

# RSVP

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## Lead With Experience

### RSVP Volunteer Handbook



**Retired & Senior Volunteer Program**  
A Program of Spark the Change Colorado

Version: 06/10/22

[www.sparkthechangecolorado.org/rsvp](http://www.sparkthechangecolorado.org/rsvp)

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## Welcome!

At **Spark the Change Colorado**, we believe that folks aged 55 and up have much to contribute to their communities through volunteer engagement in rural initiatives. Rural seniors often have significantly worse mental and physical health outcomes than their urban counterparts, but volunteering can help!

Powered by **AmeriCorps Seniors**, The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) connects older adults with opportunities that make a difference in their area, while helping them stay engaged and healthy.

### RSVP ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT

#### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

- Volunteers must be aged 55 years or older.
- Volunteers must want to engage in an approved volunteer service activity (talk to your local manager to learn more about available service activities in your area).
- The Spark the Change Colorado Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is available to eligible people regardless of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, gender identity, political affiliation, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

#### **ENROLLMENT IN RSVP:**

We keep our onboarding process as simple as possible to ensure that you can get right into the work of volunteering. All that our volunteers need to do is:

- (A) Receive an Orientation (available in-person and online) and
- (B) Fill and Sign an Enrollment form (available in-person and online)

***There are no enrollment or membership dues in the RSVP!*** Our sole goal/purpose is to support the amazing work that you do in your community! Talk to your RSVP County Manager about your preferences for completing the orientation and enrollment form.

#### **ACTIVE RSVP VOLUNTEERS:**

- We count our volunteers as *active* if they have served at least two hours in the past year. Volunteers that do not meet that threshold will be deemed inactive and may need to reapply for the program if they wish to participate again in the future.
- **If you find you are unable to volunteer during a year-long period for some reason, but still wish to engage in the program, please contact your RSVP County Manager.** If you plan to reengage soon, we can keep your information on file.

## REPORTING VOLUNTEER HOURS

### **WHY WE COUNT YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS:**

In order to provide you with all of the benefits of the RSVP, we need to know when you are volunteering! Spark the Change must also report these hours to AmeriCorps Seniors to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program. This is important for a few reasons:

**1. Hours mean you are covered**

As an RSVP volunteer; you carry supplemental insurance while you serve — so long as we have a record of your service. If an accident happens and you file a claim, we must have a verified hour recorded on file from your place of service or your claim may be denied.

**2. Hours are currency**

Many organizations use volunteer hours as the “in-kind” match for their grants. This means your hours may help your volunteer station take advantage of critical funding opportunities!

**3. Hours demonstrate value**

We track volunteer hours in order to show the level of community support for the projects where RSVP members serve.

**4. Hours accumulate**

At Spark the Change, when you volunteer with RSVP, we track your “lifetime hours”. Tracking lifetime hours helps us recognize the accomplishments of volunteers who are making a difference in their communities.

**Once you are placed at a volunteer station, the RSVP County Manager will confirm how your hours will be collected and what, if anything, you will need to do to report hours.**

## RSVP BENEFITS

### **RECOGNITION**

We want to appreciate you! This can come in the form of recognition events, gatherings with the local manager, small gifts, cards, or other appropriate forms of recognition for your time serving.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE:**

Spark the Change Colorado holds accident, personal liability, and excess automobile liability insurance for our volunteers when they serve their community as an RSVP Volunteer.

Additional Notes on the Insurance Benefit:

- Spark the Change Colorado Supplemental Insurance covers *in excess* of your own insurance. The insurance covers costs remaining after your primary insurance is exhausted
- This supplemental insurance is only in effect when you are volunteering at your RSVP volunteer station.
- To file a claim, report the incident immediately to your volunteer site coordinator. Email your RSVP County Manager within 24 Hours of the incident with a written incident report attached, signed by Volunteer Station staff. You will then be sent a claim form to

complete and return to us. Once we receive that form, we will file the claim on your behalf. Thereafter, you will be responsible for submitting all invoices, explanations of benefits, and any other requested documentation to the third-party handling your claim.

### **TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT:**

RSVP volunteers can be reimbursed for mileage or bus fare for their official work as an RSVP volunteer. This may include travel to and from a volunteer agency for an interview, training, meeting, or recognition event, or other approved activities.

#### RSVP's Travel Reimbursement Procedure:

1. Volunteer must log their cars odometer at the start and end of their drive;
2. Volunteer then must fill out the RSVP Mileage Reimbursement form;
3. Volunteer then must sign the RSVP mileage reimbursement form and get a signature from the Volunteer Station supervisor;
4. Volunteers then must return the form to their local manager by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the following month.

#### RSVP's Travel Reimbursement Policies:

- Anyone interested in receiving travel reimbursement must provide proof of a driver's license and valid car insurance.
- Participation in the travel reimbursement program subject to the availability of project funding.
- RSVP is NOT able to reimburse volunteers for walking to their volunteer agency.
- All travel reimbursement requests to RSVP must be filled out on a RSVP Travel Reimbursement Request form.
- Travel Reimbursement Forms are due to the County manager by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the following month. Late or incorrect forms may delay your reimbursement.
- Reimbursement checks CANNOT be issued if the amount is under \$5.00. Travel forms will be held until \$5.00 or more is accumulated.
- Drivers are responsible for renewing their licenses and for having personal liability insurance.

***If you have questions*** regarding RSVP travel reimbursement policies or forms, contact your RSVP County Manager.

## **VOLUNTEER RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities:***

Volunteers have the right to meaningful assignments, respectful supervision, and recognition for their service. In return, volunteers agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, be loyal to the mission and goals of the agency, and to follow agency policies and procedures.

### ***A volunteer has the right:***

- To expect that their time will be used wisely.

- To have a mutually agreed upon written volunteer position that has clear expectations, responsibilities, duties, supervision, and time commitment.
- To be provided with appropriate workspace, equipment, orientation, training, feedback, and supervision for the position they accept.
- To be informed how their position supports the mission and goals of Spark the Change Colorado, RSVP, and the volunteer station.
- To have their suggestions heard in the planning of their work.
- To be informed of policies, procedures, and benefits associated with the position.
- To say “no” to volunteer positions that they are not interested in filling.
- To be considered for promotions, special assignments, transfers, and a variety of experiences.
- To have an inclusive work environment that is respectful of all people, including those served, paid staff, and volunteers.
- To be treated as a co-worker with other staff and/or volunteers to achieve common goals.
- To feel valued and be recognized for their contributions.
- To participate in RSVP regardless of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation (including transgender status), marital status, family status, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

***Volunteers are expected:***

- To support and be loyal to the mission, goals, and philosophy of RSVP and the specific programs in which they are working.
- To be open and honest about intent, goals, interests, and skills.
- To carry out position responsibilities to the best of their ability and follow the agency’s policies and procedures.
- To accept guidance and direction from a supervisor and team and to discuss problems, concerns, and suggestions of supervisor or the volunteer manager.
- To be open to feedback and help correct problems or misunderstandings.
- To participate in orientation, training, or meetings.
- To complete records or reports on time.
- To ask questions and ask for help if they are unclear of how to proceed with an assignment or duty.
- To respect the confidentiality of the organization, the people served, and other staff and volunteers
- To respect all those you serve and serve with, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, English proficiency, gender identity, political affiliation, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- To be punctual and reliable, notifying their supervisor of absences as far in advance as possible.
- To demonstrate professional, respectful behavior, including when faced with challenging situations.
- To be cooperative and treat others with respect, maintaining good working relationships.

## PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES:

- AmeriCorps Volunteers and Grantee staff do not engage in, and grantee funds are not used for, any of the following activities, to the extent they are prohibited in the applicable program regulations: electoral activities, voter registration, voter transportation to polls, and efforts to influence legislation. Volunteers must also not take action that would result in the identification or apparent identification of AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors, or the RSVP with such prohibited activities.
- Volunteers must not engage in any activity which would otherwise be performed by an employed worker, or which would supplant the hiring of, or result in the displacement of employed workers, or impair existing contracts for service.
- Neither the Grantee nor any volunteer station may request or receive compensation from the beneficiaries of RSVP volunteers.
- An RSVP volunteer may not receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family, or friends.
- Grant funds are not used to finance labor or anti-labor organizations or related activity.
- Project staff or volunteers do not give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytization as part of their duties and, if the volunteer station is an organization that conducts inherently religious activities, those activities are offered separately, in time and location, from the programs or services funded under the AmeriCorps grant.

## VOLUNTEER GRIEVANCE POLICY

In the event of differences of opinion regarding decisions in the administration of RSVP and/or in the administration of an RSVP volunteer station. All RSVP volunteers are assured of unobstructed communication with respect to grievances without fear of reprisal. The following procedures shall be established to ensure the orderly settlement of complaints:

1. If an RSVP volunteer has a grievance, they must first discuss the matter with the County Manager. The County Manager will try to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the matter is not resolved informally, the RSVP volunteer must submit the grievance in writing to the County Manager within 7 working days of the occurrence. The County Manager will investigate the grievance and send a written reply to the RSVP volunteer and RSVP Program Director within five working days.
3. If the volunteer is not satisfied with the decision of the County Manager, the RSVP volunteer may submit the grievance in writing to the RSVP Program Director within five working days of receiving what the volunteer considers to be an unsatisfactory response from the County Manager. The RSVP Director will investigate the grievance and send a written reply to the RSVP volunteer within five working days.

All grievances will be considered closed if the RSVP volunteer does not submit the grievance within five working days of the occurrence, the volunteer fails to comply with procedural guidelines, or if the grievance process has been exhausted.

## VACCINATION AND SAFETY POLICY

At Spark the Change Colorado, we're committed to sharing trusted information about vaccines. The information provided comes from the official recommendations of the Center for Disease Control, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment or other trusted resources. Helping our employees and volunteers stay healthy is a top priority.

A fully vaccinated workforce creates the safest possible workplace environment for employees, volunteers and clients. The CDC and CDPHE recommend vaccination against COVID-19 as the most effective form of protection.

**Spark the Change Colorado strongly suggests all staff, AmeriCorps Seniors Members, Interns, Candidates for Licensure, Regular Volunteers and contractors who have signed 1099's to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.**

While proof of vaccination is not currently required by Spark the Change Colorado, Volunteer Stations may ask volunteers to comply with additional safety protocols and requirements. Volunteers must adhere to all safety protocols and requirements for their individual volunteer station.

## PHOTO AND MARKETING POLICY

At RSVP stations and events RSVP volunteers may be included in pictures taken by station and ~~RSVP staff. Photos taken by or shared with Spark the Change Colorado of our volunteers are~~ always subject to usage in our marketing materials. This could include and is not limited to: advertising volunteer positions, social media posts, newspaper articles or ads, and flyers/brochures for the program.

If a volunteer does not want to have their photo used by Spark the Change Colorado, they can indicate that on their initial enrollment form. If a volunteer would like to change their initial response from that form, they can notify their local manager, in writing, of their change in preference. Spark the Change Colorado cannot control what pictures are taken and used by the newspaper or other organizations at large community events.

## SPARK THE CHANGE COLORADO/RSVP 2024 HOLIDAY CLOSURES

<b>New Year Break</b> .....	Monday, January 1st
<b>MLK Day</b> .....	Monday, January 15th
<b>Presidents Day</b> .....	Monday, February 19th
<b>Memorial Day</b> .....	Monday, May 27th
<b>Juneteenth</b> .....	Wednesday, June 19th
<b>Independence Day</b> .....	Thursday, July 4th
<b>Labor Day</b> .....	Monday, September 2nd
<b>Thanksgiving</b> .....	Thursday, November 28th - Friday, November 29th
<b>Winter Holiday Break</b> .....	Friday, December 20th – Wednesday, January 1st, 2025



