



JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB SUMMARY: To provide regularly scheduled supportive services to frail elderly or disabled adults who need assistance with instrumental activities of daily living in order to maintain their highest degree of independent living. In addition, for the Senior Companion, to be involved in meaningful, stipended volunteer opportunities for volunteers who are of limited income and over the age of 55.

RESPONSIBLE TO: As a Senior Companion Volunteer you are responsible and report to the Senior Companion Program Coordinator. You are also responsible and report to the Station Representative who develops the client's care plan, which outlines the activities and services to be provided by you. The Station Representative will match you with the client.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS: The following are the essential job functions for this position. The client service plan activities are provided in the client's home or in the client's community. There are Senior Companion services also provided in adult day centers and hospices.

CLIENT SERVICE PLAN ACTIVITIES: The primary role of the Senior Companion is that of companionship. There are certain tasks that are considered appropriate for a Senior Companion to do for their clients. A list of specific tasks will be written on the service plan based on the needs of the individual client. Appropriate tasks are as follows:

Social and Recreation:

1. Companionship, talking and listening, life review and reminiscing.
2. Encourage client to maintain relationships and communication with family, friends, and other community interests.
3. Accompany to social or recreation events.
4. Assist in reality orientation and awareness.
5. Play games or cards, assist with hobbies, share handwork and crafts or other activities of special interest to the client.
6. Go out to lunch, go shopping.
7. Write letters, read, assist with phone calls.

Personal Care:

1. Encourage and assist with grooming, hair care, shaving, make-up.
2. Assist with choosing clean clothing and with dressing.
3. Be present while client bathes. (Station staff will evaluate client's ability to bathe independently. Companion will not bathe the client.)
4. Be present and encourage self-administered exercises.
5. Be present to encourage and observe walking or getting to the bathroom.
6. Remind of time to take medication. (Client must make own decision to take medication. Companion will not give medications or fill pill boxes.)
7. Observe client's handling of medication. Report immediately to station staff the client's inability to self-administer medications.
8. Accompany to doctor or nurse for treatment.

Nutrition:

1. Assist in meal planning and preparation.
2. Share a meal (When shared in client's home Companion will bring his/her own lunch.)
3. Encourage client to eat a regular, well-balanced diet with adequate fluids.
4. Review and observe adherence to special diets with client; report irregularities or observations to station staff.
5. Assist with grocery shopping.
6. Assist in organizing food supplies and planning use of leftovers.

Home Management:

1. Assist with light housekeeping (Make bed, do dishes, dust, sweep, 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, 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:

Assisting homebound clients served by caregivers who are in need of respite care to prevent a breakdown in household capability.

Information & Client Advocacy:

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

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: To qualify as a Senior Companion a person must:

1. Be 55 years of age or older.
2. Have a total annual income from all sources at or below the income eligibility levels established by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Deductions for health insurance and medical costs are allowable up to 50% of the income guideline.
 - a. Senior Companions already in the program may have an annual income that exceeds the guideline by 20 percent.
 - b. The Senior Companion Office is responsible for reviewing the income of each Senior Companion once a year to determine continued eligibility.
3. Have a physician determine that they are physically and mentally able to serve the required amount of hours (15 to 40 hours per week) and have an annual health exam. Be able to lift and carry 15 to 20 pounds when carrying packages for the client.

4. Be willing and capable of providing assistance to frail elderly or adults with exceptional needs on a personal and regular basis. Be able to relate well to others, be able to relate to individuals from a different ethnic background.
5. Accept supervision as required and be willing to participate in a service plan for clients served. Maintain volunteer boundaries in acceptance of appropriate tasks, client contact frequency and personal concerns.
6. Complete 40 hours of pre-service orientation and attend 4 hours of monthly training and complete reading assignments in order to provide program information to their clients.
7. If a driving volunteer and willing to transport clients, have a valid SD driver's license and maintain vehicle insurance according to SD state law. Be able to show that you have no motor vehicle moving violations for the last 5 years.
8. 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 40 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: Senior Companion Volunteers receive a tax-free stipend of \$2.65 for each hour of direct service to a client. They are also eligible for 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 position. My questions have been addressed, and by signing this page I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this job description.

Signature of Volunteer

Date