

# RSVP of Lane County

## Ready-Set-Volunteer Program Handbook



RSVP of Lane County is a program of the National Senior Service Corps, a division of the Corporation for National and Community Service

*Locally sponsored by  
United Way of Lane County*



## **Welcome!**

Welcome to RSVP of Lane County. RSVP, a Ready Set Volunteer Program, will assist you in finding a meaningful and gratifying volunteer placement. This handbook serves as a guide to help you understand what RSVP is all about and how you can get involved!

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

Please take the time to read this handbook and feel free to contact the RSVP office with any questions or comments. We like to hear about your experiences, feel free to share your stories and pictures with us too.

## **History and Mission**

RSVP is an invitation to serve. It is a national program which began in 1972 under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act. Since 1993 the Corporation for National and Community Service has administered the program. RSVP has been available in Lane County since January 1987 and United Way of Lane County began sponsoring the program in January 2003.

It is designed to provide persons 55 and older the opportunity to remain actively involved in their community. The aim is to develop specific volunteer opportunities that utilize the particular skills and interests of each individual with an eye to what needs to get done in our community.

RSVP staff will get you started and ensures complete satisfaction with your assignment. If changes are needed to help you become more comfortable, or to enable you to upgrade your volunteer work allowing for greater personal growth, we are happy to assist you with this also.

## **RSVP Membership**

Anyone 55 and over with a desire to give volunteer service in any Lane County community is eligible to be an RSVP volunteer. There are no educational, income or experience requirements to be a volunteer. In addition, there are no dues or membership fees, and no meetings that you are required to attend.

## **Benefits of an RSVP Volunteer**

- Help setting up a personal interview with the volunteer station of your choice.
- On-going support and follow-up by your station Volunteer Coordinator.
- Accident, personal liability and excess automobile supplemental insurance while you volunteer at no charge to you.
- Invitation to an annual recognition event.
- Social interaction and a chance to meet new people.
- An opportunity to learn new skills.
- Quarterly email newsletters.
- Referral information.
- Training opportunities for your professional development.
- A myriad of volunteer opportunities, including one-time only.
- Flexibility to change your volunteer assignment.

## **Important Insurance Coverage Notice**

In order to minimize risks associated with volunteering, all organizations that utilize RSVP volunteers have signed an agreement to be an RSVP station. These agreements are kept on file in our office and are renewed every three years.

While volunteering at these designated stations your RSVP insurance, provided by United Way of Lane County, is in effect. At times, you may want to take on additional work at the placement site aside from your RSVP volunteer responsibilities. Under these circumstances you would not be covered by this insurance.

## **RSVP Volunteer Responsibilities**

- To identify yourself as an RSVP volunteer whenever possible.
- To follow the policies and procedures of your volunteer station, especially regarding confidential information.
- To conduct yourself in a professional manner.
- To avoid unsafe tasks, such as heavy lifting, and advise your station supervisor of unsafe conditions.
- To report all incidents regarding personal injury to your station supervisor and RSVP Manager promptly.
- To notify the volunteer station if you will not be available during your assigned shift.
- To “sign-in” when you volunteer so that your time is recorded.
- To notify the RSVP office of changes in your mailing address, telephone number, email address, or volunteer assignment.

## **RSVP Volunteer Activities Prohibited**

- Engaging in electoral activities, voter registration, voter transportation to polls and efforts to influence legislation.
- Engaging in any activity that 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 contracts for service.
- Receiving a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family or friends.
- Giving religious instruction, conducting worship services or engaging in proselytization as part of RSVP duties.

## **RSVP Volunteer Activities That Could Result In Termination**

- Harassment on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, color, national origin, age, marital status, disability, political affiliation, associating with anyone in the above categories, or of those engaging in protected activity will not be tolerated.

- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the volunteer workplace is prohibited, as is the abuse of any drug or alcohol, or reporting for volunteering under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against or by volunteers while at their volunteer station, or off volunteer station property, will not be tolerated.
- Failure to follow volunteer station policies, including confidentiality, as outlined at volunteer station training.
- Failure to report at least 2 hours of service each quarter of the year. Volunteers who become inactive may re-enroll by contacting the RSVP Manager.

## **RSVP Volunteer Grievance Procedure**

If you feel you are wrongly terminated from the RSVP program and would like to appeal your termination please send a letter of explanation to the RSVP authorized representative for review of the circumstances and for a final determination on whether the termination will remain in effect or be rescinded.

## **Role of Volunteer Station**

Volunteer stations are public agencies, private non-profit organizations, proprietary health-care agencies or organizations that accept the responsibility for assignment and supervision of RSVP volunteers. Volunteer stations sign a Memorandum of Understanding with RSVP outlining the responsibilities of each party. A station supervisor is appointed and provides you with orientation and training and serves as your contact person at the station. He/she will provide you with information about how you can be most helpful to the organization and in return, they will attempt to accommodate your needs as a volunteer. The relationship that develops between a volunteer and his/her station supervisor is an ongoing process of understanding and caring that enables you to grow and work together for the good of the community. Volunteer stations also capture the volunteer hours and report them monthly to RSVP.

The RSVP of Lane County works with nearly 30 organizations in our service area. For a list of stations, please contact the RSVP office.

## **RSVP Station Responsibilities**

- To provide safe working conditions for RSVP volunteers.
- Make final decision on placement of volunteers.
- To provide orientation and training.
- To conduct background check if necessary for placement.
- Provide supervision of volunteers on assignments.
- To collect and submit volunteers' hours.
- Not to displace a paid worker with a volunteer.
- To recognize the achievement of RSVP volunteers and identify them as RSVP volunteers.
- Does not request or receive compensation from the beneficiaries of RSVP volunteers.
- Volunteer station financial support of RSVP is not a precondition for that station to obtain volunteer service.
- RSVP funds are not used to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activity.

## **Reporting Volunteer Hours**

- The federal government requires us to keep track of all of the time RSVP volunteers spend volunteering as a means to assess our performance.
- It indicates that you are an active RSVP volunteer and thus allows you to participate in annual recognition event and receive e-mails.
- It provides proof that you were volunteering in case of an insurance claim.
- It allows us to share with our funders required quantitative data.
- It provides information to our legislators about the type of volunteer work and number of hours of service. This information assists in deciding the amount of federal funds appropriated for RSVP programs in the United States. There are over 740 such projects currently.

- It helps RSVP promote seniors as active, contributing members of their communities.
- Hours can be reported by submission of monthly timesheets signed by the station supervisor.

## **RSVP Advisory Committee**

The RSVP Advisory Committee is made up of members selected from the community at large. The committee includes volunteer station representatives, volunteers, and other interested community members. The committee's role is to advise RSVP staff on future direction, areas of concern, and volunteer recruitment strategies; to advocate for RSVP in the community, and to assist staff with volunteer recognition events.

## **United Way of Lane County Partnership**

United Way is creating opportunities for a better life for all by focusing on the building blocks we all need to succeed: education, income and health. Locally, United Way of Lane County focuses on giving children and families the resources and skills they need to ensure all children are successful in school and life. Because when kids thrive, so does the community. No one person or organization can solve our community's tough issue alone. That's why United Way recruits people and organizations that bring passion, expertise and resources needed to get things done.

RSVP of Lane County is a partner in this effort by focusing on Education: preparing children to succeed in school and life. We work with stations that provide these services and fill volunteer needs that improve our community condition and where we can see measurable results.

Join us!

### ***Contact Information:***

RSVP of Lane County

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**LIVE UNITED**



**United Way of Lane County**

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