

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

**VOLUNTEER POSITION SUMMARY**

Senior Companion volunteers provide regularly scheduled supportive services to frail elderly or adults with disabilities, who need assistance with instrumental activities of daily living to maintain their highest degree of independent living. Additionally, the program provides the Senior Companion an opportunity to be involved in meaningful volunteer opportunities.

**REPORT TO**

As a Senior Companion Volunteer, you report to the Senior Companion Program Coordinator. You also report to the Station Representative who develops the client’s care plan, which outlines the activities and services you will provide. The Station Representative works with the Program Coordinator to match you with clients.

**CLIENT SERVICE PLAN ACTIVITIES**

The primary role of the Senior Companion is that of companionship. The client service plan activities are provided in the client’s home or their community. Senior Companion services are also provided in adult day centers. Certain tasks are appropriate for a Senior Companion to do for their clients. You will be provided a Client Service Plan for each client, which lists specific tasks requested by the client. Appropriate activities and tasks have been identified and are listed below:

# Social and Recreation

1. Provide companionship, talking and listening, and reminiscing.

2. Encourage client to maintain relationships and communication with family, friends, and other community interests.

3. Accompany to social or recreational events.

4. Play games or cards, assist with hobbies, share handiwork and crafts, and/or other activities of special interest to the client.

5. Write letters, read, and assist with phone calls.

6. Go out to lunch.

**Personal Care**

1. Assist with grooming, hair care, shaving, make-up.

2. Assist with choosing clean clothing and/or dressing.

3. Be present while client bathes. (Station staff will evaluate client's ability to bathe independently. Companion will not bathe the client.)

4. Encourage exercise by providing information on exercise and recreation.

5. Remind client to take medication. (Companion will not give medications or fill pill boxes.)

6. Observe client's handling of medication. Report immediately to the station staff or program coordinator the client's inability to self-administer medications.

7. Accompany to doctor or nurse for treatment.

# Nutrition

1. Assist in meal planning and preparation.

2. Assist with grocery shopping.

3. Share a meal. (When shared in client's home Companion will bring his/her own lunch.)

4. Observe adherence to special diets and report irregularities to station staff or program coordinator.

5. Provide health or nutrition information.

6. Assist in organizing food supplies and planning use of leftovers.

# Home Management

1. Assist with light housekeeping (Make bed, do dishes, dust, sweep, and take out trash. Laundry may be done when determined as appropriate by station staff.)

2. Accompany and assist with errands and shopping.

3. Assist with money management, bill paying, and filling out forms.

4. Read mail and newspapers.

5. Assist with non-strenuous home repair (change a light bulb, replace a nail)

6. Mend clothing.

7. Assist with light gardening.

**Respite Care**

Assist homebound clients to temporarily relieve caregiver burden.

**Information & Client Advocacy**

1. Provide information about community services and eligibility.
2. Help clients receive a needed service (food stamps, visiting nurse, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.)
3. Bring unmet needs to the attention of volunteer station staff, program coordinator, and other care providers.
4. Assure client has phone numbers to obtain emergency help.

**REQUIREMENTS**

Senior Companion Volunteers must agree to the following:

1. Have a Wellness Exam prior to volunteering and annually, provided by a medical professional to determine that they are physically and mentally able to serve.
2. Be willing and capable of assisting frail elderly or adults with special needs on a personal and regular basis. Be able to relate well to others, and individuals from different ethnic backgrounds.
3. Accept supervision as required and be willing to participate in a Client Service Plan for clients served. Maintain volunteer boundaries in acceptance of appropriate tasks, client contact frequency, and personal concerns.
4. Complete 20 hours of pre-service orientation and complete a minimum of 24 hours of in-service training and reading assignments per year to share and provide information to their clients.
5. If a volunteer is willing to transport clients, they must have a valid SD driver’s license and maintain vehicle insurance according to SD state law. In addition, no motor vehicle moving violations for the past five years.
6. Consent to the National Service Criminal History Check after a conditional volunteer position offer. Background inquiry documentation will be submitted to the appropriate agencies mandated by federal/state law and/or required by the Senior Companion Program to commence the background investigation. The Senior Companion Program retains the right to determine the scope of the background inquiry. Any conviction may be considered as a possible justification for the refusal or revocation of the volunteer position.

**SUPPORT PROVIDED**

New Senior Companions will receive 20 hours of orientation before being able to accept a client assignment. In addition, the program coordinator is available for questions and concerns on an ongoing basis to answer questions and provide guidance for the Senior Companions. The station representative is also available on an ongoing basis to provide problem-solving and support for the Senior Companions in addressing problems or issues that may develop with the assigned clients.

**BENEFITS**

EligibleSenior Companion Volunteers receive a tax-free stipend of $4.00 for each hour of direct service to a client. All Senior Companions receive mileage reimbursement for driving to and from the client’s home, as well as mileage reimbursement while providing transportation to their client.

I have read and understand the essential functions for this volunteer position. My questions have been addressed, and by signing this page I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this volunteer position description.

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Signature of Volunteer Date