



# AmeriCorps Seniors

## **RSVP Station (Partnered Agency) Handbook**

RSVP is sponsored by:



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Bath, NY 14810  
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## 1. Purpose and Design

This handbook is designed to strengthen the relationship between Steuben County RSVP and its partnered agencies by outlining critical components of the partnership. It provides a summary of our policies and procedures, along with guidance on how to effectively engage older adults in meaningful service—ensuring a positive experience for both volunteers and partner organizations. For ease of use, key information is underlined and italicized for emphasis. Throughout the handbook, embedded links offer easy access to additional information about specific program components.

## 2. Contact Information

The AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP project is sponsored by the **Steuben County Office for the Aging (SCOFA)**, a department of Steuben County Government.

### Office hours are:

- Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., excluding holidays recognized by Steuben County Government

### Office locations:

- **Main Office:**  
**Steuben County Office Building**  
3 E. Pulteney Square  
Bath, NY 14810  
607-664-2298  
Fax: 607-664-2371
- **Steuben County OFA at the Senior Corning Citizens' Center**  
1 Park Lane  
Corning, NY 14830  
\*\*Office hours by appointment. Contact Bath office at 607-664-2298 to schedule.
- **Steuben County OFA at the Hornell Senior Citizens' Center**  
20 Broadway Mall  
Hornell, NY 14843  
\*\*Office hours by appointment. Contact Bath office at 607-664-2298 to schedule.

### AmeriCorps Seniors Program Staff:

The AmeriCorps Seniors program in Steuben County is supported by a dedicated team within the Office for the Aging. Staff members oversee program coordination, volunteer engagement, and case management to ensure the effective delivery of services. The team can be reached by contacting SCOFA's Bath office at 607-664-2298 for inquiries related to volunteer opportunities, program administration, and support services.

You can also find program information at:

<https://www.steubencountyny.gov/166/AmeriCorps-Seniors-Volunteer-Programs>.

### 3. AmeriCorps Seniors Structure and Governance

#### 3.1 Federal Affiliation – AmeriCorps (CNCS)

Steuben County RSVP operates under AmeriCorps Seniors and is funded through a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps). As part of the broader National Service network, AmeriCorps was established by the [National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993](#) to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with meaningful opportunities to serve their communities and country.

*Branding:* In October 2020, the Corporation for National and Community Service rebranded as **AmeriCorps**, with its senior-focused programs now collectively known as **AmeriCorps Seniors**. While the structure and mission of each grant program remain unchanged under federal statutes, their branding aligns with the new identity. In Steuben County, the RSVP project may be referred to as **AmeriCorps Seniors** or **Steuben County RSVP**. However, all volunteers are officially designated as **AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers**, rather than RSVP volunteers.

#### 3.2 AmeriCorps Seniors

Each year, **AmeriCorps Seniors** engages individuals aged 55 and older in meaningful service through three distinct programs: **RSVP**, the **Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)**, and the **Senior Companion Program (SCP)**.

- **RSVP** offers unmatched flexibility, allowing volunteers to take on a variety of roles; from building the capacity of community organizations to directly supporting activities like mentoring and tutoring children, delivering meals to homebound individuals, assisting in disaster response efforts, and more.
- **Foster Grandparents** provide one-on-one mentoring and tutoring to young people with exceptional needs, offering support that helps them thrive academically and socially.
- **Senior Companions** assist older adults in maintaining their independence by providing companionship and help with daily tasks, enabling them to remain in their homes.

*In Steuben County, the Office for the Aging sponsors RSVP and Senior Companion Program projects.*

#### 3.3 RSVP

Since 1971, RSVP has matched older adults willing to help with local organizations on the front lines of meeting community needs. RSVP is one of the most extensive volunteer efforts for people 55 and over, with nearly 300,000 volunteers nationwide. In Steuben County, RSVP has been active in our community since 1973. Our longevity has garnered us the reputation for being the premier source of volunteerism in the county.

### 3.4 The Steuben County Office for the Aging

A parent agency must sponsor every AmeriCorps Seniors project. Typically, the project assumes the priorities of that agency when developing opportunities for volunteer impact. Since 1984, RSVP has been under the [Steuben County Office for the Aging](#) (SCOFA) sponsorship. The partnership supports SCOFA's mission motto, "...*the new age of aging – working together for innovative solutions.*" Research shows that volunteerism by older adults benefits both the community and the volunteers themselves – reducing isolation and improving overall well-being. Therefore, it is with pleasure that Steuben County RSVP partners with various agencies serving Steuben County to help create ideal service matches for volunteers ([National Service, 2016](#)).

## 4. The Benefits of Engaging AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteers

Partnering with RSVP provides access to experienced and vetted volunteers, liability insurance coverage, and assistance with program development. Volunteer Stations benefit from volunteers' expertise and RSVP's structured support system.

### 4.1 Volunteer Insurance Coverage

AmeriCorps Seniors projects are required by federal law to carry [insurance](#) on all of its volunteers. This requirement can translate to cost savings for your station, as you may reduce the number of volunteers on your policies by the number of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers engaged. AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer coverages include:

- *Accidental Injury, Death, and Dismemberment Coverage:* Volunteers who sustain an injury while on assignment are covered up to \$50,000.
  - RSVP's accidental injury insurance may be determined as primary over any other insurance, including Medicare.
  - Please ask the injured volunteer to contact our office as soon as possible to initiate a Proof of Loss claim.
  - Do not initiate any claims under your agency's insurance. Do not file a workers' compensation claim or advise the volunteer to do so.
  - AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers or their beneficiary can receive up to \$2,500.00 should an accidental death or dismemberment occur while on assignment.
- *Personal Liability Coverage:* liability coverage on AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers should they be involved in an incident that harms another person or property while on assignment.
- *Excess Auto Liability Coverage:* Steuben County will provide AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers with coverage for personal or property damage resulting from using their vehicles while on assignment for your station.

## 4.2 Supporting Volunteers with Reimbursement

Many of our partners are small organizations focused on meeting the direct needs of their communities and may not have funds available to reimburse volunteers for expenses such as mileage. RSVP has a robust reimbursement policy to help remove potential barriers to service. If your agency does not already offer reimbursements to volunteers, RSVP can provide this support on your behalf.

- **Transportation:** Mileage can be calculated either from the volunteer's home to your jobsite and back *or* based on miles accumulated while on assignment, such as making deliveries to clients. RSVP reimburses **\$0.70 per mile**. RSVP can also reimburse rideshare or taxi costs, parking, bus fare, or other travel expenses related to an assignment.
- **Meals:** If a volunteer serves more than six consecutive hours onsite and your agency does not offer a meal or food during the assignment, RSVP can reimburse the volunteer for a purchased meal, **up to \$15** (excluding gratuity).
- **Other Expenses:** RSVP can reimburse goods or services purchased out of pocket by a volunteer that directly support their assignment. Examples include paper supplies or enrollment fees for training. However, **these expenses must be authorized by RSVP staff prior to purchase** to qualify for reimbursement.

Our goal is to ensure that volunteers can serve without experiencing financial hardship. Reimbursements provided to volunteers through AmeriCorps Seniors programs are not considered reportable income and should not impact any income-based benefits the volunteer may receive. For more information, please refer to the AmeriCorps Income Disregard memo in Appendix 4.

## 4.3 Volunteer Vetting

Steuben County RSVP staff conduct a basic background check on each AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer to help ensure a standard of integrity for those placed with partnered agencies. These specific background checks mirror the terms and conditions of AmeriCorps Seniors grants.

The background check includes:

- A **self-certification** confirming that the volunteer has never been convicted of murder
- A screening through the **National Sex Offender Public Website** (NSOPW)

These screenings provide a foundational level of vetting. However, some volunteer assignments may require additional background checks based on agency policies, funding requirements, or the nature of the service. *If further screening is needed, it is the responsibility of the volunteer station to conduct and manage those checks.*

## 4.4 Experienced Volunteers

The goal of AmeriCorps Seniors is to engage older adult volunteers in meaningful community service. As a result, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers come equipped with a

lifetime of skills, knowledge, and experience. Older volunteers often require less training and work more independently than less-experienced individuals. AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers tend to focus their energy on supporting those causes they feel strongly about as well. By engaging AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, your agency can use their perspectives to build program capacity in new and unique ways.

#### 4.5 Volunteer Training Scholarship

The RSVP Advisory Council proudly sponsors the **Brenda West Memorial Scholarship**. The scholarship was developed to assist AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in making the most significant impact by financially supporting their participation in advanced training opportunities relevant to their assignment. With many agencies operating on lean budgets, it isn't easy to send staff to attend training conferences, certification courses, and other training events – especially if travel is involved. These cost barriers often cause agencies not to consider sending volunteers to training. The **Brenda West Memorial Scholarship** uniquely supports building your agency's capacity by empowering your AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers to better serve you. To learn more or to request scholarship support, contact the RSVP Coordinator.

#### 4.6 Volunteer Recognition

AmeriCorps Seniors projects are required to recognize the contributions of their volunteers. Even a simple "thank you" can have a lasting impact on volunteer satisfaction and retention. RSVP can support your agency in recognizing the AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers on your roster. This may include helping to plan recognition efforts or, in some cases, contributing to the financial cost of activities or items that specifically honor AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.

### 5. Partnered Agencies (*Volunteer Stations*)

AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers are recruited and enrolled by Steuben County RSVP and placed with or through local service agencies. In the language of National Service, these agencies are referred to as **volunteer stations**. Volunteer stations are encouraged to support AmeriCorps Seniors by referring prospective volunteers to the RSVP project.

#### 5.1 Characteristics of Volunteer Stations

A Volunteer Station must be a **public agency, secular or faith-based private non-profit organization, or proprietary health care organization**. A volunteer station must accept responsibility and supervision of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in health, education, social service, or related settings. Each station must be licensed or certified, where applicable, and adhere to all federal regulations, including **non-displacement of employed workers**. [Federal regulation: [45 CFR 2553.12](#)]

*Volunteers must not displace paid employees, contribute to staff hiring decisions, or participate in fee-for-service activities where the station receives payment for direct*

services provided by volunteers. (See Section 8: Prohibited Activities for more detail and examples.)

## 5.2 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is established before placing volunteers and outlines program requirements, working relationships, and mutual responsibilities between **Steuben County RSVP** and the **volunteer station**. It sets general conditions applicable to all projects and stations, along with any specific needs of the local volunteer station.

MOUs are reviewed and renegotiated every three years to coincide with the end of our RSVP grant cycle. The effective date is either on or after the date of signing. Amendments can be made at any time if both parties agree. Please notify RSVP if your agency encounters challenges in meeting MOU expectations – such as changes in volunteer service locations or reporting data.

Either Steuben County RSVP or the volunteer station may terminate the MOU at any time. Termination must be submitted on agency letterhead, signed by the appropriate staff member, and include an effective date.

## 5.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Volunteer Stations

For **Steuben County RSVP** and its **partnered agencies** to effectively drive positive change, both must uphold key responsibilities outlined in the **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** and **Federal Regulation: [45 CFR 2553.62](#)**. Understanding these responsibilities and implementing best practices can sometimes raise questions. RSVP project staff are always available to offer support.

### Core Responsibilities of Volunteer Stations:

- Sign the MOU before volunteers are placed or before the termination of a current MOU.
- Support the RSVP project by providing written volunteer assignment descriptions and assisting with data collection to evaluate program outcomes.
- Assign a staff member to supervise AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, ensuring accurate verification of volunteer hours.
- Maintain records and submit required reports as outlined in the MOU.
- Ensure volunteer safety by affirming, on an annual basis, that a secure work environment is provided and that volunteers are not engaged in prohibited activities.
- Provide orientation and regular training to keep AmeriCorps Seniors and other volunteers informed and prepared to complete their assigned duties.

### Additional Responsibilities:

Volunteer stations are also encouraged to enhance volunteer engagement by offering:

- **Recognition** to acknowledge volunteers' contributions.
- **Meals** for volunteers during extended service shifts.

- **Transportation or mileage reimbursement**, where applicable.

If your station cannot cover these expenses, Steuben County RSVP can help. We offer reimbursements for AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers at your station, ensuring they receive the support they need to continue their service. However, we can only provide these benefits to volunteers officially enrolled in the AmeriCorps Seniors program.

Volunteer reimbursement and support is one of the key advantages of partnering with Steuben County RSVP. Our staff is available to assist in coordinating these efforts, making it easier for your station to support and retain volunteers.

### **Collaboration on Additional Support:**

Steuben County RSVP may assist with additional responsibilities if funding is available. Stations are encouraged to report expenses related to volunteer recognition and reimbursement, as these contributions can help meet RSVP's **grant match requirements** and strengthen the partnership. If expense reporting is required, it will be specified in the MOU.

## **6. Volunteer Assignments (Jobs)**

### **6.1 Range of Options**

Volunteer assignments and service hours should match each AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer's skills, experience, and interests. The Steuben County RSVP prioritizes assignments that align with our work plan goals while also considering volunteer preferences.

RSVP staff and volunteer stations should provide a variety of service opportunities, allowing volunteers to choose assignments that are both meaningful and impactful in the community. All roles that RSVP actively recruits for will be included in the MOU. This does not mean that stations cannot offer additional volunteer opportunities outside of RSVP. However, only the assignments listed in the MOU will count toward AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer service hours. If a station has other roles available, volunteers are welcome to participate, but their hours in those assignments will not be tracked by RSVP.

The following are examples of **appropriate and inappropriate** volunteer assignments. This list is not exhaustive. If you have questions about a new or existing volunteer role, contact Steuben County RSVP to confirm its suitability.

Appropriate Assignments can include, but are not limited to:

- Delivering meals to homebound individuals
- Driving older adults to medical appointment or the grocery store
- Helping community members plan for disaster
- Tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged or disabled children
- Leading health and wellness classes
- Working in a hospital or agency gift shop
- Working with non-profits to expand services and build capacity

*Inappropriate Assignments can include, but are not limited to:*

- Performing emergency duties assigned to emergency service personnel (fire, police, EMT), street traffic control or crossing guards
- Serving in an assignment that provides the volunteer with a stipend or compensation other than allowable reimbursements for the tasks performed
- Any role that an employed worker would otherwise perform
- Engaging in political or lobbying activities, including providing transportation to polling places
- Engaging in religious instruction or proselytization

## **6.2 Developing Volunteer Assignments**

Volunteer assignments, or “jobs,” are the foundation of any service project. RSVP’s goal is to engage older adults in meaningful community service—where both the volunteer station benefits from the support and the volunteer feels their time is well spent.

For example, preparing a mass mailing may be an essential task for outreach, and some volunteers may enjoy this type of work. However, others may have specialized skills or interests that could be better utilized to strengthen your agency’s capacity in different ways. Steuben County RSVP focuses on developing assignments that align with our program goals, which may also support your agency’s objectives. Collaborating with RSVP can help you attract new volunteers, track outcomes, and appeal to funders.

When creating a new volunteer role or reviewing an existing one, consider the following:

- *Community Need & Goals*: What community need is being addressed, and how will volunteers contribute?
- *Volunteer Duties & Skills*: What tasks will the volunteer perform? Are there any specialized skills required?
- *Number of Volunteers Needed*: How many volunteers do you need?
- *Service Frequency*: How often and for how long will volunteers be needed?
- *Location of Service*: Where will the volunteers be working?
- *Supervision & Support*: Who will oversee the volunteers? Include contact information for the supervisor.
- *Measuring Success*: How will the impact of volunteer service be evaluated?
- *Data Collection*: What evidence or data will be gathered to assess the effectiveness of the assignment?

Developing thoughtful volunteer roles ensures that both the agency and the volunteers’ benefit, leading to more successful and impactful service opportunities.

## **6.3 National Service Performance Measures**

AmeriCorps Seniors provides a clear framework for using **national service** to tackle critical challenges in communities across the country. This approach builds on decades of public service initiatives and aligns with the vision set forth in the [Edward M. Kennedy Service America Act of 2009](#).

As a national service project, Steuben County RSVP works closely with partners and volunteers to develop programs that create real solutions in seven key priority areas:

- Capacity Building Services: Enhancing the effectiveness of organizations by improving infrastructure, expanding services, and increasing community impact.
- Disaster Services: Engaging volunteers to support response, recovery, and preparedness efforts for natural and man-made disasters.
- Economic Opportunity: Providing services such as financial literacy education, employment assistance, and housing support to help individuals achieve financial stability.
- Education: Offering tutoring, mentoring, and other educational services to improve student academic performance and engagement.
- Environmental Stewardship: Promoting energy efficiency, conservation, and environmental awareness through community projects and education.
- Healthy Futures: Assisting with access to health care, nutrition services, and independent living support to improve overall health outcomes.
- Veterans and Military Families: Providing support services tailored to veterans, active-duty military, and their families, addressing their unique needs.

Each priority area includes specific service focus areas, allowing RSVP to collaborate with volunteer stations and community partners to create impactful volunteer opportunities that produce measurable results. By aligning assignments with these national performance measures, RSVP ensures that volunteer efforts contribute meaningfully to both local and national needs.

### **6.3.1 Steuben County RSVP Focus Areas**

The RSVP program is designed to be flexible, allowing AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers to serve in a wide range of roles that address critical community needs. Every RSVP project develops a work plan based on [AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Performance Measures](#), ensuring that volunteer efforts align with national service priorities and support the mission of the sponsoring agency.

Steuben County RSVP places the greatest emphasis on the Healthy Futures priority area, which includes:

- Access to Care – Helping individuals improve their health knowledge, gain access to medical care, and participate in evidence-based health programs.
- Obesity and Food – Supporting food security efforts, educating individuals on healthy eating habits, and encouraging lifestyle changes that promote well-being.
- Aging in Place – Providing social support and resources to help older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers maintain independent living.

Our secondary priority is Capacity Building, which leverages the skills, knowledge, and experience of older adult volunteers to strengthen community organizations. AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers support agencies in a variety of ways—from answering phones and directing individuals to vital services, to assisting with fundraising that sustains essential programs. Many also take on administrative or leadership roles, improving organizational

efficiency and expanding capacity. These contributions help build stronger, more resilient organizations that are better equipped to meet community needs.

While Healthy Futures and Capacity Building are our primary focus areas, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers also contribute to a wide range of community initiatives. They serve in museums, animal shelters, libraries, and other community-based programs. As Steuben County RSVP continues to adapt, our focus areas may shift to meet the needs of our partners and volunteers. RSVP will notify stations of any changes to focus areas, which will also be reflected in future versions of this handbook.

Volunteer stations engaged in activities that support these goals are encouraged to work closely with RSVP staff to develop impactful volunteer assignments and improve data collection. Data requirements for each assignment will be outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure proper tracking and reporting of volunteer contributions.

## 7. Managing AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteers

Once AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers have been assigned to your station, the roles and responsibilities agreed upon in the Memorandum of Understanding begin. It is never RSVP's intention to add to the workload of volunteer station staff through the agreement. RSVP will work with volunteer stations' current data collection and reporting procedures or agree on a method for Steuben County RSVP to collect data independently. RSVP will also share any data collected with you. This data sharing could turn into a tangible demonstration of the impact your agency provides the community that you can use for funding applications, public service announcements, and annual reports.

### 7.1 Onboarding RSVP Volunteers

RSVP staff takes the time to get to know each potential volunteer, exploring their interests, experiences, and skills to match them with assignments they will find meaningful and enjoyable. A volunteer who is passionate about their role becomes a valuable asset to your agency. Once a volunteer is paired with an assignment, it is the station's responsibility to ensure they are fully prepared for their service. This includes:

- **Completing necessary documentation**, such as applications, confidentiality agreements, and other required forms by your agency.
- **Administering background checks** as needed for the assignment. RSVP staff conduct the initial screening required by the AmeriCorps Seniors grant (see Section 4.3, *Volunteer Vetting*). Any additional background checks required for specific roles—along with any associated costs—are the responsibility of the station.
- **Providing training** relevant to the duties of the assignment.
- **Offering ongoing support** to ensure volunteers have the resources they need to succeed in their roles.

To ensure volunteers are well-prepared and engaged, RSVP recommends that stations establish a consistent training schedule. Training can range from annual refresher

sessions to more frequent updates, depending on the complexity of the role. Regular training provides several key benefits, including:

- Reinforcing agency policies and job procedures, ensuring volunteers provide high-quality service.
- Updating volunteer profiles and completing any required documentation.
- Providing an opportunity to check in with volunteers, review assignments, address any challenges, and celebrate successes.
- Documenting training participation, which may be beneficial for funding and compliance purposes.
- Recognizing volunteer contributions—never underestimate the power of a simple “thank you” to show appreciation!

Volunteers are a valuable resource, freely giving their time, knowledge, and skills to support important causes. Their contributions reduce costs for agencies while increasing community impact. To retain volunteers, it is essential to develop assignments that respect their time and talents. Volunteers who feel overworked, underprepared, or unappreciated are less likely to continue serving.

Above all, *engagement is key*—**there is nothing more frustrating for an AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer than being ready and eager to help but NOT given meaningful opportunities to contribute.** When volunteers feel valued, prepared, and engaged, they are more likely to stay and make an even greater impact.

## 7.2 Volunteer Attendance and Expenses

Specific data required by Steuben County RSVP will be outlined in the MOU. All volunteer stations will be required to report AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer attendance on assignments. *Volunteer attendance should typically be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.* Steuben County RSVP provides online access to our database, called the Web Assistant, to record volunteer hours. To access the Web Assistant, go to the [Steuben County AmeriCorps Seniors](#) webpage. Navigate to [Retired & Senior Volunteer Program \(RSVP\)](#) → [Partnered Agencies](#) → [Reporting Volunteer Hours](#). If using the Web Assistant does not suit your needs, we can make other arrangements to record the information on paper or email.

Volunteer hours reported to RSVP should accurately reflect the volunteer attendance records of the volunteer station. *AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers come to you fully insured, but only for documented service hours.* When reporting hours, stations may do so for each specific day the volunteer served or tally the total week’s or month’s service. *If your agency is submitting cumulative monthly hours in the Web Assistant, use the **last day of the month** as the “served on date” even if your agency was not open on that day.* If volunteers drive their vehicles as part of their assignment, it is helpful to document the mileage they accrue. *(Please refer to Appendix 3, “Recording Volunteer Attendance”; page 19)*

AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers are entitled to mileage reimbursement through Steuben County RSVP. *Volunteers may claim mileage for traveling from their home to their*

assignment or any documented mileage accrued while performing assigned duties. However, reimbursement from RSVP **IS NOT** supplemental to any reimbursement offered by the volunteer station. To receive reimbursement, volunteers will complete a Volunteer Travel Reimbursement Form (see Appendix 3), which will document trip information for each day of travel by the volunteer. The information provided by the volunteer on the form **MUST** match the volunteer station's records and be authorized by the assignment supervisor before the volunteer may be reimbursed. To simplify tracking and avoid confusion, specific reimbursement terms may be outlined in your station's MOU.

Steuben County RSVP currently offers mileage reimbursement at a rate of **\$0.70 per mile**, Alternative reimbursement rates for specific assignments are negotiated as necessary. Additionally, RSVP can reimburse volunteers who use public transportation or rideshare services (Uber, Lyft) to get to their assignments. RSVP can also reimburse parking charges.

There are certain circumstances in which AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers may submit claims for other expenses directly related to their service with your agency. These expenses are required to be part of the description for the assignment. Notable examples are:

- Training Fee – if your agency recommends specific training for an assignment (for example, CPR/First Aid) and does not reimburse for the cost of the course, RSVP can reimburse the volunteer for the cost of the course
- Meals – If an AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer serves on a shift that is longer than 6 hours and the station does not provide a meal, RSVP can reimburse meal costs up to \$15

Please contact the RSVP Coordinator to discuss details and update the job description accordingly.

Steuben County RSVP maintains regular contact with our volunteers, but we understand that changes sometimes come up during day-to-day assignments. If a volunteer notifies you of a change to their contact information or assignment, please encourage them to reach out to RSVP directly so we can keep our records up to date. Similarly, if your agency experiences staff changes—especially involving those who supervise or coordinate with volunteers—please notify RSVP so we can update our records accordingly.

### **7.3 Other Volunteer Reporting Requirements**

Specific volunteer assignments will require additional data reported to RSVP. Typically, this information will consist of the number of clients served and/or data that evaluates service efficacy. In advance, these requirements will be negotiated between RSVP and volunteer station executives and outlined in the MOU.

## **8. Special Limitations Including Prohibited Activities**

Since RSVP is federally funded, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers are restricted from engaging in certain activities while on assignments. These activities include:

1. **Political Activities:** AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers may not engage in activities that may influence the outcome of an election, endorse candidates, parties, or factions, interfere with the results of an election, provide transportation to or assist at polls for voter or prospective voters, lobby or advocate for specific political causes or legislation, and other like activities. ([45 CFR 2553.91\(a\)](#) and [45 CFR 1226.](#))
2. **Religious Activities:** RSVP projects are encouraged to partner with faith-based organizations in addressing community needs. However, volunteers may not under RSVP affiliation engage in activities that give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization or religious instruction during their volunteer service. ([45 CFR 2553.91\(g\)](#))
  - a. **Service assignments in connection with religious activities:** AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers may accompany a client to a religious service as part of their service activity, as long as the volunteer is not responsible for conducting the service. This is not considered a prohibited activity. However, volunteers may not lead or participate in conducting any part of the religious service.
3. **Non-Discrimination:** Volunteer stations may not discriminate against an AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer, or any activity or program based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political affiliation, marital or parental status, or military service. ([45 CFR 2553.91\(f\)](#))
4. **Labor or Anti-Labor Activities:** AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers may not be used to directly or indirectly finance or support labor or anti-labor organizations or related activities. ([45 CFR 2553.91\(d\)](#))
5. **Non-Displacement of Employed Workers and Non-Impairment of Contracts for Service:** AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers may not perform any service or duty or engage in any activity that would otherwise be performed by an employed worker or supplant the hiring of or result in the displacement of employed workers or impair existing contracts for service. See [45 CFR 1216.1-3.1-1216.1.4 Non Displacement of Employed Workers and Non-Impairment of Contracts for Service](#) for the AmeriCorps regulations on this subject. These regulations list certain exceptions.
6. **Prohibition on Fee-for-Service:** Under no circumstance may a volunteer under RSVP affiliation receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, members of their family, or friends. No person, organization, or agency may request or receive any compensation for the services of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers. ([45 CFR 2553.91\(c\)](#))

a. In some cases, determining whether a payment requested or received by a volunteer station is permissible in light of the prohibition is relatively straightforward. In other cases, however, deciding whether the arrangement is proper considering the ban requires a more in-depth review, including an assessment by AmeriCorps. If you have questions about contributions to

*your agencies for programs involving AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, please get in touch with the Steuben County RSVP Project Coordinator to arrange an assignment review.*

7. **Volunteer Status:** AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers are not employees of Steuben County Government, the Steuben County Office for the Aging, or any of its related programs, including Steuben County RSVP, the volunteer station, CNCS, or the Federal Government. ([45 CFR 2553.42](#))
8. **Prohibitions on Abortion Services:** While performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps Seniors program, staff and volunteers may not engage in providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.

**Appendix 1:**

**EXAMPLE: Memorandum of Understanding  
Steuben County RSVP**

This Memorandum of Understanding (this “MOU”) contains basic provisions, which will guide the working relationship between both parties. It is entered into by and between **Steuben County RSVP**, sponsored by the **Steuben County Office for the Aging**, and the following agency and/or entity (the “**Station**”):

Station Name: \_\_\_\_\_ EIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Station  
Representative (ASR): \_\_\_\_\_

ASR Email: \_\_\_\_\_ ASR Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

The **Steuben County RSVP** and the **Station** may be referred to herein as the “**Parties.**”

This **MOU is effective from** \_\_\_\_\_, **through** \_\_\_\_\_. It may be amended in writing at any time with the concurrence of both parties and must be renegotiated at least every three (3) years.

**Basic Provisions**

**Steuben County RSVP shall:**

1. Recruit, enroll, and interview AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in RSVP.
2. Refer volunteers to the Station as appropriate.
3. Review acceptability of volunteer assignments.
4. Provide training on the proper use of volunteer time reporting tools, reimbursement guidance, and AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP procedures to station staff and volunteers.
5. Conduct an orientation for Station staff prior to volunteer placement.
6. Publicize the program and volunteer opportunities through appropriate media.
7. Provide secondary insurance for volunteers, with the AmeriCorps-specified minimum levels of insurance as follows: (i) accident insurance for personal injury against claims in excess of any benefits or services for medical care of treatment available to the volunteer from other sources, during travel between the volunteers’ homes and places of assignment, during volunteer service, during meal periods while serving as a volunteer, and while attending project sponsored activities; (ii) personal liability insurance, in excess of protection provided by other insurance (professional liability coverage is not included); and (iii) excess automobile insurance, providing protection against claims in excess of the greater of either: (1) liability insurance the volunteers carry on their own

automobiles; or (2) the limits of applicable state financial responsibility law, or in absence, levels of protection to be determined by AmeriCorps for each person, each accident, and for property damage.

8. Monitor activities at the Station to ensure compliance and support volunteer needs.
9. Facilitate an appeals process to resolve disputes.
10. Coordinate volunteer recognition and appreciation activities.
11. Ensure collaboration with other community service programs to prevent duplication.
12. Reimburse volunteers for transportation costs in accordance with RSVP policies and funding availability. Please refer to the Steuben County Volunteer Station Handbook for current reimbursement policies.
13. Arrange for meals/snacks at the request of the station for volunteers on assignment.
14. Provide identification (badges or clothing) for volunteers.
15. Assist in determining community needs and negotiate performance measures with Station staff.
16. Ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations governing AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP, including compliance with executive orders affecting funding and participation.

**The Station shall:**

1. Interview and approve AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers for assignments.
2. Perform background checks when required by the volunteer role.
3. Provide training and supervision for volunteers, ensuring they understand their roles and responsibilities.
4. Furnish necessary materials for the assignment.
5. Ensure volunteer safety and submit an annual safety assurance form.
6. Ensure that staff members responsible for supervising AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers attend an annual training session to stay updated on RSVP policies, procedures, and best practices for effectively managing AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.
7. Provide clear volunteer assignment descriptions to RSVP.
8. Report any accidents or incidents involving volunteers immediately to RSVP.
9. Acknowledge AmeriCorps Seniors in publicity and display signage indicating participation.
10. Ensure non-displacement of employees, meaning no volunteer may perform tasks that replace paid staff or conflict with existing contracts.
11. Provide reasonable accommodations for volunteers with disabilities to ensure they can perform their assignments effectively if reasonable accommodations can be made without undue hardship.
12. Prohibit prohibited activities, including engaging volunteers in political advocacy, religious instruction, or voter registration efforts as defined by federal law.
13. Adequately retain documentation of volunteer activity, such as attendance sheets, mileage, and reimbursement records.

**Data Sharing & Reporting Requirements**

To ensure compliance with RSVP operations standards, the Station agrees to:

1. Report volunteer engagement by the 15th of the following month, either by submitting a monthly timesheet or by entering volunteer service hours online via the Web Assistant, to ensure insurance coverage and federal compliance.

2. Verify and approve reimbursement requests for mileage and other authorized expenses.
3. If volunteers receive reimbursement from station, negotiate a reporting system with RSVP to disclose reimbursement amounts to AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.
4. Submit data for performance measurement, including volunteer impact metrics, as negotiated with RSVP staff.
5. Participate in an annual review to assess program impact and volunteer contributions.
6. Ensure confidentiality of all collected data and comply with applicable federal, state, and local privacy laws.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with *Executive Order 14173 (2025)* and other federal regulations:

1. The Station will comply with all federal non-discrimination laws, ensuring that no individual is denied participation in RSVP services based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or protected veteran status.
2. The Station shall **not** be required to adopt or implement any Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies that conflict with federal guidelines on merit-based service allocation.
3. No religious or political affiliation shall be required or considered for volunteers, ensuring equal opportunity for all qualified individuals.

### **Other Provisions**

1. **Hold Harmless:** Each party shall hold the other harmless against claims arising from an act or omission while acting within the scope this MOU, except as otherwise provided by law. The duty to hold harmless prescribed by this paragraph shall not arise where the injury or damage resulted from intentional wrongdoing or a recklessness act or omission on the part of the party seeking to be held harmless. Within ten (10) days of being served with a summons and complaint, the volunteer must serve a copy of the summons and complaint, or any charging document, or notice of claim, upon the County Attorney, 3 E. Pulteney Sq., Bath, NY 14810 in order for them to avail themselves to this hold harmless provision.
2. **Legal Representation:** Legal counsel may be retained, and counsel fees, court costs, bail, and other expenses incidental to the defense of an AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer may be paid, in a criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding when such a proceeding arises directly out of performance of the AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer's activities. 45 CFR Part 1220 sets forth the circumstances under which AmeriCorps Seniors may reimburse such expenses.
3. **Separation from Service:** The Station may request the removal of a volunteer at any time, and RSVP may reassign or terminate a volunteer's service if necessary.
4. **Letters of Agreement:** If volunteers serve in an individual's home, a signed agreement will be obtained between the legally responsible party, the Station, and RSVP.
5. **Termination:** Either party may terminate this MOU with 30 days written notice.

**Volunteer Stations Primary Type:** To qualify as an AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Station, an agency/office/department must self-certify that it is one of the following:

- Public Non-Profit     
  Private Non-Profit     
  Proprietary Health Care Agency  
 Governmental Agency

**Authorized Signatures**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Station Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
SCOFA AmeriCorps Seniors Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

***PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:***

Steuben County Office for the Aging  
c/o Christine Towner, Coordinator, RSVP  
3 E. Pulteney Square  
Bath, NY 14810

Or email to scanned copy to designated RSVP Staff

*Please include a volunteer assignment description for each volunteer opportunity at the station.  
Current assignments are listed on the following page(s). Thank you!*

**Appendix to MOU**

**Assignments and Volunteer Supervisors (Station Staff):**

Station Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete for each assignment for which RSVP is actively recruiting volunteers.

Assignment Name:	_____
Supervisor's Name	_____ Title: _____
Supervisor's Phone:	_____ Email: _____
Assignment Location (if different from station address:	_____
Job description reviewed and accepted:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Output data to be collected (how many)	_____
Description of reporting method	_____
Outcome data to be collected (how well)	_____
Description of reporting method	_____
Volunteers receive reimbursement from station?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

*(Repeated as necessary to document assignments and data collection requirements)*

## Appendix 2: RSVP Volunteer Assignment Form

A well-written, accurate job description is essential for attracting and recruiting volunteers by clearly communicating roles and expectations. This transparency ensures we attract individuals whose skills and interests align with our needs, leading to a motivated and effective volunteer workforce. Partnering with us to create precise job descriptions will advance our shared mission.



Gabriel Smalt, Director

### Volunteer Assignment Description

**Station:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title of Volunteer Assignment:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Introduction Statement:*

What is the goal for this assignment? Why would volunteers want to serve with you? (This is your chance to grab a volunteer's attention.)

What is the anticipated benefit of this volunteer service to those receiving service?

*Duties:*

What do you need volunteers to do? (Be as specific as possible)

*Requirements:*

What specific skill or requirements will the volunteer need? (Include any requirements such as lifting, standing, background checks, physicals, specialized training, etc.)

Do you offer reimbursement for volunteer expenses (mileage, supplies, etc.)? Yes No  
Days/times volunteers needed:

Volunteer Supervisor and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Address (if different from your agency's address): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2: RSVP Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement Form

The volunteer must complete this form and submit it to their assignment supervisor for verification before sending it to RSVP. Reported hours and mileage must match any records kept by the station. Please contact RSVP if you need a new copy of the form.



### Volunteer Reimbursement Form

Document all days/hours on assignment(s) and miles driven

Volunteer  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date (mm/dd/yy)	Location Enter the name and address of the agency	Assignment What job are you doing today?	Expenses (bus, taxi, Uber/Lyft, parking, meals - attach receipt)	Total Miles (driving, round trip)	Hours Worked
Return completed forms to: 3 E. Pulteney Square Bath, NY 14810			<b>Totals:</b>		

Signatures: By signing, you are confirming that the hours and mileage submitted are accurate and correct.

Volunteer: _____	Date: _____
Assignment Supervisor: _____	RSVP Coordinator: _____

\*RSVP reimbursement; \$0.70/mile. Reimbursement is not supplemental to reimbursement from other agencies. If using public transportation, taxi, Uber, or Lyft, receipts showing purchase are required. Meals may be reimbursed for volunteer shifts that exceed 6 hours, and where a meal is not provided by the station, not to exceed \$15/meal.

Please see back for instructions to complete this form.

## Instructions for Completing The Volunteer Reimbursement Form

### **Volunteer Information:**

Write your name, address, and phone number. We use this to calculate your mileage starting point.

### **Date:**

Enter the date you served using MM/DD/YY format (for example, 03/28/25).

### **Location:**

Write the name and address of the agency you served with. This helps us verify mileage.

### **Assignment:**

Write your job title for that day (examples: *Food Pantry Worker, Meals on Wheels Driver, Blood Drive Ambassador*).

### **Expenses:**

If you used public transit, a taxi, Uber, or Lyft, enter the cost here and attach a receipt if possible. Include parking costs and meal receipts (only if you worked over 6 hours and no meal was provided).

*If you drove yourself, leave this box blank.*

### **Total Miles:**

Write the number of miles you drove for the assignment. You may record:

- Home to assignment and back
- Mileage during the assignment (e.g., meal delivery) – must be verifiable by station

*If you used public transportation or rideshare, leave this box blank.*

### **Hours Worked:**

Write the number of hours you served that day.

### **Notes:**

You can use one form for the entire month—just list each day you served.

If you only have one assignment, complete the form for that assignment for the full month. This helps us record all your hours and miles in one place.

If you serve in **multiple assignments:**

- Use one form and list each assignment clearly.
- Ask each assignment supervisor to sign at least once under your job title.
- If your site supervisor changes often (like at a blood drive), have any supervisor sign under the assignment section.

*Have questions? Call RSVP at 607-664-2298. We're happy to help you fill out the form or figure out what's needed for reimbursement.*

Reminder: Reimbursements provided through AmeriCorps Seniors **do not count as income** and will not affect income-based benefits.

## **Appendix 3: “Recording Volunteer Attendance”**

How your agency reports volunteer attendance to Steuben County RSVP is based on your internal policies and procedures. Our goal is to adapt to your existing systems—not create additional burden. Volunteers should be informed during orientation about your agency’s recordkeeping practices, as well as the importance of accurately tracking service hours. These records help ensure volunteers are covered by insurance, eligible for reimbursements, and recognized for their service.

To support this, RSVP staff will work with your agency to develop a reporting system that fits your needs. While we recommend reporting AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer service hours by the 15th of each month, we understand that schedules vary. If this timeline is not feasible, please contact the RSVP office to make alternative arrangements.

Here are some suggestions based on current practices:

### **1. The Web Assistant – Online Hours Reporting**

#### **How to Access the Web Assist**

You can access the Web Assistant in two ways:

- Direct link:  
Visit: <https://www.steubencountyny.gov/730/Partner-Agencies>  
Then click on “Reporting Volunteer Hours” in the left menu.
  
- Navigation path from main site:
  1. Go to [www.steubencountyny.gov](http://www.steubencountyny.gov)
  2. Click “Government”
  3. Select “Departments”
  4. Choose “[AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer Programs](#)”
  5. Click “[Retired & Senior Volunteer Program \(RSVP\)](#)”
  6. Select “[Partner Agencies](#)”
  7. Click “Reporting Volunteer Hours”

The system will then navigate away from the Steuben County Government webpage and to the Web Assistant.

## Login Information

The initial login screen for the Web Assistant will look like this:

**Steuben County RSVP**

**Steuben County RSVP**

**Enter Hours You Have Served**

If you do not know your username or password, please contact Christine Towner at the Steuben County RSVP office: Call 607-664-2392 Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Instructions:**  
Enter your User Name and Password into the form below, then click the OK button.

User Name:

Password:

- RSVP will provide your agency with a default username and password.
- (New stations) You will be prompted to change both upon your first login.
- Only one account can be issued per station.
  - If multiple supervisors report hours, create a shared station username and password instead of using one tied to an individual.
- If you forget your credentials, contact RSVP at **607-664-2298** for assistance.

Your agency's username and password are kept in RSVP's database. If you should ever forget this information, simply contact the RSVP office at 607-664-2298, and an RSVP staff member will be happy to retrieve them for you.

## Entering Volunteer Hours

Once your agency's Web Assistant account is created, you'll see a list of all RSVP volunteers assigned to your station, along with their specific assignments, in alphabetical order. If a volunteer holds multiple roles, their name will appear more than once—once for each assignment. To enter hours, click on the volunteer's name under the correct assignment; it will be highlighted in blue when selected.

### Steuben County RSVP

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### Enter Volunteer Hours

You are logged in as: **Steuben County Office for the Aging.**  
[That's not me.](#)

If you have served hours at a different job not listed below, please contact us.

**Instructions:**  
Please select from the list below the volunteer/job combination for which you wish to report hours served.

---

I wish to report hours served for this Volunteer/Job:

- Alzheimer, Carla -- Bath Cluster Group
- Alzheimer, Carla -- Office Work
- Ambrosone, Cheryl -- Office Work
- Bates, Janet -- Bath Cluster Group
- Baxter, Patsy -- Office Work
- Billings, Dolores -- Bath Cluster Group
- Bolton, Pamela -- Bath Cluster Group**
- Bolton, Pamela -- Office Work
- Borhman, Mary -- Project Care Office Assistant
- Brandow, Deborah -- Project Care Companionship & Telephone Reassure Asst
- Brown, Ethel -- Office Work
- Brown, Ethel -- Project Care Companionship & Telephone Reassure Asst
- Burgess, Shirley -- Bath Cluster Group
- Burgess, Shirley -- Office Work
- Caputo, John -- Advisory Council Member

Click the 'OK' button below to proceed to the next step and enter the hours served.

[Change Your Password](#)

Press the "OK" button once the correct volunteer and assignment have been selected.

## Entering Volunteer Hours

The volunteer service screen displays the volunteer's name, prior hours, and a space to enter new hours and mileage.

### Enter Hours Served

You are logged in as: **Steuben County Office for the Aging**  
[That's not me.](#)

Thanks for entering your hours.

**Instructions:** Please complete the form below to submit your hours. Enter the date and hours served - click the calendar button to select a date. If you have any comments regarding your report, you may also enter a text message to us.

---

I am entering hours for this Volunteer:  
**Bolton, Pamela -- Bath Cluster Group**

The hours were served on:	December	31	2018	
On this day I served:	0	Hours	0	Minutes
Car mileage:	<input type="text"/>			
Did you drive for this job?	<input type="checkbox"/>			

**Past Hours for this Volunteer**

Recent hours that haven't yet been approved may not be listed.

Date	Hours	Minutes
04/30/2018	5	15

A Message to Us:

Click the OK button to submit your hours.

[Change Your Password](#)

You can enter hours in two ways:

- **Daily Hours:**
  - Change the “hours served on” date to the correct service day.
  - Enter hours worked and, if applicable, mileage.
  - Use 15-minute increments.
  
- **Monthly Totals:**
  - Use your records to total hours and mileage for the month.
  - Enter the last day of the month as the “hours served on” date (even if your agency was closed).

**Note:** Always maintain records and attendance sheets. RSVP may occasionally request documentation to verify reported hours, especially for reimbursement purposes.

### Using the Comment Box

To save a comment, you must enter at least 15 minutes of service time. The comment box is a helpful way to share information about a specific volunteer with RSVP staff. However, it may not be the fastest method for time-sensitive communication. For urgent matters, please contact the RSVP office directly by phone at 607-664-2298 or by email.

Use the comment box to share:

- Volunteer performance highlights
- Service completion
- Other important updates for the volunteer

**Please do not use the comment box to report that a volunteer did not serve during the month.** Since the system requires a minimum of 15 minutes to save a comment, entering time to report no service creates inaccurate records and defeats the purpose. If a volunteer did not serve, simply leave that month blank.

Once you've entered the hours and any necessary comments, click **"OK"** to save. You'll be returned to the list of volunteers. Please note that submitted hours will not appear immediately, as they must first be reviewed and approved by RSVP staff before becoming visible in the system.

## **2. RSVP Volunteer Attendance Form (Paper Option)**

If your agency prefers paper tracking, RSVP can provide a customized attendance form for your station. This form includes a list of all your current RSVP volunteers and their assignments, with space to record hours and mileage each day.

You may complete the form yourself based on your internal records or allow volunteers to sign in daily. The completed form can be returned to RSVP by mail, email, or fax—whatever method works best for your agency.

**Need a form?** Contact the RSVP office to request a custom attendance form. We can provide a printed copy or email you a fillable PDF version. If you prefer to use your own attendance system, please check with RSVP staff to ensure it meets our reporting needs.

The following page is an example of a blank Monthly Volunteer Attendance Form.



### **3. Email and Other Attendance Reporting Methods**

In some cases, RSVP will accept an email or a customized attendance report from the assignment supervisor listing RSVP volunteers and their hours for the month. Please contact RSVP to make arrangements if you prefer to report hours this way.

RSVP's goal is to work with your agency to gather the information we need—*not* to impose a system that adds unnecessary work for your staff.

**Always maintain your records and attendance sheets.** If verification is needed, RSVP may contact your agency to request documentation supporting the hours reported for a specific volunteer.