



**AmeriCorps**

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



**AmeriCorps  
Seniors**



**United Way  
of Marathon County**

## **UNITED WAY RSVP OF MARATHON COUNTY**

United Way of Marathon County  
705 South 24th Ave, Suite 400B - Wausau WI 54401  
Phone: 715-298-5721  
Email: [skrolow@unitedwaymc.org](mailto:skrolow@unitedwaymc.org)  
Website: [www.unitedwaymc.org/rsvp](http://www.unitedwaymc.org/rsvp)

**RSVP of Marathon County is funded by AmeriCorps and is sponsored locally by United Way of Marathon County**



## Welcome to RSVP

Welcome to United Way RSVP of Marathon County! You have joined a program that exists all across the United States. RSVP means to respond, and that is exactly what you are doing by becoming a volunteer. You are responding to help meet critical community needs by giving of your time, skills, knowledge and experience to local organizations.

This handbook was prepared to help acquaint you with all aspects of the program and we hope will be helpful in answering your questions about RSVP. If you have any concerns or questions at any time about your volunteer service, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for sharing the gifts of your time and talents in making a difference in our community. We are committed to making your volunteer experience meaningful, enjoyable and personally rewarding.

Sincerely,

*Susan Krolow*

RSVP Director  
skrolow@unitedwaymc.org  
715-298-5721

**United Way**  
***RSVP of Marathon County***  
***Connecting Volunteers 55+ to Community Needs***



**WHAT IS RSVP?**

RSVP is a nationwide program which connects persons 55 + to opportunities to contribute volunteer support locally to nonprofit agencies and organizations in Marathon County. RSVP Volunteers fill critical community needs by using the talents and experiences they have gained throughout their lifetime.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

RSVP's mission is to engage persons 55 years and over in volunteer service to meet critical community needs and to provide a quality experience that will enrich the lives of the volunteers through significant community service work and personal development.

**HISTORY**

RSVP is a federal grant funded program which began in 1971 and is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. RSVP is America's largest volunteer network for people age 55 and over. There are over 450,000 participants across the nation who are providing valuable services in their communities. Locally, RSVP is sponsored by United Way of Marathon County which received a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service to bring the program to our community. RSVP programs have been providing services in 17 Wisconsin communities for many years.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION**

No person, on the basis of race or national origin, sex, color, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation or disability shall be excluded from membership or participation in the activities and benefits of RSVP.

# VOLUNTEER BENEFITS



## **VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT HELP**

Whether you're just getting started in volunteering or have been a longtime volunteer, RSVP provides you with personalized volunteer placement assistance to help you get easily connected with the right volunteer opportunity for you. We'll help you make sure your talents, skills, and interests are being utilized in the best way that is personally meaningful for you. RSVP helps to ensure you are aware of all the opportunities that fit your criteria for volunteering and then helps you to get easily connected. After meeting with the agency, you decide if that is the right fit for you. RSVP also arranges for agency visits, tours, observer experiences and other ways to check out a potential volunteer opportunity before making a commitment.

United Way RSVP works with over 47 nonprofit agencies in Marathon County that are part of the RSVP volunteer network. A complete list is included in your packet.

## **INSURANCE**

All RSVP Volunteers receive supplemental auto liability, accident and volunteer liability insurance which is in effect only when volunteering at designated RSVP Volunteer Stations. All insurance provided by RSVP is secondary to your current provider. **Please see pages 12-14 for additional insurance details.**

## **MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

Another RSVP member benefit is the monthly newsletter which provides you with information on many free educational programs and other events. The newsletter is sent by email or regular mail if you do not have email access.



# VOLUNTEER BENEFITS



## COFFEE SOCIAL/INFORMATIONAL EVENTS

Monthly RSVP **Community Coffee Hours** offer an opportunity to meet new people and get a behind the scenes look at local nonprofits. Learn about their mission, discover how they use volunteers and tour their facilities. RSVP also presents other monthly **free informational and social programs** to promote healthy, active living. We invite you to bring a friend or neighbor to these events as they are free and open to the public.

## RECOGNITION

All active RSVP Volunteers will receive an invitation to the **Annual Recognition Luncheon** held each Spring. This event is free to RSVP Volunteers.

United Way RSVP is proud to present the RSVP Volunteers with Service Pins based on the years of service in the RSVP Program. Recipients receive a certificate of recognition and a pin based on the number of years of service in the program.

## OTHER BENEFITS

Doing good feels good and is good for you! In fact, 98% of RSVP Volunteers report that their service has improved their knowledge, health or social connectedness. Over the past two decades, a growing body of research indicates that volunteering provides individual health benefits in addition to social benefits. Those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability and lower rates of depression later in life compared to those who don't volunteer. Volunteers who devote about 100 hours per year are most likely to exhibit these positive health outcomes, and older adults receive the greatest benefits from volunteering.





# GETTING STARTED

## WHERE CAN YOU VOLUNTEER?

RSVP Volunteers may choose from a list of Volunteer Stations throughout Marathon County that have a signed agreement with the RSVP office. These Volunteer Stations are public agencies, private non-profit organizations or proprietary health-care agencies. The supplemental insurance benefits are only provided when volunteering at RSVP Volunteer Stations. These stations provide orientation, in-service instruction and special training for RSVP Volunteers as needed.

## IN-HOME ASSIGNMENTS

When RSVP Volunteers enter a person's home to provide a volunteer service, a *Letter of Agreement* needs to be signed by the volunteer and the person being visited to confirm the service to be provided. This document is normally taken care of by the RSVP Volunteer Station in arranging for services to their clients.

## ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Volunteers must complete and submit at least one volunteer hour every 12 months to remain active with RSVP. If you are unable to serve for more than 12 months, please contact the RSVP office. We will place you on the temporary inactive list so you will continue to receive mailings and RSVP information. When you are ready to volunteer again, just call and we will happily return you to the active list.

## INACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

It is federal policy that volunteers be placed on the inactive list after 12 months of inactivity. If you have not reported volunteer hours to the RSVP office after 12 months, you will automatically be placed on the inactive list. You can contact us at any time to return to the active RSVP volunteer list.

# REPORTING VOLUNTEER HOURS



## **WHY WE COUNT YOUR HOURS**

RSVP requires our Partner Agencies (Volunteer Stations) to record and report your RSVP volunteer hours to us each month. To receive funding to provide volunteer benefits, RSVP must report these hours to the federal government to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program. If you are not sure whether your agency is tracking your hours for RSVP, please check! This is important for a few reasons:

### **1. Hours mean you're covered**

As an RSVP volunteer; you carry supplemental insurance while you serve, so long as we have a record of your service. If an accident happens and you file a claim, we must have a verified hours recorded on file from your place of service or your claim may be denied.

### **2. Hours are currency**

Grants often require matching funds from organizations, and many grants allow the match to come "in-kind." Many organizations use volunteer hours as the "in-kind" match for their grants. This means it is important to have a record of the hours you serve at an RSVP partner agency, because they may be critical to securing agency funding.

### **3. Hours demonstrate value**

When you give your time to a project by volunteering, you show that the project is valuable to you. We track volunteer hours in order to show the level of community support for the projects where RSVP members serve. Demonstrating community support is very important in creating public awareness, recruiting more volunteers, and fundraising.

### **4. Hours Accumulate**

RSVP tracks your hours. Tracking volunteer hours helps up recognize volunteers who are making a difference in their communities. All hours are recorded in our database and contributed to the individual volunteer's lifetime hours.



# VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES



## VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Be prompt, dependable and reliable as a volunteer. Notify the station supervisor of necessary absences as far in advance as possible.
- To participate in orientation, training or meetings.
- Record hours so that they can be submitted to the RSVP office.
- Inform RSVP staff and your station supervisor(s) of address, telephone or email changes.
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the agency for which you are volunteering.
- Report all accidents to RSVP staff and your station supervisor. Remember RSVP carries secondary volunteer insurance and can file a claim on your behalf if notified of the accident.
- Maintain confidentiality. All information on clients, patients and station business is private and must not be discussed.
- Call RSVP if you have any problems regarding your volunteer assignment that cannot be resolved with your station supervisor or if you would like to change or add to your assignment.
- Wear your RSVP nametag or other RSVP identification while volunteering. Every RSVP Volunteer will receive an RSVP pin.





# 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:
  - Electoral activities,
  - Voter registration,
  - Voter transportation to polls, and
  - 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 may request or receive compensation from the beneficiaries of RSVP volunteers.
- Any volunteer station financial support of the RSVP project is not a precondition for that station to obtain volunteer service .
- A RSVP volunteer may 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 worship services, or engage in proselytization as part of their duties and, if the sponsor is an organization that conducts inherently religious activities, those activities are offered separately, in time and location, from the programs or services funded under the AmeriCorps Federal grant.

## RSVP CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

All information – address, phone number, etc. – you have provided to RSVP will remain confidential and for RSVP use only. RSVP will not sell the information. RSVP will always ask permission before sharing your information to a partner agency.



# VOLUNTEER RIGHTS



## VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

- You will receive an orientation packet on the RSVP's purpose, service programs, insurance coverage and volunteer opportunities.
- You can expect to be referred to a volunteer assignment where your skills and experience will be used to the best advantage.
- You can expect to feel welcome and to be treated with respect at your volunteer site.
- You will receive on-site orientation and training to comfortably perform your assigned volunteer tasks by the Volunteer Station.
- The Volunteer Station and the RSVP staff will be available to help with any questions or concerns.
- You have the right to expect your volunteer experience to be meaningful to you. If you are dissatisfied with your assignment, RSVP will attempt to find you another position.
- You have the right to change your assignment, to try new skills or to advance to more challenging tasks. Call the RSVP office to start that process.
- You have the right to a grievance procedure which provides a means of presenting grievances without fear of reprisals and an appeal process in the event of a termination or other adverse action. Contact the RSVP Director for more information if needed.





## OTHER INFORMATION

### CONDUCT

When volunteering, a RSVP Volunteer must follow the policies and procedures of the Volunteer Station at which they are volunteering. This includes requirements for training, attendance, dress code or any other guidelines established by the Volunteer Station. Any concerns regarding the agency should be taken first to the station supervisor. If concerns are not resolved, please contact the RSVP Director.

### VOLUNTEER SEPARATION

Volunteers may terminate their volunteer assignment at any time by notifying the RSVP Director. RSVP staff will assist the volunteer in locating an alternate volunteer placement when requested. The RSVP Director or a Volunteer Station may separate an RSVP volunteer for cause, including but not limited to, excessive or unauthorized absences, misconduct, breach in confidentiality or inability to perform assignments or accept supervision.

### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE and APPEAL PROCESS

While we will strive to provide every RSVP Volunteer with a meaningful and positive volunteer experience, we realize that a situation could occur in which a volunteer believes that he/she may have been treated adversely either by the Volunteer Station or RSVP program. In either situation, we do have a grievance procedure in place. Contact the RSVP Director if you would like more information on that process.





## INSURANCE INFORMATION

### **EXCESS ACCIDENTAL MEDICAL COVERAGE**

This coverage is in excess of Medicare and any other insurance that you have in place. The excess accident medical coverage will pay up to \$50,000 for medical treatment, hospitalization and licensed nursing care required as the result of a covered accident. The insurance applies while you are traveling directly to and from, and while you are participating in, volunteer-related activities. **Initial medical expenses must be incurred within 60 days of the accident. Expenses are then covered for a one-year period following the accident.**

Other than X-rays, dental care is covered up to \$500 per tooth for accidental injury to teeth and repair of dentures. Maximum benefit is \$900 per accident.

This coverage also provides up to \$50 for repair or replacement of eyeglass frames and up to \$50 for repair or replacement of eyeglass prescription lenses damaged as a result of a covered accident.

The maximum payment under this coverage, including dental and eyeglass expenses, is \$50,000. **This insurance does not duplicate benefits payable under Medicare or any other valid and collectible insurance coverage.**

### **Accidental Death and Dismemberment Coverage**

In addition to the accident medical coverage, the underwriter will pay benefits for death or loss of limb or sight, occurring within one year as a result of a covered accident. See coverage details at [www.cimaworld.com](http://www.cimaworld.com).

*Exclusions to Accident Insurance-* A complete listing of the exclusions is detailed in the insurance policy. Please go to [www.cimaworld.com](http://www.cimaworld.com) for details.



# INSURANCE INFORMATION

## **EXCESS VOLUNTEER LIABILITY INSURANCE**

All RSVP Volunteers (collectively) are provided with excess volunteer liability insurance at a limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence. This policy provides protection if you are liable for bodily injury or property damage arising out of the performance of your duties. **This coverage is in excess of and noncontributing with any other valid and collectible insurance you may have.**

*Exclusions to Volunteer Liability Insurance-* A complete listing of the exclusions is included in the insurance policy details, available at [www.cimaworld.com](http://www.cimaworld.com).

## **EXCESS AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE**

This coverage provides an extra layer of protection for you as a registered volunteer driver while performing your duties. This insurance applies only after your own insurance is exhausted, or the policy's retention has been exceeded. This coverage is in effect only while driving your personal vehicle in performing your volunteer assignment, NOT to and from the Volunteer Station.

The liability policy is written at a combined single limit (including both bodily injury and property damage) of \$500,000 each accident. This insurance is in excess of the greater of:

- \$50,000 each accident
- an amount equal to the applicable limits of liability of any other collectible insurance
- an amount equal to the minimum limit of liability required under the motor vehicle financial responsibilities laws of the state in which the accident occurs.

**It is important to remember that you must maintain your own auto liability coverage at least equal to the state-required minimums. Also, please remember that this coverage does not apply to any damage to your vehicle.**

# COMMONLY ASKED INSURANCE QUESTIONS



## **My car was damaged in an accident while I was volunteering; will you cover my deductible for the repairs?**

No; the coverage is for liability claims only. There is no coverage for damage to your car.

## **Medicare says that your insurance should pay first. What should I do?**

CIMA can help! Their coverage is specifically excess over Medicare. Call CIMA at 800-468-4200, and they will assist you.

## **I see that the policy provides excess protection if I cause bodily injury or property damage. What if there is an allegation of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse?**

The policy does not provide protection in the event of a criminal proceeding, but it may provide protection in the event of a civil proceeding. You would be entitled to a defense against an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct under the personal liability contract. *However, the policy would not defend or indemnify you if you admitted wrongdoing or if the allegations against you proved true.*

## **How do I file a claim?**

For any type of claim, contact the RSVP Director first. We will sit down with you and help you complete the needed forms and file them correctly. Provide as much detail as possible about the incident and obtain any police reports. We will then pass this information to CIMA, along with a statement that you were volunteering at the time of the incident. For a claim against you alleging that you caused bodily injury or property damage while volunteering, be sure to inform the RSVP Director immediately.

**Further Questions?** Visit [www.cimaworld.com](http://www.cimaworld.com) for policies along with additional information concerning the extent and limitations of these policies.

# THANK YOU!



**“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED, IT’S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.”**  
**-MARGARET MEAD**



## HELPFUL WEBSITES

RSVP of Marathon County: [www.unitedwaymc.org/rsvp](http://www.unitedwaymc.org/rsvp)

RSVP Community Connection Calendar:  
<http://www.unitedwaymc.org/rsvpcalendar.htm>

United Way Volunteer Connection: [www.unitedwaymc.org/volunteer](http://www.unitedwaymc.org/volunteer)

Corporation for National and Community Service: [www.cnsc.gov](http://www.cnsc.gov)

CIMA Insurance: [www.cimaworld.com](http://www.cimaworld.com)

Rev. 02-02-2022