

RSVP

Making a Difference

We invite you to share your feedback with us regarding your experiences as a volunteer and with any issues or concerns you may have. RSVP/VC is here to serve you, our volunteer. Our goal is to ensure that you have a completely successful, satisfying and rewarding volunteer experience.

You can keep us informed via email at rsvprutland@aol.com by phone at 802-775-8220 or through the website at www.volunteersinvt.org

Our website also has many of the forms you may use such as the Hours Reporting Form, donation envelopes and the latest newsletter.

Rutland County



*RSVP Volunteers:
Sharing Talents
Touching Lives
Changing the World*



Volunteer Handbook

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RSVP/VC Contact Information

***Our office is located at:
6 Court Street
Rutland, VT 05701***

Our hours are 8 AM to 4 PM M-F

We can be contacted several ways:

Phone: 802-775-8220

Fax: 802-775-8221

**Email: rsvp@volunteersinvt.org or
rsvp@rutland.aol.com**

Website: www.volunteersinvt.org

Each staff member has their own voice mail so when you call please listen to the menu carefully before making your selection.

Parking for our office is the parking lot for Grace Congregational Church. Once parked, come down the driveway between our office and the church. You will see a ramp leading to the door. We suggest you use this entrance.

Grievance Procedures

RSVP/VC recognizes that not all volunteer assignments are without problems. At times, problems may arise that cannot be resolved by talking. The grievance procedure provides an RSVP volunteer with a means of presenting grievances without fear of reprisals. The volunteer can request a grievance meeting with the RSVP/VC coordinator after discussing the problem with the staff at the station without satisfactory resolution. The coordinator will try to find an acceptable resolution. If the volunteer still feels his/her needs have not been met, a meeting can be requested with the RSVP/VC Director. If an acceptable resolution is not reached at this level, the volunteer may request, in writing, a meeting with the Rutland Community Programs Board of Directors. The decision of the RCP Board is final.

Insurance Information

In order to minimize the risks associated with volunteering, all non profit agencies that utilize RSVP/VC volunteers have signed an agreement to be an RSVP/VC station. These agreements are kept on file in our office and updated per compliance regulations.

While volunteering at these designated stations, your RSVP/VC supplemental insurance is in effect. At times you may want to take on additional work aside from your RSVP/VC assignments. Under these circumstances you will not be covered by RSVP/VC insurance. Only those assignments for which we track hours are covered. This is for your protection. We ask that you please adhere to this procedure.

Handicap Accessibility

Title V, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended) prohibits discrimination against disabled persons in all programs, services and activities receiving federal funds. It is a policy of the National Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) that its programs be accessible by individuals with disabilities.

WELCOME NEW RSVP/VC VOLUNTEER

It is our pleasure to take this opportunity to welcome you to RSVP and The Volunteer Center. There exists today, perhaps more than ever before, a tremendous need for volunteers in many of the non profit organizations throughout Rutland County. Volunteers are being asked to share their time and efforts with others as a response to the pressing issues our communities face. You can volunteer as little or as much as you want. There is no minimum time required and no age restrictions. Your gifts of time and talent will be appreciated and valued by those you touch with your service.

You can make a difference by sharing in the caring!

This handbook was written for you the volunteer, to familiarize you with RSVP/VC and to use as a reference tool as you volunteer. We encourage you to take the time to read the information which along with your orientation will prepare you to begin your volunteer assignment. Please feel free to openly share any hesitations or concerns with us so that we can respond to you in a helpful manner.

RSVP is here to serve you, our volunteer!

Contact information is on the back inside cover of this booklet for easy reference. Remember to visit the website to stay up to date on RSVP/VC, see the latest newsletter, and learn more details about current opportunities available to you. Each staff member has voice mail so feel free to leave us a detailed message including your full name and phone number so we can return your call promptly.

Enjoy your volunteer work!

Nan M. Hart - Executive Director RSVP/VC

Tammy Brown - Office and Community Coordinator,
Rutland Reads Coordinator and TeleCare Coordinator

Michele Dauphinais - Volunteer Coordinator and
Operation Dolls and More Coordinator

Pat Facey - Bone Builders Coordinator

What is RSVP/VC?

RSVP and The Volunteer Center is an “Invitation to Serve” program for people of all ages who want to make a difference in their communities by getting involved and realizing the satisfaction that comes with being a volunteer. You will have the opportunity to serve at one of the 200+ non profit organizations we work with or to participate through one of our RSVP Signature Programs, such as RSVP Bone Builders or RSVP TeleCare.

Nationally, RSVP, one of the largest volunteer efforts in the nation, began in 1971 as part of the Older American’s Act. Today, RSVP is part of the **National Senior Service Corps**, which consists of RSVP, the Foster Grandparent Program, and the Senior Companion Program. The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) provides federal dollars as well as policy guidelines and regulations. There are over 1350 Senior Corps programs throughout the United States with over 500,000 volunteers.

Locally, RSVP & The Volunteer Center is part of the Community Care Network's Rutland Community Programs, our sponsor for over 30 years. RSVP/VC has the unique advantage of being a well-established volunteer program with over 35 years of successful volunteer management as well a strong collaborative partnership with over 200 non profit organizations in the 2 county region we serve.

RSVP/VC has nearly 1000 volunteers at our disposal to mobilize and engage as the needs arise for their services. What does this mean to our communities? It means that RSVP is a catalyst for positive change, with you, the volunteer, positively impacting your community with your dedicated service.

Professional Volunteer Coordinators will assist you in selecting from hundreds of interesting and diverse opportunities to find what suits your needs best. You can be sure their personalized support will make your volunteer experience successful.

RSVP/VC Roots and History

RSVP is part of the triad of senior volunteer programs known collectively as the National Senior Service Corps. We are regulated federally by The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS provides programmatic and fiscal oversight.



Visit the Senior Corps website at www.seniorcorps.gov

RSVP/VC Volunteers do not receive any stipend for their volunteer service and have broad flexibility as to scheduling, type of volunteer service, hours, etc. based on their desires, talents, and needs.

For 35+ years, RSVP has been sponsored locally by Community Care Network’s Rutland Community Programs division. CCN is a network of programs aimed at improving the health status of our citizens through its broad array of mental health and human service programs.

Visit the CCN website at www.rmhscn.org for more details.



RSVP/VC is also a proud member of United Way of Rutland County.



Why Become an RSVP/VC Volunteer?

When you volunteer, you're not just helping others, you're helping yourself. Volunteering will lead to fresh discoveries, interesting challenges and new friendships. There are conclusive studies that show volunteering helps you live a physically and mentally healthier life. This is no surprise to us. We have been witness to this for many years!

As a volunteer with RSVP, you are entitled to a number of benefits:

- Supplemental insurance that covers you while actively serving at a Volunteer Station from whom we receive hours documentation.
- Professional intake, placement and ongoing support from our highly trained Volunteer Coordinators. In the case of Signature Programs, you will also receive appropriate orientation and training.
- Recognition events at which we honor your service.
- Social interaction and an opportunity to meet new people.
- Newsletters full of information relative to volunteering and other topics of interest to you.
- An opportunity to learn new skills and develop new talents.
- Full details on hundreds of volunteer options in your community.
- A way to stay engaged in all that life has to offer!
- The chance to make a real difference in your community!
- You have access to a comprehensive service designed to assist you in all aspects of volunteering from selecting that initial choice to making that first important contact with the volunteer station to keeping you informed of other opportunities as they become available at one of the over 100 sties we work with on your behalf.

RSVP/VC Advisory Council

The RSVP/VC Advisory Council consists of individuals from the community at large. They come from our corps of volunteers as well as sites we serve or other community partners and/or stakeholders. Council members provide feedback, programming advice, evaluation, assistance with events and activities such as our annual Recognition Luncheon. They are advocates and spokespersons for RSVP and The Volunteer Center. They are priceless ambassadors for RSVP/VC, raising awareness about our services and sharing the story of RSVP/VC volunteers in our region.

Who is Eligible to be an RSVP/VC Volunteer?

Anyone with a desire to explore the world of volunteering is eligible to be an RSVP/VC volunteer. There are no educational, income, or experience requirements nor any barriers relative to race, citizenship, creed, nationality, gender, disability or political affiliation. There are no dues or membership fees.

What are Signature Programs?

RSVP/VC designs, develops and implements special ongoing projects we call **Signature Programs** in response to well defined community needs. RSVP/VC Signature Program volunteers provide direct service and are trained, supported, and guided by RSVP staff. Programs such as RSVP Bone Builders, RSVP TeleCare, and RSVP Operation Dolls and More are just three examples. These programs attract volunteers who are looking for a unique challenge and an opportunity to respond to gaps in service or to an issue or identified need within our communities. Other issue areas include literacy and education, transportation, wellness, and health issues. The website has extensive information about each of our Signature Programs and we have brochures available at the office that provide complete details.

What is a Volunteer Station?

Volunteer Station is a term we use to refer to a non-profit that has a written agreement (Memorandum of Understanding or MOU) with RSVP/VC to provide volunteer assignments for you. RSVP/VC works with over 100 organizations in Rutland County. For a complete list of stations stop by our office, visit our website or give us a call. Each volunteer station has a volunteer supervisor designated to provide you with orientation and training for your particular volunteer assignment. He/she will be our regular contact person at the volunteer site. They will provide you with ongoing information and details of your service. Additionally, they will listen and attempt to accommodate your needs as a volunteer. The relationship that develops between a volunteer and his/her station supervisor is an ongoing process of communication, support, and respect.

Station Responsibilities

Our Volunteer Stations (the sites where our volunteers serve) have responsibilities for ensuring that the volunteer has a safe, satisfying, purposeful experience. They have agreed:

- To provide adequate **orientation and training** for the volunteer.
- To provide **safe conditions** for the volunteer at all times.
- To assist, if possible financially, with **transportation** or make arrangements for transportation.
- To provide, if possible financially, **meals and/or refreshments** to volunteers as an in-kind donation and to provide this information annually to RSVP for their records.
- To **recognize** the contribution of time and effort that is provided by RSVP/VC volunteers. This can be done both informally (a verbal thank you) or more formally through an event designed to recognize the volunteer. We encourage our Volunteer Stations to attend the RSVP/VC Recognition Luncheon as a way of showing support.
- To not displace a paid worker. RSVP volunteers are intended to expand organizational capacity by offering assistance to non profits who, thanks to the efforts of volunteers, can continue to serve the residents of our communities.
- To, track, collect and submit hours, impact, and accomplishments of the RSVP volunteers who serve at their organizations and to report that data per the MOU to RSVP as agreed upon.

Volunteer Responsibilities

- To identify yourself as an RSVP volunteer (this helps with our ongoing efforts to recruit new volunteers).
- To cooperate with your volunteer station supervisor and abide by all the rules and policies of that organization such as confidentiality.
- To conduct yourself in an appropriate manner at all times.
- To avoid unsafe or risky tasks and report any such requests to staff.
- To report any incidents of personal injury to your site and RSVP.
- To notify RSVP of change of address, phone, or assignment.
- To notify staff at your station if you cannot volunteer.
- To notify RSVP staff if you have a problem or issue that you need assistance addressing.

Why is it Important to Collect Your Volunteer Hours?

Hours and data collection is **federally mandated** as part of our agreement to accept federal funds to support our programs. Hours and data represent a statistical snapshot of our accomplishments as a volunteer placement/management organization. As a federal program, we have outcome goals that must be met and reported in order to allow our legislators and other funders to get a numerical summary of our work.

Hours and other outcome data **validates and verifies that registered RSVP volunteers have been active** over the course of the fiscal year being reviewed. Only those volunteers who are actively volunteering are eligible to enjoy the benefits of RSVP such as the supplemental insurance we offer, recognition events, newsletters, etc.

Hours documentation signed and submitted by our volunteers and/or volunteer stations ensures that you remain insured. This documentation is the sole verification that you are actively volunteering at a specific site. Without this **signed written documentation**, our supplemental insurance policy does not cover you in the event of an injury.

It allows local non profits who utilize RSVP volunteers to tell their story of service to the community and to funders. Accurate records about the volunteers serving at local sites means non profits can highlight the fact that they are using volunteers to expand their operational capacity. Volunteers represent a cost savings to already tightly budgeted organizations and represents an in-kind match for their budgets. This leveraging of funds is critical. Potential and ongoing funders look very positively on such wise and creative fiscal management.

RSVP, through both national and local marketing and public awareness efforts, promotes the true story of today's older adult population as active, contributing members of their communities. The powerful impact of volunteers benefits everyone by saving taxpayer dollars, reducing healthcare costs and strengthening civic participation. By collecting hard data and sharing that information we can continue to ensure that the world knows the true impact of our volunteers and their incredible contribution to the well being of our communities.

Without the tracking done by RSVP, the efforts of volunteers remains unidentified in any comprehensive way. We will tell the story of your service so that the world knows volunteers make a difference!