

**The Orange County Department on Aging**  
**Volunteer Connect 55+**

# Volunteer Handbook



We sincerely hope this Volunteer Handbook enables you to find your best volunteer experience. Please call Yvette Missri, VC55+ Manager, with any questions, concerns or feedback at (919) 245-4241, or [ymissri@orangecountync.gov](mailto:ymissri@orangecountync.gov). We are grateful to you for your dedication and commitment to our Orange County older adult community!



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# About Volunteer Connect 55+

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## Mission

Volunteer Connect 55+ seeks to foster meaningful volunteer experiences for Orange County older adults, based on each participant's talents and passions. The VC55+ peer-to-peer engagement model encourages enduring and authentic connections between older community members. Our primary goal, encompassed by the central mission of Orange County Department on Aging, is to imbue purpose and richness in the daily experience of our older adults, both as providers and recipients of volunteer service benefits.

## Achieving the Mission

- Maintain a variety of both peer-led and department-directed programs to furnish volunteers with a diverse array of flexible and structured volunteer opportunities.
- Facilitate access to high-quality volunteer programs through senior center locations and throughout our Orange County community.
- Encourage volunteer leadership and creativity, and provide ongoing support and appreciation to all volunteers.

## Three Guiding Principles

**1. *Autonomy*:** Volunteers have genuine ownership over projects with the freedom to contribute ideas and recommend modifications.

**2. *Mastery*** Volunteers work toward self-actualization by cultivating and expanding new and existing skill-sets through individualized volunteer work.

**3. *Purpose*** Volunteers can identify how their volunteer experience enriches their lives and provides a sense of meaning.

# Registration Process

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***Contact us by phone or in person to find your ideal volunteer match!***

***We look forward to meeting and supporting you!***

## Registration Form

The Volunteer Connect 55+ Registration form is attached to the end of your handbook. It is also accessible on our website: [www.orangecountync.gov/aging/volunteerconnect55](http://www.orangecountync.gov/aging/volunteerconnect55). Completed applications may be submitted via our website, via email to Judy Mathias, Volunteer Coordinator, at [jmathias@orangecountync.gov](mailto:jmathias@orangecountync.gov), or in person at either center (COSC or the Seymour Center).

## In-Person Meeting

Once you submit your registration, the VC55+ will review your information, and within two weeks, contact you to schedule an in-person meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to help you find your best volunteer match by getting to know you, discussing your interests, talents and passions, and answering your questions about our diverse range of volunteer opportunities.

## Connect with Volunteer Station

At the end of your intake meeting, we'll schedule you to attend a VC55+ Volunteer Orientation, and connect you to your new volunteer activity, and station supervisor. Once connected with your supervisor, you'll work together to begin your service, including scheduling any necessary additional training or meetings.

## Volunteer Orientation

The VC55+ Volunteer Orientation is mandatory for all volunteers and offered once per month. At your orientation, you will hear about VC55+'s policies and procedures, and become familiar with the Orange County Department on Aging, as well as local resources for aging well. You'll learn how our County is aging, the associated opportunities and challenges, and how your volunteer service fits in.

## Collection of Volunteer Hours

VC55+ collects volunteer hours on a monthly, or quarterly basis, depending on your volunteer station. While we recognize that your hours do not begin to measure your positive impact on our older adult community, we use your hours to showcase your important work to our funders and to our community at large. Your station supervisor will show you how to collect and submit your hours.

## Volunteer Code of Ethics

VC55+ recognizes the critical role of its volunteers, and is extremely grateful for their dedication, their time and their skills. VC55+ asks you as a volunteer to:

- Perform your service to the best of your ability, maintaining the volunteer recipient's interests as your primary focus.
- Observe, maintain and protect confidentiality regarding volunteer recipients, and avoid sharing with anyone information that identifies them.
- Avoid activity construed as conflict of interest, i.e. neither accept loans or gifts of money or property from clients, nor give gifts of money or property to volunteer recipients, unless through an organized agency program.
- Refrain from offering medical, legal, or financial advice to volunteer recipients.
- Respect the cultural, religious and political views of volunteer recipients, and refrain from imposing your cultural, religious and political views on volunteer recipients.

# Volunteer Opportunities

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## Senior Center-Based Opportunities

*All hours are part-time and flexible, unless otherwise noted.*

### Senior Center Support Programs

**Overall Mission:** *To enable our Senior Centers to effectively enrich the lives of our Orange County older adults by welcoming our seniors into our centers, educating people about our services and opportunities, and keeping our centers beautiful.*

#### Front Desk Team (Both Senior Centers)

**Position Summary:**

Patient & kind volunteers greet & assist seniors & visitors, answer phones, assist seniors in filling out forms, making appointments, and directing seniors to appropriate activities. Understanding the workings of the Senior Centers, and an ability to work with a diverse set of seniors and department staff is important.

#### Gardening & Flower Teams (Both Senior Centers)

**Position Summaries:**

*Gardening Team* have meetings and work with Master Gardeners to decide plantings, adopt garden spots, keep a scrapbook, or work on their own in flower beds at either COSC or the Seymour Center. *Flower Arrangement Team* creates beautiful flower arrangements with donated flowers, each week at the Seymour Center.

#### Special Events & Projects (Both Senior Centers)

**Position Summary:** Volunteers assist with decorations, greeting guests, assisting with food service, and set up/ clean up for one time or on-going happenings at the senior centers.

### Wellness Programs

**Overall Mission:** *To provide a diverse range of services that enables our Orange County older adults to live and exercise their best lives, in mind, body, and spirit.*

#### Blood Pressure Screener Team (current or retired state LPN or RN license required)

**Position Summary:** Team members take seniors' blood pressures with as needed counseling & assistance.

#### Lunch Nutrition Program Team

**Position Summary:** Volunteers assist with serving daily lunch meals to between 50 and 70 seniors at each Senior Center.

#### Clerical

**Position Summary:** Volunteers assist with various clerical duties, including data entry, filing, and record keeping.

### ***Exercise & Health Instructor***

**Position Summary:** Instructors with appropriate training and licensing provide wellness education and exercise for seniors.

### ***Memory Screening***

**Position Summary:** Memory Screener volunteers interview participants on National Memory Screening Day in November at both Senior Centers, to identify memory problems through early detection and intervention.

### ***Music & Memory***

**Position Summary:** Music & Memory volunteers give the gift of music by enabling participants to listen to their favorite music in a familiar setting. Once per month, volunteers visit persons living in assisted living and work with staff and the participant's family to identify, download, and update music to an IPOD.

### ***Senior Games Assistant***

**Position Summary:** Assistants help with all aspects of the Senior Games, including coordinating events, and projects, and setting up and cleaning up site areas.

### ***Special Events/Projects Assistants***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers assist with special projects, such as greeting guests, assisting with food service, decorations, and clean up, through one time or on-going happenings at senior centers.

## **Chinese Connections (Seymour Center)**

**Overall Mission:** *To enrich the lives of our Orange County Chinese seniors through a diverse range of programming, helpful services, and relationship building activities.*

### ***Chinese Peer to Peer Caregiver Program***

**Position Summary:** Qualified bilingual mentors interested in providing limited free respite care and/or emotional support to Chinese caregiver families volunteer once per week for a mutually agreed upon period of time. Mentors will undergo a background and reference check, and training will be provided.

### ***ESL Bilingual Class Assistant***

**Position Summary:** Bilingual Class Assistant will assist ESL instructor and work with Chinese seniors to practice and improve their English skills.

### ***Chinese Ambassador Program***

**Position Summary:** Diverse set of volunteer opportunities within the Seymour Center (help with translation, communication, organizing activities, and other group programs) for bilingual volunteers who are active, loving and creative. Volunteer must also attend a monthly volunteer meeting, held the third Wednesday morning of each month.

## ***Hospitality***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers greet & welcome newcomers & promote the benefits of participating in Senior Center activities with tours, conversation, and interpretation as needed.

## ***ESL Conversation Lab (Charlie's Club)***

**Position Summary:** In an informal, social, conversational setting, bilingual speakers work with Chinese seniors to better assimilate.

## **The Arts, Entertainment & Current Events**

**Overall Mission:** *To provide a rich and diverse set of volunteer opportunities around the arts, entertainment, history, and current events.*

## ***Jammers***

**Position Summary:** Cheerleaders with wonderful uniforms & routines perform for fundraising & support of performers in Senior Centers & throughout the community.

## ***Prime Time Players***

**Position Summary:** Performers, musicians & dancers produce & rehearse stage plays at the senior centers.

## ***Village Revue***

**Position Summary:** Singers & musicians produce, rehearse, and present stage musicals & plays at the Senior Centers & outside sites.

## ***Musicians***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers skilled at playing any musical instrument perform in both indoor and outdoor settings.

## ***Tappers***

**Position Summary:** Tap dancers perform at the Senior Centers.

## ***Quilters***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers create quilts and donate them to various organizations.

## ***Teach Your Specialty***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers teach a specialty subject for education or pleasure, as well as prepare, collect supplies, set-up & clean up teaching area.

## ***Change the World Discussion Group Leaders***

**Position Summary:** Participants meet to discuss given topics once per month, and Discussion Group Leaders will have interest or knowledge in the topic of choice. Leaders will hold engaging, philosophical, and inclusive monthly discussions to expand understanding of the interrelated nature of our physical and political environments.

## Tax Assistance

### *VITA: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program*

#### **Position Summaries:**

*Appointment Schedulers:* Volunteers use computer software to schedule tax appointments

*Computer Specialists:* Volunteers troubleshoot problems & fix them on site

*Instructors:* Volunteers present the latest tax information & laws to volunteer Tax Preparers.

*Office Assistants:* Volunteers perform clerical duties, data entry, filing, and record keeping

*Site Coordinators:* Volunteers greet volunteers, and gather intake data of tax clients.

*Tax Preparers:* Volunteers prepare Federal & State Income Taxes & electronic filing for older adults.

## Community-Based Opportunities

### Aging Well Supports

**Overall Mission:** *To provide a holistic range of services and programs designed to maximize aging well and aging in community.*

### *Volunteer Drivers Program*

**Position Summary:** Volunteers provide safe and direct transportation for older adults who cannot access public transportation. Some common destinations are medical appointments, grocery stores, barber/beauty shops and the bank. Each driver chooses a schedule when he/she is available to drive. Drivers receive training, support, and gas mileage reimbursement. After successfully completing required training, drivers are notified at the beginning of each week of the routes needed. At the end of each day, drivers report back to the Transportation Specialist to confirm that the trips occurred successfully. The report includes a recording of time and mileage. Volunteers are especially needed in areas north of Chapel Hill. \* *Volunteers must be willing to undergo background checks for this position.*

### *Friend to Friend Team*

**Hours:** Part-time (about 2 hours per week; pre-determined hours)

**Position Summary:** As a Friend to Friend Team member, you'll build a friendly relationship with an older adult or couple, who enjoys being with other people, but no longer has many opportunities for social interaction. After a small orientation with the Department on Aging, you'll be matched with an older adult or married couple, with similar interests. You'll spend just one or two hours a week with your new friend, exploring your common interests and making a huge difference in her or his life.

*\*Volunteers must be willing to undergo background checks for this position.*

### *Telephone Reassurance Team*

**Position Summary:** Volunteers make telephone calls to local older adults, providing reassurance and a check on their status, safety, and comfort. Volunteers are trained to provide phone calls, and commit to making calls once per week (recipients receive daily calls Monday through Friday).

### ***SHIIP: Senior Health Insurance Information Program***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers provide Medicare & Affordable Care Act Insurance assistance, counseling, information, and education, as well as publicity & community information sessions. Volunteers receive comprehensive training and supervision.

### ***Caregivers Day Out Team***

**Position Summary:** Volunteers provide caregiver respite at the Senior Centers for caregivers who bring their elders once per week to participate in supervised activities and crafts, including lunch with an RN Program Assistant and a CNA.

### ***Handy Helpers Team***

**Position Summary:** Handy Helpers enable older adults to stay in their homes by providing high-quality, volunteer/pro-bono repairs of minor maintenance issues for those unable to afford to complete repairs on their own. Volunteers perform small maintenance jobs (less than three hours), such as changing light bulbs, fixing a broken screen, unclogging plumbing, patching minor leaks, and installing smoke detectors. \*Volunteers must be willing to undergo background checks for this position.

### ***Senior Times Delivery Carriers***

**Position Summary:** Volunteer carriers deliver Senior Times to outside racks or indoor shelves once per quarter (four times per year), and then maintain their racks/shelves on a weekly basis.

## **Project EngAGE & Senior Resource Teams**

***Project EngAGE Senior Leader Training:*** Project EngAGE is a 13-week senior-leadership program whose mission is to recruit and train Orange County older adults to become community resource leaders and ultimately make their communities the ideal places to age. Project EngAGE graduates have formed self-directed Senior Resource Teams (SRTs) to fill resource gaps with their own unique projects. These teams currently play an integral role in helping achieve the mission of making Orange County an ideal place to age well. If you are interested in participating in a semester-long Project EngAGE training, contact the Volunteer Connect 55+ Manager, Yvette Missri, at [ymissri@orangecountync.gov](mailto:ymissri@orangecountync.gov).

**Senior Resource Teams (SRTs):** VC55+ aims to get interested community volunteers, who are *not* Project EngAGE graduates, directly involved in existing SRTs and their activities. This can include both direct participation in the direction of a given SRT and/or working on the ground to make the SRT's mission a reality. Time commitments vary and generally depend on how much time an individual volunteer wants to commit. Project EngAGE volunteer opportunities are listed below:

### ***SRT: Community Visitation/SALT Team***

**Mission:** To improve the quality of life for isolated Orange County seniors by nurturing the development of resources adequate to mitigate the more extreme risks of isolation.

**Hours:** Part-time (flexible, set hours once scheduled, 6 month minimum commitment)

**Position Summary:** Volunteers Visitors are trained with a retired SALT (Seniors & Law Enforcement Together) County Deputy (including three day-long ride-alongs) and choose a route to visit each week on the same day at about the same time. There is no minimum number of people to be visited

on a given visiting route, but each volunteer must commit at least six months to this program. The purpose of each visit is to establish a friendly relationship and to check-in on aging, often homebound individuals to help them problem-solve, refer them to relevant services, and provide companionship. Available referrals and services are covered in the training process. Please note, at this time there is no monetary mileage compensation. *\*Prospective and current volunteers must be willing to undergo background checks.*

### ***SRT: Faith-Based Outreach Team***

**Mission:** To serve as an outreach channel and resource for our area aging congregations and the Department on Aging, and to distribute information, education, and opportunities to the faith-based community.

**Position Summaries:**

*Congregational Liaison:* Orange County faith-based organization members interested in helping to disseminate the services and opportunities offered by the Department on Aging in order to enrich the lives of those in faith communities and living within Orange County.

*Team Member:* Members of this team are expected to participate in once-monthly meetings plan and activities that support aging congregations, such as Faith & Aging Symposiums, and senior hunger initiatives in the faith-based setting.

### ***SRT: Senior Falls Prevention & Health Promotion Team***

**Mission:** To keep seniors standing and mobile.

**Position Summary:** Members of this team are expected to participate in once-monthly meetings to plan and implement primary falls preventions to older adults within the Orange County community.

### ***SRT: End of Life Choices Team***

**Mission:** To enable seniors in Orange County to make choices that maximize their quality of lives in their final years and around how their lives end.

**Position Summary:** Members of this team are expected to participate in once-monthly to plan activities designed to increase end of life planning behavior for seniors, and to advocate for maximizing end of life choices.

### ***SRT: Senior Rural Hunger Team***

**Mission:** To safeguard the health and well-being of Orange County seniors through ensuring their access to quality and adequate nutrition.

**Position Summary:** Members of this team are expected to participate in once-monthly meetings around activities that ensure our rural Orange County seniors have access to the nutrition they need to age in place.

### ***SRT: Senior Transportation & Mobility Team***

**Mission:** To enhance the overall well-being of Orange County seniors through meaningful education and advocacy around driving alternatives

**Position Summary:** Members of this team are expected to participate in once-monthly meetings around advocacy and educational activities, and to partner with the Department on Aging's Transportation Specialist.

### ***SRT: Neighborhood Connections Team***

**Mission:** To foster within Orange County a vibrant and engaging quality of life for seniors living in community by building trusted and reciprocal relationships through social engagement, education, practical support and assistance.

**Position Summary:** Members of this team consist of individuals interested in forming community within their own, individual neighborhoods. Members are expected to participate in once-monthly meetings to support one another's efforts, and to help plan the "Engaging Issues" speakers series around aging-inn-community related resources.

## **Boards & Committees**

### ***Friend of Senior Centers Boards (COSC & Seymour)***

**Position Summary:** The Friends mission is to promote the well-being of all persons age 55 and older in Orange County by supporting the effective use of the Senior Centers. The boards solicit and receive funds and other support to assist the efforts of the Orange County Department on Aging and partner organizations and agencies to serve and meet the needs of seniors in the area.

### ***Program Advisory Committees (COSC & Seymour)***

**Position Summary:** Members create & promote senior center programs, attend regular meetings, assist with programs, projects, and presentations.

### ***Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee (County Appointed)***

**Position Summary:** This committee helps to maintain the intent of the Residents' Bill of Rights, promotes community involvement and provides public education on long-term care issues. The regional ombudsman with Triangle J Council of Governments provides specialized training and support.

### ***Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee (County Appointed)***

**Position Summary:** This committee helps to maintain the intent of the Adult Care Home Residents' Bill of Rights for those residing in licensed adult care homes. The members of this committee promote community involvement and cooperation with these homes to ensure quality care for older and disabled adults.

## **Volunteer Connect 55+ Program Team**

**Overall Mission:** *Our internal volunteer team works hand-in-hand with VC55+ staff to carry out our mission to foster meaningful volunteer experiences for Orange County older adults, based on each participant's talents and passions.*

### ***VC55+ Data Manager***

**Mission:** To compile and analyze data that will contribute strongly to the success of VC55+, allowing the program to continue to evolve and improve.

**Position Summary:** Using excellent analytical skills, the VC55+ Data Specialist is responsible for collecting and analyzing quantitative data (volunteer impact measures, such as number of volunteers, number of hours volunteered, etc.), as well as qualitative data (satisfaction and impact survey results, etc.) This volunteer will report directly to the VC55+ Manager.

### ***VC55+ Intake Specialist***

**Mission:** Through the Intake Specialist's compassion, patience, and understanding of available senior center and community-based volunteer opportunities, she or he will enable new volunteers to create meaningful and fulfilling volunteer roles.

**Hours:** 2-3 hours per week

**Position Summary:** The VC55+ Intake Specialist Volunteer works as part of a team of trained volunteers who, along with the Volunteer Coordinator, conduct intake interviews with new volunteers.

### ***VC55+ Volunteer Recognition Specialist***

**Mission:** To recognize individuals and the overall accomplishments of VC55+ volunteers and programming.

**Position Summary:** Utilizing creative planning skills, the VC55+ Volunteer Recognition Specialist strives to foster a deeply engaged, informed and committed volunteer force through planning and conducting regular volunteer recognition activities and events including sending birthday cards, making bi-annual check-in phone calls, and planning regular small-scale events (e.g., coffee/tea social, ice cream social, movie social, etc.), as well as an annual larger-scale event that includes a presentation of accomplishments – both recognizing individuals and the overall accomplishments of VC55+ programming. He or she will be supported by, and work closely with, the VC55+ Manager and Volunteer Coordinator to plan and execute these activities and events.

### ***VC55+ Orientation Coordinator & Facilitator***

**Mission:** To present the OCDOA's orientation materials 1-2 times monthly to new volunteers in order to educate them about the history of the OCDOA, procedural processes involved with volunteering, and the services and opportunities offered by the OCDOA.

**Hours:** 1-2 half days per month

**Position Summary:** The VC55+ Orientation Volunteer coordinates & facilitates the OCDOA VC55+ Orientation to new volunteers before they start their positions. It is important that this volunteer has strong attention to detail, is comfortable with public speaking and is well-versed in the history, activities, services, and opportunities offered by the OCDOA and its senior centers.