



Helping Neighbors stay connected, active, and independent

Volunteer Guidelines

Village Connections appreciates the time and effort that each Volunteer contributes. The mission of our organization is to enhance our members' health and wellness needs and support their social and cultural interests. Our mission simply cannot happen without our volunteers. They are the heart of our organization and we rely on their commitment.

This guide is designed to answer questions you have about being a volunteer. We encourage you to contact our office whenever you have a question or concern.

Phone: 614.226.6567

Email: info@villageconnectionsolumbus.org

Address: 588 S. Third Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

Thank you for your decision to volunteer!

General Information

As a Volunteer you will be the face of our organization to our members and the public. We expect the following from our volunteers:

- you must attend at least one orientation session
- we ask that you contact the member the day prior to your visit
- be prompt and reliable
- decline monetary tips and gifts
- notify the Director as soon as possible if an appointment must be cancelled

Privacy and Confidentiality: Volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of personal information to which they may be exposed while serving as a volunteer. Information must never be shared — except with the Director— when the volunteer feels it is reasonable and necessary in fulfilling a service for a member.

Drivers: Village Connections volunteers who drive must have on file with the organization proof of a valid driver's license and insurance. Drivers will be covered by their own insurance.

Volunteer Opportunities

Generally, the kinds of services we offer fall into these categories:

Driving Members: This is our most often requested service. Driving may include taking a member to an appointment, shopping, or to a Village Connections social event.

Friendly Calls and/or Home Visits: Keeping in touch with members is crucial. Volunteers CAN help us determine specific needs of individual members and help members to feel less isolated.

In Home Support: This may include anything from changing light bulbs or replacing batteries in a smoke detector to raking up leaves. Snow removal, light furniture moving and pet care are other examples of how you may help members in their homes.

Grocery/Prescription Pickup: Members sometimes require someone to go to the grocery store and buy their groceries for them. This process is different than a typical request, and is outlined further in the “Fulfilling a Service Request” section of the Volunteer Guidelines.

Technology Assistance: Members have different levels of technology assistance needs, which could range from setting up a new laptop and printer to downloading a new app or help with a cell phone

Office Help: Several times throughout the year we have the need to do large mailings, needing help with addressing and stuffing envelopes. Along with this, there are other opportunities to help with general office duties including scheduling member and volunteer services, data input, and help with our monthly newsletter.

Social Engagement: As a volunteer you are invited to participate in the many activities we provide for members. You can check the calendar of events on the Village Connections website (www.villageconnections.columbus.org) to see what is happening each month. We encourage you to become a social member so you can participate in our full schedule of events. This will qualify you to come to several special parties and member-only events we provide our members each year.

Fulfilling a Service Request

The normal procedure for getting a service request from a member is via email. You will receive an email with the name of the member, date and time of the service, and a short description of the request. Please be sure to respond to the email with “Yes, I can do this” or a “No, I am not available.”

You will then receive another email; the second email is important because it will **confirm** you as the volunteer who will complete the service request. Once you commit to a service we ask that you contact the member 24 hours in advance via phone, as many of our members do not use email, to confirm with them personally. When the service has been completed, send a quick email saying DONE. Note also that if another Volunteer has agreed to the service before you did, you will receive an email stating you are no longer needed for the request.

Another way to pick up a service opportunity is to keep up with the weekly volunteer open service requests. These go out every Friday with the open request for the next four weeks. We put these out weekly to let our volunteers know what is coming up and to advise them of member requests that have not been met yet. This is very Volunteer-friendly because you can pick something that comfortably fits your time constraints.

Occasionally, members will request additional services that were not described in the initial service request. This can include tasks such as stopping at the bank or picking up groceries. You are not required to do any task that was not outlined in the initial service request; however, you can if time allows you to do so. If you do provide any additional service, please update us with the total additional time spent.

If a member reaches out to you directly to provide a service, please ask them to contact the office to schedule the service so that we are aware.

Grocery/Prescription Pickup Request

When grocery shopping for a member, you will need to stop by the office, pick up our Village Connections credit card and grocery pickup form. The member should provide you with the list of items they need. You will use our credit card to pay for the groceries; all financial obligations will be between Village Connections and the member. **DO NOT ACCEPT ANY CASH, or a CARD FROM THE MEMBER.** After the groceries have been delivered, fill out both portions of the grocery pickup form. If the member is paying by check, have them fill it out for the amount on the receipt and make it out to Village Connections. Leave the top portion and the receipt with the member, and bring the bottom portion, the credit card, and the check (if applicable) back to Village Connections.