

RSVP BURLINGTON COUNTY STATION HANDBOOK



**Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Burlington County
Rowan College at Burlington County-Lewis Parker Center-Room 221
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<http://rcbc.edu/rsvp>



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Attachments

- Sample Volunteer Assignment Description
- Sample Memorandum of Understanding
- Sample Time Sheet
- Sample Training Manual/Job Description Form

Introduction

RSVP is part of Senior Corps, funded by the National Corporation for Community Service. RSVP's 55+ aged members share their abilities, interests and experience, while improving lives, strengthening communities and fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering.

For over 40 years, RSVP has placed thousands of volunteers in approximately 50 not-for profit agencies (stations) in Burlington County. In 2015 alone, this program provided nearly 20,000 hours of service toward critical needs. RSVP volunteers work in health and nutrition, education, Medicare counseling, emergency support, transportation, tax preparation, money management and many other areas.

RSVP volunteers are only placed in not-for-profit and government agencies. The work they perform must be non-political and non-religious in nature. All agencies where RSVP volunteers are placed must have on file a current Memorandum of Understanding (see following section).

RSVP acts as a liaison between the volunteer and the station. Any accidents involving RSVP volunteers should be reported to the RSVP Coordinator immediately so that an insurance claim form can be filed. Any problems involving a volunteer's performance can and should be discussed with the RSVP Coordinator.

We hope your agency will consider using RSVP volunteers in new and challenging assignments. Please call our office if you are in the planning stages of a new program or service and we can see how RSVP volunteers may play a role in your efforts.

Memorandum of Understanding

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a basic agreement between agencies using volunteers and RSVP. According to this agreement, RSVP will do its best to provide volunteers as requested as well as a coordinator to serve as liaison with the agency or volunteer station. RSVP will provide supplemental accident and liability insurance for volunteers while they are volunteering. In addition, we hold an annual recognition event to honor and thank all RSVP volunteers.

Station responsibilities include approving volunteer time, providing appropriate orientation and supervision as well as any specific training that may be necessary, and provision of materials (such as smocks, pins, etc.)

necessary for the volunteer assignment. Station representatives are also invited to attend the annual recognition event to support and honor the RSVP volunteers working at their agency.

Requests for more volunteers and/or different assignments may be made by completing the attached Volunteer Assignment Description and forwarding it to the RSVP Coordinator.

Prohibited Activities

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

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.

Neither the grantee nor any volunteer station requests or receives compensation from the beneficiaries of Senior Corps volunteers.

Any volunteer station financial support of the Senior Corps project is not a precondition for that station to obtain volunteer service.

A Senior Corps volunteer does not receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family or friends.

Grant funds are not used to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activity.

Project staff or volunteers do not give religious instruction, conduct workshop 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 Corporation grant.

Orientation/Training

RSVP distinguishes between orientation and training, although we strongly advise stations to provide both to new volunteers.

Orientation can be provided in both written and oral form and should include a description of the function of the agency and the service(s) it provides, a tour of the facility, including where accessible lavatory facilities are located and a review of the volunteer's job description.

Training will depend on the position. The more a volunteer deals with other people and makes decisions independently, the more training should be provided. Many stations find on-the-job training to be most effective, while others prefer a formal, classroom- type training session. Some time should be allotted after each session for evaluation.

Supervision

The station agrees to provide necessary supervision of volunteers. The amount of supervision depends on the volunteer's assignment. We prefer that a supervisor is always available during a volunteer's work time in case of any problems/questions. Supervisors should also "budget" for volunteer needs, both in terms of time and money. Volunteers will need a place to work, equipment and supplies as necessary. The work area should be comfortable and safe.

Tips for Supervising Volunteers

The following are some suggestions for working with volunteers:

1. Designate one supervisor or volunteer coordinator.
2. Set a trial period. Evaluate performance with volunteer and allow volunteer time to discuss their experience.
3. Set goals and objectives with volunteer.
4. Follow an "open-door" policy.
5. Make sure the volunteer feels needed and appreciated.
6. Make sure the volunteer knows what you expect. Job descriptions will help reinforce expectations.
7. Provide volunteers with constructive feedback just as you would for paid staff.
8. Most importantly, consider the volunteer part of your team and encourage other staff to do the same.

If you encounter any problems with an RSVP volunteer, please call the RSVP Coordinator. The Coordinator will work with you and the volunteer to resolve the problem. If a volunteer is found to be inappropriate for your agency, we will reassign the volunteer and try to find a replacement.

Recording of Volunteer Time

RSVP is a federally funded program through the Corporation for National and Community Service. Our continued funding is dependent on the number of active volunteers, the number of hours served, and the measurable outcomes of the volunteers' efforts. It is therefore extremely important to RSVP that you, the station, cooperate with our time approval policies.

Volunteers must record/report their volunteer time to RSVP by using ONE of the following four methods:

1. **By entering their hours via our online hours reporting system (preferred).** Volunteers go to <http://rcbc.edu/rsvp> and click on the "Submit Hours" tab. Every volunteer is provided with a username and password to log in, as well as with instructions on how to enter their hours online by the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator. After logging in, volunteers must follow the prompts on the screens to enter their hours. Volunteer hours also include travel to and from the station, as well as any training hours, if appropriate. They are instructed to total up all the hours they volunteered in a specific month, click on the last day of that month for which they are entering hours, then enter that total number of hours.
2. **By emailing hours directly to the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator.**

Volunteers are encouraged to submit their hours, either via the online system or by completing and mailing in a timesheet, by the 10th of the following month. The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator is

responsible for following up with volunteers to obtain any “missing” hours not submitted in a specific month.

Station Approval of Volunteer Hours: On a monthly basis, the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator will email the station contact requesting approval of the hours entered online or emailed by their volunteer(s) included in that email. To approve the hours, the station contact simply replies “APPROVED” to the email.

3. **By completing the attached RSVP Volunteer Timesheet.** The volunteer records the hours they volunteer on a monthly basis on the time sheet, sign it and have it verified and signed by their volunteer coordinator, supervisor, etc. Please double check the hours and dates recorded before signing it. Volunteers have been provided with RSVP return envelopes to mail the completed form to our office.
4. **By signing the Station’s Volunteer Sign-In Sheet,** as provided by and authorized by the station. At the end of the month, volunteer sign-in sheets must be signed/approved by the station contact and sent/emailed to the RSVP Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteer Recognition

Many agencies benefit from the time, energy, and expertise that volunteers offer them. We ask that you provide on-going recognition to your volunteers. This can be done in a formal manner, such as an Awards Dinner, Volunteer Tea, etc. Or, it can be done in a simple, inexpensive manner all year long. A question about the volunteer’s family, recent vacation, or health shows you care about them as individuals. Birthday cards are well received and thank you notes for special service are appreciated. The words, “You’re doing a great job” and “We really missed you while you were away,” can mean the world to a volunteer.

RSVP holds an annual recognition event each year. We invite a representative from each station to attend along with the volunteers. Many stations have recruited new volunteers at this event simply by visiting with volunteers at their table during the meal. Please try to join us.

A Special Request: When publicly recognizing RSVP volunteer contributions, please mention RSVP specifically. By doing this, you can help raise the visibility of RSVP in our community, and that will help all of us. Thank you.

RSVP Volunteer Assignment Description

Station Name: _____

Assignment Title: _____

Date Assigned: _____

VOLUNTEER STATION SUPERVISOR: RSVP volunteers should be assigned where they can make an impact on your agency and the community.

Please complete this form thoughtfully, documenting your need, the activities you want the volunteer to perform, the desired results of those activities, and the impact you hope those results will have on your agency and the community. Example: *Student cannot read and is falling behind grade level (problem); volunteer is asked to tutor (activity); desired result is that student will learn to read (accomplishment); and therefore be promoted with his class (impact).*

Please be as specific and direct as possible. Please go over it with the volunteer to be sure he/she understands the required activities and the desired results.

Describe Where the Volunteer Will Serve: _____

Service Schedule: Does the volunteer station require the volunteer to be available on given days or at certain times? If yes, please notate: _____

Supervision Received: Who supervises the volunteer? _____

Are they present onsite during volunteer time? _____

Supervision Exercised: Does the volunteer supervise anyone else? _____

Examples of Services Performed: List activities of the volunteer. _____

Anticipated Accomplishment(s) as a Result of Activities Listed Above: _____

Need That Warrants This Volunteer Assignment: _____

Can you provide statistics to warrant need? _____

Anticipated Impact of Accomplishments: (This is not the same as accomplishment. See example above).

Experience and Training: Are any prior experience, training or skills required or desired by the volunteer station?

Please provide a copy of your training manual for each volunteer position. Please remit the attached form indicating the date the training manual and job descriptions were read/received by the volunteer.

Qualifications: Age 55 years or older.

Benefits Provided: Examples: Assistance with transportation and the cost of meals taken during assignments. Accident, personal liability and excess automobile liability insurance. Recognition program/activities.

Signature: Volunteer Station Supervisor

Signature: RSVP Volunteer

Signature: RSVP Project Director

Insert Updated MOU

The RSVP Volunteer is to complete and sign this form upon receipt of the Training Manual and Job Description from the Station for his/her Volunteer Job Assignment and mail to RSVP at the address below.

Station Name: _____

Station Address: _____

I have received a Training Manual and Job Description for my volunteer assignment from the above-named station on the date indicated:

Print Name of Volunteer

Signature of Volunteer

Date Received

Print Name of Station Contact

Signature of Station Contact

Date

**Please send completed form to:
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Burlington County (RSVP)
Rowan College at Burlington County
Lewis Parker Center - Room 221
601 Pemberton Browns Mills Road
Pemberton, New Jersey 08068**