



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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Director  
*Cheryl Cain*  
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 Volunteer Coordinator

**Welcome to RSVP!**

These are exciting times to live in because we have an opportunity to make a difference in others lives & our communities. Volunteering gives us that opportunity - to make our mark on the world—our world! We can change our communities where we reside. We can help & get to know others at the same time, improve our communities & improve our own lives by being proactive & learning new skills.

RSVP has made a huge impact for 34 years in Garfield County....let's continue!

Cheryl Cain  
 RSVP Director

**Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers have a right to:

- Assignments that suit you.
- Clear & specific instructions about your assignments & continuing staff support.
- Treatment as an equal co-worker
- The opportunity to offer your ideas & suggestions.
- Regular appreciation for your efforts & accomplishments.
- Receive RSVP volunteer benefits while active.
- Have RSVP assistance in resolution of any grievance.

Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Treat everyone connected with your volunteering partnership with respect, dignity, concern, & courtesy without discrimination.
- Report your volunteer hours monthly via our time sheet.
- Keep RSVP informed of any address or telephone change you may have.
- Report your resignation if you choose to stop volunteering or become too ill to continue.
- Make a serious commitment to your assignment.
- Be loyal to the organization, cooperate with the staff & abide by all policies.
- Be willing to learn & to ask questions about things you don't understand, to be "up-front" about your skills & limitations.

The RSVP staff is here to help—always!

Please call if you have any question or concern.

We are here for YOU!

## **ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The purpose of the RSVP Advisory Council is to assist the RSVP staff in the continuing development of the program by acting as a sounding board on many issues. The Advisory Council offers support, assistance, & advice concerning significant program decisions. It also organizes fund-raisers & conducts an annual evaluation of RSVP projects. Both community members & RSVP volunteers serve on this group. Members come from a cross section of the community that include members from the private sector, public sector, businesses, service clubs, churches, etc... Also, members that serve on the advisory council come from a broad-age spectrum. If you have an interest, please let the RSVP Director know.

### **RSVP FITS YOUR SCHEDULE**

RSVP strives to maintain flexibility in the scheduling of assignments. There is no minimum number of service hours.

Assignment hours vary according to the needs of the agencies, but you may select an assignment that suits your schedule. We realize that you may have planned to do things during retirement that might conflict with your volunteering, just notify your station & the RSVP office in advance. Communication is the all important ingredient of our success!

**THANK YOU FOR BEING A RSVP  
VOLUNTEER.**

**YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE &  
CHANGE OUR WORLD!**

## **WHAT IS RSVP?**

The Regional Service Volunteer Program here in Garfield County provides volunteer opportunities for persons age 55 & older. The purpose of RSVP is to enrich the lives of adult seniors through significant community service work. RSVP encourages seniors to bring a lifetime of talents, experiences, skills & hobbies to community organizations needing volunteer talent.

A national program, RSVP is primarily funded through the Corporation for National Service, a federal agency. When joining the program, you become part of a national movement of hundred of thousands of volunteers striving to help others nationwide.

RSVP has been a sponsored program of Colorado Mountain College since 1972. Colorado Mountain College is a non-profit post-secondary educational organization through which all federal funding & local donations are received.

### **WHO CAN BE A RSVP VOLUNTEER?**

Any man or woman, 55 years of age or older, who wants to share the benefits of a lifetime of living is eligible. There are no restrictions based on education, income, race, color, creed, sex, handicap or experience. Volunteers help address their communities in Garfield County with solutions around their *“critical needs”*.

### **WHAT DO THE RSVP VOLUNTEERS DO?**

RSVP volunteers serve without pay on a regular basis at community assignments at museums, hospitals, libraries, senior centers, social service agencies, schools, & many other non-profit organizations in Garfield County. They assist homebound residents, assure in the delivery of meals, & work with children & youth. RSVP volunteers have served & currently serve on local, county, regional & state boards. RSVP volunteers serve in nearly every capacity at non-profits in Garfield County.

## YOUR VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

Approximately 350 active volunteers currently belong to RSVP & contribute thousands of hours of service each month to meet the needs of over 60 organizations in Garfield County. To receive RSVP program benefits, you must be an active volunteer. This means that you must perform and report only three hours each three months. You decide the hours & days you want to volunteer. We value whatever contribution of time you can give & we will tailor the assignment to fit your needs & preferences. If you later find that your volunteer work is conflicting with other commitments, simply call the RSVP Office & make arrangements to alter your volunteer assignment schedule.

## WHAT IS A VOLUNTEER STATION ?

Any place where RSVP members volunteer is called a volunteer station. It can be any public or private non-profit organization.

The volunteer station must sign the RSVP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which lists information, RSVP policies, procedures & standards. The station agrees to offer volunteers appropriate & specific volunteer assignments on a regularly scheduled basis. In addition, the stations must fill out a **Job Description Form** that lists all the jobs volunteers perform.

**REMEMBER:** RSVP volunteers do not replace paid staff at a station. No one at a volunteer station will ask you to do anything that the staff is unwilling to do.

The station staff provide you with supervision & the materials you need in order to work effectively. The station supervisor explains assignments & answers specific questions.

## REPORTING HOURS

Volunteers report their hours on a monthly basis on a monthly timesheet. You will get timesheets from us three times a year. Many volunteers serve in more than one capacity. Suppose you are a hospital volunteer, a tutor at an elementary school & a tax

- If, while working at your volunteer assignment, you encounter confidential information concerning the volunteer station, its employees, and/or the people it serves, you **must** maintain the confidentiality of the information.
- Volunteers who do not adhere to policies of RSVP or their volunteer workstation may be terminated. Naturally, we never want to see this, so please contact us if there are issues we need to discuss.
- Please keep the RSVP office informed of any changes in your phone number, your address, & your ability to serve as a volunteer. Also, please notify the RSVP office of any problems which may arise at your station.

## CHANGES IN YOUR ASSIGNMENT

RSVP realizes that you may want to change your assignment. You might want to try out new skills or advance to more difficult tasks. Whatever the reason, RSVP will accept your request for a change at any time while working to find just the right opportunity for you. You may either make a selection from existing needed volunteer lists or suggest specific interests & let RSVP do the legwork to create them. We always are looking for volunteer program coordinators to head specific projects.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

Realizing that many volunteers want to serve their community but still do all they want during retirement, RSVP offers short-term assignments. Many agencies need help with mailings, office work, & other projects only at certain times of the year. RSVP tries to fill their request for “now & then” assistance. Other examples of short-term assignments include special community functions, handicraft projects, fundraising, market research, etc... Let us know if you are interested in these RSVP One Time Assignments.

## **6. RSVP Newsletter**

Our newsletter is sent to all volunteers & other interested people periodically. It includes RSVP news, volunteer jobs, information on special events, new laws, classes, how to live & age successfully, & other information & services. Please let us know if there is something you are particularly interested in & would like to share via our newsletter.

### **WHAT ARE VOLUNTEERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IN THE PROGRAM**

RSVP asks each volunteer to observe the following principles while performing any volunteer assignment:

- The volunteer assignment is important to the volunteer station, to RSVP, & to the public. Please perform the duties to the best of your ability, observe the days & hours agreed upon, cooperate with staff & other volunteers, & follow the policies set forth by the volunteer station. If a problem should arise with regard to the assignment, speak with the station supervisor &/or someone at the RSVP office.
- Please inform your station supervisor if you cannot report to your assignment, will be late, or must leave early. We all realize that emergencies & conflicting commitments will arise. Your volunteer workstation will be happy to work with you on these conflicts.
- If you will be away for an extended period of time, or if you choose to discontinue serving at a particular volunteer station, please inform the RSVP Office in advance & also communicate with your volunteer workstation.

counselor. It is important that RSVP knows when you started & ended your volunteer time daily, **how many hours you worked** & the **type of job you performed** at each recognized volunteer station. If you have any questions on filling out the timesheet, please call the office & we will be happy to help. If you are not sure you are working at a recognized volunteer workstation, again—ask—we are happy to help. For us to count your volunteer hours, we MUST get your timesheet monthly.

### **HOURS YOU MAY COUNT**

When you work at a volunteer station such as a school, the library, Senior Center, Chamber of Commerce, etc., you will need to keep track of the hours that you work & then report them on your timesheet monthly. RSVP needs to know about your hours, because these records prove to the community & the nation that seniors, 55 & older, are a great contributing resource.

### **HOURS YOU MAY NOT COUNT**

You may not count work done which should be done by a paid employee, work done for members of the immediate household, work done for a political organization, or work for a profit-making institution. In addition, you may not count hours in a church that involve teaching or preaching.

NOTE: Hours may not be counted when you work at a non-approved volunteer station. If you are not sure, please check with the RSVP Office. We can make an agreement with the volunteer station where you volunteer & will be happy to do so.

## BENEFITS OF BEING AN RSVP MEMBER

### 1. Insurance:

As an enrolled RSVP member, you are covered by personal liability, accident, & excess automobile liability insurance at no cost to you. Benefits include up to \$25,000 in medical insurance, \$1,000,000 in personal liability insurance & \$500,000 bodily injury & property damage for each accident. The insurance covers you while you are working at the assignment, as well as while you're en route to & from the station. At the time of enrollment, you are asked to sign an insurance form designating a beneficiary.

In case of an accident, you should call the RSVP office at 947-8462 immediately. A claim form will be sent to you to be completed & returned to RSVP. You should include all bills & a statement from Medicare (if you are enrolled in Medicare). RSVP insurance pays expenses in excess of benefits paid for by Medicare & your supplementary insurance.

### 2. Transportation:

The Traveler provides wheelchair accessible, door-to-door, demand responsive, driver-assisted transportation to Garfield County residents who can not use public or private transportation because it is unavailable, inaccessible or unaffordable. This program primarily serves the elderly, disabled low-income & rural residents of Garfield County.

To schedule a ride, call on any weekday at least 24 hours before your volunteer assignment. Call 945-9117 in the Glenwood Springs area & 625-1366 in the Rifle area. The Traveler is available for volunteers to travel to volunteer worksites, **but please schedule your own ride.** The suggested donation for fares is \$1.50 each way in town. The drivers can not make change, so please have correct change. Punch cards are also available.

### 3. Meals:

Garfield County has congregate meal sites in each community. The meals are served hot & normally served from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.. The schedule for meals sites in Garfield County are the following: Monday – New Castle; Tuesday – Glenwood Springs & Rifle; Wednesday – Parachute, Carbondale & Silt; Thursday – Rifle; Friday – Glenwood Springs & Rifle. Please call one day in advance to cancel or reserve. Call 945-9117 for Glenwood Springs & Carbondale meal sites, 984-2334 for the New Castle meal sites, 876-5581 for the Silt meal site, 625-1366 for the Rifle Meal site & 285-7216 for the Parachute meal site (Parachute calls are taken only on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.). RSVP volunteers working at meal sites may receive their meal free on the day they are working. However, volunteers will not be discouraged from making a suggested contribution. As an RSVP volunteer, you may find known & new friends at our meal sites.

### 4. Recognition:

The annual recognition & awards ceremony is usually held once a year for all RSVP volunteers. Those who have been RSVP volunteers for 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years & 20 plus years are recognized at the Annual Recognition Banquet. In addition, the Paul Lappala award is given each year to one or two outstanding volunteers. A nomination form is given to each volunteer workstation. Then the nominations are reviewed by the recognition committee of the RSVP Advisory Council.

### 5. Training:

RSVP offers training occasionally to volunteers who would like to improve their skills or develop new ones. Let us know of any special training needs you may have—we can easily create a training program tailored to you. Watch our newsletter for information on existing training opportunities.