



**Meals On Wheels**

*Meals are just our first course!*

# **VOLUNTEER POLICY & PROCEDURES**

## **Introduction**

These policies and procedures are designed to establish conditions that will attract and retain qualified volunteers for all available service positions. They reflect the current best practices in the field of volunteerism and predominant values and standards of Meals on Wheels Programs & Services of Rockland, Inc. (referred to as the "Agency").

This manual is intended as a day-to-day service guide for volunteers and their supervisors. The Agency reserves the right to modify the policies and procedures at any time and will notify volunteers about the changes.

Every volunteer will be given a copy of the Volunteer Service Policy & Procedure Manual as part of the volunteer orientation. A statement by the volunteer acknowledging receipt of the Manual shall be kept on file in the volunteer department.

## **Agency Mission Statement**

The mission of the agency is to enhance the wellness of Rockland's older adults and their families by providing services that support their safety, independence and health.

## **Volunteer Department Mission Statement**

The goal of the Volunteer Department is to provide qualified, trainable volunteers to perform specific duties and functions, working together with staff to increase the effectiveness of the Agency's mission to benefit the clients we serve.

## **Agency Overview**

The Agency is a non-profit corporation providing a myriad of services to older adults, the disabled and the homebound across Rockland County.

The Agency, through its many programs, delivers services to the community at large to help maintain independent living for many people for as long as possible.

Founded in part through the Rockland County Legislature as a subcontractor of the Rockland County Office for the Aging, the Agency has grown to meet the diverse needs of an ever growing older adult population. Contracts granting Federal and State money under the Older Americans Act, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), the Villages, the United Way and a number of County Departments and Agencies keep the program solvent. Participant contributions, recipient's fees, private

donations, grants, and the sale of prepared meals help to defray administrative costs of the agency.

The Agency collects and maintains information about clients as required by our major contractor the Rockland County Office for the Aging. The information is kept in individual case files and file cabinets. This information is kept confidential and is shared with the Office for the Aging for statistical purposes only.

The following represents the purposes and goals of the Agency's programs:

### **1. Senior Activity Center Programs**

Clarkstown/ Pearl River Senior Center

Nyack Senior Center

Ramapo Senior Center/ North Rockland Senior Center

This program is mandated to serve persons sixty years or older or persons married to individuals sixty years of age or older, to provide social and emotional support and prevent isolation and possible premature institutionalization. Participants are offered a broad range of services in a congregate setting which may include some or all of the following services: a) nutritionally balanced hot meals; b) nutrition education; c) transportation to centers, shopping, medical and hospital visits; d) advocacy, information and referral; e) program and recreational activities and trips; f) health screening; g) legal, financial and housing assistance; h) case assistance/ counseling; i) opportunities to volunteer, and j) other services and programs as they evolve.

A particular group of the over sixty population is known as the "Target Population" (as defined by the older Americans' Act) and may be identified as the priority group for services. The "Target Population: includes a) anyone who suffers loneliness and isolation but prefers not to be alone and would benefit from socialization at a Senior Center; b) anyone who is economically disadvantaged; c) anyone who is not able or willing to prepare properly balanced nutritious meals; d) anyone who can benefit from obtaining needed resources by direct information or referral through a Senior Activity Center; e) anyone who is low income, disabled or of minority background as defined by law; or f) anyone who is considered to be vulnerable.

### **2. Home Delivered Services**

Meals on Wheels provides peace of mind for caregivers and older adults by delivering nutritious meals to any Rockland resident who cannot shop or cook for themselves due to illness, physical disability or advanced age. In addition to the daily meal, caring volunteers deliver a friendly, personal connection, a safety check and an important link to the greater community. Home delivered meals, along with all of our services, are part of a greater continuum of care that enable older adults to remain as independent as possible and living in their own homes.

### **3. Rockland Central Commissary**

This professionally operated kitchen was established to prepare and provide cost effective, nutritionally balanced meals to congregate and home delivery programs, and to offer meal service to other agencies and/ or programs, as requested.

A fully equipped commissary enables staff to prepare meals each day. The commissary packages individual meals for home delivery and prepares bulk meals for distribution at congregate center sites, schools and to other contracted programs.

### **VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

A volunteer's service with the Agency is not for a specified period of time and can be terminated at any time for any reason, with or without cause or notice by the volunteer or by the Agency.

### **Equal Volunteer Opportunity**

The Agency strives to provide a safe and secure environment for all volunteers. No person volunteering with the Agency or seeking to volunteer with the Agency shall be appointed, removed, or discriminated against because of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship, genetic predisposition or carrier status or any other characteristic protected by the federal, state, or local law.

### **Orientation Process**

Each volunteer will meet with the Volunteer Coordinator for a volunteer service interview. During the service interview the Volunteer Coordinator will provide the potential volunteer with an Agency overview in order to match the skills and expectations of both the volunteer and the program.

Once the volunteer has been accepted as an Agency volunteer, they will then meet with the site supervisor of their assigned program for an orientation on the policies and procedures of that specific program.

The volunteer will be supervised by both the site supervisor and the Volunteer Department.

**\*Please note the following characteristics that will automatically disqualify a person from serving as an Agency volunteer:**

**- Criminal background, such as felony conviction, assault charges, theft/robbery charges, convicted of driving under the influence of a controlled substance, etc.**

If appropriate, when a disqualifying characteristic is detected in an applicant for a volunteer position, the Agency may consider the applicant for another volunteer position.

### **Minimum Age for Volunteers**

The minimum age for volunteering on Agency premises is twelve years old. Any child twelve to seventeen needs permission from a parent or legal guardian to volunteer.

- Children under the age of twelve may volunteer off premises for the benefit of the Agency and its' recipients i.e.: special projects, food drives, etc.

### **Background Checks**

Volunteers having direct contact with older adults are required to pass a background check. The background check is limited to only sexual offenses. If the potential volunteer refuses to sign a release form they will not be able to volunteer as a home delivered meal driver or in any of the older adult centers.

### **Volunteer Drivers**

Volunteer drivers must provide proof of a valid New York state driver's license and auto insurance during their initial meeting with the Volunteer Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to submit a copy of their renewed auto insurance card to the Volunteer Department as soon as it is made available to them. The Agency reserves the right to suspend volunteer service until proper documentation is provided.

### **Volunteer Driver Safety**

If a meal recipient is exhibiting serious symptoms such as bleeding, a fall, is unconscious, short of breath, experiencing chest pains or other serious symptoms DO NOT attempt to move participant. **FIRST, CALL 911 FOR ASSISTANCE, and then notify the Meals on Wheels office at (845)624-6325.** \* Remember to **BE CAREFUL** if the meal recipient is bleeding; blood and bodily fluids can carry infectious viruses.

### **Change of Volunteer Information**

To ensure accuracy in the Agency's records, volunteers are requested to notify the Volunteer Department in writing of any changes in name, home address, telephone number or emergency contact.

### **Assigned Volunteer Service Schedule**

The Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Site Supervisor will set a schedule with the volunteer upon orientation.

**Regular-** Deliver the same route on a consistent basis (once per week or once every other week)

**Substitute Driver-** Deliver a route based upon scheduled availability (able to deliver at least once a quarter)

**Holiday Driver-** Only available for Holiday delivery

Any contact with program participants and/or the program made by the volunteer outside the scope of their assigned volunteer service schedule is not authorized by the Agency, therefore the Agency will not be held liable for any unauthorized contact.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

#### **a. Attendance**

Volunteers are considered non-paid staff and are expected to conduct themselves as professionals. Each volunteer's attendance is very important to properly serve our clients and fully perform the mission of the organization. It is each volunteer's responsibility to call his or her supervisor directly and as far in advance as possible to notify them of any change in schedule. \***Please note**, Volunteer Drivers who need to cancel a route on the day of a scheduled delivery, must call the Volunteer Coordinator by 8am.

The Agency reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's service based on poor attendance.

#### **b. Punctuality**

Excessive lateness disrupts the Agency's ability to provide quality programs and services.

The Agency reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's service due to excess lateness.

### **Gas Allowance**

The Homebound Program currently offers a gas allowance per route to Volunteer drivers who request this stipend. Please see the Volunteer Coordinator for the reimbursement amount.

If you wish to receive this gas allowance that is reimbursed quarterly, please fill out attached form and return it to the Volunteer Coordinator.

\*\* Form can be found in back of packet

### **Confidentiality**

The protection of confidential information is vital to the agency. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, client names, addresses and any other client related information, mailing lists, donor information and financial information. All agency volunteers are required to uphold client and Agency confidentiality.

### **Grievances**

If a volunteer has a grievance with anyone with whom they work and cannot resolve it on their own, they should inform their direct supervisor first. If the problem is with their supervisor, they should inform the Volunteer Coordinator. The next line of report is the President & CEO.

It is the responsibility of the direct supervisor and the volunteer to decide upon a plan of action in order to handle the matter. If the problem persists, a second plan of action can be taken. After that, it is left to the discretion of Agency management to handle the matter.

### **Taking Action on Volunteer Complaints**

If a direct supervisor is having difficulties with a volunteer, they must report to the Volunteer Coordinator to decide together upon a plan of action. If the problem with the volunteer persists, and the volunteer's conduct has become a hindrance to the program and or the clients' care, the Agency reserves the right to remove the volunteer from the volunteer position. The volunteer may be considered for another position within the Agency if deemed appropriate to do so. All volunteer complaints, plans of action (official reprimands) and outcomes will be kept on file in the Volunteer Department.

## **Disciplinary Action and Termination**

If a volunteer's service is below standard or if the volunteer engages in misconduct or does not adhere to a plan of action set by Agency management or has not responded positively to official reprimands the Agency will terminate their service. Both the volunteer and the Agency reserve the right to terminate volunteer service at any time for any reason, with or without cause, with or without notice.

### **Reasons for immediate termination include, but are not limited to:**

#### **Appearance and Demeanor**

Volunteers are required to dress in appropriate attire and to behave in a professional manner. Please use good judgment in your choice of clothes, especially when working directly with seniors, and remember to conduct yourself at all times as a representative of the Agency.

#### **Commissary Attire**

Volunteers assigned to the commissary must wear long pants, sleeved shirt (no sleeveless), and good fitting rubber-soled shoes for safety. Hair nets, aprons and gloves must also be worn and are provided by the Agency.

#### **Substance Abuse**

Being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or other controlled substances while on Agency premises or while performing Agency services is strictly prohibited.

In addition the use, possession, sale, transfer or purchase of any illegal drug or alcohol while on Agency premises, or while performing Agency service is also strictly prohibited.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including immediate termination.

#### **Smoking Guidelines**

The Agency prohibits smoking during volunteer service. There is absolutely no smoking in or within the vicinity of any Agency building at any time. Volunteers who wish to smoke must do so outside of the building. Smoke breaks may not be taken if it interferes with Agency programming during a volunteer's assigned service schedule.

## **Corporate and Group Volunteers**



The Agency welcomes small groups of corporate and group volunteers for one time only volunteer experiences, as well as ongoing service, such as meal delivery, but requires certificates of liability naming Meals on Wheels Programs & Services or Rockland, Inc. as additionally insured. Certificates of liability should be sent to the Volunteer Department to be kept on file. Updated certificates are required throughout the duration of volunteer service.

**Reference letters**

Any volunteer requesting to have a reference letter for their resume, professor, job, school, etc. can request one from the Volunteer Coordinator. The letter will state your name, address, number of volunteer hours served and a brief description of your service.

- Community Service Volunteers must provide the Agency with the referring judge’s name and address. The reference letter will be written by the Chef Manager.

I have read and reviewed the Meals On Wheels Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and the Meals on Wheels Volunteer Policy & Procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Full Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date