



RSVP TeleCare Program

6 Court Street • Rutland • VT 05701 • 802-775-8220

RSVP TeleCare Volunteer Guide

Welcome to the RSVP TeleCare Program and thank you for volunteering. Your time, service, and concern is greatly appreciated by RSVP and, more importantly, by the clients and their families. Your calls will not only help and assist our community members, but will allow our senior population to remain independent and feel less isolated. Elders feel comforted knowing that someone will be calling them to check in on a regularly scheduled basis.



Your compassion is the foundation of the RSVP TeleCare Program.

This Guide is meant to provide you with an overview of the program, guidelines and other useful information. Please keep it handy for easy reference and to assist you if you have questions.

What is RSVP TeleCare?

The RSVP TeleCare Program provides check in, telephone reassurance and friendly phone calls to area seniors or challenged adults who are homebound and/or isolated. This program targets our most vulnerable and needy population i.e., the elderly, who are trying to "age in place", remain independent and require support services to do so.

Who is eligible to be a TeleCare client?

Individuals may self-refer or be referred by a caregiver, family member or service provider. The service is FREE of charge to Rutland and Addison County residents. This program is intended to serve area seniors or disabled adults who are homebound, isolated, living alone, or otherwise in need of regular contact to ensure personal safety. This may be temporary while recuperating from an illness or it may be a permanent situation. Married couples who are isolated or homebound are also eligible to be TeleCare clients.

Calling Assignments

Each TeleCare Volunteer will be matched with a client(s) primarily based on scheduling and location (to avoid long distance call charges). Volunteers may elect to call more than one client, which is up to them and their preferences and schedules.

Calling Timeframes/Schedules/Conflicts

There will be a specific timeframe/calling schedule prearranged between the TeleCare Volunteer and the TeleCare Client. Time of day, days of the week, etc. will all be pre-determined and agreed to by all parties. Commitment to this is absolutely critical to ensure success. **In the event that you are unable to make a call** due to illness or some unexpected schedule conflict or other situation, please let your client know as soon as possible and **also inform RSVP so that we might make alternative arrangements**. If your client does not answer, please leave a message for them. Then, call the RSVP office at 775-8220 or leave a message if it is after office hours. If possible, we ask that you provide at least a week's notice if you are planning to stop volunteering altogether to allow us time to make new arrangements.

Confidentiality

As an RSVP TeleCare Volunteer you will be privy to client information that is personal and highly confidential. It is essential that you maintain total confidentiality and honor the TeleCare client's privacy. You will be asked to read and sign a Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement that indicates your understanding and commitment to honor this policy. Should confidentiality be breached, you may be terminated as an RSVP TeleCare volunteer subject to review by the Executive Director of RSVP.

Calling Procedures

Place your call to the RSVP TeleCare client at the pre-arranged time and allow the phone to **ring at least 15 times**. If there is **no answer, try again in 10 or 15 minutes**. If there is **still no answer, call the Emergency Contacts** that have been provided to you. **If you are able** to reach one of the Emergency Contacts be sure to log that on your Calls/Hours Reporting Form. You may want to request the Emergency Contact call you back once they have checked on the client for your peace of mind. **If you are unable to reach any of the Emergency Contacts**, you should check in with RSVP at 775-8220 to make sure that the client did not call RSVP to report being gone or, if our office is closed and/or no one is available, you should **call 911 or the local police**. Please inform RSVP as soon as possible if you have engaged emergency responders so that we might follow up to ensure the safety of the TeleCare client and for record keeping purposes. Be sure to record your actions on your Calls/Hours Reporting Form, including any follow up actions and the outcome.

ALWAYS KEEP YOUR VOLUNTEER CALLER INSTRUCTION SHEET NEARBY AS A HANDY REMINDER OF THE BASIC PROCEDURES.

Emergency Procedures

If during the course of the phone call with the TeleCare client you or the client believe that there is an immediate emergency **instruct the client to hang up and call 911**. When you hang up call 911 and report the incident yourself as a follow-up, identifying yourself as a TeleCare Volunteer. Next, call both RSVP **AND** one of the Emergency Contacts for your client to inform them of the incident and for record keeping purposes. Be sure to log it on your Calls/Hours Reporting Form. **At no time should you dispense medical advice or offer services to the client. RSVP TeleCare is not a referral service, telemedicine provider, or medical alert service.**

Non-Emergency Concerns

If you have a concern arising from a conversation with a TeleCare client but it is not an emergency, inform the client that you will pass on their concern to RSVP and record it on your Calls/Hours Reporting Form. You have to use your own sound judgment in determining if a concern is critical or not or if it can be put off until you either submit your Reporting Form to RSVP or call our office. If you have any doubts, we encourage you to call our office and speak to an RSVP staff member to help you determine the correct course of action.

Calls/Hours Reporting Form

You will be provided with Calls/ Hours Reporting Forms which you will be expected to complete and submit to the RSVP office on a monthly basis. You can mail them in, drop them off or submit them via email (we can send you the form electronically). Each form is for a single client so if you have more than one client you will need to record them on separate forms. You can plan on submitting them on a 4 week cycle to simplify the process, unless other arrangements have been made. If you have filled in the column for Concerns for Client, and they are urgent or pressing, don't wait to inform RSVP. Call immediately and let us know.

Making the Calls

Start your conversation by identifying yourself - "This is your RSVP TeleCare volunteer (your name), calling". We encourage you to use a warm and friendly tone when chatting with your TeleCare client as this is often the only contact they may have with others on a given day. Your cheerful and compassionate manner will be greatly appreciated and valued. If the TeleCare client desires, spend some time chatting with them asking questions such as "Are you feeling OK today?" or "What did you have for breakfast?" as this is a great way to discover if there are any concerns to address. Other clients may simply want a basic check-in or reassurance call. The choices may vary, depending on various factors such as their schedule, mood, etc. You and the client will make that determination together. Be flexible and allow time to adjust to the needs of the TeleCare client. Your skills as a compassionate listener form the foundation of each conversation you engage in with the TeleCare client. **Regularly remind the client to let you know of any changes in their schedule that would alter your calling days and/or times.**

Referrals/Community Resources

In the event that your client asks for a referral for a service or other general information please suggests that they call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119 or, in the Rutland Area, 786-5991 or visit their website at www.svcoa.org. A program of the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, this information and referral service for Vermont seniors is free of charge. They will get answers to questions on issues such as health insurance, housing, transportation, home care, living wills, caregiver information, nursing homes, income supplement programs, prescription coverage, meals on wheels, and many more. In addition, clients can simply dial 211 for information on human service agencies that might assist them both locally and statewide.

*Please call RSVP/VC at 775-8220 at any time
if you have any questions or concerns.*

We value your feedback and input.

*Together we will make RSVP TeleCare an effective and successful program
that meets some of the key needs of our senior population.*

**On behalf of your TeleCare Client and the staff of RSVP/VC
our sincere thanks for agreeing to be a TeleCare Volunteer.**





RSVP TeleCare Program



Volunteer Training Checklist

1. _____ Receive a thorough explanation of the TeleCare Program from RSVP staff.

Comments: _____

2. _____ Register with RSVP as a TeleCare Volunteer.

Comments: _____

3. _____ Attend training, and read the Volunteer Guide.

Comments: _____

4. _____ Understand all components of the TeleCare Program through a one on one or group training conducted by RSVP staff.

Comments: _____

5. _____ Sign and submit the RSVP TeleCare Confidentiality Agreement.

Comments: _____

6. _____ Sign and submit the RSVP TeleCare Job Description.

Comments: _____

7. _____ Receive your Volunteer Caller Instruction Sheet which will include your specific TeleCare Client Information.

Comments: _____

8. _____ Receive Calls/ Hours Reporting Forms and understand the procedure for submission to RSVP.

Comments: _____

9. _____ Discuss any questions or concerns arising prior to the start of volunteering.

Comments: _____



Job Description for the RSVP TeleCare Volunteer

General Summary of Job:

The RSVP/Volunteer Center Tele Care volunteer will provide volunteer services specific to the RSVP TeleCare Program, at no cost, to individuals throughout the RSVP service area.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

The volunteer will be required to complete training & orientation conducted by RSVP/VC staff.

The volunteer will be encouraged to attend occasional “refresher” meetings to be informed of any updates/changes to documents in the Volunteer Guide. In addition, experience of best practices will be shared between and amongst TeleCare Volunteers.

The volunteer will follow the procedures outlined during the trainings which will involve making regularly scheduled phone contact with the TeleCare client for the purpose of check-in and reassurance.

The volunteer will sign all necessary paperwork (for example, the confidentiality agreement and job description) and agree to background checks to ensure the safety of the TeleCare clients. Violations of the procedures could result in the volunteer being terminated from the program.

The volunteer will be responsible for maintaining and submitting on a regular basis all paperwork required as part of their participation in the RSVP TeleCare program, such as their TeleCare Calls/Hours Reporting Forms.

The volunteer will keep RSVP and their TeleCare clients informed about any changes in the calling schedule due to illness, vacations, etc. so as to minimize the impact on all stakeholders.

Qualifications:

The volunteer must have a pleasant phone manner, conducting themselves appropriately on the phone.

The volunteer must be willing to commit to a minimum of one phone call per week.

The volunteer should enjoy working with adults of any age.

The volunteer should be committed to the goals of the RSVP TeleCare program.

I have read the above Job description

_____ **Signature of volunteer**

_____ **Date**



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Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

To be in compliance with RSVP TeleCare Program Regulations and to respect the privacy of each TeleCare client, confidentiality of information is of primary importance.

Persons who receive or process written or verbal information for the RSVP TeleCare Program and its clients are advised that all such information is strictly confidential.

No information relative to the clients enrolled in RSVP TeleCare shall be discussed or released by any volunteer of RSVP & The Volunteer Center, unless authorized by the Executive Director.

All records are confidential and clients' personal information should be kept in a location not available to public access.

The volunteer will not use information obtained through RSVP TeleCare for his or her own use. This includes not discussing clients or their families, except when it is clearly related to the TeleCare service.

Upon concluding my volunteer service with the RSVP TeleCare Program, I hereby agree to return all TeleCare client records that I have obtained in connection with my volunteer responsibilities with the RSVP TeleCare Program. Further, I agree to keep confidential all information contained in those records to which I had access during my tenure with RSVP.

Any individual that violates this confidentiality will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Your signature below acknowledges that you have read, understand, and will adhere to the policies stated above.

Signature

Printed Name

Date



RSVP TeleCare Volunteer Caller Instruction Sheet



Your TeleCare Client's Name Is: _____

Day(s) Of Call: _____

Time(s) Of Phone Call: _____

RSVP TeleCare Client Phone Number(s): _____

RSVP TeleCare Client Address: _____

If you will be unable to call the TeleCare client be sure to tell them at least the day before and notify RSVP at 775-8220 as soon as possible. Leave a message if the office is closed.

Basic RSVP TeleCare Volunteer Procedures

1) Place your call to the RSVP TeleCare client at the pre-arranged time and allow the phone to **ring at least 15 times**.

If there is **no answer, try again in 10 or 15 minutes**.

If there is **still no answer, call the Emergency Contacts** that have been provided to you.

If you are able to reach one of the Emergency Contacts just log that on your Calls/Hours Reporting Form. You may want to request the Emergency Contact call you back once they have checked on the client for your peace of mind.

If you are unable to reach any of the Emergency Contacts, you may check in with RSVP at 775-8220 to make sure that the client did not call RSVP to report being gone or, if our office is closed and/or no one is available, you should **call 911 or the local police department**.

2) Use a warm, friendly voice and indicate that "this is your RSVP TeleCare Volunteer, (Your name) calling". You are encouraged to spend some time chatting as your conversation with them may be the only one they have all day. Some TeleCare clients may only desire a reassurance or check in call while others may need more specific questions asked such as "What did you have for breakfast today? or Are you feeling OK today?", etc.

3) Volunteers **must refrain** from providing health related advice to TeleCare clients. TeleCare is NOT a referral service, telemedicine provider or medical alert service. Health concerns are an important and popular topic but volunteers cannot recommend treatment or provide advice to clients regarding health related issues such as diagnosis, care or treatment, referral to a particular health care provider or facility. If a client asks for medical advice, encourage him/her to call their doctor.

4) If the TeleCare client has a medical emergency while on the phone with you, immediately instruct them to hang up and dial "911". When you hang up, call "911" to report the incident. Then call an Emergency Contact and RSVP promptly to inform them of the incident.

Always identify yourself as an RSVP TeleCare Volunteer to whomever you are speaking, including the client, the Emergency Contacts, police or other emergency personnel or RSVP staff. Leave the phone number at which you can be reached.

PLEASE REFER TO YOUR RSVP TELECARE VOLUNTEER GUIDE FOR FURTHER DETAILS AROUND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.



RSVP/VC 6 Court St. Rutland, VT 05701
(802)775-8220



RSVP TeleCare: Calls / Hours Reporting Form

Month of _____

TeleCare Volunteer : _____
Name printed Signature

Client Name: _____

Date of call:	Length of time spent on call:	Any concerns / questions	
		Total Volunteer Time this page:	Total # calls this page:

