

Greenfield Senior Center
your place
for friendship, fitness, & fun



VOLUNTEER MANUAL

Council on Aging & Senior Center
54 High Street, Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301
413.772.1517

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Table of Contents

Welcome from the Director	2
Mission Statement	7
Statement of Purpose	7
History	7
Summary of Activities and Services	9
Staff-Based Services	9
Support Groups	9
Other Services.....	9
Officers, Directors, and Staff	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Volunteer Opportunities (Job Descriptions)	10
Administrative	10
Board of Directors	11
Community	12
Courtesy Volunteer.....	13
Decorating Committee Volunteer	14
Greeter	15
Health & Wellness	16
MedRide Driver	17
Newsletter & Bulk Mailer	18
Receptionist	19
Special Events.....	20
Weather-related Closings, Delays, and/or Early Dismissals	21
Policies & Guidance	22
Confidentiality	22
Criminal Offender Record Investigation (CORI) Check	22
Equal Opportunity.....	22
Dress Code	22
Signing in/out – Attendance	22
Parking	22
Smoking	23
Gratuities	23
Personal Property.....	23
Accidents and Injuries	23
Volunteer Application	1
CORI Check	1

Welcome from the Director

Thank you for your interest in the Greenfield Council on Aging (COA) and Senior Center! We've prepared this Volunteer Manual to provide you with valuable

information pertaining to our mission, programs and policies, along with our expectations of volunteers.

Here at the Center, volunteers are at the heart of our work and, in most circumstances, the only way we're able to complete our mission. Here, mutual support and respect are the hallmarks among staff and volunteers and lead us to addressing the Center's mission on a daily basis.

Prospective volunteers are requested to fill out an application form and will be interviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator. If there are no current volunteer opportunities available, application forms will be kept on file for a period of one year. Applicants will be called if a project is identified which matches their stated interests or qualifications.

Volunteering to help elders is an extremely rewarding experience. We use volunteers in many different ways and consider their work an essential part of our service. The easiest way to find out about current volunteer opportunities is by speaking with our Volunteer Coordinator or any staff member. We look forward to you joining our dedicated staff and team of volunteers. Your involvement is significant in maintaining and enhancing the connections between the Center, our participants, and the community at large.

Welcome!

Hope Macary

Senior Center Director

This manual was created to give overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers. The policies contained herein do not express, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contract or employment agreement. These policies and this manual may be changed from time to time, with or without notice. Questions pertaining to areas not specifically covered by these policies should be directed to your supervisor and/or the Senior Center Director.

Mission Statement

The Council on Aging provides the elder citizens of the Town of Greenfield, Massachusetts and their families: services, information, community education, intergenerational activities, outreach, support, and activities. The Council on Aging recognizes the increasing number of elders in this community and welcomes those who have been life-long residents and those who have chosen to come to Greenfield to retire.

Specifically, the Town of Greenfield, through its Council on Aging provides a location, the Greenfield Senior Center, for organized activities and services as well as general socialization each weekday. The Council on Aging works cooperatively with other community agencies to enrich the lives and to advocate for elders age 55 and above, as they seek new challenges so that elders can maintain independence, dignity, social well being, and quality of life.

Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Purpose of the Greenfield Council on Aging is based on this premise: the community shares a collective responsibility for those who are seniors, that seniors have a right to participate in determining matters which vitally affect them, and that there is an important community resource in the wisdom, experience, skills, and abilities which the senior population has to share.

In accordance with this philosophy, the Council is committed to fulfilling the following functions:

1. Provide, through its multi-purpose Senior Center, an environment that supports personal dignity, opportunities for sharing, creative expression, learning, and a general encouragement of initiative and self-fulfillment.
2. Provide meaningful educational, social, recreational, cultural, and volunteer opportunities to encourage independence, participation, and community involvement.
3. Provide healthy lifestyle support through health promotion, health education, physical activities, and other wellness programs.
4. Be responsive and accessible to the changing needs of seniors, in cooperation with community organizations, agencies, and individuals. Offer assistance in coping with the challenges of aging by providing information, referrals, and counseling as appropriate.

History

The Greenfield Council on Aging was established by Town Meeting in 1967 and since then has provided continuous quality services and programming. The Town of Greenfield is committed to its elderly population, many of whom are striving to cope with health and financial problems, loneliness, and boredom.

This group has the right to determine matters which directly affect them and they, in turn, have the experience, education, and skills which enrich our community. The Council on Aging's purpose is to provide information in areas that will encourage and enhance independence, dignity, participation, and involvement with the community.

The Council on Aging provides, through the Senior Center, the opportunity for self-fulfillment and support in coping with problems. The Senior Center also provides educational, cultural, social, recreational, and volunteer activities.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that all Greenfield seniors enjoy a high quality of life.

Summary of Activities and Services

Among a significant number of ongoing activities and offsite services, the Senior Center provides an evolving number of programs designed for seniors. Among them are:

Staff-Based Services

- *Advocacy for Elders*
- *Notary Services*
- *Computer Training*
- *Information and Referral*: finding assistance & resources for elders and their families and caregivers
- *Volunteer Opportunities*: meaningful service and civic engagement through volunteerism
- *Wellness Events*: Flu clinics, health screenings, health education presentations, and more
- *Special Events*: holiday parties and other social gatherings, educational events, tag sales, craft fairs, and more
- *Intergenerational Activities*: bringing people of all ages together
- *Community Awareness*: Raising the level of appreciation in the community for elders' abilities and wisdom and increasing community awareness of elders' needs

Support Groups

A variety of support groups meet at the Center, for example:

- Fibromyalgia
- Low Vision Support
- Bereavement group

Other Services

- *Wellness Library*
- *Foot Work*: nail trimming twice monthly by appointment
- *SHINE*: help with Medicare Part D and other health insurance issues by appointment
- *Income Tax Preparation*: AARP Tax Aide Volunteers, February through April by appointment
- *MedRide*: Transportation to medical appointments outside Franklin County (call at least 48 hours in advance)

Volunteer Opportunities (Job Descriptions)

Administrative

Under the supervision and direction of the Volunteer Coordinator, many tasks fall within the administrative area providing general clerical office support to the Senior Center.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks may include:

- Coordinating mailings.
- Correspondence.
- Proof reading.
- Creating and/or editing reports.
- Collating documents.
- Preparing data for computer entry.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training.

- Friendly, courteous, cooperative demeanor
- Strong communications skills: verbal, written, and on the phone.
- Willingness and ability to work independently and cooperatively with GCOA staff, other volunteers, and other service providers and program participants.

Ability requirements

- Physical: Sits a minimum of 2.5 hours. Gets up from chair, stands, and moves about to assist patrons or complete other tasks.
- Hearing/speaking/vision: interacts with others in person and on the telephone, views print materials and a computer screen.
- Fine motor: Legible handwriting, filing, etc.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.

Board of Directors

Board of Director positions are appointed and require a nomination from the Board's Nominating Committee, an approval process through the Mayor's Office, a vote of the current Board, and swearing in requirement with appropriate officials (contact the COA directly for the details on the current appointment process).

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Attending regular monthly meetings and meetings at other times as warranted.
- Vote on proposals of interest to the Council on Aging
- The setting of policy for the administration of elder programs and services.
- Interaction with Senior Center staff and participants.
- Serving as advocates for elders.
- Educating the community at large about the needs of and resources affecting elders' lives.
- Short range planning pertaining to the Senior Center programs and facilities.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Ability and willingness to lead and/or serve on subcommittees in an assigned area or project.
- Familiarity with the workings of COA and the Senior Center
- Familiarity with assigned area or program.

Ability Requirements

- Ability to read the English Language
- Ability to sit for two or more hours

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Ability to lead in coordination with GCOA director and staff.

Community

Community Volunteers are individuals who share their gifts, talents, or education through programs and activities sponsored by the GCOA. In coordination with and under the supervision of the appropriate Senior Center staff, a Community Volunteer might provide a wide array of services.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Make a presentation or lead a workshop, class, activity, or program in their area of expertise. [Examples might include: an attorney leading a class on elder law issues; a college professor or teacher leading a class on the subject of their proficiency; an artist facilitating an art class; an author facilitating a writing class; a musician or dance instructor leading a class on performing; a computer literate person leading a presentation about using the internet or trouble-shooting problems; a psychologist or social worker leading a support group,

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Community volunteers must demonstrate qualifications and expertise in their particular field.
- The ability and interest in leading, teaching, and/or mentoring seniors in a specific area of expertise.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements

Courtesy Volunteer

Courtesy volunteers assist in various ways with events and activities as needed.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Assist people attending events or special activities at the Senior Center.
- Direct people to the areas at the Center with which they're not familiar and/or to the appropriate staff person if needed.
- Ensure visitors to the Senior Center are made to feel welcome and comfortable.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Ability to communicate well with both staff and the general public.
- Ability to effectively present information to visitors and staff.
- Ability to deal with problems as they arise and bring those problems to the attention of the appropriate staff member.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Ability to move about the Center without assistive devices.
- Good communications and interpersonal skill
- Ability to assist guests/visitors with physical mobility challenges such as opening doors and assistance with the handicapped elevator.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.

Decorating Committee Volunteer

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

The Volunteer Decorating Committee will be asked to decorate the Senior Center for holidays and events including, but not limited to:

- Seasonally: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter;
- Holidays: Christmas, Valentines Day, St. Patrick's Day, 4th of July, Halloween.
- Special Events: various.

Decorations should be put up two to three weeks before the holiday or event and all decorations should be taken down two to three days following the holiday or event.

- Bulletin board: Maintain designated bulletin board area
- Determine theme and appropriate materials to be utilized
- Ensure materials are updated

Decorations will be provided by the Senior Center should be applied using the following guidelines:

- There will be NO use of confetti at any time
- Tape should be used to avoid damaging wall and/or other surfaces
- Nothing should be used if it is hazardous or unsafe
- Volunteers will not climb on chairs or put themselves in any danger while decorating at the center.
- Volunteers will ask for assistance from staff in reporting unsafe circumstances.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Ability to read and write
- Ability to walk unimpeded, stand for periods of time.
- Willingness to "be creative" and bring that creativity to the group

Ability Requirements

- Ability to lift small boxes/items
- Mobility with both hands and legs; physical mobility requirements vary depending on the task.
- Being creative and having a good sense of color and imagination. All volunteers should check with their "point person" when they arrive for their volunteer task.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.

Greeter

Volunteer Greeters receive visitors at the Senior Center entrance and direct guests to their destination as appropriate.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Greet all visitors coming to the Senior Center.
- Open entrance door and assist guests who need help.
- Control traffic flow into the entrance of the building.
- Direct visitors/guests to the appropriate scan in screen.
- Notify appropriate staff immediately of any breach or non-compliance with procedures.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Ability to comprehend written and verbal instructions.
- Ability to effectively present information to visitors and staff.
- Ability to deal with problems as they arise and communicate issues with staff and general public.

Ability Requirements

- Ability to walk, stand for periods of time.
- Ability to hear
- Ability to use hands to open doors, activate buzzer system, operate walkie-talkie or other electronic device.
- Occasionally required to sit, and reach with hands and arms.
- Specific vision abilities include: close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.
- Occasionally exposed to weather conditions when opening and closing the doorway.
- Required to exert sufficient force to open and close exterior doors.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.
- This position requires appropriate dress and a pleasant manner. All volunteers are asked to check in with their “point person” when they arrive for their volunteer assignment.

Health & Wellness

Health & Wellness Volunteers usually work under the direction of the Wellness Coordinator. These volunteers help in facilitating various health and wellness programs that take place at the Senior Center and/or at other locations under the leadership of the Greenfield COA. Duties are varied depending on the particular program and the credentials of the volunteer.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Signing in participants at blood pressure screenings
- Assisting with physical activity
- Administering vaccines, performing limited exams [with documented appropriate licensure]
- Leading educational health and wellness programs [with appropriate background and/or certification]

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Demonstrated qualifications and required certifications within the area of expertise of the volunteer.
- Ability to work harmoniously and in support of seniors

Ability Requirements

- Various, dependent upon the requirements of the health and wellness program.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.

MedRide Driver

MedRide Drivers provide seniors who are capable of walking on their own (ambulatory) with transportation for non-emergency medical purposes. This service is so important to helping seniors get to see their medical providers when they have no one else to turn to for transportation.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Being assigned pick-up and destination point for senior riders.
- Waiting to ensure seniors are safely delivered at each destination point.
- Assisting seniors in and out of automobiles

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Demonstrated a current driver's license free of convictions.
- Demonstrated ability to drive safely and be in control of their vehicle at all times.
- A proven reliability for each assigned task.
- Must have a vehicle that is kept clean and in good repair.
- Documented auto insurance.

Ability Requirements

- Safe and reliable operator of a motor vehicle.
- Willingness and ability to assist seniors to and from assigned destinations.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.

Newsletter & Bulk Mailer

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Fold and prepare newsletters for mailing.
- Schedule may vary when the newsletter will be ready so flexibility is key with this position
- Occasionally asked to deliver the newsletters to the post office or other in-town locations.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- None.

Ability Requirements

- Ability to lift 25 pounds.
- Good fine motor skills (i.e. using fingers and hands to fold, place stamps, labels, etc.)

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.
- This position requires volunteers to be flexible with their availability and to have mobility in their hands.
- We ask that all volunteers check in with their “point person” when they arrive to volunteer.

Receptionist

The volunteer receptionist position serves a critical function for the Senior Center. He or she often is the first person to interface with the Center's public, either in person or on the phone. The receptionist will be asked about elder services and refer these questions to staff and may give general information about the Senior Center. Receptionists should always be friendly, and have good communication, organization, and clerical skills. Any issues/questions arising out of performance of this function shall be reported promptly to staff.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Support and sustain a friendly, helpful and welcoming atmosphere at all times.
- Greet guests in a hospitable manner, ensuring every person scans in as they enter the Senior Center.
- Respond to inquiries by phone and in person following stated protocols.
- Accept payment and make change for small items (e.g. coffee, greeting cards, movies, etc.) and refers all other payments to appropriate staff.
- Schedule appointments for activities in the activities register.
- Provide clerical and other administrative support to staff as requested including, but not limited to, making phone calls, collating and stapling papers, assembling mailings.
- Keeps desk and reception area neat and tidy. Stocks coffee and other supplies.
- Attends meetings and/or in service trainings as needed.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Friendly, courteous demeanor
- Strong communications skills, spoken, written, in-person, and on the phone
- Willingness to work independently and cooperatively with COA staff, volunteers, visitors, providers, and participants
- Operates standard office equipment including multi-line telephone, touch screen sign-in system, standard office systems

Ability Requirements

- Physical: Sits a minimum of 2.5 hours. Gets up from chair, stands, and moves about to assist patrons or complete other tasks.
- Hearing/speaking/vision: interacts with others in person and on the telephone, views print materials and a computer screen.
- Fine motor: Legible handwriting, filing, etc.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.

Special Events

There is a wide array of tasks and assignments throughout the year for Center Special Events volunteers.

Typical responsibilities and/or tasks

- Helping to set up various rooms for events (e.g. chairs, tables, decorations, etc.)
- Serving meals, and/or cleaning up following an event.
- Ticket takers for events.
- Other event-specific tasks.

Suggested qualifications, interests, and/or training

- Varies.

Ability Requirements

- Physical: Sits a minimum of 2.5 hours. Gets up from chair, stands, and moves about to assist patrons or complete other tasks.
- Hearing/speaking/vision: interacts with others in person and on the telephone, views print materials and a computer screen.
- Fine motor: Legible handwriting, filing, etc.

Other

- Requires criminal records check.
- Must adhere to confidentiality requirements
- Professional attire.
- Follows directions from GCOA director and staff.
- This position requires volunteers to be flexible with their availability. We ask that all volunteers check in with their “point person” when they arrive to volunteer.

Weather-related Closings, Delays, and/or Early Dismissals

In the case of poor driving conditions due to weather, the Council on Aging strongly recommends that you do not take risks. You may also call the Senior Center at 413.772.1517. If the center is closed, the automated message will state that there are no activities for the day and/or closing information. Call your supervisor and advise if you are not able to report for your shift. The Senior Center follows guidelines and protocol for weather-related closings, delays, and/or early dismissals as set forth by the office of the Mayor. Policy from the Mayor effective February 2, 2006 states that the Senior Center will operate in accordance with school department closings. Announcements of weather impact on the Senior Center's operations can be heard on WHAI radio Greenfield and Channel 22 and CBS 3 television stations in Springfield.