

*Adams, Brown, and Pike County*

RSVP

*Lead with experience...*

Volunteer Handbook



Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

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## **WHAT IS RSVP?**

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a national program which coordinates volunteer opportunities with persons 55 and older who wish to contribute meaningful volunteer support to non-profit agencies while also assisting our fellow seniors. RSVP volunteers fill critical community needs by utilizing the talents and experiences they've gained throughout their lifetimes.

## **HISTORY OF RSVP IN ADAMS, BROWN & PIKE CO.**

RSVP is a national program governed by AmeriCorps Seniors, a federally funded agency. RSVP is part of the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program and the AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program.

RSVP began in Adams County in July, 1973, under the Volunteer Committee of the United Way. The United Way turned the sponsorship of the program over to John Wood Community College in 1976. The College is legally responsible for the program and serves as the fiscal agent, with RSVP staff considered staff of the college.

The Brown and Pike County RSVP program was established in October of 2012 after receiving funds that were awarded as part of a national grant competition.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

You are eligible to join RSVP if you are 55 years or older and have a willingness to invest some time, experience, and expertise in meeting various community needs.

## **RSVP FITS YOUR SCHEDULE**

You are not required to commit to a specific amount of volunteer time. Assignment hours vary according to the needs of the agencies, and you may select an assignment that suits your own schedule. We realize that while you may want to serve the community, you also want to do all the things you had planned to do during retirement. Volunteering does not have to interfere with your plans for travel, part-time employment, or other obligations. We can help make volunteering flexible and easy.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

RSVP accepts requests for volunteers from public and private non-profit agencies which RSVP calls “volunteer stations.” Examples of volunteer stations include government agencies, libraries, schools, hospitals, day care centers, social services, and community organizations.

The RSVP staff meets with the volunteer station staff to discuss the needs of the agency, types of assignments available, and the type of volunteer supervision and training required. Volunteer assignments are matched with our roster of volunteers and their service preferences to facilitate satisfactory placement.

There are a wide variety of volunteer assignments from which to choose, including tutoring, mailings, clerical, medical transporting, delivering meals and groceries, disaster response and recovery, activities assistants, and tour guides, just to name a few.

## VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT

We like to have an informal initial meeting to better get to know you and to discuss your past work experience, your skills, passions, and any previous volunteer experience. We like to know your reasons for wanting to volunteer and how much time you feel you would like to be engaged. We review the various assignments that are, or may be, available and try to find something in which you have an interest. This ensures we can determine the kind of volunteer work you will enjoy. When placement is appropriate, we will call the volunteer station to refer you to their staff. Our primary goal is to make your volunteer experience enjoyable and meaningful.

Not all volunteer assignments are performed at a volunteer station. Some volunteers work from their homes doing projects such as making teddy bears for the hospital emergency room or making telephone calls for agencies.

Volunteers may also perform “neighborly assistance” activities, which include time spent helping neighbors by taking them to medical appointments, assisting them with chores, or just checking up on them. Many of us do these sorts of things already and do not realize these activities count as volunteer services in the eyes of AmeriCorps Seniors. *(More about why every hour of volunteer time is important to our community later.)*

### **SPOT VOLUNTEERS**

Some RSVP volunteers may not want to make a commitment to a particular agency but would prefer to be “on call” for assignments. For this purpose, RSVP has ***Special Placement/One Time*** volunteering which involves assisting a variety of stations

with short-term projects. The RSVP Volunteer Coordinator keeps a list of SPOT volunteers and calls them as requests come into the office.

## **ORIENTATION**

As a new volunteer, you will be invited to an orientation shortly after you enroll in the program. This is an informal gathering which allows you to meet the RSVP staff while giving you the opportunity to become better acquainted with the programs and services we offer. You will be able to discuss volunteer placement, meet with other new volunteers, and ask and/or get answers for any questions or concerns.

## **CHANGES OF ASSIGNMENT**

One of the advantages of volunteering with RSVP is that you may request a change in your assignment at any time and for any reason. You may want to try a new assignment from the existing opportunities or you may suggest a specific interest. Let RSVP do the work to develop an assignment for you.

## **VOLUNTEER REPORTS**

You will be asked to submit a Volunteer Report (pink sheet) each month to the RSVP office. This is very important for several reasons:

- The report indicates where you are serving, the number of hours you've worked, and the nature of your work.
- The report provides an accurate record of your volunteer activities that RSVP uses as a guide for recognition awards.
- The report allows you to request reimbursement for meals and transportation.

- The report allows RSVP to convey to our funding sources the needs that are being met in our community by RSVP volunteers, the collective number of hours our volunteers are serving, and the impact of the work. (The total number of volunteer hours that RSVP records can greatly affect future funding for our communities.)

If your assignment includes travel and meals, you may request meal or mileage reimbursement. You must record your mileage, attach the meal receipt, and have your station supervisor sign the report. Reimbursement for volunteer expenses is paid monthly by checks disbursed by JWCC. To receive your check promptly, you must have your report to the RSVP office by the seventh day of the month following the service date. Reimbursement requests of less than \$25.00 may be held until a total of \$25.00 is accumulated (more on reimbursement on page 8).

Volunteer Reports may be mailed or dropped off and blank forms picked up at the RSVP offices located in the JWCC Centers: Quincy at 1301 S. 48th Street; Mt. Sterling at 102 N. Capitol; and Pittsfield at 39637 260th Ave. They can also be dropped off at:

- RSVP Office on Quincy JWCC Campus, Room D128
- The Quincy Senior and Family Resource Center
- Blessing Hospital Volunteer Office
- Good Samaritan Home Activity Office
- Email – [RSVP@jwcc.edu](mailto:RSVP@jwcc.edu)
- Call your local RSVP office

## **SPECIAL BENEFITS**

The opportunity to volunteer should be available to everyone regardless of income. You may request reimbursement for certain out-of-pocket expenses if they create a hardship for you.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Upon request, RSVP will reimburse you for travel expenses *between home and the volunteer station* when using your personal vehicle. You must work a minimum of three hours that day to receive mileage and you must be working at an RSVP volunteer station. There is a \$25.00 limit per month.

If you do not drive, the RSVP staff can arrange for public transportation, which is also reimbursable upon request. Taxi fares are not reimbursable unless you have received prior approval from the RSVP office.

Mileage reimbursement for long distance medical trips arranged by RSVP is paid for by the agency requesting the service. This long distance travel reimbursement will be issued on a per trip basis and can be paid in addition to any local reimbursement.

## **MEALS**

If your volunteer assignment spans a meal time, you may request reimbursement for that meal. To collect meal reimbursement, your service must span at least five hours including the meal time and you must attach the meal receipt to your Volunteer Report which must be signed by your station supervisor. There is a \$7.50 limit per meal.

You may **not** request meal reimbursement if:

1. You are serving at a station that provides meals or directly reimburses for meal expenses.
2. You are serving in the same building where you live.
3. Your volunteer assignment ends at a meal time.
4. You are serving at a meal site where there is no fixed price for the meal but donations are accepted.



## **INSURANCE**

When you enroll in RSVP, you will be provided insurance that covers you during your volunteer time. The insurance coverage shall be in excess of and noncontributing with any other valid and collectible insurance you have. In other words, the accident and excess automobile liability coverage are intended to provide higher levels of insurance for you, starting where your own insurance coverage stops. This is excess, not primary coverage. This is also true for personal liability. If you are not covered by personal liability insurance, the RSVP personal liability insurance becomes the primary insurance with no deductible. When you enroll in RSVP, you will sign the Volunteer Registration Form and designate a beneficiary. This will pay your beneficiary if you should die while volunteering. If no beneficiary is named, "Estate" will be entered in that space.

### **Accident Insurance**

Accident insurance shall cover you for personal injury incurred during your volunteer assignment and during traveling from your home to the volunteer duty, and at other RSVP sponsored activities such as recognition events and Advisory Council meetings.

RSVP provides the following accident insurance coverage:

1. \$50,000 for medical treatment, hospitalization, and licensed nursing care;
2. \$50 for repair or replacement of damaged eye glass frames and \$50 for replacement of broken eye glass lenses or contact lenses;
3. \$500 per tooth for injury to teeth and repair of dentures;
4. \$2,500 for accidental death (paid to the beneficiary);  
and

5. Various amounts paid for dismemberment depending on part of body and multiples of injuries (see literature available at the RSVP office).

### **Personal Liability Insurance**

Protection shall be provided against claims in excess of protection provided by other insurance for claims sustained while you are volunteering. RSVP provides third party protection for you against injury or property damage claims that occur during the volunteer assignment only—not during travel to or from. The amount of personal protection shall be \$1,000,000 for each occurrence of personal injury or property damage and shall be in excess of any other valid and collectible insurance.

### **Excess Automobile Liability Insurance**

To avoid a gap in coverage between your personal vehicle insurance and liability claims in excess of that coverage, RSVP provides excess auto liability insurance coverage of not less than \$500,000 each accident for bodily injury and/or property damage that occurs during the volunteer duty—not traveling.

RSVP provides protection against claims in excess of the greater of either the liability insurance you carry on your own vehicle or the limits of the Illinois State Safety and Financial Responsibility Law.

In case of an accident while participating in volunteer activities, you should notify the RSVP office as soon as possible. A claim form will be sent to you to be completed and returned to RSVP. You must include all bills and a statement of Medicare payment, if you are enrolled in Medicare.

***For more detailed information on all RSVP insurance coverage, please review at [www.cimaworld.com](http://www.cimaworld.com).***

## **RECOGNITION**

Because you are enrolled as a RSVP volunteer, you will receive a name badge that identifies you as such. You should wear this during your volunteer assignment.

A recognition banquet is held once a year. Every volunteer who has provided at least 24 hours of service in the prior 12 months is invited free of charge. Banquet activities include awards that celebrate length of service with RSVP. Others may attend the banquet for the cost of the meal.

## **SEPARATION**

### **INACTIVE STATUS**

If you do not report at least one hour during a 90 day period, you will be considered “inactive.” The RSVP office will contact you to find out why you have not been volunteering. If you have had a temporary illness or have been on vacation, you will be kept on inactive status until you return to work. If we find that you are no longer able to volunteer or have developed new interests, we will withdraw you from RSVP.

### **WITHDRAWAL**

Official withdrawal is necessary for insurance purposes. You may re-enroll in the program any time you want to resume your volunteer work.

### **RESIGNATION**

You may resign from an assignment, from a volunteer station, or from membership in RSVP at any time by notifying the RSVP office.

## **GRIEVANCE**

The grievance procedure was adopted by the RSVP Advisory Council on September 28, 1988, and states, "RSVP may separate a volunteer from the program for cause, including, but not limited to, extensive or unauthorized absences, misconduct, and/or inability to perform assignments or accept supervision, after consultation with the RSVP Advisory Council according to the following grievance procedures:

- You may first present your case to the RSVP Director. If your case is not resolved following recommendations of the RSVP Director, then the RSVP Advisory Council shall hold a hearing within fifteen days after receiving your request.
- If, after notification of the recommendations from the RSVP Advisory Council, the problem is still not resolved, you may request a hearing before the President of John Wood Community College. Upon receiving the request from you, the President of the College shall hear the case within fifteen days.
- Thereafter, the regular grievance procedure adopted by the Board of Trustees of JWCC shall be followed."

## **RSVP'S PLEDGE TO THE VOLUNTEER**

- We will help you find a volunteer placement that is mutually satisfactory to you and the volunteer station.
- If volunteer reports are submitted as requested, we will maintain these records and recognize your hours of service through the RSVP awards system.
- We will provide transportation or meal reimbursement when requested, insurance, and other benefits, as outlined earlier in this Handbook.

## **DUTIES OF THE VOLUNTEER STATION**

- The volunteer station agrees to provide you with the necessary training and supervision. Conditions of the supervision will be worked out between you and the supervisor.
- The station supervisor will discuss any problems or questions you may have concerning your assignment.
- The station supervisor is responsible for verifying your hours of service by signing the Volunteer Report and for sending your report to the RSVP office each month, unless other arrangements are agreed to by you and the supervisor.
- The volunteer station will specify if they will or will not pay for any supplies necessary for you to carry out your assignment (e.g., craft materials) and any transportation expenses you incur during your volunteer assignment (e.g., transporting a client to a medical appointment). RSVP cannot pay for these expenses.
- The volunteer station will inform the RSVP office if and when your service is ended at that station, or if there is a problem which requires RSVP intervention.

## **VOLUNTEERS ARE RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE**

The following general principles should be observed while performing any volunteer assignment:

- The volunteer assignment is important to the volunteer station. You should perform the duties to the best of your ability, observe the time agreed upon, cooperate with staff and other volunteers at the station, and recognize the value of a job well done. If there is a problem with your assignment, you should talk to the station supervisor or the RSVP staff.
- Everyone recognizes that emergencies or conflicting commitments may arise. You should inform your station supervisor if you cannot report for your assignment, will be late, or must leave early.
- If you will be away for an extended period or if you stop going to a particular volunteer station, you should inform the RSVP office.
- If you come into contact with confidential information concerning the volunteer station, its employees, or the people it serves, you must maintain the confidentiality of such information. Be respectful of the confidentiality and sensitivity of participant needs. You will sign a Confidentiality Agreement form at your orientation.

***A breach of confidentiality will result in termination of your volunteer position.***

- You are responsible for submitting your Volunteer Report to the RSVP office by the end of each month. It should contain the name of your volunteer station and assignment, the hours worked, and any reimbursement requested. Your report must be verified by your station supervisor if you are asking for mileage and/or meal reimbursement.
- As a representative of RSVP, hygiene and dress should be appropriate, presentable, and consistent with your position responsibilities. You will wear the RSVP volunteer identification badge provided during all volunteer activities.

If you no longer wish to volunteer with RSVP, please notify our office so we can officially withdraw you from the program.

## **RSVP Mission Statement**

The purpose of RSVP is to engage persons 55 and older in volunteer service to meet critical community needs and to provide a high quality experience that will enrich the lives of volunteers.

# CORE VALUES

John Wood Community College Staff and Faculty (and RSVP) will be guided by these core values in everything we do:

**SELF-DEVELOPMENT** - We support lifelong learning and personal growth

**EXCELLENCE** - We maintain the highest professional standards in support of the college mission

**ACCOUNTABILITY** - We are accountable for providing quality service and instruction

**INTEGRITY** - We maintain responsible personal and professional behavior



**RSVP**, a program of John Wood Community College, is funded by AmeriCorps Seniors, United Way of Adams County, the City of Quincy, the Adams County Board, and the Illinois Department on Aging.