

Redwood Coast Village

HANDBOOK

For Members and Volunteers

Helping seniors stay in their own homes



Please call 707-442-3763 ext. 217

with any questions, ideas or

to request a service.

Please give us 2-5 days notice

to find a volunteer.

The RCV office is open

Monday – Friday from 10 am to 3:30pm

Closed on holidays.

The RCV office is located at 434 Seventh Street in Eureka, California.
Redwood Coast Village is an independent 501(C)3 non-profit organization

Redwood Coast Village

Contact Information

WEBSITE

RCV@redwoodcoastvillage.org

OFFICE AND CONFERENCE ROOM

(707) 442-3763 ext. 217

434 Seventh Street

Room 208

Eureka, CA 95501

BUSINESS ADDRESS

FOR DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS

P.O. Box 2843

McKinleyville, CA 95519

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OR TO SCHEDULE A PRESENTATION ON RCV

info@redwoodcoastvillage.org

707-798-6311

Acknowledgements

Redwood Coast Village wishes to thank the folks from the Area 1 Agency on Aging for all their support and encouragement along the way as Redwood Coast Village grew from the seed of an idea into reality.

We also wish to send a big thank you to the many established Villages, especially Ashby Village, Berkeley, California, for so graciously sharing their insights, guidance, and experience as we developed our own Village.

Last, but definitely not least, we want to thank all the dedicated volunteers who have worked so many hours on multiple fronts to bring Redwood Coast Village into being and the wonderful volunteers yet to join us in helping to make Humboldt County a great place to grow older.

Redwood Coast Village Handbook

Welcome to Redwood Coast Village!

We are pleased you have decided to join us as we create a new way to help older people continue to live in their own homes, stay active, and remain socially connected. We are a grassroots membership organization that continues the Humboldt County tradition of self-reliance and self-determination. Redwood Coast Village (RCV) creates social networks and provides volunteer-based services that neighbors might do for each other. We seek to build a vital organization that improves the quality of life for all Humboldt County residents because a society that has a better aging process is better for everyone.

What does your membership provide?

RCV offers the following volunteer-based services:

- * **Going Your Way:** Rides to appointments, errands, and social events
- * **Helping Hands:** Occasional help with light house or yard work, fix-it jobs, occasional pet care, and assistance with home technology, along with other small tasks a friend or good neighbor might do
- * **Member-recommended Businesses:** For those services a volunteer cannot do, we maintain a file of businesses recommended by our members. Need a plumber, roofer, electrician, landscaper, auto mechanic or other professional? Call RCV and get up to three names of professionals in the category you are interested in. Know tradespeople you'd like to recommend? Let us know! After you've had experience with one of the companies on our list, we welcome your feedback.
- * **Social Connections:** RCV activities and classes are open to both members and volunteers and are listed in the monthly "Redwood Coast Village VOICE". This update which is sent by email or by U.S. post. We also have a list called "Let's Go, Villagers". Are you looking for a bridge partner, hiking companion, or someone with whom to attend a movie or a play? Looking for a group to discuss books, current events, or other topics of interest? Call us with your own ideas and get connected to other like-minded people.
- * **One-call Referrals:** Are you seeking information about other issues and don't know where to turn? Our one-call help center can draw upon extensive files of information to find the answer for you.
- * **Just Checking In:** Become part of a calling circle to check in with other RCV members.

How do we do it? Volunteers!

RCV members and other volunteers provide a wide range of services that are coordinated by our central office. They use their talents and skills to help others, knowing that someday each of us may need support. We encourage all RCV members to volunteer in some capacity, if they are able.

Volunteers, both members and nonmembers, are always needed to help with driving and office work, event planning, check-in phone calls, technology assistance, pet care, gardening, friendly visits, and shared interests. Other areas in which RCV volunteers can play important roles are marketing and community outreach, including speaking to groups about RCV, and helping to raise funds so we can offer scholarships to those who want to join but are unable to afford membership.

Be a part of the exciting growth and development of our Village by sharing your ideas, getting to know your neighbors, and enjoying the good feeling that comes from helping.

*Volunteers are vital to the success of Redwood Coast Village.
Both members and non-members have found being an
RCV volunteer to be a rewarding way to meet new people and
make a contribution to the Humboldt County community.*

Redwood Coast Village Member Criteria

Redwood Coast Village membership is open to residents of Humboldt County, California, who are 50 years of age and above. We welcome members from throughout our diverse community.

To qualify for membership, you must:

- * Reside in an area where services are currently available.
- * Be 50 years of age or older.
- * Be responsible for and capable of making key decisions about your own life.
- * Live in a residence that presents no known threats to your health or safety nor to that of others.
- * Be self-sufficient in meeting your own personal care needs through either self-care or arrangements with a personal caregiver.
- * Be willing to provide contact information for a family member, friend, or other trusted person.

RCV membership fees

What are membership fees used for?

Although RCV is a nonprofit organization run primarily by members, minimal membership dues are still needed to partially cover the costs of expenses such as insurance, background checks, publicity, printing, computers and software, and a program coordinator. The remainder of RCV's expenses will be covered through donations and grants.

Guidelines for using your RCV member benefits

The **RCV website**, (www.redwoodcoastvillage.org) enables members to see a calendar of events and other useful information about the Village. By registering your name and password you will be able to access your personal account information. For members without Internet access, this information is available in print through the RCV office.

To make service requests, RCV Members should call or visit the RCV office in person during business hours, 10:00 - 3:30, Monday through Friday.

RCV Office is located at:

434 7th Street, Room 208

Eureka, CA 95501

(707) 442-3763 ext. 217

When arranging for services, please remember that RCV needs lead time, at least two business days, to let the team of volunteers know about your need and to give someone time to respond, but be aware that there could be times when no one is free to help at the time you prefer.



For any help a volunteer cannot provide, call the RCV office.
We will give you the names of up to three member-recommended businesses.
The office can also help you with a referral to an agency or organization
that can help with your specific situation.

RCV Monthly Limits

If you think you will need additional rides to physical therapy following an operation or injury, check in with our coordinator in advance and we'll make special arrangements for you. You can also arrange **Just Checking In** call through the office.

Services	Individual	2-Peson Household
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going Your Way: Ride to appointments, errands, and social events. • Helping Hands: Occasional help with light house or yard work, fix-it jobs, occasional pet care, and assistance with home technology, along with other small tasks a friend or good neighbor might do. 	Any combination of these two services six times per month	Any combination of these two services nine time per month
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member-recommended Businesses: For those services a volunteer cannot do, we maintain a file of businesses recommended by our members. Call RCV and get up to three names of professionals in the category you are interested in. • Social Connections: RCV lists our activities and classes on our website and in the monthly update "Redwood Coast Village VOICE" which is sent by email or as a mailing. These activities are open to both members and volunteers. • Just Checking In: Some members enjoy connecting by phone with other members on a weekly or even daily basis. 	Unlimited	Unlimited

How contact information is used

RCV will use members' contact information only to provide them with news and updates and to make notifications in the case of emergency or concern about a member's welfare.

Termination of membership

RCV reserves the right to limit or refuse services to anyone who no longer meets membership criteria.

For the safety of all, a member may also be refused the chance to renew for reasons that include misconduct or verbal or physical abuse of members, volunteers or staff. Any pro-rated refund of membership fees is at the sole discretion of the RCV Program Coordinator.

In closing

Have a question, concern, or suggestion? Please email, call, or visit the RCV office to share it with our office coordinator. Your feedback can help Redwood Coast Village help you stay active, independent and connected!



Information about Volunteering

“Throughout my life, I’ve seen the differences that volunteering efforts can make in people’s lives. I know the personal value of service as a local volunteer”

Jimmy Carter

All RCV members are considered volunteers and are encouraged to volunteer if they are able.

Helping other people keeps us connected and active. It can be an activity like driving someone to an appointment or fixing a latch, or something as simple as bringing cookies to an event.

All members can help Redwood Coast Village by telling people about the organization, and of course you can always contribute just by being appreciative of our volunteers.

To non-member volunteers:

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with RCV, a grassroots, membership-based organization, created by caring and involved Humboldt County residents to provide members with many of the resources, referrals, and services they need to live independently and safely as they age in their own homes for as long as possible.

As people grow older, many feel forced to give up their homes simply because they are unable to perform formerly easy tasks, such as getting to doctors' appointments, running errands, or changing a burned-out light bulb. By building a network of volunteers and recommended businesses to help with these needs, RCV offers members and their families a safety net and peace of mind.

Volunteering is a great way to connect with others and it offers you the opportunity to put your abilities to good use in ways that will bring you satisfaction and the great appreciation of others. In addition, it offers ways to stay physically, mentally and socially active.

Your gift of time, skills, and caring will help our members thrive in their own homes. We hope you will benefit equally from the experience, gaining friends and the sense of satisfaction that comes with the pleasure of helping other people.

What Do Volunteers Do?

Most volunteer assignments take two hours or less. The RCV office staff vets the activity for safety. You only work as much as you like, in the areas you want to work in. Choose to share something you enjoy doing and have the pleasure of helping someone else. Some driving assignments may take longer, but you can set your own time availability. (A detailed checklist of volunteer opportunities is listed in the back of this handbook). All RCV members, volunteers and staff are mandated reporters.

- **Going Your Way: RCV Driver**

RCV drivers pick up members and drive them to and from the doctor's office, grocery store, post office and social or educational events; sometimes they even run errands for them.

- **Helping Hands**

Some Helping Hands volunteers provide assistance with occasional light physical tasks, such as gardening, cleaning, fix-it jobs, yard work, or pet care that may be too daunting for members.

Other Helping Hands volunteers assist members with their various technological devices. Yet others bring joy to members by visiting, reading to a member, playing games, doing mending or cooking a special meal. Be sure to indicate all the ways you would like to assist so Village staff can note them and let you know as requests for them are received. We only do things that a friend or neighbor might do.

**We do not want volunteers to use any sharp spinning blades
or to do heavy labor.**

- **Just Checking In**

Some members enjoy connecting by phone with other members on a weekly or even daily basis. *This service is designed to provide a friendly connection. It is not meant to substitute for medical or emergency services.*

- **Office Support and Information Desk**

The RCV office is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 3:30pm.

We need volunteers to help in the office for 2-3 hour shifts each week. It's a great way to meet other volunteers and members and to be part of the infrastructure of the Village. Tasks can include answering phones, responding to requests for information or service, calling members or other volunteers, working with our Club Express software, stuffing envelopes, data entry, scheduling or even facilitating occasional orientations.

- **Social Connections, Classes and Events**

If you want to help plan a specific social event or outing, or are interested in teaching with a class, let the office know about of your ideas and interests.

We have sponsored things like Easy Kayaking, walking groups, Tech Tuesday classes, and presentations on Advanced Directives. This is your Village, create the activities that interest you!



- **Other**

As RCV develops and grows, other volunteer-based services will be added, and volunteers' suggestions as to how to help bring this about are encouraged and welcomed.

Committees

Volunteers are also needed for the committees that keep the organization running. Committees usually meet monthly for one to two hours. Additional activities may also occur throughout the year. Within these committees, people do different tasks from meeting people at social events to writing stories and articles for the media, helping staff with computer issues or analyzing financial data.

- **Outreach and Fundraising**

We need volunteers who can help us write or graphically create visually appealing materials to tell others about the Village, to speak with groups, to identify and write grants, to draft letters seeking donations and be involved with fundraising activities, recruit members and volunteers, and manage social media or to handle other public relations functions.

- **Office**

The Volunteer Team (V-Team) manages services to members, trains volunteers for the office, participates in member/volunteer orientations and is the primary contact with the public. We have people with technical, public speaking, organizational, and administrative skills and are always looking for more people who enjoy these types of tasks and activities.

- **Financial**

We need volunteers with financial background or a knowledge of budgets to do strategic financial planning, develop budgets and reports, and monitor income and expenses. If you like numbers, this is the committee for you.

- **Tech**

We need volunteers who enjoy maintaining and troubleshooting any RCV software and creating tech trainings and manuals. We also need volunteers interested in developing “elder-tech” workshops for our members.

How to become an RCV volunteer

Application

To become a Redwood Coast Village volunteer, please complete the application, which you can find on our website at www.redwoodcoastvillage.org or call the office for an application to be mailed to you... or come by the office to pick one up.

Screening and Orientation

Once your application has been returned to our office, you will be scheduled to attend a general orientation at which we will explain the Redwood Coast Village program, go through general training as a volunteer, confidentiality, safety, elder abuse reporting and other important topics, and agree to a background check and sign the Volunteer Code of Ethics.

Once the paperwork, background check, orientation and any specialized training have been completed, you will receive an identification badge and your name will be added to our database and will be considered an “active” volunteer ready for assignments. You will then be contacted as soon as a volunteer opportunity that matches your interests, skills, and time availability arises. Please make sure we have your current contact information and inform us of any changes immediately.

Drivers

If you wish to be an RCV driver, you will also be asked for proof of a valid California driver’s license, current DVM registration, adequate auto insurance (\$100,000/person and \$300/000 incident) and a DMV report of your driving record (can be obtained at www.dmv.gov or in person at local DMV office). Your vehicle will be check for safety and a volunteer will do a “ride along” before you can become a volunteer driver.



Email Communication

Most communication with volunteers is through email. Watch for your monthly update from info@redwoodcoastvillage.org. To avoid the possibility of messages going into your spam mailbox, add RCV at redwoodcoastvillage.org to your email contacts or address book. Members who do not use the Internet can request to be contacted by U.S. post or a phone call.

Volunteer Identification Badge

After you have completed the training, you will be given a photo identification badge to present when you arrive at a member's home to provide a service. You will be photographed for the badge (head shot only) at your orientation or during your in-person interview.

Volunteer support and guidance

RCV staff will oversee and support the activities of volunteers. This includes being available to answer questions regarding the program or volunteer assignments, and offering periodic follow-up training meetings, which volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend.

RCV reserves the right to reject or dismiss a volunteer if he or she creates a potential risk to member(s) or fails to abide by any part of the RCV Volunteer Handbook.

Volunteer Assignments:

How a volunteer receives requests to help members

Members call or email the office to request a service. When a request for service comes into the RCV office, we ask the member for as much information as possible. For example, it's important to know when a member is hearing impaired and may need loud knocking on the door. For ride requests, the information we gather includes the following:

- Date, time and place of pick-up
- Length and location of an appointment
- Whether it's a round-trip or a one-way ride
- Any special needs, such as support walking to and from the car, or a car that can accommodate a walker, has extra leg space, or is easy to get into.

Office staff and volunteers will email you requests for services only in the areas you have indicated an interest. In other words, if you sign up just to be a driver, you will not receive an email requesting a handyperson.

When you receive an email request for a volunteer service, please respond as soon as possible **ONLY** if you are **available** to help. If you see a second request, it means we haven't had a response yet, please respond as the need may be urgent.

Once you have accepted the service assignment, we will send the member's contact information. Please call the member as soon as possible (within 24 hours) to confirm details of the visit. The office is not involved in setting up the logistics of the visit, so once you have accepted an assignment the responsibility for contacting the member is yours. Your confirming call is the only way the member knows the request will be taken care of. On the morning of the appointment, contact the member for a friendly reminder.

Basic guidelines for handling your service assignments with a member

- Background information about the member will be given to you before you are introduced to him or her. Be sure to keep all information confidential.
- It is important that you confirm your assigned date, time, and service requested with the member before going to his or her house. The confirmation phone call is also an opportunity for a short chat that the member will appreciate.

- You may only provide transportation if you have cleared all driver requirements and must carry a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and registration at all times.
- If you cannot keep an appointment, give the RCV office as much advance notice as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made to provide those services.
- Canceling a member service due to adverse weather conditions is at the discretion of the volunteer. Safety is always the most important priority. If weather warrants cancellation, the volunteer must notify the member and the RCV office as soon as possible

General guidelines for a positive volunteer-member relationship

We want your volunteer experience to be engaging and rewarding. How much time you volunteer depends on your availability and the number of service requests received in any given week.

- Listen intently and be empathetic.
- Share of yourself. If the member is interested, describe your world. However, don't share your personal problems or views on politics, religion or other potentially controversial topics. Not everyone has the same view, and we want members to feel comfortable with our volunteers.
- Be dependable and be prepared to help.
- Be straightforward and honest at all times.
- Do not try to "fix" situations beyond your expertise or control
- Ask the member whether he or she has any needs. For instance, ask whether he or she needs assistance in walking. Does the member need to hold your arm for support? Is the member able to clearly see signs? *Do not assume you know the member's needs.*
- Be generous with your touch (for example on the hand, arm or shoulder) ONLY if it seems welcomed by the member; it may be the only touch that person will get that day. Be aware that some people may misinterpret the meaning of touch, so pay attention to the response you get.
- Always allow sufficient time. It is sometimes difficult for older people to rush or to be under pressure if time is limited. Allow extra time in bad weather to ensure the safety and comfort of the member.
- Be cheerful. Let the member know by your actions that there are people and an organization that cares and is ready and willing to help.
- We recommend that you not give your phone number to members. This will lessen the chances of a dependency relationship developing.
- Report any changes in a member's mental or physical health, or any other unusual behavior, to the RCV office.
- Refrain from smoking while you are working as an RCV volunteer.

Guideline for interacting with senior and persons with disabilities

It is important to engage in appropriate etiquette and behavior when relating to seniors and persons with disabilities. The following tips should help.



- Treat adults as adults. Always be courteous. Don't patronize. Use the same good manners in interacting with a person who has a disability as you would with anyone else (e.g., offering to shake hands or making introductions when another person joins the group).
- If you have a question about what to do, how to do it, what language or terminology to use, or what assistance to offer, ask the person with the disability.
- Speak directly to a person who has a disability. Please do not consider a companion or interpreter to be a conversational go-between.
- Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to get things said or done. Let the person set the pace in walking or talking.
- Passengers needing mobility assistance must be accompanied by a caregiver.
- Please do not pet or otherwise distract service dogs; they are working and must remain focused.
- Be alert to the possible existence of architectural barriers in places you may want to enter with a person who has a disability.
- Relax! The most important thing to remember when interacting with people with disabilities is to be yourself. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions that seem to relate to the disability (e.g., walk, see).
- You have a right to set limits on what you can and cannot do. If you are unable to assist with something that has been asked of you, explain this to the person asking it of you.
- **For members with vision impairments:** Identify yourself when speaking with a person who is blind, and announce yourself whenever entering or leaving a room. Offer your arm for support and guidance. Identify steps or obstacles in the way. Avoid glare and poorly lighted areas. Communicate your willingness to help and ask how you can help them.
- **For members with hearing impairments:** To get the attention of a person with a hearing disability, wave your hand or tap the person on the shoulder. Face the person when speaking. Face the light. Lower the pitch of your voice and speak clearly, calmly, slowly and distinctly. If there is a need to clarify, rephrase what you had said. Do not over-articulate. Do not shout. Stand or sit between three and six feet from the person. When conversing with a person with a hearing disability, keep your hands or other objects away from your face so the person can read your lips.
- **For members with mobility challenges:** Move slowly and deliberately. Ask how you can best assist the member to get into and out of a chair or a car. Avoid sudden changes in motion, pace, or direction. People who have had strokes may be slow and unsteady. If the person is paralyzed on one side, assist the member on their feeling side. Always be patient, and communicate your desire to help.
- **For members using wheelchairs:** Do not lean on a person's wheelchair. A wheelchair is an assistive device or mobility aid, not furniture. When speaking to a person in a wheelchair, sit or squat in order to be at eye level. This not only helps the person feel included in the conversation as an equal, but can help you avoid neck strain.
- **For members with breathing difficulties:** Limit physical activity, such as climbing stairs or walking long distances. It may also be important to avoid open windows, fumes or smoke.
- **For members with speaking difficulties:** Give whole, unhurried attention to a person who has difficulty speaking. Don't pretend to understand a person with a speech difference when you do not. Don't be afraid to let the person know that you do not understand. Listen carefully for him or her to finish. Clarify what the person said; paraphrase what you think you heard and let the individual respond. Ask short questions that can be answered by yes or no or by a nod or shake of the head. **Note: Someone who does not speak is "nonverbal" or "without speech" not "mute".**

Boundaries

Sometimes volunteers have difficulty establishing boundaries with members and don't know how to say no to a request, even when they want to. Trust your instincts and personal sense of how much you can take on.

- Know your limits: physically, emotionally and otherwise.
- When you're "on duty" (e.g., in a member's home, providing transportation, or in the RCV office) please do not bring along family members, pets or friends.
- Talk to RCV staff if a member you are helping continually asks you directly for services instead of calling the office.
- You are not required to provide your contact information to the member.
- If you own a business that provides services similar to those provided by RCV, you will need to choose between providing your services as volunteer or as a paid professional who can be named in our listing of *member-recommended businesses*, which are made up of recommendations by members who have been pleased with specific local services.
- If you need advice on setting boundaries, talk to our staff.

Be aware of these signs of boundary violations:

- Feeling compassion fatigue or not taking care of yourself.
- Spending extra time doing things for a member or the member's household beyond your assigned task.
- Finding it hard to say no to a member's additional requests.
- Disclosing your personal information and problems to a member.

Avoiding and dealing with problems

In order to reduce risk volunteers must follow these guidelines:

- Exercise caution and common sense when providing services.
- Develop a positive and open relationship with a member.
- Accept a confidence carefully and honestly and keep the member's personal matters confidential; however, inform the member beforehand that you may have to reveal this information if it involves potential risk, danger or emergency, in which case your contact person at RCV must be notified.
- If you suspect any abuse – physical, emotional sexual or financial –as a **mandated reporter** you **must** report it to the RCV office **immediately**.
- **Do not perform hands-on or other personal services such as bathing, toileting, dressing, massage, etc. for the member.**
- **Never attempt to lift the member or items that are too heavy to lift safely.**
- Do not offer medical advice. This includes advice about medications or over-the-counter medical products or herbs.
- Never administer medications, and never pick them up without the member present.
- Do not expose the member to any contagious disease. If you develop a cold or flu or are exposed to a communicable disease such as chickenpox, or tuberculosis, notify RCV staff immediately so that alternate arrangements may be made.
- **If the member is experiencing an immediate medical emergency, call 911.**
- Do not smoke when you are providing services to a member.
- Respect the spiritual and religious practices of the member. Avoid discussions of religion or religious practices.

- Do not cash checks or witness or sign any legal documents with or for the member.
- Do not offer legal or financial advice.

Safety

Tasks will be screened before they are assigned. You won't be asked to do unsafe things, but you need to watch out for your own limits and not put yourself at risk for situations in which you do not feel comfortable. **Do not use tools with blades (e.g. skill saw, jigsaw, lawn mower, brush cutter with blade).** Sometimes potentially dangerous circumstances can be spotted only after you arrive at the member's home. Do only what you feel safe doing. If a member is not putting safety first, let us know. **Trust your judgment.**

Safety tips for RCV drivers

Volunteers driving to, from, or during an RCV service request are required to follow these guidelines:

- Drive in a courteous and safe manner and observe all traffic laws. RCV does not accept responsibility for any parking or traffic violations while completing a volunteer assignment.
- Ensure seatbelts are worn by both the driver and the member at all times during any trip.
- Do not bring other adults, children, or pets on the service request.
- Do not give medical assistance. Instead, call 911.

Guidelines for emergencies

If an emergency occurs when you are on an assignment, it is important that you remain calm. Focus on helping the person in need and notifying the proper authorities for help.

When a member does not answer the door

- Check the premises; look through the window; call the member on the phone.
- If there is still no response, call the RCV office to see whether the member has contacted the office because of last-minute plan changes. If the office has not received a call from the member, call 911, explain the situation, and ask for a welfare check.

When the member has a serious accident or has fallen and can't get up without your help

- Do not move the person unless his or her safety is further threatened by a dangerous situation such as a fire. Call 911 immediately for emergency assistance.
- Call the RCV office at (707) 442-3763 ext. 217 to report the situation.
- Do not attempt to handle an emergency situation on your own.
- Complete the **Incident investigation Report Form** at the scene to ensure all information is obtained.

If you are in an accident while driving with a member

In the event of an automobile accident, the volunteer's insurance will provide the first line of coverage. Volunteers will be responsible for paying the deductible for their personal insurance policy. In the case of an accident, follow local and state laws.

- Stop immediately; however, do not leave the vehicle in a place where it is illegally parked or can create a traffic hazard.
- Check to see whether anyone is injured. Assist if appropriate and call an ambulance if necessary.
- Call the police to report the accident. Identify yourself as a Redwood Coast Village volunteer and state that you are driving an RCV passenger.
- Courteously respond to questions and exchange appropriate insurance information with other parties involved. Do not discuss the details of the accident except with the police or an authorized RCV representative.
- Obtain copies of any written accident report from the law enforcement officer.
- Complete the Incident Investigation Report Form at the scene to ensure all information is obtained.
- If you damage a parked vehicle or other property and cannot immediately locate the owner, always leave your name and the Redwood Coast Village contact information in a secure but conspicuous place where the owner of the property or vehicle can find it.
- NEVER leave the scene of an accident without attempting to identify yourself and provide the necessary information.
- Carefully assess your vehicle to determine whether it can be driven. Contact RCV staff to report the accident and, if necessary, to alert them that they might need to provide alternate transportation for the member.
- If RCV staff is unavailable, leave a message with your name, date, phone number, the member's name (if applicable), and the nature of the incident. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible during business hours.

Red flags: Observations and Opportunities

What if you suspect elder or dependent adult abuse?

All volunteers, members and staff of RCV are mandated reporters. You will receive training during your orientation as to the definition of abuse and your role and responsibilities in this area. This handbook has very good information that should be read carefully.

Red flags: Indications a member might need outside assistance

The following information can help you make an informed decision about referring a member for help. Trust your intuition and know that your compassion and efforts may prevent the premature or unnecessary institutionalization of an elderly person.

Remember that most problems don't happen overnight. They usually follow a slow progression that can be missed even by persons closest to the individual. An individual's uncharacteristic behavior, unkempt appearance, or bizarre expressions can often reveal underlying problems.

Extreme anger, hostility, or agitation could indicate emotional, mental or physical ailments. Marked personality changes are not a normal part of aging and are likely to be indicative of a problem. Many people experience a mental or emotional problem for the first time only after 60 years of age. Men aged 60 + have the highest suicide rate of any age group. Take changes in mood and emotions seriously.

The Red Flags list includes behaviors and conditions to note that may indicate a member may be in need of help. Noting which indicators you are observing will be useful information if RCV needs to make a referral for other services.

**If you suspect abuse
or sexual harassment
please tell RCV staff immediately
or anyone on the
RCV Board of Directors.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
info@redwoodcoastvillage.org
707-798-6311

Red Flags List

General red flags

Unjustified fear
 Unreasonable excuses
 Unwarranted suspicion
 Unwillingness to talk
 Tearfulness
 Agitation or irritability
 Inability to concentrate
 Neglect of self-care
 Stopping usual routines
 Mood swings
 Unexplained injuries
 Refusal to have visitors
 Multiple medications
 Isolation or withdrawal
 Multiple complaints
 Burdensome guilt or shame
 Neglect of duties
 Feelings of worthlessness
 Recent losses

Indicators of failing mental or emotional health

Confusion
 Disorientation
 Inappropriate dress
 Forgetfulness
 Repetitiveness
 Overmedication
 Increased withdrawal
 Disheveled appearance
 Bizarre behavior
 Sleeping difficulties
 Paranoia
 Alcohol or drug abuse
 Change in functioning
 Irrational beliefs
 Intense anger or irritability
 Nervous or fidgety appearance
 Recent or multiple losses
 Difficult to console
 Change in appetite
 Suicidal thoughts

Indicators of social isolation

Homebound
 Lack of social relationships
 No mention of family or friends
 Consistent refusal to participate in activities outside the home
 Physical or verbal "barricades" against outsiders

Changes in physical health

Severe illness

Chronic disease changes
 Loss of hearing or vision
 New or multiple prescriptions
 Inability to move easily
 Loss of bladder or bowel control
 Complaints of pain or malaise

Neglect in self-care

Unkempt appearance
 Dirty and/or uncombed hair
 Unshaven
 Dirty clothes
 Inappropriate clothing
 Body odor
 Trash around the home
 Little food in the home
 Neglect of environment
 Clutter everywhere
 Strong odors
 Disrepair
 Garbage left out
 Dirty surfaces
 Utilities cut off
 Neglected animals

Economic hardship

Inability to manage finances
 Loss of financial support
 Increased medical expenses
 Low income

Watch for situations or behaviors which might indicate suicidal thoughts

Recent or multiple losses
 Alcohol or drug abuse
 Increased depression
 Increased isolation
 Sudden happiness
 Giving away possessions
 Putting affairs in order
 Despairing statements, such as:

- "There's no use."
- "I'm no good to anyone."
- "I'd rather be dead."
- "I'm just a burden."
- "Why go on like this?"

Providing RCV with feedback

To ensure safety and quality, we need to get follow-up and/or feedback on the service visits you make. Don't hesitate to send us an email, especially if:

- You were requested to do (or ended up doing) something outside of the request you were filling.
- A request lasts longer than was initially agreed upon or takes more than four hours. Please note: you have permission to set specific guidelines for how many hours you are available.
- You have ideas on how we can better serve our members or volunteers.
- You suspect a problem. Be the eyes and ears for RCV. Depending on the types and length of assignment, you may be the only person who sees a particular member regularly. For this reason, you may be the first to identify changes that might affect his or her safety. If you have observed any changes in cognition, memory (e.g. signs of forgetfulness) or physical abilities (e.g. dizziness, slurring of words), even on your first visit, report this to the office. We trust your intuition and you can trust us to sensitively check on the wellbeing of our member without compromising your relationship. (For further information, see Red Flags).
- You think the member you have been helping might have important unmet needs. RCV can be in touch with friends and relatives of the member and has access to social service agencies, so we can alert the appropriate party if there is a need for any action.
- Every month the office call all member and volunteer who have participated in service requests to see how things have gone. We want to make sure each visit has been a useful, comfortable and rewarding experience for both our volunteers and members.

If it isn't working out

There may be an occasion where you and a member don't get along or you realize you would rather provide a different service from the one you signed up for. If this happens, let RCV staff know so they can reassign you. We want our volunteers to be happy and enjoy the time they spend with members.

However, RCV may stop you from serving our members if you fail to fulfill the duties of the position or put yourself or a member in danger. Grounds for dismissal may include but are not limited to the following:

- Failure to adhere to RCV policies, guidelines or procedures
- Theft of property or misuse of the organization's equipment or materials
- Financial, verbal or physical abuse of a member
- Breach of confidentiality
- Failure to report an instance of elder abuse as defined in the volunteer training materials

Additional general volunteer information

- Most assignments usually take about two hours, with a maximum of four hours. Although the office tries to gauge the time needed for all requests, on occasion a request might require more time.
- You are not obligated to do anything beyond what you have volunteered to do. If you don't mind doing something extra, please let the office know what you have done. It is important for grants and other funding sources that we track services provided. (A service is a visit e.g., taking out the trash and walking the dog in the same visit is one service.)
- You also have the option of asking the member to call the office to set up an additional service request.

- If you get involved in regularly scheduled commitments (e.g., the same volunteer drives a member to a weekly yoga class), that's GREAT, but let us know if you set up such an arrangement. Don't feel obligated to provide regular services.

Confidentiality and privacy issues

You're being invited into people's homes and may become privy to the intimate details of their lives. Please be respectful of the connection and sharing you may experience while working closely with our members. By volunteering with RCV you make a commitment to keep all information learned about members, employees and fellow volunteers to yourself (to be shared only with appropriate Village staff and only when necessary).

RCV respects the privacy of its members, volunteers and donors and does not sell, exchange or share personal information for use in marketing or solicitations of any kind. We collect personal information only as needed and with the consent of the member.

As a volunteer for RCV, it is essential to respect the privacy of our clients by complying with the following guidelines:

- Keep members' names and other personal information where others aren't likely to see it.
- Do not discuss a member's situation or other personal information with others.
- When finished with any written information pertaining to particular member, shred it.
- When arranging details of a service, call the member from a private area.
- Be careful when leaving messages on answering machines or with other people. Do not assume that everyone in the household knows about a member's healthcare activities.

Good Samaritan laws

Good Samaritan laws apply to volunteers. This means that, when you try in good faith to help someone in distress and it doesn't help but might even harm him or her, you may be protected from liability.

- A Good Samaritan law applies only to risks not otherwise insured.
- Volunteer associated with RCV are covered under a liability policy for \$1,000,000. This policy also covers the difference between the amount of an automobile repair claim and what a volunteer's insurance might cover.
- Intentional acts, criminal behavior, or gross negligence are **not** covered.

How to handle gifts or payments for services

- Acceptance of money in exchange for volunteer services negates one's volunteer status under our insurance policy. Therefore, volunteers may not accept money, gifts or other items of value.
- If a member insist on giving money to a volunteer, the volunteer should forward the gift to RCV in the name of the member. RCV will acknowledge receipt of the gift from the member.
- The volunteer may accept nominal gifts, minor items of food, beverages, snacks or handmade items.
- If a member is legally incompetent, has dementia, or is otherwise incapable of making decisions for himself or herself, the volunteer may **not** accept **any** gift (for yourself or for RCV) without first gaining the approval of the member's family or legal guardian. **Note: A legally incompetent person may not legally give a gift.**

Tax issues for volunteers

- Gifts of your time or personal services are not tax deductible.
- Gifts to nonprofit organizations of personal property, money, stocks, bonds, or other cash equivalents might be tax deductible. Check with your tax person.
- Expenses incurred while conducting charitable activities are deductible in accordance with accepted business practices and/or governmental rates.



VOLUNTEERING is a great way to:
Connect with others and be a valuable part of our community. Hear wonderful stories from people and share in their wisdom. Put your talents, skills and capacities to good use.
Stay **ACTIVE** physically, mentally and socially.



THANK YOU!

Volunteer Opportunities

Make a difference – volunteer for your community

The Redwood Coast Village is 99.9% volunteers, helping every day in every way.

We'd love to have you join us – once a day, once a week, or once a month – however you'd like to participate. There are lots of ways you can help – check the boxes below to let us know what you'd like to do and then tell the RCV office.

Helping Hands	Helping Hands	Helping Hands
Computer and Technology Help – (Are you a Mac or PC?) <input type="checkbox"/> Show members how to use various computer programs (i.e. word) <input type="checkbox"/> Help set up a wireless connection or computer <input type="checkbox"/> Show members how to access the Internet, Facebook and other social media <input type="checkbox"/> Show members how to set up their TV or streaming device Gardening – <input type="checkbox"/> Light weeding, planting, raking and small tree/bush pruning <input type="checkbox"/> Water gardens and indoor plants when members are away <input type="checkbox"/> Offer gardening advice on where plants and flowers will grow best.	Handy work – <input type="checkbox"/> Change a light bulb <input type="checkbox"/> Hang a picture <input type="checkbox"/> Change a filter on the furnace <input type="checkbox"/> Carry out the recycling or pull-out the garbage cans <input type="checkbox"/> Light housework <input type="checkbox"/> Wash windows <input type="checkbox"/> Stack firewood or bring into the home <input type="checkbox"/> Minor home repairs Pet Care – <input type="checkbox"/> Feed a pet when a member is away or recovering from illness/surgery <input type="checkbox"/> Walk a pet when a member is away or recovering from illness/surgery	Social – <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud books/magazines or documents if member has poor vision <input type="checkbox"/> Read email or snail mail messages <input type="checkbox"/> Play cards or board games <input type="checkbox"/> Work on a puzzle <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to personal stories, just chatting <input type="checkbox"/> Go for a walk in the neighborhood <input type="checkbox"/> Bring cut flowers to a member Sewing/Ironing – <input type="checkbox"/> Sew on a button <input type="checkbox"/> Mend a seam <input type="checkbox"/> Hem a dress or pants <input type="checkbox"/> Iron a shirt or blouse
Going Your Way (Driver Program) <input type="checkbox"/> Take a member grocery shopping <input type="checkbox"/> Take a member to the beauty salon <input type="checkbox"/> Take a member to a medical appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Take a member to church or a meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Take a member a movie or performance	Just Checking In <input type="checkbox"/> Daily phone call to check on a member <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly phone call to check on a member	Medi-Pal (in development) <input type="checkbox"/> Assist members in navigating the complexities of the health care system. <input type="checkbox"/> Assist filling out forms <input type="checkbox"/> Take notes during a visit to the doctor <input type="checkbox"/> Assist with scheduling follow-up appointments

Redwood Coast Village Incident Investigation Report Form

This form is intended to capture all the details associated with any type of incident involving volunteers and/or clients of Redwood Coast Village. If additional space is needed, please continue on the back.

DATE OF REPORTED INCIDENT:	DATE/TIME:
LOCATION:	INCIDENT:
NAME(S) OF MEMBER(S) INVOLVED:	
RCV VOLUNTEER'S NAME:	RCV STAFF CONTACT:
DESCRIBE IN FULL THE NATURE OF THE REPORTED INCIDENT AND ANY INJURY OR PROPERTY DAMAGE.	
CONTACT INFORMATION FOR OTHERS INVOLVED:	
911 OR POLICE CONTACTED? YES NO? (Names, Badge #, etc., if available)	
Witness(es)	Contact #
ACTIONS TAKEN FOLLOWING THE REPORTED INCIDENT:	
FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATION:	
RCV Supervisor/Staff Signature:	

IncidentRep-June5.docx