

STATE OF NEVADA AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION

ADSD VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GUIDE
**FOR VOLUNTEER HOST
ORGANIZATIONS**

Revised March 2023



**Nevada Aging and Disability
Services Division
Volunteer Programs**

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Introduction

This Volunteer Management Program Guide for Volunteer Host Organizations (Guide) was created under the State of Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD), Office of Community Living (OCL). The intention of this Guide is to assist third-party organizations to develop and/or manage volunteer programs that provide direct service to Nevada consumers, under ADSD's purview. Third-party organizations that manage volunteer programs are known as Volunteer Host Organizations (VHOs). VHOs may be formally contracted to deliver direct services utilizing volunteers or, may provide services through informal partnership arrangements with ADSD or another VHO.

This Guide is based on the Volunteer Risk and Program Management Policies (VRPM or Policies) developed by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) for the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). A full copy of the VRPM is available upon request. Suggested procedures and other resources for following the various policies are available through the Medicare Assistance Program (MAP) Oversight Team. (See Section III - Resources for contact information).

Many areas covered in this Guide may have been covered in the Service Specification -General Requirements or in the Service Specification for a particular program in the ADSD grant Notification of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Please contact your ADSD Subaward Program Specialist for clarification.

Definitions of Terms

Consumer - Volunteers serve a variety of individuals referenced with terms such as client, customer, residents, Medicare beneficiaries, Medicare eligible individuals, Medicare pre-enrollees, beneficiaries' family and/or caregivers, etc. These terms will be referenced as "Consumer" in this document.

Volunteer (or Volunteers) - A Volunteer is anyone who, without coercion or compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of reasonable and previously approved expenses incurred during his or her Volunteer duties, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Volunteer Program. A Volunteer is one who is officially enrolled and trained by the Program, or an entity managed under the Program prior to performance of any task. Unless specifically stated, Volunteers are not considered "employees." Employees of other organizations and partners who perform "in-kind" Volunteer Program work are not considered Volunteers under these policies.

Volunteer Host Organization (VHO) - A Volunteer Host Organization is any third-party organization engaged in recruiting and/or managing Volunteers performing Volunteer Program duties. Host organizations may be formally contracted to deliver the Volunteer Program or may be doing so through informal partnership arrangements with the Volunteer Program.

ADSD staff is responsible for ensuring that VHOs comply with all relevant policies governing the management and engagement of Volunteers performing Volunteer Program duties through or under the auspices of host organizations.

Volunteer Program(s) (or the Program) - Consists of the Volunteer Program under the Medicare Assistance Program (MAP): Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)/Extra Help, Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs, and any other Volunteer Program to be administered or managed by the State of Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division or Volunteer Host Organizations.

Volunteer Risk & Program Management Policies (VRPM) – A set of volunteer policies developed by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) for the SMP and SHIP volunteer programs. The policies are designed to establish and organize the structure and operation of a volunteer program. They describe the governing principles and values that shape and guide volunteer involvement, set expectations regarding the management of the volunteer programs, delineate core expectations of volunteers, and broadly describe what volunteers may expect from the program. The purpose of the volunteer policies is to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and safety of program services through the provision of guidance and direction to program staff and volunteers. The policies are intended to support internal program management. They do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement.

Section I - Volunteers – Asset or Liability

Having volunteers assist with day-to-day operations can be a huge benefit to programs and organizations, but the question becomes: *“How do we make sure volunteers are an asset and not a liability?”*

There are three (3) key principles to consider with volunteers, which include:

1. Volunteer recruitment is to enhance a service, not to replace paid staff.
2. Clearly written role descriptions, which are skills-based, provide meaningful tasks with opportunities for personal development when possible.
3. Effective supervision that establishes guidelines to follow when problems or difficulties arise.

Benefits of Volunteers

Beyond the value to programs, volunteers bring other benefits, particularly when considering, for example, retired older Americans may possess many skills that can enhance an organization. Is a staff person spending a lot of time on fiscal matters? Could a retired CPA be recruited to assist with some of those duties? Often volunteers are thought of in terms of simple tasks – filing, folding papers, stuffing envelopes, etc. However, when a comprehensive volunteer management program is in place, the benefits of having volunteers can outweigh the liabilities when considering what volunteers can bring to the organization. Following are some of the benefits that organizations enjoy when they utilize volunteers.

Volunteers:

- Enhance community outreach, relationships, and knowledge about programs by supporting fundraising activities, outreach events, conferences, etc. and sharing the information
- Increase the number of services available while reducing overall costs with special projects, general assistance – filing, data entry, stocking, etc.
- Enrich the skills and knowledge available to programs/services. For example, a retired or prospective social worker could be available to assist with case management, advocacy, and follow-up with the consumer
- Assist Federal and State governments with providing social services to the broader community, thus, increasing capacity to reach people, meet individual needs, and make positive impacts on people’s lives
- Expand the agency’s capacity through community, professional, and personal connections

Value of Volunteers

There are tens of millions of volunteers across the nation providing billions of hours of service through organizations. The latest information available shows the average value of a U.S. volunteer’s time is \$29.95 per hour, while Nevada’s rate is \$25.46 per hour.¹ According to the AmeriCorps 2019 Report on Civil Engagement and Volunteering Supplement,

¹ http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

approximately 77.9 million Americans gave a total 5.8 billion hours of volunteer service with an economic value of \$147 billion² nationwide.

Liability of Volunteers

An effective volunteer program is an undertaking that takes resources. The key to ensuring that volunteers are an asset to an organization is ensuring that they, like paid staff, have the support and structure necessary to be successful. A few considerations to be made are:

- Training volunteers to be knowledgeable about the program(s).
- Supervising and supporting volunteers.
- Engaging volunteers' participation in meaningful activities.
- Planning for the varying reliability and availability of volunteers.

While this Guide will cover pertinent aspects of training, supervising, and retaining volunteers, VHOs also need to take into consideration additional factors, including costs associated with volunteers.

Costs to Consider with Volunteers

There are certain cost considerations that need to be made when working with a volunteer staff. The good news? The costs of working with volunteers are typically considerably less when compared to costs associated with paid staff. Beyond standard overhead costs such as office space, utilities, telephone service, etc., other costs can include:

- **Supplies:** Volunteers are going to need supplies. Think about supplies/equipment volunteers will be using and determine an average cost per volunteer to aid in any budget process. Also, within this category, volunteer recognition could be included. It may be as simple as developing a reward system based on hours/length of time of service, or it may be a quarterly or annual program. There are a lot of options and flexibility here; be creative and work within the budget confines.
- **Administrative:** To protect an organization and volunteers, there are administrative costs to consider. Some of these costs could include recruitment, background and reference checks, liability coverage, staff salary for management/oversight, training, retention efforts, etc. Check with insurer(s) to determine what additional coverage beyond workers' compensation and liability will be required for volunteers. It is also beneficial to check with accountants to learn about any tax implications associated with volunteers. Please refer to the ADSD Service Specifications - General Requirements for more information on background and reference checks and liability coverage.
- **Travel:** Are volunteers going to be using their personal vehicles? Mileage reimbursement is a cost that should be considered. While not every volunteer may expect mileage reimbursement, it can be a nice perk to offer.

² Americorps <https://americorps.gov/newsroom/news/via>

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These are core cost considerations to make when planning for volunteers. By considering these items and planning, organizations can keep costs low and still have a productive volunteer program to supplement the services of paid staff.

If it is decided to include a Volunteer Program component under an ADSD sub award, the following section will provide additional information to start a new Volunteer Program or to incorporate into any existing volunteer program.

Section II – Volunteer Risk and Program Management Policies

The purpose of the VRPM is to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and safety of ADSD services through the provision of guidance and direction to VHO staff and Volunteers. The volunteer policies are intended to support ADSD and related VHO volunteer management.

Introductory Policies

Overall Policy on Engagement of Volunteers

A Volunteer Program is best served by the active participation of citizens of the community and accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at a range of levels and within all appropriate projects and activities. Volunteers contribute unique talents, time, and knowledge, complementing the skills and dedication of the Program paid staff.

Scope of the Volunteer Policies

The VRPM was designed to establish and organize the structure and operation of Volunteer Programs that are under the purview of ADSD. The policies apply to all VHOs that control or manage Volunteers performing Program services.

Compliance

Any VHO must strike a balance among respecting the dignity, rights, and comfort of its personnel, Volunteers, and Consumer population, along with its legal and ethical obligations to deliver safe, efficient services to fulfill its mission. Policies and procedures, workplace rules, and prohibitions do not exist for their own sake. Therefore, there is an expectation that VHOs and Volunteers follow all VRPM policies. This Guide, and accompanying VRPM, provides awareness to the VHO. The VHO has a responsibility to familiarize the Volunteers with the Policies. Mechanisms for informing Volunteers include but are not necessarily limited to various parts of the Volunteer screening process; Volunteer orientation; Volunteer training; the Volunteer handbook; Volunteer in-service sessions; notices, memos, and bulletins about existing policies; and supervisory and performance evaluation sessions.

Volunteer Role Classification or Description

Role classifications are intended to reduce the burden of imposing in-depth training, screening, and supervision on all Volunteers and particularly on those who perform relatively simple and safe services for the Program. This allows the Volunteer Program to focus more attention and energy on working with Volunteers who perform more complex tasks. Many Programs will have the classifications already established by ADSD.

Risk Management, Health, and Safety

The safety of staff and Volunteers is paramount. VHO staff is responsible for the safety and well-being of Volunteers, just as they are responsible for the safety and well-being of paid staff. The overarching rationale for this section of the VRPM is that the VHO's should strive to operate a health and safety-conscious service environment, as well as deliver safe and reliable services to Consumers.

Risk management is central to any volunteer program. It is, for example, a measurement of effective and safe role development; appropriate screening and placement; comprehensive orientation; training; certification; and ongoing volunteer supervision and support. Managing risks is fundamental to both the management of the Program and Volunteer performance.

Refer to the ADSD Service Specifications – General Requirements – All Funding Sources: The sub awardee shall hold harmless, defend, and indemnify the State of Nevada, Department of Health and Human Services and the Aging and Disability Services Division from any and all claims, actions, suits, charges and judgements whatsoever that arise out of the sub awardee's performance or nonperformance of the services or subject matter called for in the sub award agreement.

Risk Assessment

The Volunteer Programs implement a risk assessment process on the roles, service, and activities of the Volunteers every three years. It is the responsibility of each VHO to ensure that its unique risks, exposures, and risky conditions are identified, and strategies are implemented to prevent and reduce the incidence and/or impact.

Other risk factors to evaluate are training and qualification procedures; volunteer performance management; volunteer program management processes and activities; and volunteer service site.

ADSD staff will assist with the Risk Assessments.

Insurance

VHOs are responsible for providing **liability insurance** for all Volunteers. Liability insurance is essential for protecting VHOs and Volunteers alike, from the risks of liabilities imposed by lawsuits and similar claims. Liability coverage should include:

- physical injury to another,
- damage to another's property,
- and defense of an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct.

In addition, Volunteers are to be covered by **Workers' Compensation** insurance as provided in NRS616A.120.

Also see: ADSD Service Specifications - General Requirements - Volunteer Insurance Requirements.

Automobile Insurance Coverage

Volunteers who drive their own vehicle for Program purposes must carry a valid driver's license and liability coverage on any vehicle used. The Volunteer bears the cost of this insurance. Volunteers are to be advised to notify their own automobile insurance provider about their driving activities as a volunteer, and ensure coverage is in place that provides adequate protection. If coverage is lost or driver's license is not current, a Volunteer must notify the VHO. VHOs are responsible for developing guidelines for verifying and keeping records of a Volunteer's automobile insurance and valid driver's license.

Safe Work Environment

Both VHOs and Volunteers are responsible to follow all safety and health standards established by relevant local, state, and federal authorities. This includes assigned workspace at the VHO as well as sites that the Volunteer may visit for a counseling session, presentation, and/or community outreach event. Safety training for Volunteers to make them aware of safety hazards they might encounter should help safeguard Volunteers and Consumers.

Mandatory Reporting of Abuse

Volunteers who witness instances of abuse to Consumers while performing their assigned duties must report this to their VHO supervisor so that appropriate follow-up action may occur. This requirement may not apply to any Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs.

ADSD Service Specifications - General Requirements state that "Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 200.5093, all sub awardees (VHOs) must report suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, isolation, or abandonment no later than 24 hours after such knowledge is obtained. A program receiving ADSD funding may be subject to cancellation of the sub award and/or ADSD may withhold funds if any staff member, volunteer, or director of a program fails to report or is convicted of abuse."

Privacy and Location of Counseling

Counseling Consumers can involve sharing of, and access to, private and confidential information. Because they may divulge such information even without being asked, the setting within which such exchanges take place must be controlled to prevent unauthorized people from overhearing.

Face-to-face services with Consumers should take place at VHO's offices or those of partner agencies. Where Consumers are unable to travel to the VHO's or partner's office and services need to be provided face-to-face, staff and Volunteers should discuss alternate meeting arrangements that will provide for privacy as well as safety for the Volunteer.

Home Visits

VHOs will assess the risks of Volunteers making home visits to Consumers based on their organization's safety protocols, the VRPM, and the terms and conditions of their ADSD subaward.

Incident Reporting for Workplace Violence or Accidents

As with paid personnel where occupational health and safety and labor laws generally make reporting mandatory, Volunteers' workplace injuries and accidents need to be reported. Volunteers should be clearly informed on procedures to report any incident they observe or is directed at them. Incidents can include injuries, accidents, harassment, violence, substandard volunteer service or serious judgment errors, or other behavior missteps.

Emergency Contact Procedures

Volunteers should be able to reach their supervisor or Program staff person in the event of an incident, danger, or substantive programming question while on duty. Volunteers are given procedures that enables them to communicate with VHO supervisory personnel at any time Volunteers may be on duty.

It is equally critical that the VHO can reach the Volunteer in the event of a change of schedule or other event that requires off-hours contact. In addition, the VHO should have on file a person to contact in case there is an emergency involving the Volunteer. The VHO will maintain emergency contact information on all its Volunteers.

Disaster Plan

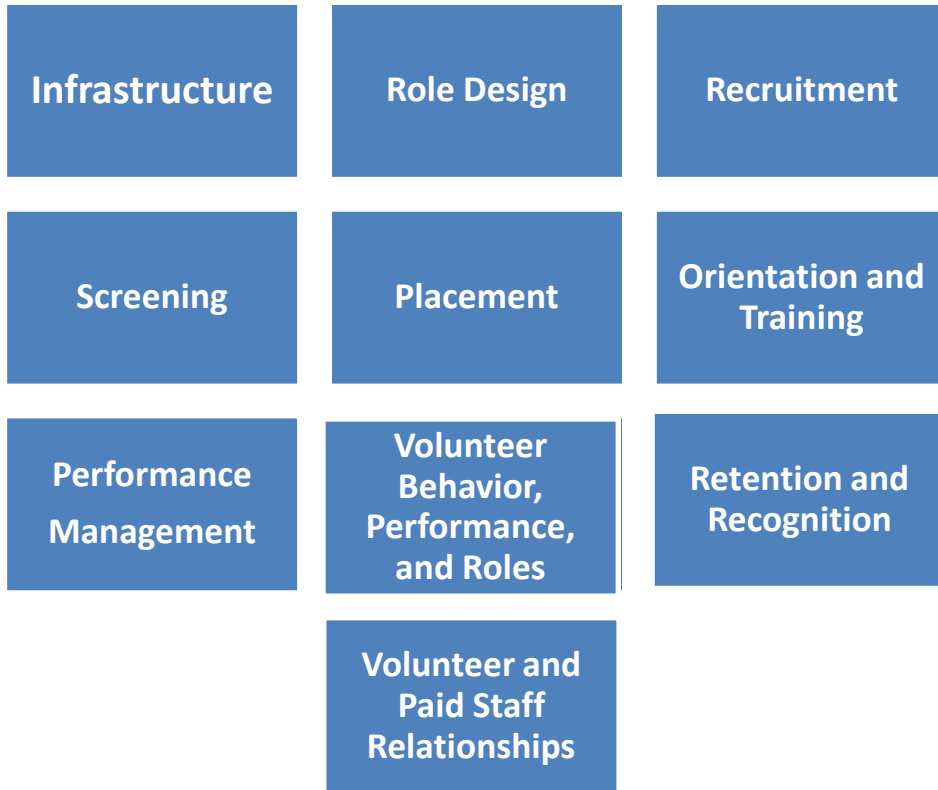
Plans dealing with disasters, including flood, tornado, earthquake, and pandemics should be communicated to Volunteers.

Volunteer Program Management

Management of volunteers is in many ways no different from management of any other organizational resource; it requires planning, support, and a systematic approach.

Volunteers are such a valuable resource that they both deserve and require a management structure that enables and assists them to contribute to the organization and to the community.

The VRPM outlines 10 components to managing a Volunteer Program as described below.



Infrastructure

Any Volunteer Program should ensure that an infrastructure is in place to support engagement and volunteer program management that, together, create effective, productive, safe, and rewarding Volunteer involvement. The Volunteer Program’s policies and procedures should apply equally to all Volunteers and reflect the diversity of the community it serves.

The Program has both the right and the obligation to ensure that its Volunteers are capable of effectively providing service. This means that the Program must retain the right to determine when a Volunteer is not suitable for continued service and to end the service of a Volunteer who is deemed not suitable. At the same time, Volunteers reserve their own right to, at any time and for any reason, resign from the Program.

Evaluation of Volunteer involvement and the Volunteer Risk and Program Management Policies - Monitoring of the Volunteer Program will help gain insight on areas that are best practices and areas that might need improvement. VHOs will conduct an annual survey of Volunteers for both volunteer involvement and, the infrastructure in place to support volunteer involvement.

Refer to the ADSD Service Specification- General Requirements Quality Improvement section as well as the VRPM for additional information monitoring and evaluating volunteer involvement.

Maintenance of Reports - Accurate and current records regarding Volunteers are essential to a Volunteer Program because they provide the data that allows for continuous and consistent supervision, even if there is staff turnover. These records provide a history of the Volunteers' involvement and are essential to protecting the Volunteer Program in the event of a lawsuit because they will outline the care that the Program has taken in screening, training, and supervising its Volunteers. Inadequate records may themselves be viewed as evidence of insufficient management.

Volunteers are entitled to examine the contents of their service records, just like paid staff are allowed to review their employee records.

Volunteer service records shall be maintained in printed or digital format.

Documentation is retained as follows (this retention policy applies to VHO's even if the close of their sub award occurs before the end of the ACL grant(s)):

- For applicants accepted into volunteer service: the Volunteer's service record is retained for a minimum of three years after the close of the grant in which the Volunteer served if they are no longer with the Program.
- For applicants not accepted into service: Screening documentation is retained for a minimum of six months after the applicant has been notified of the non-acceptance of their offer of involvement.
- For applicants who never complete initial screening: applications are maintained for six months.

Role Design/Descriptions

Prior to any recruitment effort or Volunteer assignment, a role description is developed for each volunteer position. ADSD may provide role descriptions for some ants. All role descriptions include, but may not be limited to the following:

- purpose of the role
- role duties
- designated supervisor
- service site location(s)
- time frame for the performance of the service along with service schedule
- qualifications
- benefits of the role to volunteers
- measures
- limitations

Volunteer roles add value to Program services. A written role description helps ensure Volunteers understand their role and its responsibilities before they agree to volunteer. Volunteer role descriptions create the legal basis to screen volunteers for suitability for specific roles and form the basis of the volunteer performance management system.

Recruitment

After volunteer roles are established, the next step is recruitment. Recruitment of volunteers always involves designing a plan to bring volunteers into an organization. Volunteer opportunities should be publicized broadly, and through a variety of methods, so that no group of people is excluded because of limited access to information. VHOs will strive to develop a volunteer population that mirrors the diversity of the community in which it operates. Indications of diversity may be obtained from data reflected in the most recent census.

Volunteers serve for various reasons for both the short-term and the long-term so, volunteer recruitment should be an ongoing process toward maintaining, broadening, and extending the Program services to Consumers.

When a potential volunteer has expressed interest in volunteering but has not yet been recruited into a role, the VHO staff should follow up with the individual on regular basis, until the prospect has been recruited into a volunteer position or has indicated they are no longer interested in volunteering. The VHO staff should make every reasonable effort to keep interested prospective volunteers engaged, until they are recruited into the program of their choice.

On an ongoing basis, designated VHO staff should respond to volunteer inquiries made during the week. It may be helpful for designated VHO staff to schedule time to follow up with inquiries on their calendar. Once confirmation of a role within the VHO is made, follow a standard volunteer recruitment procedure.

Responses to individuals who express interest in a Volunteer Program should be timely. A response protocol should exist to prevent undue delays and ensure that prospective Volunteers receive a welcoming and effective recruitment message.

A wait list of individuals who are at various levels of the recruitment process should be created and maintained in a volunteer management database or tracking system. Individuals should be scheduled for follow-up, until the relevant steps in the recruitment process are complete. Every effort should be made to keep the new recruits and interested prospective volunteers engaged.

In some cases, there will be existing databases that must be maintained by the Program which contains Volunteer demographics but may not be sufficient for initial tracking for recruitment. i.e., SMP Information and Tracking System (SIRS) for SMP and SHIP Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) for SHIP.

Databases are available for volunteer management. This can help with tracking all phases of the volunteer program from recruitment to retirement. It can also help keep track of volunteer hours and be used for information related to retention and recognition. Using a volunteer database is not required however, information that may be needed by the Program may be more easily assessed from a database.

Screening

Volunteer screening is a critical component of both human resources management and risk management. The goal is to maintain a safe and productive service environment with honest, trustworthy, reliable, and qualified volunteers who do not present a risk of harm to themselves, other persons, or the reputation of the Program, VHO, or ADSD.

Volunteers may be exposed to sensitive Consumer data. It is very important to scrutinize and follow a screening process for potential volunteers. The screening process can simplify the placement of volunteers and help ensure that the best and most appropriate volunteer candidate is in each position.

Screening processes should be clear and comprehensive, and standards are never waived, including for persons known to the screener. Equity and human rights compliance is expected in the screening process. Although screening processes may vary by role, applicants for any given role are screened in the same way as all other applicants for the same role.

Prospective volunteers are notified early in the application process about the range of screening inquiries and projected timelines. No screening inquiry is undertaken without the prior knowledge and permission of the applicant.

Acceptance as a volunteer is not automatic. The right not to accept an applicant is based on an objective and equitable assessment of their suitability. Not all people are suited to all roles. Screening and placement decisions must focus solely on the suitability of the Volunteer and their ability to perform the assignment and meet performance standards.

Screening and Application Forms - Standardizing the application form not only ensures that all applicants are treated in the same way, but it also ensures that complete and uniform information is collected on all applicants. Some ADSD Programs will provide the application form requesting pertinent information from the applicant. Check with your ADSD program contact.

Interviews – An interview determines the applicant’s qualifications and commitment to fulfill the requirements of the role and provide ample opportunity for interviewees to ask questions about the Program, Volunteer duties, and gain any other information they may need to make an informed decision about volunteering with the Program. To maintain consistency and equity during the interview process, standardized interview questions should be asked.

During the interview, questions asked should be directly related to the prospect’s ability to perform the Volunteer position. It is also important to avoid asking any questions related to age, birthplace, height and weight, marital status, national origin, arrest record, race, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Reference Checks –A reference check is not required for all Programs. Check with your ADSD Program Coordinator as needed.

Background and Criminal History Record Checks - All Volunteers must undergo background and criminal history record checks. Background checks may include, but not be limited to verifying:

1. identity
2. volunteer history and experience
3. employment history and experience
4. education
5. social security number

In addition to background checks, state and nation-level criminal record checks are to be conducted.

There are many professional organizations that can perform these checks for the VHO.

ADSD Service Specifications – General Requirements: Employees and volunteers working in programs funded by ADSD must sign a Self-Declaration Regarding Criminal Conviction form, one year after the completed background check, and on an annual basis thereafter. *See ADSD Service Specification General Requirements for more information, exemptions to this requirement, and form.*

Conflict of Interest - Given the sensitive nature of many of the Volunteer Programs, the need for objectivity, and the ever-present possibility of fraud and abuse, even inside the Program, the screening of Volunteers must be done carefully to avoid a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest. Volunteers agree to not promote any personal or business interest while undertaking their volunteer assignment. One example of persons with an inherent conflict of interest in the MAP Program is anyone who is licensed and actively selling Medicare insurance.

Driver's License and Insurance Checks - All Volunteers whose responsibilities involve operation of a motor vehicle are required to sign a certification verifying they have a valid driver's license and automobile insurance.

Criminal records checks, driver's license checks, are time limited and reconfirming these screening is important to the safety of the Program.

Once the screening process has been thoroughly completed, the VHO should inform the recruit of their acceptance and have the recruit complete and sign a volunteer agreement. The volunteer agreement should include information regarding expected service hours, attendance at trainings and meetings; as well as other requirements of the VHO and ADSD Program.

Screening some Volunteers to a newly created standard and allowing Volunteers – those who are already in the Program – to not meet those new standards is ethically questionable and legally difficult to defend. Double standards can also set up animosity between new and

current volunteers because the former would now be subjected to a more rigorous process than the latter. New screening standards must be applied to existing Volunteers as well as the new.

Placement

Most people can be induced to volunteer for anything for a short period of time but if Volunteers are to serve for longer periods, they need to be assigned services that motivate them. This requires understanding the interests and capabilities of the Volunteer, matching them with a role that suits them, and supportive paid staff. Placements are not to be made unless the requirements of the Volunteer, the role requirements, and the supervising staff can be met.

Orientation

Volunteers perform better when given a sense of context regarding the system within which they will be serving. This includes understanding the overall mission of the Program, the system through which the Program provides services to the community, and the nature of the role they will be performing.

New Volunteers also need an orientation about the VHO, including everything from where to hang their coat and get a cup of coffee to where they will serve, the workplace climate, and how people relate to one another. Providing this context will prevent unfortunate misunderstandings and inadvertent mistakes by Volunteers. It also makes them feel wanted and part of the team.

Orienting Volunteers as part of the team within the VHO will be a key aspect in their commitment and retention and improve the quality of their service.

Orientation on topics include, but are not limited to:

- the purpose and values of the VHO and the Program
- the nature and operation of the VHO and the activity they have been recruited into
- the purpose, duties, and requirements of the role that they are accepting
- the importance of understanding of and compliance with the VRPM and VHO policies and procedures

It is recommended that each Volunteer be provided with a written resource guide such as a volunteer handbook. The handbook is outlined to include the background and history of the VHO and Volunteer Program, an organizational chart, and information on the facilities and organizational protocols. The volunteer handbook will be amongst other documentation included in the orientation packet; and in reviewing the volunteer handbook with volunteers, there should be emphasis on what their responsibilities will be. Orientation is a good time to introduce Volunteers to the organization's staff and provide a tour of the facility.

Training

Volunteer training is essential to effective service delivery, and both the Program and Volunteer have the right to ensure that training leads to satisfactory Volunteer performance.

Minimum initial and ongoing Volunteer training requirements are established by the Program and involve the delivery of a volunteer training program tailored to specific Volunteer roles. Volunteers must fulfill mandatory training requirements before any service is assigned.

Classroom (in-person and virtual), as well as on-the-job training, are regular elements of volunteer management. Initial and ongoing training occurs to ensure that Volunteers know and understand their role in the VHO, as well as how to perform their roles, within the context of the Volunteer Program. Training should also include instruction and appropriate responses concerning potential risks of hazardous aspects, materials, equipment, or processes the Volunteer may encounter while performing their role; as well as training necessary to operate volunteer service-related materials and equipment.

Training is a form of retention and recognition and helps keep a Volunteer motivated and committed to the VHO and the Program. If a Volunteer has a specific strength or skill, seek to engage them in the Volunteer Program in that capacity. For example, if a Volunteer is friendly and a good communicator, it might be wise to offer them a position in which they can exercise their people skills, such as by participating in outreach events. If a Volunteer expresses interest in a specific role that they are not experienced in, seek to provide additional knowledge and the tools to equip them to perform it.

Credit for Related Training - At the discretion of the VHO and the Program, credit may be given for training received from another organization that corresponds with training provided in the Volunteer Program. However, any recommendations and modifications to Volunteer Program training must be approved by ADSD.

Demonstrating Qualifications - Many volunteer roles depend upon Volunteers having a high degree of knowledge of complex subjects. Provision of accurate and current knowledge is an essential element of Program service delivery. Volunteers are assessed on their knowledge, skill, and ability to perform their role to the minimum requirements determined by ADSD, the Volunteer Program and the VHO. Successful completion of training may include, but not limited to, verification of attendance, written (or virtual) testing, and coaching or shadowing sessions to confirm an understanding of materials.

Hands-on Training - Volunteers receive specific hands-on training which provides the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer role. The timing and methods for delivery of training are appropriate to the complexity of the training, the demands of the role, and the capabilities of the Volunteer.

Paid Staff Involvement in Orientation and Training - Paid staff possess essential knowledge and techniques connected to effective performance of volunteer roles.

Accordingly, ADSD and VHO staff with responsibility for service delivery should be involved in both designing and delivering volunteer training.

Volunteer Involvement in Orientation and Training - Volunteer involvement creates a heightened sense of being part of a team and offers the Program an opportunity to both benefit from and honor the contributions of experienced Volunteers.

Continuing Education - As with paid staff, improvement of volunteer skill levels during their terms of service is encouraged. Training updates and recertification training (where required) are administered by the VHO, based on ADSD guidelines. Any continuing education requirements must be met for Volunteers to continue serving in their role.

Performance Management

A key principle of volunteer program management is to support volunteers to be successful in their roles. Performance management provides a wide range of support and intervention techniques for supervisors to encourage and enable productive and satisfying volunteer involvement, and to help volunteers adjust performance when necessary to meet performance standards and achieve role outcomes. The performance management system includes three primary components: **supervision, performance evaluation, and corrective action.**

Volunteer presentation and performance should reflect positively on the Program and VHO, enhancing their integrity, reputation, and credibility.

Boundary breaches can be a very serious matter. Volunteers need to know what kinds of actions and behaviors are outside their assigned role. Boundaries are communicated through a range of mechanisms including, but not limited to, role descriptions, performance standards, orientation, training, on-the-job training, ongoing training, volunteer supervision and support, performance evaluation, and, as needed, corrective action.

It is the Volunteer's responsibility to seek clarification about Policies, as needed. Not understanding a Policy is not acceptable grounds for failure to comply.

Matters not specifically covered in the VRPM are determined by the Program Director/Manager/Supervisor, coordinator of volunteers, or VHO designee.

Failure or refusal by a Volunteer to accept supervision and/or to integrate the direction of the supervisor into his or her volunteer service performance is grounds for corrective action up to and including dismissal.

Supervision – Supervision allows the all-important early intervention to prevent more serious performance issues. As personnel working on behalf of the Program, Volunteers are a critical part of the team and services provided. Accordingly, the Program has an obligation to ensure that the performance and behavior of Volunteers best serves the

Program and does not diminish its ability to deliver the very best services possible to the community. The Program has both the right and the obligation to provide supervision and support, to manage the service done by Volunteers and to determine the nature and extent of supervisory guidance provided to Volunteers. Therefore, each Volunteer accepted into a service role has an identified supervisor who is responsible for direct supervision and support of that Volunteer. This supervision is the day-to-day feedback and reward process that helps Volunteers understand expectations and standards to achieve them. This approach has both reward and corrective components, but all of these are focused on assisting the Volunteer in meeting standards and delivering a consistent level of quality service. It is very much a success-driven rather than failure-driven system.

Many performance management issues are the result of miscommunication and bad information. This is unfortunately a common situation among Volunteers who are dispersed through the community. Therefore, it is important that Volunteers receive all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their role assignments. Accordingly, Volunteers are included in and have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials, meetings, and Consumer records relevant to service assignments. Lines of communication operate in both directions and exist both formally and informally.

Performance Evaluation - It is impossible to achieve success without monitoring performance and behavior against established and communicated standards. Written documentation of Volunteer performance evaluations is essential, both to allow a historical record that can be invaluable to a newly assigned supervisor of a Volunteer and to demonstrate and justify appropriate supervisory and corrective actions in the event of legal action.

Feedback is an integral part of the evaluation process where the Volunteer's performance is reviewed, and the results are shared with them. Conversely, it is an opportunity for the Volunteer to give feedback to the VHO.

Evaluation can range from informal conversations to annual formal written reviews that become part of the Volunteer's service record.

Progressive Corrective Action - Managing volunteer performance will occasionally require attempts to get a Volunteer to modify his or her behavior. Volunteer performance issues may range from relatively minor infractions to major misconduct. They may be inadvertent errors or intentional or even criminal actions. Given this range of extent and cause, an effective correction action system must include a range of intervention strategies from informal to formal procedures. Continuation or repetition of a behavior a Volunteer has already been asked to correct is not acceptable and needs to be communicated clearly to the Volunteer. When corrective action is necessary, it is positive, constructive, and success-oriented, designed to help Volunteers whose performance and/or behavior is not meeting expectations.

When Volunteers demonstrate a consistent unwillingness or inability to meet expectations regarding performance and behavior, then the Program has both the right and obligation to terminate their involvement as a Volunteer. Establishing specific grounds for dismissal makes it more likely that Volunteers will be aware of the seriousness of some forms of misconduct and that staff will consistently apply corrective actions procedures.

- Grounds for Dismissal – Below is a list of acts by Volunteers that may result in dismissal of volunteer service. However, the list is not intended to be complete or comprehensive, as individual situations can vary. VHO staff should use discretion and good judgment in all decisions regarding possible volunteer dismissal.
 - gross misconduct
 - serious misjudgment that may undermine the Program’s trust in the Volunteer, cause harm to others, or diminish public trust in the Program
 - insubordination including failure or unwillingness to perform essential role responsibilities and/or accept direction from authorized Program supervisory personnel
 - being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on Volunteer duty or representing the Program
 - dishonesty, theft, or other illegal acts
 - loss of certification or qualification required to perform assigned duties
 - unauthorized use or misuse of Program equipment or materials
 - harm, abuse or mistreatment of beneficiaries, co-workers, or other persons
 - sexual harassment
 - serious and repeated failure to abide by Program policies and procedures
 - failure to meet physical, cognitive, or emotional standards of performance
 - repeated failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties
 - irresolvable conflict of interest
 - serious breach of boundaries

- Grounds for Immediate Dismissal – There are some behaviors that are so unacceptable that they are simply not tolerated by the Volunteer Program. These behaviors trigger immediate dismissal of Volunteers. When there is no doubt that the unacceptable behavior has taken place, the Volunteer is immediately relieved of their duties.

Following is a sample list of possible grounds for immediate dismissal of Volunteers. This list is for illustration purposes and is not intended to be complete or comprehensive:

- fraud, theft, or abuse in connection with Program service

- serious illegal act
- gross negligence causing bodily harm in connection with Volunteer service
- breach of confidentiality
- reporting for Volunteer service in an impaired condition resulting from the use of alcohol or drugs
- violence in the workplace

When a Volunteer departs from the VHO Program, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, a written notice should be sent to the ADSD Program Coordinator of the VHO subaward as well as any Consumer or VHO Staff (paid and unpaid) that may be affected.

Volunteer Behavior, Performance, and Roles

The Policies guide and direct the work and behavior of Volunteers. They apply equally to all Volunteers, and compliance with these Policies is a condition of continued Volunteer involvement in the any Volunteer Program.

Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the Volunteer Program only as clearly and specifically prescribed by their role descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications. Volunteers are not spokespersons for ADSD or any service area within the Volunteer Program in any formal sense and will not represent themselves as such. VHO may determine their own policies in this regard.

Prohibited actions in this regard include, but are not limited to:

- public statements that might in any way be construed as originating from or representing the respective Volunteer Program
- statements to the press regarding anything pertaining to the Volunteer Program or ADSD or the Volunteer's service with the Program
- lobbying efforts with other organizations, governments, or other entities
- collaborations or joint initiatives not clearly authorized in advance by the Volunteer Program
- any agreements, undertakings, or contractual obligations on behalf of the State of Nevada, ADSD or the Program
- online statements in social media or other forums that might be construed as officially representing the State of Nevada, ADSD or the Volunteer Program

Use of ADSD, VHO and Volunteer Program Affiliation - Volunteers may not use their affiliation with ADSD, VHO, or the Volunteer Program in connection with partisan politics, religious matters, business dealings, or community issues. Volunteers do not sell, recommend, or endorse any specific insurance or medical product, agent, or company, or promote religious or political beliefs, perspectives, or practice.

Confidentiality - Confidentiality related to the Program service delivery is a matter of highest importance. Even small breaches may cause harm to Consumer and/or to other persons and are subject to serious consequences up to and including dismissal.

While volunteering for the Program, Volunteers may become aware of private information about Consumers. This may be health/Medicare related or information of an otherwise personal nature. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a Volunteer, whether this information involves a member of staff, a Volunteer, a Consumer, or other person, or involves the overall business of ADSD or the Volunteer Program.

Volunteers take all steps necessary to safeguard the confidentiality of all Program and Consumer related information and to prevent personal information of Consumers from falling into the possession of unauthorized persons. Volunteers use any information collected or obtained in their course of their service only to assist the Consumer or otherwise fulfill volunteer role responsibilities. No information collected or obtained during volunteer service is disclosed other than when clearly approved by an authorized Program representative.

There is zero tolerance for breaches of confidentiality in connection with Volunteer Program services. Volunteers are required to follow the Department of Health and Human Services Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) confidentiality procedures and any additional procedures required by the VHO.

Dress Code - The Program will be judged by the Consumers in part by the appearance and demeanor of the Volunteers who act on its behalf. Accordingly, Volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that best represents the Program, including maintaining appropriate dress for the conditions and performance of their volunteer roles.

Recording of Volunteer Time and Activity - Most of the service areas in the Volunteer Program are accountable to Federal Grants for time and activities provided by Volunteers. MAP requires Volunteer time and activities entered in the STARS and SIRS databases provided by the Federal programs.

Harassment - ADSD and the Volunteer Program are committed to providing a safe and respectful service environment for all Volunteers, staff and Consumers. No one must put up with harassment for any reason, at any time. No one has the right to harass anyone else, at any service site or in any situation related to the Volunteer Program and its services. ADSD and the Volunteer Program treat all complaints of harassment seriously, whether they are made informally or formally. Action is taken on all complaints to ensure that they are resolved quickly, confidentially, and fairly. Corrective action will be taken with anyone who has harassed a person or group of people.

All Volunteer Program staff have a responsibility to stop harassment. Everything is done to stop it as soon as it is detected whether a complaint has been made or not. Appropriate corrective action measures are taken where harassment has occurred.

Drugs and Alcohol - Volunteers reporting for duty are expected to be able to perform assigned duties safely and responsibly without any limitations due to the use or after-effects of alcohol, illicit drugs, non-prescription drugs, prescribed medications, or any other substance. The State of Nevada and the Volunteer Program operate a service environment that is free of alcohol and drug use/abuse. This is a zero-tolerance policy. Non-compliance is grounds for immediate dismissal.

The possession, consumption, manufacture, and/or distribution of alcohol or illicit drugs, or the misuse of prescription or "over the counter" drugs is prohibited on State premises or service sites, or in circumstances deemed by the State to present a serious risk to the reputation or interest of the Volunteer Program in terms of Volunteers, staff, Consumers or public safety, service quality, or VHO. These prohibitions include while the Volunteer is on duty, while operating a vehicle on duty or while driving to or from a Volunteer Program service site.

Volunteers taking legal medication, whether or not prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner, that affects or impairs judgment, coordination, or perception to adversely affect ability to perform service in a safe and productive manner, should consult with their supervisor prior to engaging in volunteer service.

A safe and productive alcohol and drug free workplace is achieved through cooperation and shared responsibility. Both Volunteers and VHO have important roles to play. A Volunteer's responsibilities include:

- Maintaining a safe, secure, and productive environment for himself/herself, other employees and Volunteers, Consumers, and the public
- Reporting dangerous behavior to his/her supervisor
- Informing his/her VHO in writing within five days after conviction for violation of any federal or State criminal drug statute when such violation occurred while on duty
- Notifying his/her supervisor as soon as possible after consuming any drug, which could interfere with the safe and efficient performance of his/her duties

Acceptance of gifts and honoraria - It is not appropriate for Volunteers to benefit materially from their services. Acceptance of personal gifts by Volunteers is prohibited to prevent, and prevent the perception of, exploitation of Consumers and their families and caregivers and to protect both the reputation of the Program and its Volunteers from accusations of favoritism or personal gain. It is understandable that some Consumers and those who care for them wish to express their thankfulness through gifts to the people who have been so helpful; however, the Program provides services to Consumers without compensation. Any such offerings are respectfully and tactfully declined, citing, as needed, this policy as the basis for their action.

Exemptions as follows:

- When gifts are offered as part of cultural etiquette.

- Meals provided during events are not considered gifts for the purposes of this policy.
- Small or token gift where the nominal value received by any one person is under \$15.00.
- Accepted on behalf of the Program and shared with Volunteers.

Relationships with Consumers - It is appropriate to be friendly, courteous, and caring but it is not appropriate to become friends with Consumers, their family members or others connected to the delivery of service. Friendships with Consumers can lead to unclear boundaries, inappropriate expectations, the appearance of favoritism or exploitation, and conflicts of interest. Volunteers should not enter into financial transactions with Consumers, their family members or caregivers, either lending or borrowing in either direction.

Political Issues - The Volunteer Program is nonpartisan in its operations and services. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining this nonpartisan stance while performing their services. Volunteers will not engage in political activities, campaigning or lobbying when representing the Volunteer Program. While serving, Volunteers do not:

- publicly express their personal opinions regarding political issues
- display or distribute political signs or materials either on their person or at their assigned site
- solicit or accept contributions for political purposes

Note: This policy clarifies the boundaries of the roles of a Volunteer. It does not prohibit any of the activities listed above as an individual.

Cultural Sensitivity - The level of cultural awareness in the Program directly affects both the quality of service with Consumers and the effectiveness of the Program in serving the community. The Program must be, and must be perceived to be, a respectful member of the communities it serves. This requires Volunteers to be knowledgeable regarding different cultures and to always strive to show respect for these cultures. VHOs train Volunteers in the norms of identified consumer groups/cultures. **Managing diversity** relates to valuing ethnic differences and managing prejudice and discrimination through teaching and education that reflects the nature and essence of the Volunteer Program. Managing diversity also involves a grievance process that will address and resolve complaints of all occurrences of prejudice and discrimination. Volunteers should be trained in and demonstrate respect and sensitivity to the norms, traditions, lifestyles, and beliefs of identified Consumer groups and cultures. Because excellent communication is a key to success in most volunteer roles, Volunteers should have the ability to communicate effectively with Consumers and participants from diverse populations.

Retention and Recognition

The VHO will establish a system for recognizing and rewarding the service done by Volunteers both individually and collectively.

While recognition is not the sole factor in volunteer retention, it is an important one. In fact, for volunteers, recognition is the equivalent of a paycheck. Volunteers deserve appropriate praise and recognition for their service, delivered both formally and informally. A formal volunteer recognition system provides an official means for the Program to recognize the contribution of Volunteers.

Formal volunteer recognition systems are not as powerful as the day-to-day appreciation expressed by a Volunteer's team members and supervisor. This recognition will shape the experience of a Volunteer and can provide a powerful motivating force.

Retention - Keeping Volunteers interested, excited, and motivated about the Program is crucial to retaining them. Allowing for Volunteers to provide feedback about their participation and experience with the Volunteer Program (also see Performance Management, Evaluation of Volunteer Service above) is a good way to gauge how dedicated Volunteers are to a Volunteer Program. Understanding and responding to their feedback will be an important factor in retaining them. Retaining Volunteers can also be achieved when a VHO establishes an ongoing system of responding to Volunteer's questions, concerns and needs. Also see Section III Resources - Respond to Volunteer Questions, Concerns, and Needs.

Recognition - Recognition is defined and used in many ways, but in the case of Volunteers, it is to acknowledge an achievement, service, merit, etc. VHOs should have a system for recognizing and rewarding the work done by Volunteers both individually and collectively. This system, including criteria, timing, and process, is explained to all Volunteers upon acceptance into service. A system for recognition is broadly constructed to allow recognition of all forms of Volunteer contribution and achievement, not just quantity of Volunteer time donated. Staff and Volunteers are consulted to identify those deserving of any special recognition or awards. (See Section III Resources for recognition ideas.)

Volunteer/Paid Staff Relationships

The effectiveness of the Volunteer Program is dependent upon support and cooperation of every member of the paid staff. A VHO can either train its staff in volunteer management or hire new staff based on their previous experience in working with volunteers. Hiring experienced staff is often cheaper and more expedient.

Volunteers and paid staff are partners in implementing the mission and services of the Volunteer Program, with each having an equal, but complementary role to play. Each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other. Paid staff, whether employee or contract staff, who have responsibility for supervising Volunteers have this responsibility clearly identified in their role description.

Information Technology

Information Procedures and Protocols – Having an information management protocol ensures the safe handling, transmission, and storage of Consumers' sensitive personal identifying information and protected personal and health information. While conducting Volunteer Program services, Volunteers may gain access to Medicare numbers, Social Security numbers, birth dates, medical records, and financial information in combination with names, addresses, telephone numbers, and other sensitive information.

The main reason for having an internet protocol is to ensure the safe electronic transmission of consumers' sensitive personal identifying information and protected personal and health information between Volunteers, Consumers, and other Program staff. Other reasons for establishing an Internet protocol are to:

- Raise awareness among Volunteers and paid staff of their roles in protecting the privacy of Program consumers through appropriate use of the Internet.
- Prevent identity theft that can result from information security breaches using spyware and hacking.
- Prevent breaches that could expose the VHO, ADSD or Program to fines for violating federal and state privacy protection laws or to lawsuits for failure to properly safeguard protected information.

No matter how diligent Volunteers may be, there remains a possibility that data will be misplaced or stolen. Common consideration, along with privacy protection and security breach laws, require VHOs to promptly notify persons whose protected personal information has been stolen or lost as well as ADSD. This enables the affected person to act as appropriate to mitigate the loss. Another reason to notify affected persons is to rebuild trust through transparency.

Section III - Resources

Recruitment

The following are recruitment methods that can be used to bring Volunteers into your organization:

1. Volunteermatch.org

This website can be an excellent resource for recruiting and communicating with potential volunteers. Volunteermatch.org is a fee-based service, which costs \$99 annually.

Payment of Subscription

The premium subscription is paid annually.

Guides and tools to learn to use VolunteerMatch effectively are available here:

<https://vmhelp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/201877757>

2. AARP Create the Good

This is a free site that can be used to promote volunteer opportunities.

3. Justserve

This website is administered by the LDS church to involve more of their members in service.

4. Allthegood

A website sponsored by Points of Light organization to promote volunteer opportunities.

5. United Way of Southern Nevada

United Way of Southern Nevada operates a website that will promote volunteer opportunities and community events. Register at:
http://www.volunteercentersn.org/About_Partnership/index.html

6. OLLI – Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

OLLI chapters operate both out of University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) and University of Nevada Reno (UNR). OLLI offers courses to semi-retired or retired adults who are attracted to the joys of life-long learning, on a variety of topics. OLLIs are located on the campuses of more than 120 colleges and universities in the US; and offers non-credit courses and activities tailored for adults, age 50 or older. Email the contact person and ask that they share volunteer opportunities with their members as it is not unusual for OLLI members to also be seeking volunteer opportunities.

UNLV – OLLI contact info

Website: <https://olli.unlv.edu/>

UNR – OLLI contact info
Website: <http://www.oli.unr.edu/>

7. Community Calendars

Many local television stations have free community calendars that will post volunteer opportunities and events.

8. Email Blast

Periodically email a flier, brochure, or announcement for upcoming volunteer opportunities. Often, timing is important when recruiting volunteers and a “no” today, may be a “yes” tomorrow. Email individuals who did not follow through on an inquiry to a volunteer opportunity until they indicate they are no longer interested in volunteering. Emailing various professional societies and faith-based organizations, etc., can also be useful for finding volunteers.

9. Exhibits/Health Fairs

Volunteers attending community events and health fairs should include for display, brochures and fliers that describe volunteer programs and opportunities. Additionally, volunteers will have a contact form available to collect contact information from individuals who are interested in the Volunteer Program. Volunteers will in turn, share contact information with the respective VHO staff. VHO staff are encouraged to reach out to individuals who inquire about volunteering by phone or email on the next business day.

10. Volunteer Information Session (VIS)

A Volunteer Information Session (VIS) can be scheduled by VHO staff to give potential volunteers a view of the program(s). A VIS outlines information about the Program, the VHO, training requirements, benefits of being a volunteer, etc. A VIS can be enhanced with the use of a PowerPoint presentation, and videos that provides visuals of volunteer opportunities and benefits.

11. Taproot+

This website is helpful to recruit for skills-based volunteers, technology professionals. If there is a need for a specific skill, post a notice on Taproot+ and they will promote it to find volunteers who seek to share their time and skills, on a pro-bono basis.

12. Community Outreach

Local libraries, community centers and residential areas, etc. typically have designated space for fliers and brochures that announce community events. This can include information on volunteer opportunities and upcoming VISs. A stack of fliers and brochures should be taken to these locations at least once every five to six weeks.

Retention/Recognition

One of the most important ways to recognize the volunteer is to treat them with respect and give them support and praise throughout the year. With creativity and effort, there are a variety of ways to celebrate volunteers without slashing into your budget, here are a few:

- Get name badges for the volunteers
- Select “Volunteer of the Month” and post his/her story on your website or in your newsletter
- Saying “Thank you” often
- Celebrating Volunteer Day (April timeframe) – have a luncheon, ice cream social, or potluck
- Small tokens of gift cards, movie passes, etc.
- Share your success with volunteers. They like knowing how their time has made an impact on the business, project, or meeting a goal (i.e., raised \$10,000 during an event).
- Nominations for local, state, and national awards
- Personal notes and verbal greetings from a supervisor and peers
- Annual events (i.e., luncheons, dinners, and award ceremonies)
- National Volunteer Week events – this week is set aside to honor people who donate their time and energy to various organizations and causes. This is an opportunity for you to use this week as a special time to recognize your volunteers.
- Special celebrations – recognize birthdays, milestones and holidays

A simple, yet effective practice for volunteer recognition is “*A Round of Applause.*” This simple volunteer recognition activity can be used to acknowledge volunteer support on an ongoing basis. Take a piece of paper in the shape of a small circle with an encouraging photo and list “Date, To, From, and Why.” Anytime you want to say thank you to a volunteer, give them a “*round.*” After the volunteer collects five (5) of them, give them the opportunity to turn them in for a prize. You can get small prizes such as donated gift cards, gas cards, etc.

Best Practices for Volunteer Recognition

- *Make It A Priority.* Recognizing the work of volunteers is crucial for any organization that wants to retain its volunteers and attract new ones. Designate someone in your organization to be responsible for ensuring that ongoing recognition of volunteers takes place.
- *Do It Often.* Recognition of volunteers should happen on a year-round, frequent, formal, and informal basis. Begin by saying “*thank you*” often!
- *Do It in Different Ways.* Vary your recognition efforts, from the informal thank you and spontaneous treats to more formal events. Here are some examples:
 - Give them the bigger picture: One way to thank volunteers is to give them perspective about what they’re doing. No matter what they’re doing, let your volunteer know the larger context – not just what they’re doing, but why

they're doing it – and you'll show that you respect them and appreciate their work.³

- Provide food for your volunteers when they work.
- Check-in with your volunteers regularly.
- Feature volunteer stories on your blog/website.
- Provide volunteer awards.
- Give your volunteers small tokens of gratitude.
- Send your volunteers a simple, handwritten thank-you card.
- *Be Sincere.* Make each occasion to recognize volunteers meaningful and an opportunity to reflect on the value volunteers bring to your organization.
- *Recognize the Person, Not the Work.* It's best to phrase recognition to emphasize the contribution of the individual and not the result. “*You did a great job!*” as opposed to “*This is a great job!*”
- *Make It Appropriate to the Achievement.* For example, a paper certificate accompanied by a private thank you may be appropriate for a few months of service, but a public dinner and engraved plaque may better suit 10 years of volunteerism.
- *Be Consistent.* Make sure that whatever standards of recognition you establish can be consistently maintained by your organization in years to come. Holding a volunteer recognition dinner one year sets up expectations for future volunteers.
- *Be Timely.* Try to arrange recognition soon after an achievement has been reached – delaying until weeks or months later diminishes the value of your gratitude.
- *Customize It.* Getting to know each of your volunteers and their interests will help you learn how best to recognize each individual and make him/her feel special.

Saying “*Thank you*” can bring results that are pure magic, and every volunteer will appreciate the message from your organization. The volunteer will feel completely satisfied that their time donated is not wasted and will make them feel fulfilled.

See suggested awards program on next page.

³ <http://blogs.volunteermatch.org/engagingvolunteers/2012/04/05/7-ways-to-appreciate-your-volunteers/>

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Award Sponsor & Award	Criteria	Deadline
<p>AARP Andrus Award for Community Service https://www.aarp.org/giving-back/volunteering/info-02-2011/aarp_andrus_nominations.html</p>	<p>AARP’s most-prestigious volunteer tribute recognizes outstanding individuals who are sharing their experience, talents, and skills to enrich the lives of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominee must be at least 50 years old • The achievements, accomplishments or service on which the nomination is based must have been performed on a volunteer basis, without pay • The achievements, accomplishments or service on which the nomination is based must reflect AARP’s vision and mission • Couples or partners who perform service together are also eligible; however, teams are not eligible • The recipient must live in the awarding state • This is not a posthumous award 	<p>July 15 deadline</p>
<p>America First Credit Union Give Back https://www.ktnv.com/morning-blend/give-back</p>	<p>Nominate a Southern Nevada volunteer who endlessly gives back to our community without expecting anything in return. Each month one nominee is selected to appear on a segment with The Morning Blend hosts, as well as an America First Credit Union representative, to share his or her story and officially accept a \$500 cash prize from America First for community service. Write a paragraph describing how they "give back" to our community. Be specific and provide 3-4 sentences and examples.</p>	<p>No deadline</p>
<p>My Voice Matters /Consumer Voice Leadership Awards https://theconsumervoice.org/</p>	<p>Nominate an exceptional commitment to improving the lives of long-term care consumers. Individuals that are dedicated to quality long-term care, raising the voice of consumers, and have made significant contributions to improving the lives of long-term care consumers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and contact information of person being nominated (name, address, phone, email) • Your contact information (name, address, phone number, email) • Narrative explaining why you are nominating this individual (approximately 500-word limit) <p>One-paragraph description that summarizes the qualities and achievements of the nominee. This summary will be used in Consumer Voice announcements regarding the award. At least one letter of recommendation, from someone other than the nominator, needs to be submitted per nomination. Letters should be no more than one page each, legibly hand-written or, preferably typed. Also, nominators may submit additional information to support their nomination (e.g., newspaper articles, magazine articles, photos, videos).</p>	<p>May not be still available. Awarded at Annual Conference in November. Check out website closer to event to see if nomination forms available.</p>

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Award Sponsor & Award	Criteria	Deadline
	<p>Please send the letter of recommendation and other materials via email to info@theconsumervoice.org or by mail to: National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care Attn: Awards Committee 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Ste. 632 Washington, DC 20036</p>	
<p>Nevada Volunteers Points of Lights Awards https://nevadavolunteers.org/gpol/</p>	<p>The Governor’s Points of Light Award categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Volunteer • Individual Youth Volunteer • National Service Member of the Year • Nonprofit/Community Organization Volunteer Program • Business/Corporate Volunteer Program • Community Leadership Award • Lifetime Achievement Award <p>The Governor’s Points of Light finalists are selected by a panel of judges. Finalists show achievement through voluntary service in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence in Volunteerism: Excellence in volunteerism/service is an individual or group that is passionate about the organization’s mission and consistently strives to improve how they serve. • Commitment: Commitment is dedication to advancing a community or cause. • Impact: Impact is defined as nominees who, through their volunteerism/service, achieve results that are evident and advance a cause or improve a community. • Use of Resources: Maximization of the tools and funds available in order to increase reach and/or impact of service. • Longevity: Longevity is defined as the endurance of a volunteer who has an inherent ethic of service and desire to improve their community through lifelong volunteerism. • Inspiration: Inspiration is a lifelong volunteer who inspires others to serve and make a difference in their community/cause. 	<p>Deadline has varied.</p>

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Award Sponsor & Award	Criteria	Deadline
<p>Nevada Volunteers Volunteer Recognition Certificate https://nevadavolunteers.org/governors-certificate/</p>	<p>Nominations for the Governor’s Volunteer Recognition Certificate include one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed over 200 hours of service in a calendar year, representing exceptional service that surpassed expectations; • Provided a skilled or pro bono service that increased the capacity or stability of the organization by \$10,000 or more; • Demonstrated reliability and commitment in continual direct volunteer service for a period of two or more years; and/or • Taken on a significant leadership role resulting in a new or enhanced program, an innovative way of meeting organizational needs, or has addressed a need that was not previously met. • Youth Volunteer (18 years or younger) has performed over 100 hours of service in a one-year period, representing exceptional service that surpassed expectations. 	<p>Nominations need to be submitted 4 weeks in advance of when the award will be presented.</p>
<p>National Volunteer Week Generally, the third week of April</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate with a special event for volunteers 	<p>1st week of April</p> <p>Submit the proclamation to the Governor by March 1</p>
<p>Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division Senior Samaritan Awards http://adsd.nv.gov/About/Awards/Awards/Recognitions/</p>	<p>Recognizes seniors who have volunteered for organizations or programs, contributing their time and talents to the community. Awards are printed on special parchment paper and are signed by the Governor of the State of Nevada. Senior Samaritans can only receive this award one time.</p>	
<p>Presidential Service Awards https://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/</p>	<p>The President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) is the premier volunteer awards program, encouraging citizens to live a life of service through presidential gratitude and national recognition. Volunteers who meet criteria and hours are recognized.</p> <p>Award Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipient(s) must be a United States citizen or a lawfully admitted permanent resident of the United States. • Awards are issued for service hours served within a 12-month time period or over the course of a lifetime. 	<p>Can be submitted at any time</p>

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Award Sponsor & Award	Criteria	Deadline												
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awards are issued for volunteer service only; additional levels of participation with the organization (i.e., charitable support) are not a factor considered for the award. Court-ordered community service does not qualify for the award. 													
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Hours by Award</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Bronze</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Silver</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Gold</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Young Adults (16-25)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100 – 174</td> <td style="text-align: center;">175 – 249</td> <td style="text-align: center;">250 +</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adults (26+)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100 – 249</td> <td style="text-align: center;">250 – 499</td> <td style="text-align: center;">500+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Hours by Award	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Young Adults (16-25)	100 – 174	175 – 249	250 +	Adults (26+)	100 – 249	250 – 499	500+	
Hours by Award	Bronze	Silver	Gold											
Young Adults (16-25)	100 – 174	175 – 249	250 +											
Adults (26+)	100 – 249	250 – 499	500+											
	Your organization must be certified – see website for instructions.													

Respond to Questions, Concerns, and Needs

While Volunteers are generally more focused on their role, it is important for them to understand how their role effects, and is impacted by factors surrounding them, such as changes that occur in the VHO and Volunteer Program, as these changes can directly, or indirectly impact their service. VHOs that encourage feedback from Volunteers and keep Volunteers abreast of what is occurring, can enhance the production buy-in from Volunteers, towards their aims and best interests. Buy-in is enhanced with good two-way communication as Volunteers can express what is needed to perform their role more efficiently and effectively. Feedback from Volunteers also allows VHOs and Programs better understand and utilize the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their Volunteers. When Volunteers achieve buy-in to an organization’s aims and best interests, they will have a vested interest in how the organization functions, not as bystanders, but as co-members with the Program and the VHO itself. As such, it is important to keep Volunteers in the loop of what is going on in the organization. To do this, VHOs can do several things:

- Conduct weekly team briefings to report relevant changes; updates; and gauge Volunteer thoughts and experiences collectively, relative to their respective program, as well as their activities in the Program and the VHO
- Display a feedback box to collect anonymous feedback
- Encourage and quickly respond to Volunteer questions
- Assess what is needed for Volunteers to perform their roles optimally and make efforts to accommodate them
- Thoughtfully address the collective concerns of Volunteers
- Compile and disseminate a list of FAQs and responses to anonymous feedback to all Volunteer staff

Other Resources

- ADSD Grant Management Webpage:
<https://adsd.nv.gov/Programs/Grant/Resources/>

ADSD Volunteer Management Program Guide for Volunteer Host Organizations

- SHIP TA Center: <https://shiptacenter.org>
- SMP Resource Library: <https://smpresource.org>
- VRPM Policies and Procedures Manual
- MAP Oversight Team – NevadaMap@adsd.nv.gov

For more information, contact your ADSD Program Coordinator or Grant Management Specialist.



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