



RSVP TeleCare Volunteer Guidelines

RSVP of Summit and Medina Counties
c/o VANTAGE Aging
Attn: Erica Banks, Director of RSVP
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Welcome to the RSVP TeleCare Program! We thank you for your interest in volunteering. Your time, service and concern is greatly appreciated by RSVP of Summit and Medina Counties and more importantly, by the clients you will be calling. Your calls will not only help and assist our community members, but will allow our senior population to remain independent and feel less isolated while living alone within their homes. Seniors will feel comforted knowing that someone will be calling them to check in on a regularly scheduled basis. Your compassion is the foundation of the RSVP TeleCare Program.

This guide is meant to provide you with an overview of the program and other useful information. Please keep it handy for easy reference and to assist you if you have questions.

What is RSVP TeleCare?

The RSVP TeleCare Program provides a simple check in and friendly phone calls to area seniors or challenged adults who are homebound and/or isolated. This program targets our most vulnerable and needy population i.e., the elderly, who are trying to “age in place”, remain independent and require support services to do so. Volunteers are not to provide financial or health care advice, even if asked. They are simply calling to offer companionship and give seniors a sense of connectedness to the outside world and relieve feelings of isolation.

Who is eligible to be a TeleCare participant/client?

Individuals may self-refer or be referred by a caregiver, family member or service provider. The service is FREE of charge to Summit and Medina County residents. This program is intended to serve area seniors or disabled adults who are homebound, isolated, living alone, or otherwise in need of daily contact to ensure personal safety. This may be temporary while recuperating from an illness or it may be a permanent situation. Married couples who are isolated or homebound are also eligible to be TeleCare clients.

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Calling Assignments

Each TeleCare volunteer will be matched with a client(s) primarily based on preferences from initial interviews with the volunteer and the client. Volunteers may elect to call more than one client, which is up to them and their preferences and schedules.

Calling Timeframes/Schedules/Conflicts

There will be a specific timeframe/calling schedule prearranged between the volunteer and the client with assistance from the RSVP staff. Time of day, days of the week, etc. will all be pre-determined and agreed to by all parties. Commitment to this is absolutely critical to ensure success. In the event that you are unable to make a call due to illness or some unexpected schedule conflict or other situation, please let your client know as soon as possible. If possible, we ask that you provide at least a week's notice if you are planning to stop volunteering altogether to allow us time to make new arrangements.

Confidentiality

As an RSVP TeleCare volunteer you will be privy to client information that is personal and highly confidential. It is essential that you maintain total confidentiality and honor the TeleCare client's privacy. You will be asked to read and sign a Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement that indicates your understanding and commitment to honor this policy. Should confidentiality be breached, you may be terminated as an RSVP TeleCare volunteer subject to review by the Director of RSVP.

Making the Calls

1. Start your conversation by identifying yourself - "This is your RSVP TeleCare volunteer (your name), calling". We encourage you to use a warm and friendly tone when chatting with your TeleCare client as this is often the only contact they may have with others on a given day.
2. Your cheerful and compassionate manner will be greatly appreciated and valued. If the TeleCare client desires, spend some time chatting with them asking questions such as "Are you feeling OK today?" or "What did you have for breakfast?" as this is a great way to discover if there are any concerns to address.
3. Other clients may simply want a basic check-in or reassurance call. The choices may vary, depending on various factors such as their schedule, mood, etc. You and the client will make that determination together.
4. Be flexible and allow time to adjust to the needs of the TeleCare client. Your skills as a compassionate listener form the foundation of each conversation you engage in with the TeleCare client. Attempt to find things you have in common. Topics off their registration in- take form will be helpful. Questions about their families are always potential choices of conversation.

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5. Regularly remind the client to let you know of any changes in their schedule that would alter your calling days and/or times.
6. Place your call to the RSVP TeleCare client at the pre-arranged time and allow the phone to ring at least 15 times. If there is no answer, try again in 10 or 15 minutes again allowing the Phone to ring 15 times.
7. If there is still no answer, call the emergency contacts that have been provided to you.
If you are able to reach one of the emergency contacts be sure to log that on your Daily Log. You may want to request the emergency contact call you back once they have checked on the client for your peace of mind.
8. If you are unable to reach any of the emergency contacts, you should leave your client and their emergency contact number a voice mail.
9. Be sure to record your actions on your Daily Log including any follow up actions and the outcome.

Emergency Procedures

If during the course of the phone call with the TeleCare client you or the participant believe there is an immediate emergency, instruct the participant to hang up and call 911. When you hang up call 911 and report the incident yourself as a follow-up, identifying yourself as a TeleCare volunteer. Next, call the Emergency Contacts for your client to inform them of the incident and for record keeping purposes. Be sure to log it on your Daily Log. At no time should you dispense medical or financial advice or offer services to the client. RSVP TeleCare is not a referral service, telemedicine provider, or medical alert service.

Daily Log and Time Recording Form

You will be provided with Daily Log and Time Reporting Forms which you will be expected to complete and submit to the RSVP office on a monthly basis. You can mail them in, drop them off or submit them via email (we can send you the form electronically). Each form is for one client so if you have more than one client you will need to record them on separate forms. You can plan on submitting them on a 4 week cycle to simplify the process.

Referrals/Community Resources

In the event that your client asks for a referral for a service or other general information please suggest that they call 211 which will direct them to a local information and referral service.

Please call RSVP at 330-253-4597 ext. 166 at any time if you have any questions or concerns. We value your feedback and input.

NOTES: _____

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RSVP TeleCare Volunteer Job Description

The RSVP TeleCare volunteer will provide volunteer services specific to the RSVP TeleCare Program, at no cost, to individuals throughout the RSVP service area.

- The volunteer will complete and sign necessary paperwork.
- The volunteer will be required to read the training guidelines & sign the confidentiality agreement.
- The volunteer will follow the procedures outlined within the guide line booklet. Violations of the procedures could result in the volunteer being terminated from the program.
- The volunteer will be responsible for maintaining and submitting all paperwork required as part of their participation in the RSVP TeleCare program, including their phone logs and volunteer timesheets.
- The volunteer will keep RSVP and their TeleCare clients informed about any changes in the calling schedule due to illness, vacations, etc. so as to minimize the impact on all stakeholders.
- The volunteer will assist in distributing surveys and flyers for marketing and client satisfaction purposes to TeleCare clients and other stakeholders when convenient and appropriate which will aid in evaluating the effectiveness and raise awareness about the RSVP TeleCare Program.

Qualifications:

1. The volunteer must have a pleasant phone manner, conducting themselves appropriately on the phone.
2. The volunteer must be willing to commit to a minimum of two phone calls per week for a minimum of a 15 minute duration.
3. The volunteer should enjoy working with older adults.

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TeleCare VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

I understand and agree that in performance of my duties as a volunteer for the RSVP TeleCare Program, I will hold in strictest confidence any information or observations I may make or hear regarding clients, client families or VANTAGE Aging staff.

I understand that intentional or accidental violation of confidentiality may result in being terminated by RSVP TeleCare of Summit and Medina Counties.

If at any point during my assignment, I am not comfortable making calls, I will inform the RSVP director that I wish to discontinue my participation. Before dropping the program, I will first inform my senior companion in advance. This will give the RSVP director a chance to find a new volunteer to take over your calls.

Volunteer Signature _____ **Date** _____

RSVP Signature _____ **Date** _____

Do you prefer calling on a male or female? M/F/Either _____

In order to appropriately match you with a senior companion, please share with us some of your interests and hobbies. _____

Please sign and return THIS PAGE ONLY to the address below:

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