



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Welcome to Greater Cleveland Volunteers. You have joined the proud ranks of more than 1500 adults who give thousands of hours of service to our community each year.

Greater Cleveland Volunteers' greatest success lies in its ability to match volunteers with agencies where their unique talents are put to the best and fullest use. We know that volunteers do not want to just "*be kept busy*"; rather, they wish to be able to serve where their life's experience is most needed. Greater Cleveland Volunteers help them achieve this!

Volunteering is a great way to:

Be Healthy- Volunteering has been shown to improve your health- physically and emotionally!

Help Others - You can put your life's experiences and skills to meaningful use.

Learn New Skills - Many volunteer opportunities allow you to learn new skills or keep your skills current.

Make A Difference - Volunteers help nonprofits deliver services to those in need in the community. The impact you make while volunteering is shared with various government and funding entities.

Social Opportunities – Volunteering gives you the opportunity to meet people, network with others and make friends. And have FUN!

We thank you for your willingness to give back to the community. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to make your volunteer experience more rewarding,

Please feel free to contact our office with updates to your volunteer status, suggestions, questions or concerns. Our staff works remotely. Please reach out before coming to our office.

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Mission Statement:

Greater Cleveland Volunteers enriches the community and individuals through volunteer service.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Greater Cleveland Volunteers celebrates and embraces our country's diversity. We recognize and deplore that many people have been, and continue to be, subjected to violence, injustice, and unfair treatment simply because they differ from the perpetrators. We pledge to do all that we can to embrace diversity, promote equity, and assure inclusion for everyone we interact with.

We embrace DIVERSITY, the rich mix of differences that encompasses all the dimensions that make each person one of a kind based on our own lived experiences, advantages, or barriers to opportunities.

We embrace the concept of EQUITY, providing equal access to all information, resources, and opportunities, while acknowledging and dismantling roadblocks to success. Equity promotes justice.

We embrace INCLUSION, building a culture of belonging by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people.

We believe that marginalization of any kind is a grievous insult not only to the victim but to our organization and to society as a whole.

We pledge that we will be sensitive, listen, seek to understand, and strive to make a difference.

Read our full Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement at:
<https://greaterclevelandvolunteers.org/about/>.

Benefits of Joining Greater Cleveland Volunteers

Birthday Acknowledgement- Birthday communication to help you celebrate your special day.

Insurance- Free excess accident and liability insurance is provided to RSVP volunteers and AARP Foundation Experience Corps volunteers only. This accident & liability insurance covers you while you are volunteering, with accident coverage while traveling to and from volunteering. This insurance coverage is secondary to your primary insurance. Additional information is available in the insurance coverage section of this handbook.

Mileage Reimbursement- May be available to AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP volunteers who use their own vehicles for select meal delivery volunteer positions.

Newsletter- Produced several times a year and contains upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, educational information and features some of our partner agencies and funders. In an effort to conserve paper and postage, the newsletter is emailed to your inbox. For those volunteers without an email account, a paper version is mailed to the mailing address on file and is also available on our website.

Personalized Service- Greater Cleveland Volunteers staff will work with you to match your talents, skills, and availability to appropriate volunteer opportunities. We keep in touch with you and are available to assist you in finding volunteer opportunities.

T-shirts- Greater Cleveland Volunteers and/or AmeriCorps Seniors shirts may be available upon request. Sizes may vary. Must be picked up at our office.

Volunteer Portal- All enrolled volunteers can log into their account to update their contact information, volunteer preferences as well as to view and then apply/sign up for ongoing and event volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Recognition- All active volunteers will be invited to attend Greater Cleveland Volunteers recognition activities. Volunteers are also encouraged to participate in any volunteer recognitions hosted by their volunteer site(s).

Insurance Coverage

(RSVP and AARP Foundation Experience Corps volunteers only)

Volunteers are covered by free excess accident insurance while traveling to and from their volunteer assignments. Volunteers who drive their own automobiles to their volunteer assignments are covered by excess accident insurance. In addition, volunteers are covered by accident and liability insurance while volunteering. The insurance covers you for the volunteer opportunities that Greater Cleveland Volunteers is partnering with. The names of volunteers who drive their own automobiles must be submitted to the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office upon enrollment. This insurance does NOT apply to damage to the volunteer's automobile. A copy of the insurance information is available on request.

In case of accident

1. You or the agency at which you serve, should report an accident as soon as possible to the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office at 216-391-9500 or email contact@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org .
2. Notify staff at your volunteer site to document the accident.
3. Greater Cleveland Volunteers will send you a claim form which needs to be fully completed. The agency volunteer coordinator will need to sign the completed claim form.
4. Keep the claim form until all bills are paid by your primary insurance carrier. Then, attach the accident report form with any remaining unpaid doctor's bills, and submit to the insurance company address listed on the claim form.

Policies and Procedures

Accessibility & Reasonable Accommodations

Ensure that the facilities, programs, and activities to which Greater Cleveland Volunteers members are assigned, provides reasonable accommodations, within reason, for persons with disabilities (including mobility, hearing, vision, mental, and cognitive impairments or addictions and diseases) and/or limited English language proficiency, and to allow qualified persons with disabilities to participate in programs.

Background Check Policy

Most agencies conduct background checks on potential volunteers. Agencies' staff set the guidelines for these checks. Please be aware that having something on your record may exclude you from some, but not all volunteer opportunities. All volunteers applying for the AARP Foundation Experience Corps program will be subject to a criminal background check. Any volunteer working unsupervised with a child, frail elderly or individual with disabilities will also be required to undergo a criminal background check, conducted by the agency where you will be volunteering.

Collection of Volunteer Hours

You should have a designated place at your volunteer assignment to sign in and out each time you volunteer. These hours are totaled by agency staff and submitted to Greater Cleveland Volunteers. These statistics are compiled with other data and provided to various funders. The record is also important in the event that an insurance claim (AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP volunteers and AARP Foundation Experience Corps only) is made. We also advise you to keep track of your own hours.

Financial Support

Greater Cleveland Volunteers receives support from a variety of government and foundation sources, as well as individual donors. We are the sponsoring agency for the AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP program in Cuyahoga County, as well as several other programs. AmeriCorps Seniors is a federally funded program through AmeriCorps under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act. (45 CFR § 2553).

Grievance Policy

Although every effort is made to resolve complaints before they become serious, a grievance procedure has been established for volunteers. A copy of this policy is available on request.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated. Greater Cleveland Volunteers and its partner agencies will comply with provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 regarding the prohibition of discrimination. We will not discriminate against volunteers or in the operation of programs on the basis of race, color,

religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, political affiliation, marriage or parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, and local laws.

Prohibited Activities

- **Religious Activities/Political Activities:**
Greater Cleveland Volunteers members may **NOT** conduct or engage in religious, sectarian or political activities, while serving in a Greater Cleveland Volunteers position.
- **Displacement of Employees:**
Greater Cleveland Volunteers members may NOT serve in any assignment that would displace employed workers or impair existing contracts for services.
- **Non-Compensation for Service**
No person, organization or agency will request or receive any compensation for placement or services of volunteers. Volunteers may not receive a fee for services from service recipients, their legal guardians, members of their family, or friends.
- **Labor & Anti-labor Activity** (including direct or indirect funding)
Greater Cleveland Volunteers members may not serve in a labor or anti-labor volunteer position.

Separation/Termination

Volunteers who do not report at least one hour of service during a 12-month period may become inactive with Greater Cleveland Volunteers. They may be temporarily withdrawn from the membership in accordance with our policy on volunteer withdrawal. They may be re-instated upon resumption of active volunteer service by contacting the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office.

The Greater Cleveland Volunteers staff or staff where a volunteer serves, may separate the volunteer from the program for cause, including, but not limited to; excessive or unauthorized absences, misconduct, inability to perform assignments, or inability to accept supervision. Separation may also be based on termination of volunteer assignment or when the volunteer assignment is no longer meaningful or satisfying to the volunteer.

Sexual Harassment

Greater Cleveland Volunteers is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing. If you experience or witness harassment in your volunteer activities, report it immediately to the volunteer coordinator at the site at which you volunteer as well as your Greater Cleveland Volunteers contact.

Social Media/Photography

Volunteers should follow the photography and social media policies of the agency where they volunteer to the extent that the agency policies equal or

exceed Greater Cleveland Volunteers' policies. If the agency does not have such policies, volunteers must follow the policies of Greater Cleveland Volunteers:

Social Media Policy: Your on-line presence reflects Greater Cleveland Volunteers. Please make sure that your actions captured via images, posts or comments reflect positively on that of Greater Cleveland Volunteers. You are prohibited from being "friends" on Facebook or other social media platforms or engaging in any other kind of personal relationship via social media platforms, with any individual under the age of 18 that receives any services from Greater Cleveland Volunteers.

Photography: You are prohibited from taking photos of anyone under the age of 18 that you encounter while volunteering. If you are assigned to take photographs for Greater Cleveland Volunteers, strict guidelines will be discussed with Greater Cleveland Volunteers Communications Manager and parental permission and/or permission from the agency serving the child is required.

Volunteer Portal

All enrolled volunteers can log into their account to update their contact information, volunteer preferences, and change your password as well as to view and apply/sign up for volunteer opportunities.

To update your volunteer information, log in at: <https://greaterclevols.vsyslive.com/>; click on My info; Update My Profile.

To view available volunteer opportunities, visit: <https://greaterclevols.vsyslive.com/> and view opportunities based on interest area. You can further refine your search, by using the "search" feature by typing in a neighborhood/location; availability (i.e. weekend) or a key word in the opportunity (i.e. homebound, mentor).

To apply/sign up for opportunities, you will first need to sign into your account, and then click on the Apply Now button. You can also cancel your shift at any event volunteer opportunities.

Program Evaluation

We welcome suggestions on ways to improve Greater Cleveland Volunteers, as well as measuring the impact that volunteers make in the community. As part of this effort, volunteers may be asked to help conduct surveys or complete paperwork of the clients that they work with (pending approval of the agency where a volunteer serves). Volunteers may also be asked to provide direct input on the future of our programming and services provided. In order to help us capture meaningful stories, please complete the "Tell Us your Story" form at: <https://tinyurl.com/bdf3teeb>. We appreciate your cooperation and input.

Volunteer Basics

You have the right to have:

- A volunteer assignment where your skills and experience will be used to the best advantage.
- Be welcomed and be treated with respect at the agency where you volunteer.
- Be provided with a job description for your volunteer position and be satisfied with your volunteer position. If you are dissatisfied with a volunteer position, Greater Cleveland Volunteers will attempt to find you another position. Please notify Greater Cleveland Volunteers if you wish to change to another volunteer position.
- Be provided with orientation/training for your specific job, and staff to supervise you at your volunteer site, and have your questions and concerns about your volunteer activities answered by the agency volunteer coordinator.
- To volunteer in a safe, healthy working environment.

As a volunteer, you are asked to:

- Act in a professional, dignified manner. You are representing Greater Cleveland Volunteers and the agency at which you serve.
- Arrive at your volunteer assignment on time and at the designated location. If you are unable to volunteer as assigned, please call the agency volunteer coordinator immediately. Please notify the agency at which you serve if you expect to be away from your volunteer responsibilities for an extended period of time.
- Call the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office if you have any concerns regarding your volunteer assignment that cannot be resolved with the agency volunteer supervisor, or if you would like to add or change your assignment.
- “Sign in” when volunteering in order that hours can be accurately recorded.
- If you are injured while volunteering, contact the volunteer coordinator at the agency where you were injured immediately; then, the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office.
- Ask for assistance if you have questions or problems. If you want to expand your responsibilities, discuss these with the agency volunteer coordinator or Greater Cleveland Volunteers staff. Ask questions of your agency volunteer supervisor if you don’t understand any of your volunteer assignment responsibilities.
- Contact the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office as soon as possible if you are unable to volunteer for an event assignment or log in to your account at <https://greaterclevols.vsyslive.com/> to cancel any scheduled event volunteer opportunity.
- Please keep confidentiality. All information on clients, patients, and agency/organization business is private and must not be discussed with anyone, not even your family members.

Volunteer Reminders

- Make sure the volunteer coordinator where you volunteer knows that you are a member of Greater Cleveland Volunteers. Verify with them that they are reporting your volunteer hours to our office on a monthly basis.
- Please remember to report any changes to your volunteer status, such as a change in volunteer assignment, to the Greater Cleveland Volunteers office.
- You can view and apply for available volunteer opportunities by logging into your account at: <https://greaterclevols.vsyslive.com/> . Greater Cleveland Volunteers

staff can also refer you. Please be aware that our partner agencies have application processes in place that may include: completing an application; interviewing prospective volunteers; and performing background checks. This process may take a few weeks up to several months.

Greater Cleveland Volunteers Programs

Volunteers serve nonprofit agencies in many capacities for ongoing and event opportunities throughout Cuyahoga County.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps- This program engages adults age 50+ as volunteers to 1st to 3rd grade students in the Cleveland Metropolitan and Euclid City School Districts. Volunteers may serve at the school or virtually. Volunteers serve during the school day, approximately 2 hours per day, 2 days a week, from October through May. A small stipend may be available for those who qualify. Greater Cleveland Volunteers hosts the Cleveland chapter of this national program. (Eligible for free excess/liability insurance)

AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP- We manage the Cuyahoga County Chapter of this national service program engaging adults age 55+ to help with critical needs in our community through assignments at nonprofit organizations. (Eligible for free excess/liability insurance)

Chat Pals- A telephone-based or video-based (Facetime or Zoom) program designed to be a support system, which hopes to provide emotional support and companionship to older people in our community. The intention of this program is to bring people together based off like-minded interests and experiences, so that a friendship can be formed remotely – functioning as a method to combat the negative effects that social isolation and loneliness can have on a person.

Community Volunteers- Volunteers aged 18-54 assist in hospitals, health care agencies, social service organizations and various arts and cultural institutions. They lead museum tours, comfort hospital patients, provide clerical assistance and much more, at over 75 local nonprofit agencies, many of which could not operate without the help of volunteers.

Encore Cleveland- The Encore movement is a national effort to leverage the energy and experience of Americans, age 50+, seeking to fill community needs at retirement or near the end of their primary careers. Individuals are given the opportunities to give back to the community. Our agency is part of this initiative and manages communications activities for the Encore Cleveland network.

