



RSVP Walking Buddies

Volunteer Position Description

Purpose of Service: Volunteers will establish walking times for area seniors enrolled in this program. Volunteers will describe/demonstrate pre and post exercises for stretching in readiness for walking, ensure the safety of all participants, and conduct walks 2-3 times weekly for a minimum of six weeks.

Locations: Public community settings convenient for seniors throughout Penobscot, Piscataquis, Hancock, and Washington Counties. This can include inside environments such as malls, in-door walking tracks, and community centers as well as outdoors in participant(s) neighborhood(s), parking lots, and walking trails. We encourage walking on relatively flat (non-icy) surfaces during daylight hours.

Goals: Our main goal is to provide Maine seniors the opportunity to participate in a free and physically distanced (Covid -19 protocol) exercise program which research has shown to improve one's overall health. By offering your time, you can help others in your community improve their health and be more active, as well as providing social engagement.

Qualifications: The volunteer position requires the physical ability to walk steadily for 30-60 minutes and a willingness to engage the participant in conversation while respecting the participant's confidentiality.

Description of Service Activity: Volunteers will coordinate with RSVP to schedule and safely lead walks. Activities will be conducted in small to medium-sized groups, with some individual instruction for participants needing additional coaching. The volunteer will not be transporting the participant(s) in his or her vehicle. Make arrangements to meet your Walking Buddy at a pre-determined site or at the driveway to their home if you feel safe at that location.

The program is designed to help area seniors:

- improve balance to protect against falls and fractures
- increase leg muscle strength
- enhance energy level and sense of well-being
- gain information related to healthy aging.

Time Requirements: 30-60 minutes 2-3 days per week for 6 weeks. Sessions are ongoing throughout the year and can begin at any point in the year.

Training: Volunteer walkers will attend a one-hour session with the RSVP coordinator online or in person.

Materials: Various educational materials are supplied by UM Center on Aging RSVP for both volunteers and participants regarding warm-up and cool-down exercises pre and post activity.

Other Requirements: Volunteers are responsible for maintaining monthly participant attendance sheets and distributing/returning participant surveys to RSVP office when requested.

Agreement: I, the undersigned, agree to the conditions set forth in this document. My signature here also indicates I have read all the contents of the volunteer Walking Buddies manual. Participants may be contacted periodically to check on their satisfaction with their assigned volunteer.

Volunteer Printed Name: _____

Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Station Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

RSVP Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

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