

RSVP of Citrus County  
Citrus County Resource Center  
2804 W. Marc Knighton Ct., Key #4  
Lecanto, FL 34461

# RSVP

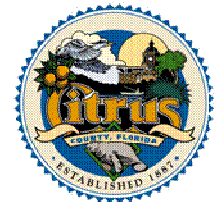
## Lead With Experience

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## Get Involved!



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE** 



**Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Citrus County  
Central Ridge Community Center  
2804 W. Marc Kington Ct., Key#4  
Lecanto FL 34461**

Phone: 352-527-5959 Fax: 352-527-5908

Hours of Operation: M - F 8AM to 5PM

E-mail: [ncvc@citrusbocc.com](mailto:ncvc@citrusbocc.com)

Web Page: [www.naturecoastvolunteercenter.org](http://www.naturecoastvolunteercenter.org)

Dear Volunteer:

Welcome to the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Citrus County! It is our hope you will find volunteering to be a satisfying and rewarding experience. We are confident that your hours of service will be of value and benefit to your community.

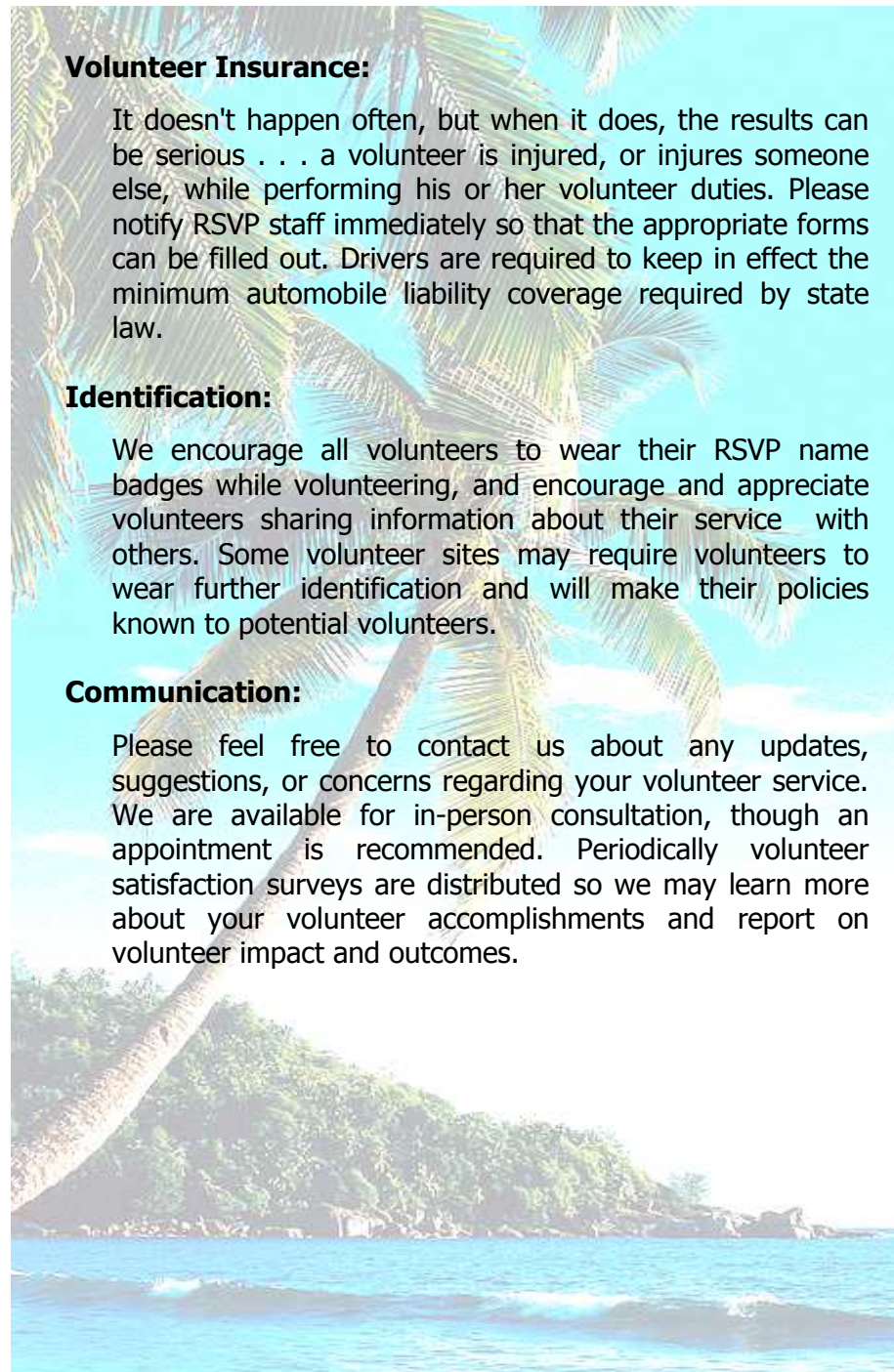
This handbook contains information on the history, mission, and benefits of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, and highlights some of the volunteer opportunities available to you. Please refer to it as a useful reference as you begin your volunteer experience.

We appreciate your interest in volunteer service and are here to help make your volunteer experience meaningful and productive. We look forward to getting to know you and are available for assistance. Please do not hesitate to call or come by the RSVP office any time.

Sincerely,



Laurie Diestler  
RSVP Project Director  
Phone: (352) 527-5952



**Volunteer Insurance:**

It doesn't happen often, but when it does, the results can be serious . . . a volunteer is injured, or injures someone else, while performing his or her volunteer duties. Please notify RSVP staff immediately so that the appropriate forms can be filled out. Drivers are required to keep in effect the minimum automobile liability coverage required by state law.

**Identification:**

We encourage all volunteers to wear their RSVP name badges while volunteering, and encourage and appreciate volunteers sharing information about their service with others. Some volunteer sites may require volunteers to wear further identification and will make their policies known to potential volunteers.

**Communication:**

Please feel free to contact us about any updates, suggestions, or concerns regarding your volunteer service. We are available for in-person consultation, though an appointment is recommended. Periodically volunteer satisfaction surveys are distributed so we may learn more about your volunteer accomplishments and report on volunteer impact and outcomes.

Hours can be reported via:

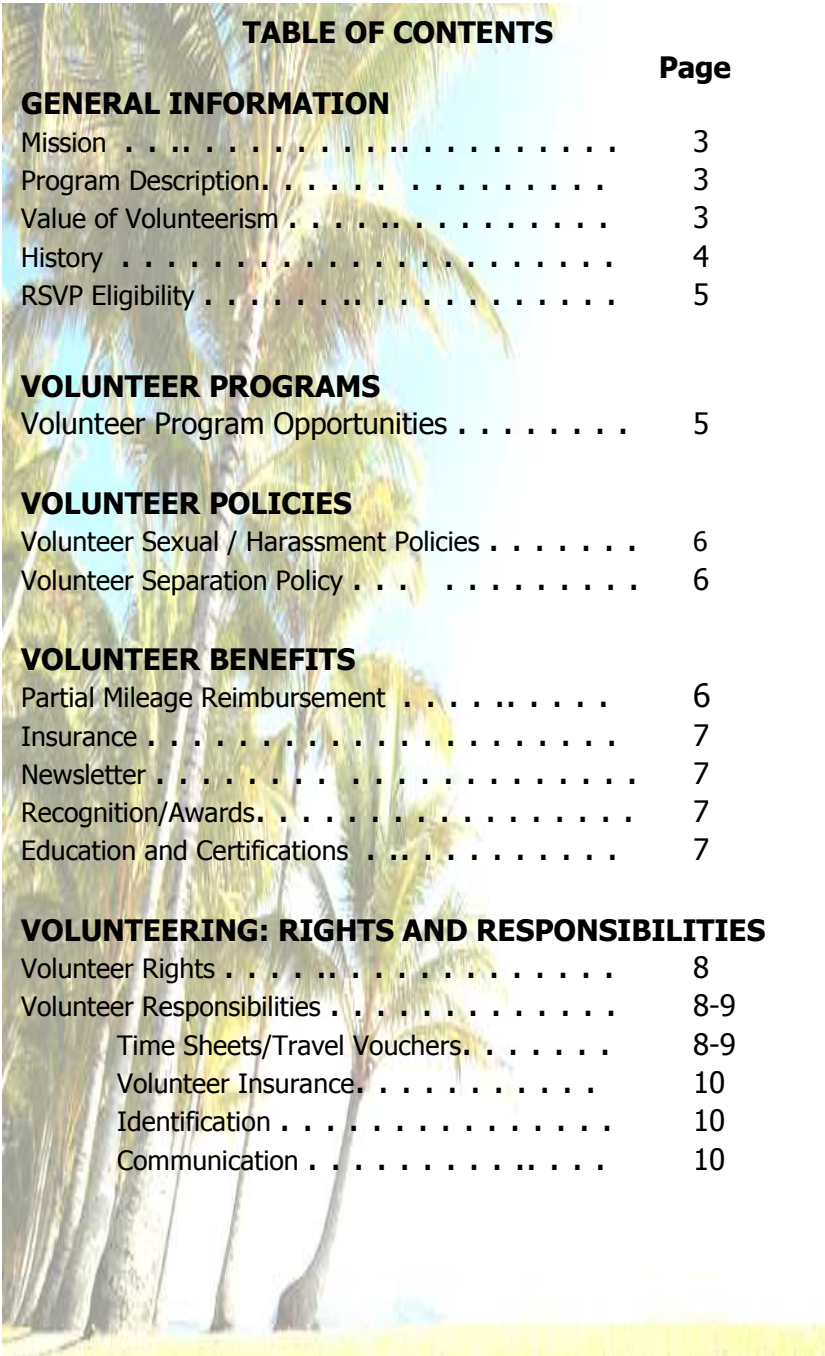
- Webpage: [www.naturecoastvolunteercenter.org](http://www.naturecoastvolunteercenter.org) Online hours reporting is available on our webpage. Your first and last name (all one word) is your user ID and your password is volunteer. After you first sign in you will be asked to change your password. Enter your hours online!
- Phone: 352-527-5959
- E-mail: [ncvc@citrusbocc.com](mailto:ncvc@citrusbocc.com)
- Fax: 352-527-5908
- Mail: Nature Coast Volunteer Center  
2804 W. Marc Knighton Court, Key #4  
Lecanto, FL 34461

Timesheets and Travel Vouchers can be obtained from the volunteer coordinator at the volunteer station, on our website at [www.naturecoastvolunteercenter.org](http://www.naturecoastvolunteercenter.org) under forms, or from the RSVP office. Instructions for reporting hours are on the back of the form and in each quarterly newsletter.

The Volunteer Station will not assign RSVP volunteers to any assignment which would displace employed workers or impair existing contracts for services.

The Volunteer Station will not request or assign RSVP volunteers to conduct or engage in religious, sectarian, or political activities. This will include electoral activities, voter registration, voter transportation to polls, and efforts to influence legislation; religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in proselytization as part of their duties, and, if the sponsor is an organization that conducts inherently religious activities, those activities are offered separately in time and location from the programs or services funded under the Corporation grant.

Volunteers do not receive a fee for services from service recipients, their legal guardian, or members of their family or friends.



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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Mission

**To offer Citrus County citizens, especially those 55 years of age and greater, challenging and rewarding volunteer opportunities in order to significantly and positively impact our community.**

### Program Description

The goal of RSVP is to expand services to the citizens of Citrus County and provide a rewarding volunteer experience. Volunteers are offered special event, short term, or ongoing positions within a variety of local nonprofit organizations and agencies. Volunteer benefits **may** include partial travel reimbursement, accident medical, excess auto liability (if driving is a part of the volunteer's assignment), and personal liability insurance, recognition events, awards and quarterly newsletter.

### Value of Volunteerism

- Volunteerism provides opportunities for the volunteer to share their skills, knowledge, and experience with others.
- Volunteerism provides a chance to explore and develop new interests and skills.
- Volunteerism provides a chance to form new friendships and meet people with similar interests.
- Volunteerism provides significant personal rewards and satisfaction from the services they provide.
- Volunteerism provides a visible and positive impact on the community, inspiring others to get involved.

## VOLUNTEERING RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Volunteer Rights

Volunteers serve agencies and organizations in a variety of ways through the RSVP program. Volunteers do not replace the paid staff of an organization, but they do provide valuable assistance. Volunteers are not paid for their activities but are entitled to many of the same rights and considerations as paid employees. Some of the rights and considerations a volunteer should expect include:

- The volunteer should be welcomed and made to feel an important part of the agency where they volunteer. The volunteer site should provide an orientation and acquaint the volunteer with the tasks and activities associated with the volunteer work. The volunteer should feel free to request additional orientation and/or training if necessary, in order to successfully perform their volunteer assignment.
- All new volunteers are encouraged to attend Opportunity Links orientation. Opportunity Links, is a forum for new volunteers to get acquainted with RSVP staff and learn about policies and benefits. Volunteer managers from other sites are also encouraged to attend to give new recruits a wide array of service opportunities.
- The site or station will provide a safe, healthy working environment for all RSVP volunteers as documented in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is signed by volunteer station representatives.

### Volunteer Responsibilities

#### Timesheets/Travel Vouchers:

RSVP keeps records of volunteer service hours. It is important that an accurate and official record of all volunteer time be kept. Hours reporting assists with demonstrating the value of volunteer service, providing recognition and eligibility for grant funding.

## Insurance

Active RSVP volunteers are provided with accident medical, and volunteer liability insurance coverage while volunteering. This coverage is provided at no cost to the RSVP volunteer. Brochures on volunteer insurance are available upon request. In some cases a volunteer may be covered by excess auto liability coverage if driving is a part of the volunteer assignment. Drivers are required to keep in effect the minimum automobile liability coverage required by state law.

## Newsletter

The Newsletter is published quarterly and sent to all volunteers and sites. The newsletter contains information on volunteer opportunities and activities, scheduled training events, recognition items and reporting forms.

## Recognition

RSVP provides recognition events each year where volunteers, station representatives, community agencies, and other supporters of RSVP are honored. Volunteers can, and are encouraged to participate in other forms of recognition which may be provided by their individual volunteer sites.

## Awards

Volunteers are eligible for years of service pins when they achieve 5, 10, 15 or 20 years of service. Presidential Service Awards are given to volunteers to recognize volunteers with over 4,000 of life-time hours.

## Education and Certificates

There are numerous educational opportunities a volunteer can take advantage of to further personal interests. Training and educational opportunities include becoming a mentor to a child, a docent at a museum, financial mentor, master gardener, tax counselor, or a Homeland Security Volunteer Team member, to name a few.

## History

The "Retired Senior Volunteer Program" (RSVP) was authorized under the Older Americans Act of 1965 by the United States Congress. In 1971, funds were appropriated to the Administration on Aging to initiate RSVP projects nationwide. Later, RSVP was transferred to ACTION, the Federal Agency for Volunteerism, which also included programs such as the Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and AmeriCorps. Presently, there are RSVP projects in all fifty states, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. In Florida, over 27,000 volunteers are serving in RSVP programs.

On October 1, 1993 under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, ACTION merged with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to administer the program. With this merger came the renaming of the program to "The Retired *and* Senior Volunteer Program," at which time the age eligibility was lowered from sixty to fifty-five. This allowed for the inclusion of volunteers who want to make a difference yet are still in the work force.

The Corporation for National and Community Service initially awarded grant funding for RSVP of Citrus County in 1989. The RSVP mission is to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for people 55 and older who bring vast experience, skills, and interest from diverse economic, educational and social backgrounds to serve on a regular basis at sites throughout Citrus County.

In 2016, 528 volunteers provided 82,843 hours of service at a value of \$1,951,787\* to Citrus County residents.

\*Source: [www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer\\_time](http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time)

## RSVP Eligibility

Any person age fifty-five and greater may apply to participate in RSVP. Potential volunteers must complete a registration form and include drivers license and beneficiary information to join. There are no income, education, or experience requirements to become a volunteer. Other requirements vary based on volunteer position.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### Volunteer Program Opportunities

RSVP strives to provide each volunteer with an experience that will be personally enjoyable and satisfying. The volunteer's own interests, skills and experiences serve as a guide to match the volunteer with various opportunities. There are a variety of organizations and agencies in need of volunteers in Citrus County and RSVP has partnered with a number of them.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES may include:

Be a mentor to a child	Help in a gift shop
Adult Literacy	Tax Counselor
Help in a thrift store	Disaster Preparedness
Read to/Tutor children	Improve Trails
Greeters	Home Delivered Meals
Receptionist/ Clerical help	Carpentry Work
Hospice worker	Respite Care

## VOLUNTEER POLICIES

### Volunteer Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment Policy

RSVP is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, including discrimination against race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated. If you experience or witness unlawful discrimination or harassment in your volunteer activities, report it immediately to the RSVP Project Coordinator and/or your volunteer-site supervisor.

### Volunteer Separation Policy

Volunteers may terminate their participation in RSVP at any time for any reason. If a volunteer is considering separation, RSVP asks that you contact our staff, as there may be other volunteer opportunities available.

Under extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary for RSVP to terminate a volunteer from the program. This action would be taken only after all options have been explored and there have been consultations between the volunteer, staff, and other appropriate parties. Should an involuntary separation occur, the volunteer has the right to appeal the decision. The appeal process is available upon request.

## VOLUNTEER BENEFITS

### Partial Mileage Reimbursement

RSVP provides partial mileage reimbursement for those volunteers age 55 and better, up to a maximum of \$200 per year based upon availability of funding. Reimbursement is limited to mileage covered driving *to* and *from* a volunteer site within Citrus County. The program's guidelines do not allow reimbursement for travel while actually volunteering for a station.