

AMERICORPS SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in the AmeriCorps Senior Companion Program! We aim to make aging gracefully a reality for everyone. To help you become an AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program volunteer and be matched with a client, please review the following steps:

Potential Volunteer Prescreening (SCP Office)

In this meeting, we will:

- ✓ Collect the potential volunteer prescreening form, including personal information, emergency contact information, and other required details.
- ✓ Collect identification, such as a valid driver's license.
- ✓ Coordinate background check
- ✓ You must have access to an email account because authorizations will be emailed to you.

Orientation and Training (1–3 weeks)

If you are cleared to join the program, we will coordinate an orientation date and training schedule. Please note that you must complete a minimum of 20 training hours before you can be matched with a client.

Search Period (4-6 weeks)

During this phase, we will search our pool of clients to find a suitable client match.

Please note that the SCP cannot always guarantee that a match will be made. Expect to hear from us at least once per month.

Client Match Meeting (SCP Office)

Once we've identified a potential client, we will contact you for a client match meeting. At this time, you will have the opportunity to meet and speak with the potential client, exchange contact information, sign contracts, and review the client's care plan.

Match Begins (Within 3 Days)

You and your client will begin your meeting, based on the agreed schedule.

During the match phase, the SCP will conduct at least 2 follow-up visits/calls to the client within the first 3 months of the initial companion match. Please note that both the volunteer companion and the client can discontinue the match at any given time.

In-Service Meeting (3rd Wednesday of the month) MANDATORY

All volunteers must attend a monthly in-service meeting. It is typically held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, but volunteers will be updated on any changes.

Annual Review (June of each year at the client's home)

A program staff member will coordinate a home monitoring visit with the client and volunteer to conduct an annual survey.

Things to make note of:

Payment & will this impact my SSI

The TAX-FREE STIPEND cannot be counted as income. Senior Companion volunteers receive a **tax-free stipend and service-related cost reimbursements** that are **excluded from countable income** and **must not be reported as wages**. These payments are **not treated as income or resources** for determining eligibility for Housing Authorities, HUD Section 8, Public Housing, SNAP, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, TANF, or other public assistance programs. Receipts of these payments do not reduce or terminate benefits under any governmental assistance program. **(64 FR 14126, March 24, 1999; redesignated at 72 FR 48585, August 24, 2007).**

IRS: page 16, National Senior Service Corps programs.

In accordance with IRS instructions for National Senior Service Corps programs, amounts received for supportive services or reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses must not be included in income. This exclusion applies to participants in the **Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparent Program, and Senior Companions Program.**

Mileage Reimbursement

If selected, you will be provided with mileage reimbursement for your registered/insured vehicle for services related to serving as an AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Volunteer and your assigned client only. All reporting must be in association with these services. Failure to report fraudulent information will be considered a crime.

Insurance for Drivers

All drivers must always carry a valid TX driver's license and automobile insurance. If you're driving/insurance status changes at any time, you have the responsibility to communicate any/all changes.

Additional Income

If your income changes throughout the program year, it is your responsibility to communicate with our office immediately. Your eligibility for volunteerism is based on your/family's annual income. This does not automatically mean that you're disqualified. We may need to have an updated income verification on file.

Harris County Residence

The AmeriCorps Senior Companion Program of Harris County is for Harris County, TX residents only. If you move outside of Harris County, you must communicate with our office immediately.

Uniforms

You will be provided with AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion T-Shirts, Vests, and other branded items for the purpose of identifying yourself as part of ACS.

Thank you again for your interest in participating in the AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program of Harris County.