Local sponsoring agencies, which provide matching grant funds, are responsible for administering the local RSVP program, operations, and budget.

RSVP and the Department of Aging & Human Services

St. Mary's County RSVP began in the 1980's under the sponsorship of the St. Mary's County Department of Aging (now Department of Aging & Human Services). RSVP is a division of the Department and is an essential part of the Department's vision for the future, which includes partnerships with organizations in the community to meet local needs. The St. Mary's County RSVP volunteers provide thousands of hours of service annually to local non-profit and community service agencies.

Local Operation and Need

The operation of St. Mary's County RSVP is a team effort involving multiple non-profit and community service organizations that request help from RSVP volunteers to meet local needs. Volunteer services continue to expand to meet the needs of community partners. We encourage you to invite your friends and neighbors aged 55 and above to join our program.

RSVP staff work with non-profit organizations and leaders in the community to determine community and volunteer needs. RSVP staff recruit, interview, and place volunteers with local agencies by matching their skills and interests with an organization's needs and service opportunities. RSVP Staff conduct marketing for the program to recruit volunteers and inform the community of our services. RSVP staff also plan and conduct appropriate recognition for RSVP Volunteers in the form of an annual recognition luncheon and various achievement awards.

The RSVP manager secures grant funding to meet budgeted needs for the program. RSVP staff also work closely with the RSVP Community Advisory Committee to evaluate and promote program operations.

The national AmeriCorps program provides training, advice, and networking opportunities to keep local RSVP staff current with national strategies and goals. Communication among local AmeriCorps Seniors programs and the mid-Atlantic region also provide a forum to share ideas and successes.

RSVP Community Advisory Committee

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

The RSVP Community Advisory Committee consists of members from the community, including RSVP volunteers, community stakeholders, professionals, and representatives from RSVP volunteer service sites.

The RSVP Community Advisory Committee meets quarterly.

Joining RSVP

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

RSVP staff provide an orientation in policies and procedures for the program and the Department of Aging & Human Services. Local volunteer service sites also provide orientation and training to volunteers. There are no fees required to join the RSVP.

Interested seniors may call or visit the RSVP office which is located at the Loffler Senior Activity Center in the Chancellors Run Regional Park, 21905 Chancellors Run Road, Great Mills, Maryland.

RSVP staff are available to answer questions and discuss volunteer interests and needs for volunteers within our community. Volunteers fill out an enrollment form, and the information is entered into our volunteer database.

Volunteer Placement

Volunteers will be matched with local service sites—also known as Volunteer Stations—according to their interests, abilities, skills, preferences, and availability. If a volunteer has limited strength or problems with mobility, special consideration will be given to assignments that can accommodate a volunteer’s abilities. Volunteers are placed in service at one or more of approximately 30 volunteer stations which have agreed to assign and supervise RSVP volunteers. Volunteers choose a station where they will feel comfortable serving and can use their abilities in a positive way.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are needed to assist with medical equipment distribution, deliver meals to home-bound individuals, drive seniors to medical appointments, provide reception and administrative support services, lead group activities at Senior Activity Centers, provide tax preparation and filing services, and many other opportunities that are available in our community. Volunteer opportunities are published in the Department of Aging & Human Services newsletter and on the Department website under RSVP Volunteer Opportunities. You can also call the RSVP office for current openings.

One-Time Events

Occasionally we have special projects or hold one-time events, such as our annual Community Health Fair, which require extra volunteers. This can be an ideal way of volunteering if you have limited availability or time constraints. Check the Department of Aging & Human Services newsletter or call the RSVP office for special project or event volunteer needs.

Reporting Hours

St. Mary's County RSVP prepares reports on a monthly basis for our Project Sponsor—the Department of Aging & Human Services—that includes the number of volunteers and hours served, as well as details on volunteer service activities. RSVP also sends detailed reports to AmeriCorps every six months concerning our volunteers' hours of service and their service activities. These reports provide a record of what is happening with volunteers in St. Mary's County. They indicate where volunteers are serving, the kinds of services they are providing, the amount of time they are investing in service, and how they are impacting our community in a positive way. Most of all, the reports demonstrate how our community is a caring one where seniors give their time freely and willingly to help others.

Hours are recorded on the RSVP Service Log form, a copy of which is located in the back of this handbook and online at <https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging> . The timesheets require the volunteer's name, the name of the volunteer station, services provided, dates and hours of volunteer service. The forms are signed by both the volunteer and the volunteer station supervisor. Service Logs are returned to the RSVP office by either the volunteer or the volunteer station, and can be submitted by mail, online, or in person. Extra forms can be obtained by calling the RSVP office or by downloading from the Department of Aging & Human Services website.

What Hours Count?

All hours count that result from an approved RSVP volunteer placement under the supervision of a registered RSVP Volunteer Station, including volunteer service hours spent in training, orientation, and preparation.

Volunteer Benefits

Volunteer Insurance

A free supplemental insurance policy covers all registered volunteers while on volunteer assignment. This is a requirement of AmeriCorps and a benefit to RSVP Volunteers.

Accident insurance covers RSVP Volunteers for personal injuries suffered during volunteer assignment. The policy is intended to reimburse the cost of medical treatment, hospitalization and licensed nursing care required as a result of an accident. The limit is \$25,000 per accident.

Personal liability insurance provides protection for volunteers against injury or property damage claims arising out of volunteer service. The policy liability is \$1,000,000.

Excess automobile liability insurance is provided only for those volunteers who drive as part of their volunteer assignment. The liability policy limits are \$500,000. The liability insurance is for the protection of the volunteer in the event a volunteer is sued for causing physical injury to another person or damage to another's property. It does not cover damage to the volunteer's automobile.

Accidental death and dismemberment benefits of \$2,500 will be paid to the volunteer's beneficiary in the event of accidental death while volunteering. Benefits of \$2,500 will be paid to the volunteer in the event of loss of both hands, feet, or eyes, and any combination of the above while volunteering.

Other Benefits

Recognition: Each year RSVP honors all volunteers who have served 12 hours or more at an annual recognition event. Presidential awards and lifetime achievement awards are given out at this event. The award criteria are located on page 16 of this handbook.

Training: RSVP Volunteers receive station training at their site and during orientation.

Newsletter: RSVP submits information to the Department of Aging & Human Services bi-monthly newsletter, *New Beginning*, about our local RSVP Project, Volunteers, Volunteer Stations, and success stories.

Sense of worth and accomplishment: RSVP members have a sense of accomplishment in remaining active and a vital part of our community.

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.

Inactive Status and Separation

A volunteer who has not actively served as an RSVP Volunteer for a year will automatically be on inactive status. When the volunteer is ready to return, a call to the office or reporting new hours will reactivate the volunteer. Enrollment records are maintained to simplify activation.

Volunteers planning to be out of town for an extended period of time, or just taking some time off, are asked to let the RSVP office know as soon as possible. Also, please inform the volunteer station of the temporary absence.

Other reasons for separation include:

Reduction in workforce at the volunteer station:

When separation of a volunteer is required because of a reduction in work force, every effort shall be made to transfer the volunteer to another suitable assignment.

Unsatisfactory Performance:

Imposed by the volunteer station for not meeting the agreed performance standards, a failure to complete assigned tasks, misconduct, repeated failure to report for assignments, etc. Prior to separation of a volunteer for unsatisfactory performance, the volunteer station supervisor and/or the RSVP Manager must make a reasonable effort to resolve the problem.

Cause:

Imposed by the volunteer station for gross misconduct, breach of responsibility, wrongful appropriation for personal use of goods or materials owned by the volunteer station, conviction of a crime, or insubordination. Separation for cause requires no notice.

Grievances

If a volunteer has a problem that cannot be resolved by talking with the volunteer station supervisor, contact the RSVP Manager who will act initially as a mediator. If a successful solution is not found, the volunteer should follow the RSVP Grievance Policy, as stated below:

If the matter cannot be settled, a meeting of all concerned parties will be scheduled with the RSVP Manager.

If no solution is found at the meeting, the volunteer may request a meeting with the RSVP Community Advisory Committee Executive Committee. The decision of the committee will be final.

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.



St Mary's County RSVP Membership Enrollment Form

RSVP
St Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services
PO Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650
Phone: 301-475-4200, Ext. 1653 or Ext. 1650
Fax: 240-237-8132
RSVP@stmaryscountymd.gov

Personal Information

Name: _____ Date: ___/___/___

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Male Female E-mail address: _____

Date of Birth (Mandatory): ___/___/___ Driver's License # _____

RSVP volunteers must be at least 55 years of age; I meet this requirement. Initials: _____

Ethnicity: ___ Hispanic or Latino ___ Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino
___ White ___ African American ___ American Indian or Alaskan ___ Asian ___ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Isl

How did you first hear about RSVP? _____

Are you a Veteran? Yes _____ No _____ Branch _____

Do you have any physical disabilities or limitations? Yes ___ No ___ Disability (Optional) Arthritis

Asthma Back Diabetic Emphysema Epilepsy Hearing Impaired Heart Condition

Hypertension Lung Disease Osteoporosis Stroke Visually Impaired Other _____

Supplemental Insurance Coverage

As an RSVP volunteer, you are covered by supplemental: **1) accidental insurance, 2) liability insurance, and 3) excess automobile insurance** while volunteering in the program. **Write DECLINE if you do not wish to be covered by this supplemental insurance.**

Please provide the following information (If you prefer you can enter an **ESTATE** as beneficiary):

Beneficiary _____ Relationship: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Address: _____

Auto Insurance Co. _____

Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

I volunteer my services through the RSVP program and agree to furnish information regarding volunteer activities and hours. My signature grants my permission to RSVP to perform a Maryland Judiciary Background Check and Sex Offender Check with State and National Registries.

Volunteer Signature/Date

RSVP Interviewer/Date

Volunteer Experience

Are you currently volunteering? Yes No

If yes, please list where you are volunteering and describe the types of jobs:

- 1) _____ Job: _____
- 2) _____ Job: _____
- 3) _____ Job: _____

Please list three of your skills or interests: _____

What is/was your occupation? _____

Do you speak a second language? No Yes _____

Do you belong to an organization that would like a presentation on RSVP programs and services?

Yes Please contact: _____

RSVP has a wide variety of volunteer opportunities through St Mary's County organizations. Please circle all activities that match your skills and interests.

	Animals		Health/Health Fair		Teen Court
	Arts (painting, music, etc.)		Home Delivered Meals		Gift/Thrift Shop
	Computers		Transportation/Senior Rides		Hospice
	Crime Prevention		Tour Guide/Museum Docent		Music
	Equipment Repair		Quilting, sewing, crafts		Veterans Services
	Pantry/Food Services		Seniors Center Activities		Tax Aide
	Gardening		Special Events/Projects		Animals
	Equipment Repair		Nursing Home		
	Environment/Parks/Nature		Office – clerical, mailings, reception		Tutor/Mentor (Adult and/or Youth)

For Office Use Only:

Initial Contact Date ___/___/___ Staff Contact: _____

Enrollment entered into Volunteer Reporter database ___/___/___

Volunteer Stations:

1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____



**AmeriCorps
Seniors**

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

Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

Media Release Form

RELEASE FORM

Date _____

I hereby grant St Mary's County RSVP permission to use my likeness in photograph(s)/video in any and all of its publications or on the world wide web, whether now known or hereafter existing, controlled by St Mary's County RSVP, in perpetuity. I will make no monetary or other claim against St Mary's County RSVP for the use of the photograph(s)/video.

Name (print full name) _____

Signature _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____



President's Volunteer Service Award Criteria

Individual Volunteers

Reporting Period: January-December of the previous year

Gold Award: 500 hours or more recorded during the award year.

Silver Award: 250 – 499 hours recorded during the award year.

Bronze Award: 100 – 249 hours recorded during the award year.

President's Lifetime Achievement Award: 4,000 hours or more of volunteer service over a lifetime.

All recipients receive a lapel pin, a personalized certificate, and a congratulatory letter signed by the President of the United States of America.

Volunteer Stations

Gold Award: 1000 hours or more recorded during the award year.

Silver Award: 500 - 999 hours or more recorded during the award year.

Bronze Award: 200 - 499 hours or more recorded during the award year.

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, ext. 1653 or 1650

Email: RSVP@stmaryscountymd.gov

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

AmeriCorps, our federal funding agency, requires that we inform RSVP volunteers, RSVP volunteer stations, and RSVP grant staff that the following activities are strictly prohibited by federal regulations governing our program:

Legal Restrictions: Prohibited Activities

Policies and Procedures

RSVP regulations 45 CFR §2553.91(a)-(g) require RSVP project sponsors have written policies and procedures ensuring the following:

- (a) Volunteers and grantee staff do not engage in, and grantee funds are not used for, any of the following activities, to the extent they are prohibited in the applicable program regulations:
 - i. *Electoral activities,*
 - ii. *Voter registration,*
 - iii. *Voter transportation to polls, and*
 - iv. *Efforts to influence legislation.*
- (b) 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.
- (c) Neither the grantee nor any volunteer station requests or receives compensation from the beneficiaries of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.
- (d) Any volunteer station financial support of the AmeriCorps Seniors project is not a precondition for that station to obtain volunteer service.
- (e) An AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer does not receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family, or friends.
- (f) Grant funds are not used to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activity.
- (g) Project staff or volunteers do not give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytization as part of their duties and, if the sponsor 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 AmeriCorps grant.

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. 1050

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

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Brought to you by the Commissioners of 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.