

Ready to Volunteer... Now What?

A Guide for Older Adults on Giving Back



1 (800) 677-1116
eldercare.acl.gov

Connecting You to Community Services

Have you been thinking about volunteering? For many of us, giving back to the community by volunteering can be an incredibly rewarding experience. Whether it's through tutoring young children, delivering groceries to a neighbor, becoming a pen pal or participating in a day of service, volunteering benefits both volunteers and their communities.

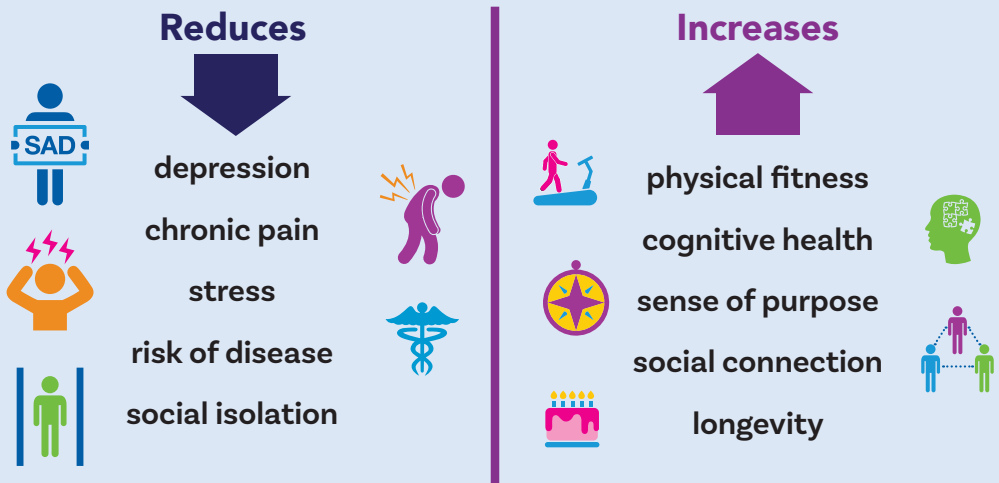


And there's no better time than **now** to explore the volunteer opportunities available in your community. After experiencing significant declines in the number of volunteers available during the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations need volunteers—and you can help!

The Benefits of Volunteering

By being active and connecting with others, volunteering can help improve physical and mental health. Giving back to the community also gives us a sense of purpose and drives change in communities with research showing that just one hour spent volunteering has an economic impact of nearly \$30!

Doing Good is Good for You Volunteering



Finding a Volunteer Opportunity

Would you rather volunteer in person or would you be more comfortable volunteering from the comfort of your home? Organizations around the country offer a wide array of volunteer opportunities that you can choose from to match your unique needs and interests. Once you've decided that you want to volunteer, getting connected to the right opportunity can be just a call or a click away.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs provide a variety of services for older adults and connect older adults to local volunteer opportunities. To learn what opportunities are available in your area, contact the **Eldercare Locator**, a public service of the U.S. Administration for Community Living, to get connected to a local AAA or Title VI program near you. You can also find volunteer opportunities through AmeriCorps Seniors, a program of AmeriCorps.

Contact Us!
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AmeriCorps Seniors empowers adults ages 55 and older to support critical local challenges by volunteering in their communities through three signature programs:

- **Foster Grandparent Program:** Older adults volunteer as tutors and mentors who support children and youth who face academic, social or financial disadvantages.
- **Senior Companion Program:** Older adults support their peers by helping them live independently in their homes and communities. Volunteers also provide respite to family caregivers.
- **RSVP:** Older adults volunteer using their skills and talents to address a range of critical community issues such as isolation, food insecurity, benefits support and a host of other community needs.







**AmeriCorps
Seniors**

For more information and to find AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer opportunities, visit www.AmeriCorps.gov/pathfinder.

Deciding How You Want to Volunteer

To help decide whether volunteering is right for you, ask yourself the following questions to make sure you're ready and to help ensure you find a volunteer opportunity that matches your interests.

-  **What kind of time commitment works for me?** There are many types of volunteer opportunities, all with different time commitments. Some service opportunities are time limited, occurring only once a year or once a season. Others may require monthly or weekly participation. Once you know how much time you have to commit, you'll be on the way toward finding the activity that works best for you!
-  **Do you prefer a virtual or in-person volunteer experience?** Many volunteer opportunities can be done virtually, while others may require that volunteers be in-person. Some volunteer roles may require a combination of virtual and in-person support. Make sure you know what type of volunteer role you prefer.
-  **What are my interests, skills and talents?** How do I want to use them in my volunteer experience? There are many ways to volunteer and while you don't have to be an expert in any area to volunteer, thinking about what you like to do or teach may help you find the best volunteer match.
-  **Will I need transportation to participate?** If you want to volunteer in person and need transportation, the Eldercare Locator can connect you to your local AAA or Title VI program to request a ride to a local volunteer opportunity.



Finding a Local Volunteer Opportunity

Once you've decided you're ready to volunteer, it's time to narrow down what interests you most. We've provided a list of some of the most common options below to get you started thinking. Once you have a few ideas, contact the Eldercare Locator to find a local agency that can help you get started on your volunteering journey.

Types of Volunteer Opportunities

- Participate in a day of service in your community
- Deliver meals to neighbors
- Provide rides as part of a volunteer transportation program
- Read to children at schools
- Mentor a young adult
- Teach a class or lead an activity
- Serve as a museum docent
- Serve on an advisory board for your local government or for a community organization
- Staff a phone hotline
- Join the Senior Medicare Patrol or become a Medicare benefits counselor
- Become a friendly visitor or friendly caller
- Join a letter-writing or pen pal program



Finding Your Local Volunteer Connection

The Eldercare Locator is a national call center and website funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living. Contact the Eldercare Locator to get connected to your local AAA, Title VI program or other local resource that can help you find a volunteer opportunity that's right for you!

People contacting the Eldercare Locator can speak to a specialist who is trained to support callers in a variety of languages, as well as those in crisis situations or who may need extra support with a complex issue. In addition to our website and phone number, support is available for deaf users via videophone, ASL Now and TTY relay.

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(Monday–Friday, 8:00 am – 9:00 pm ET)

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Launched in 1992, the Eldercare Locator is the only federally funded national information and referral resource to provide support to consumers across the spectrum of issues affecting older Americans. The Locator is funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is administered by USAging.



Leaders in Aging Well at Home

USAging

USAging.org

USAging represents and supports the national network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocates for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs that help older adults and people with disabilities live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities.



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