



Tips for Senior Companion Volunteer Station Managers

- **Review the Senior Companion Job Description**
 - Ask the MAS Volunteer Coordinator to e-mail you an electronic version of the job description so that you can personalize it.

- **Interview the volunteer**
 - Review the job description with the volunteer
 - Prepare a list of interview questions for the volunteer
 - What are your strengths?
 - What creative things do you have to contribute?
 - Why do you want to be a Senior Companion?

- **Provide Orientation for the volunteer**
 - Where to park? Parking for people with disabilities available?
 - Where are the restrooms? Is it handicap accessible?
 - Who to ask questions of?
 - Must they sign in and out of buildings they visit?
 - Do they need to wear their SC identification while on a shift? If so, do they have their identification badge from MAS yet?
 - What is the protocol for calling in sick?
 - What days does the organization deem a holiday? Provide handout.
 - Will there be any agency staff trainings to attend?
 - What to do if the weather is bad?
 - Give tour of the buildings they will use while volunteering.
 - Give tour of the client sites once assigned
 - Where they can store their valuables on a shift?
 - Introduce to agency staff, especially front office support staff.
 - Complete the Care Plan with both the client and the volunteer and provide copies for all involved. Send original to MAS.
 - Let the volunteer shadow you or another Senior Companion for a day of service.
 - Invite to new staff trainings if applicable.
 - Tell them their attendance is required at monthly staff mtgs if applicable.

- **Volunteer Retention Strategies**
 - Make your expectations known early and often. Review the job description when necessary.
 - Address problems and concerns when they arise. Focus on the behavior not the person. By addressing things when they arise it will
 - Provide structure that will allow the volunteer to become self-directed and confident in their role.
 - Create a mailbox for the volunteer at your site if necessary.



- Complete the MAS written evaluation each year. Be honest. Go over it with the volunteer and provide them with a copy of it
 - Share client successes and good news.
 - Praise contributions.
 - **Invite the volunteer to attend staff trainings your organization may offer and remind them that training counts towards their stipend**
 - Invite the volunteer to attend agency events, participate in committee's, help with special client programming, and remind them that this time counts toward their stipend
 - Include the volunteer in staff photos and/or newsletter mailings.
 - Interview a volunteer for your agency newsletter and include their photo.
 - Invite the volunteer to staff parties or to participate in birthday clubs
- **Never Say to a Volunteer**
 - "You can just go home – we don't need you today." This is an insult.
 - "I haven't had time to get the materials you need." Don't waste a Volunteers time.
 - "Thank goodness you're here – we've tried and tried to hire someone to do this job!" Volunteers are not what you use when you can't hire what you need.
- **Always Say to a Volunteer**
 - "Thank you." Say it often and mean it.
 - "You make a difference because" Everybody likes to hear the end of the story.
 - "We are glad you are here!" or "You are wonderful!"
 - "Your contributions allow me the extra time to ..."
 - "I've noticed that since you started spending time with Jim he is more social with the other people.." Be specific with your praise.