



# **SMP Volunteer Handbook**

**July 2016**

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## Welcome and Thank You from ACL

On behalf of the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL), we want to welcome you to the SMP volunteer program and thank you for volunteering in the effort to empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse.

In recent years, ACL's partners in this effort—the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the HHS Office of the Inspector General, and the Department of Justice, including the FBI—have created the resources needed—including sophisticated technology and skilled local investigative and enforcement teams—to identify and prosecute criminals who steal hundreds of millions of dollars each year from Medicare and related health insurance programs. That is important work.

But in the end, we can't forget that no law or technology is as effective at preventing fraud as educated and informed consumers. Tips from Medicare beneficiaries helped take down a fraud scheme in Miami involving false claims for community mental health services. The investigation ultimately led to a judgment of \$3.8 million and a recovery of \$1.6 million against the defendants, including one who was sentenced to 3 years in prison and 3 years' probation.

Those tips likely would never have been made without the extensive outreach and educational efforts of the Florida Senior Medicare Patrol – the same outreach and educational work that you and other SMP volunteers in your state are being trained to do or to support. Preventing fraud takes a lot of time, preparation and hard work. It's people like you who bear a heavy part of that load – without always seeing the most direct or obvious rewards.

Sometimes your efforts may result in a big takedown, but more often than not, you will be preventing fraud before it ever takes place. That can be a hard thing to measure, but the benefits for Medicare and America's seniors and people with disabilities are enormous. Since 1965, Medicare has been one of our country's greatest success stories. We have a responsibility to keep it strong for generations to come. And we can't do that without you. Thank you for volunteering with the SMP.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Kinney and Josh Hodges

Administration for Community Living



## History of the SMP Program

In 1995, the Administration on Aging (AoA) became a partner in a government-led effort to fight fraud, error and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs through a ground-breaking demonstration project called Operation Restore Trust (ORT). ORT's purpose was to coordinate and target federal, state, local and private resources on those areas most plagued by abuse. Operation Restore Trust was announced at the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. The initiative focused on five states where fraud and abuse was most prevalent: California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas.

ORT brought together several agencies within the federal Department of Health and Human Services, including the Health Care Financing Administration (now the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services or CMS), the Office of Inspector General and the Administration on Aging, to fight health care fraud, waste, and abuse. These agencies also worked with partners in law enforcement such as the federal Department of Justice and state and local authorities.

In 1996, Congress enacted the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 (P.L. 104-191). Although HIPAA is best known for rules that protect patient confidentiality, the law also created the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control (HCFAC) program and authorized funding for AoA to support the effective training and mobilization of senior volunteers who provide consumer education to beneficiaries.

Another law enacted in that same session of Congress—the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997 (P.L. 104-208)—affirmed AoA's role as a key partner in the fight against health care fraud by establishing the program that would come to be called the Senior Medicare Patrol program in 12 local demonstration projects. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) offered legislative language that directed the AoA to form projects that would recruit and train retired doctors, nurses, and other professionals to identify and report error, fraud and abuse.

A Senate Report explained the rationale for the newly created program by saying, “senior citizens are our best front line defense against these losses [from health care fraud and abuse], but they don't have the information and experience needed” to recognize and accurately report cases of error, fraud, and abuse. The Senior Medicare Patrol would address this problem through volunteers who provide *consumer education* which is, along with provider education, one of the five primary purposes that the HIPAA lists as an authorized use of HCFAC funding.

**As a result of this Congressional action, SMP volunteers are now at work in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands.** They teach their peers to protect themselves against fraud, safeguard Medicare numbers, and examine Medicare Summary Notices and other documents to detect discrepancies and report suspicious activity.

Allocations through the Older Americans Act and the HCFAC program help fund SMP program operations.

## National SMP Program Milestones

- 1995 – Operation Restore Trust (ORT) brings together the Administration on Aging and other federal agencies in a coordinated effort to fight Medicare and Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse.
- 1997 – Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act establishes 12 demonstration projects to “utilize the skills and expertise of retired professionals in identifying and reporting error, fraud and abuse.” HIPAA provides Health Care Fraud & Abuse Control program funding to AoA for consumer education.
- 1998 – In the program’s first year, more than 3,600 volunteers delivered 1,300 education and counseling sessions that reached 41,000 people. AoA increases the number of cooperative agreements for the program from twelve to eighteen.
- 2002 – AoA convenes its first National Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program Conference in Washington, D.C. Its purpose is to share successful practices, strengthen collaboration between federal, state and local partners, and honor outstanding senior volunteers. 51 Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) projects, located in 45 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, are in operation.
- 2003 – AoA convenes three regional Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program Conferences in the DC area, Dallas, and Seattle. The SMP program has projects in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
- 2004 – SMP projects refer 1,700 cases to Medicare contractors for follow-up.
- 2007 – SMART FACTS reporting system launches and AoA introduces a national SMP logo and outreach materials.
- 2008 – Together with the National Hispanic Council on Aging, the AoA establishes the National Hispanic SMP project to focus education and outreach efforts on Spanish speaking communities in south Florida and Texas.
- 2010 – The Department of Health & Human Services, through the AoA, launches a national public awareness campaign about Senior Medicare Patrol with Fraud Prevention Public Service Announcements (PSAs), fact sheets, and other information resources. The AoA provides media toolkits, training and support to

the SMPs to ensure effective placement and response to the PSA. Also, SMPs receive special capacity building grants enabling many to hire Coordinators of Volunteers.

- 2011 – Working with volunteer management consultant Linda Graff and Associates, the AoA and SMP Resource Center disseminate a comprehensive set of new volunteer program management policies that will take effect in stages over three years, beginning in June 2013.
- 2012 – April 16, 2012 – the Administration on Aging (AoA), the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD), and the HHS Office on Disability come together to become the Administration on Community Living (ACL).

## History of the SMP Program in Illinois

- 1995 – AgeOptions in Oak Park, IL is chosen as one of the original Operation Restore Trust (ORT) grantees.
- 1997 – AgeOptions works with all of the Area Agencies on Aging in Illinois to expand SMP outreach into a statewide program.
- 2003 – Three Illinois SMP volunteers were recognized by AoA for their commitment to SMP outreach.
- 2009 – Illinois SMP Stakeholder Committee is formed. (This Committee currently consists of 17 members from various health care and consumer protection agencies.)
- 2010 – Illinois SMP received Expansion grant and hires additional staff to support volunteers and assist consumers with complaints.
- 2011 – AgeOptions receives three awards at the National SMP Conference. One Illinois SMP volunteer also received an award.
- 2014 – Illinois SMP reached 30,561 people with the SMP message.
- 2014 – Illinois SMP has 54 active volunteers who contributed 1,060 hours.
- 2015 – AgeOptions partners with agencies across the state of Illinois to deliver the SMP message. These agencies include:
  - All 13 Illinois Area Agencies on Aging
  - Catholic Charities
  - White Crane Wellness Center
  - Coalition of the Limited English Speaking Elderly

## What is the SMP Program?

**What do SMPs do?** The SMP program, also known as Senior Medicare Patrol program, helps Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries avoid, detect, and prevent health care fraud. In doing so, they help protect older persons and promote integrity in the Medicare program. Because this work often requires face-to-face contact to be most effective, SMPs have recruited nearly 4,500 volunteers nationwide to support this effort. SMP volunteers serve in many ways, including outreach, education, and one-on-one counseling. Most are Medicare beneficiaries themselves and are thus well-positioned to assist their peers.

SMP staff and volunteers conduct outreach to Medicare beneficiaries in their communities through group presentations, exhibiting at community events, answering calls to the SMP help lines and meeting individually with clients. Their main goal is to teach Medicare beneficiaries how to:

- Protect their personal identity
- Identify and report errors on their health care bills, and
- Identify deceptive health care practices, such as illegal marketing, providing unnecessary or inappropriate services and charging for services that were never provided

In some cases, SMPs do more than educate. When Medicare beneficiaries cannot act on their own behalf to address these problems, SMPs work with family caregivers and others to address the problems, and if necessary, make referrals to outside organizations that can intervene.

**How do SMPs Work** The Administration for Community Living (ACL) provides funding for SMP's.

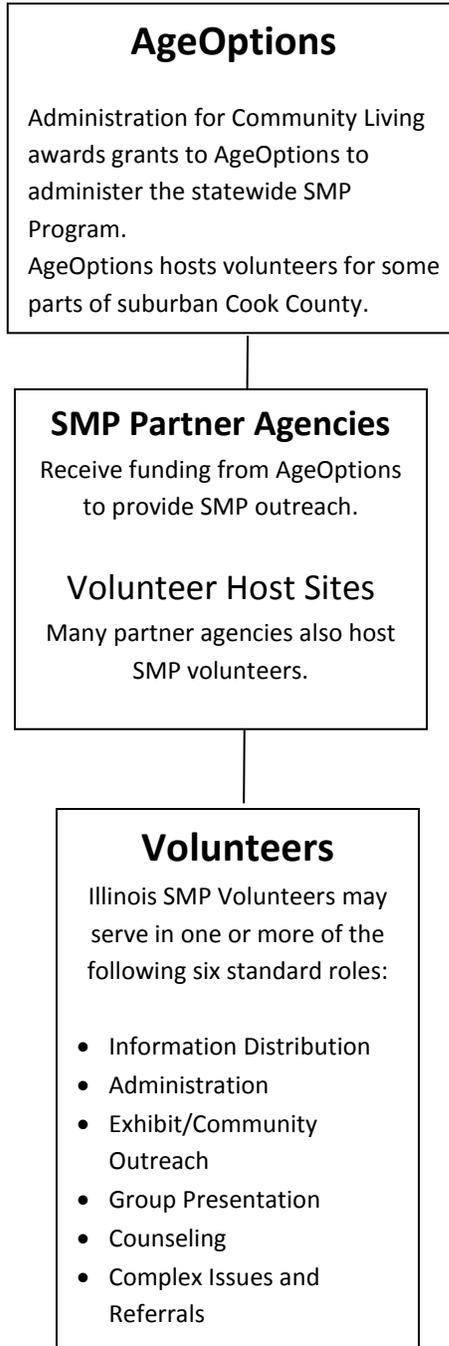
SMP projects operate in all fifty states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. At the state and local levels, SMPs rely on hundreds of partnerships with host organizations that include Area Agencies on Aging, faith-based organizations, and State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), to help achieve the program's goals. Paid staff members at host organizations sometimes are responsible for recruiting and supervising SMP volunteers. SMP projects receive technical assistance and training from the National SMP Resource Center based in Waterloo, Iowa.

SMP activities promote increased choice and greater independence among Medicare beneficiaries. The activities of the SMP program also serve to enhance the financial, emotional, physical and mental well-being of older adults -- thereby increasing their capacity to maintain security and independence in retirement and to make better financial and health care choices.

**How does SMP work in Illinois?** In Illinois, the SMP Program is coordinated by AgeOptions. Over the past 21 years, AgeOptions has been a leader in the fight against health care fraud in Illinois, first as part of the “Operation Restore Trust” demonstration project in 1995 and then as the host of the Illinois SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) Program since it began in 1997.

To provide outreach and education to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries across Illinois, AgeOptions works with 16 partners statewide. These partner agencies include the Illinois Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Catholic Charities, White Crane Wellness Center, and the Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly. SMP volunteers work with each of these partner agencies and AgeOptions to spread the SMP message of Protect, Detect, and Report to beneficiaries in the community via presentations, community fairs, or meeting one-on-one.

## Illinois Senior Medicare Patrol Organizational Chart



## **Illinois SMP Program Partner Agencies**

Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland  
AgeSmart Community Resources  
Catholic Charities Northwest  
Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services/White Crane Wellness Center  
Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly  
East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
Egyptian Area Agency on Aging  
Midland Area Agency on Aging  
Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
South Suburban Senior Services - Catholic Charities  
Southeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
West Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging  
Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging

## Illinois SMP Office Locations and Staff Contacts

The Illinois SMP Program is administered by AgeOptions:

AgeOptions  
1048 Lake Street  
Suite 300  
Oak Park, IL 60301

Phone: (708)383-0258  
Toll-free Phone: (800)699-9043  
TTY: (708)524-1653  
Fax: (708)524-0870

SMP Staff at AgeOptions includes:

**Bailey Huffman**, SMP Volunteer & Benefits Access Specialist, works with SMP volunteers in Illinois ([bailey.huffman@ageoptions.org](mailto:bailey.huffman@ageoptions.org))

**Jason Echols**, Health Care Consumer Protection Coordinator, oversees the SMP Program for Illinois ([jason.echols@ageoptions.org](mailto:jason.echols@ageoptions.org))

**Peg Tully**, Healthcare Fraud Information Specialist, helps clients with fraud-related issues ([peggy.tully@ageoptions.org](mailto:peggy.tully@ageoptions.org))

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

- AAA:** An Area Agency on Aging is responsible for planning and delivery of services under the Older Americans Act for a geographic region within a state. In Illinois, there are 13 AAAs and the SMP Program partners with each of them. AgeOptions is the AAA for suburban Cook County. To locate your local AAA, please visit: [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov).
- ACL:** The Administration for Community Living, an operating division within the federal Department of Health and Human Services with headquarters in Washington, DC and regional offices in ten cities, includes the Administration on Aging, the Administration on Disabilities, and the Center for Integrated Programs. ACL provides funding for SMPs.
- AoA:** The Administration on Aging, an agency within the Administration for Community Living, administers programs funded by the Older Americans Act.
- CMS:** The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) administers the Medicare program and oversees state administration of the Medicaid programs. The Center for Program Integrity is a bureau within CMS that works with various contractors to identify potential fraud, waste and abuse in the original, fee-for-service Medicare program. The Center for Drug and Health Plan Choice is responsible for overseeing the Medicare Advantage (Part C) and Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) programs. An Administrator appointed by the Secretary of HHS heads CMS.
- DoJ:** The Department of Justice is one of two federal departments (with HHS) that administers the Health Care Fraud & Abuse Control (HCFAC) program. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), an agency within the DoJ, works with the HHS Office of Inspector General to investigate health care fraud and apprehend alleged perpetrators. The DoJ's U.S. Attorney offices throughout the country prosecute criminal health care fraud cases.
- HHS:** The Department of Health & Human Services is one of two departments within the executive branch of the federal government responsible for administering the Health Care Fraud & Abuse Control (HCFAC) program of which the Medicare Integrity Program (MIP) is a part. The Administration for Community Living (ACL), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) are units within HHS. The Secretary of HHS holds a cabinet-level position.

- OIG:** The HHS Office of Inspector General investigates Medicare and Medicaid fraud, and refers criminal cases for prosecution to the U.S. Attorney offices. The OIG has authority to issue civil monetary penalties and exclude providers from the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- SHIP:** The Senior Health Insurance Program provides free counseling services to Medicare beneficiaries and assists them in applying for assistance programs, comparing and choosing health plans, and appealing claims denials. In Illinois, this program is sponsored by the Illinois Department on Aging. For more information, visit: <http://www.illinois.gov/aging/ship/Pages/default.aspx> or call (800)548-9034.
- SMP:** The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program helps Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries avoid, detect, and prevent health care fraud. SMP staff and volunteers conduct outreach to Medicare beneficiaries in their communities. Their primary goal is to empower Medicare beneficiaries to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud. In Illinois, the SMP Program is coordinated by AgeOptions. The Illinois SMP hotline number is: (800)699-9043.

## SMP Volunteer Program Management Policies

A comprehensive set of program management policies guide the operation of the SMP volunteer program. The policies resulted from a project that began in 2010 to assess and identify the risks involved in the operation of the SMP volunteer program, and to provide guidance and resources to program managers to help them manage the identified risks. This project is known as the Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) project. The Administration on Aging (AoA) initiated the VRPM project with these factors in mind:

- Growth of the SMP programs
- Increased awareness about risks related to volunteer involvement, for example, with volunteers who have access to sensitive personal information
- The need to adapt to a changing environment for volunteering in which volunteers assume responsibility for challenging and responsible tasks
- The SMP program's higher profile in the media
- Expectations in the courts and public opinion for high standards and greater accountability in volunteer programs

The primary purpose for the VRPM project, and the development of a comprehensive set of program management policies, is **to enable SMP programs to manage their volunteer programs more safely, effectively, and productively**. Safety is a concern for both volunteers and the people—many of whom are vulnerable older adults—who benefit from the SMP program's services. The VRPM project also promotes effectiveness by setting a high standard for volunteer services. The creation of national standards for this important area of program operations will enhance the program's results.

As an SMP volunteer, you have an obligation to know and understand SMP policies and how they affect and protect you. Your supervisor and other SMP staff will refer to these policies as they manage you and the other volunteers in the program. The policies address:

- Definitions of key terms
- Volunteer role classifications and position descriptions

- Risk management and insurance requirements
- Incident reporting and response procedures
- Volunteer rights and responsibilities
- Role of SMP Volunteer Specialists and SMP Coordinators
- Screening procedures
- Orientation and training
- Performance management
- Boundaries and ethics, including relationships with beneficiaries
- Confidentiality
- Grievances and complaints
- Recognition
- Information and data security, and
- Much more

This handbook contains information on some of the policies that most interest volunteers such as roles, rights and responsibilities, orientation and training, screening, dismissal, and complaints and grievances. If you would like to see the complete set of SMP volunteer program management policies, ask your supervisor or Volunteer Specialist.

One thing to keep in mind is that the SMP volunteer program management policies apply to all state and local organizations, also called “host organizations”, that recruit and retain volunteers to perform SMP duties, and to all the SMP volunteers who work under them. In some cases, host organizations may have volunteer policies in place in addition to the SMP policies. If you find that the different policies are in conflict or are causing confusion, please discuss the problem with your supervisor and/or Volunteer Specialist.

## Compliance

Volunteers are made aware of all volunteer policies through a range of mechanisms including, but not necessarily limited to, various parts of the volunteer screening process; volunteer orientation; volunteer training; the volunteer handbook; volunteer in-service sessions; notices, memos, and bulletins about existing policies; and supervisory and performance evaluation sessions.

Not knowing a policy is not acceptable if the policy has been communicated and the volunteer ought to have known.

SMP volunteers are expected to conduct their work with a view of the larger picture of what is in the best interests of the majority of SMP beneficiaries, the integrity of SMP programming, and the long-term reputation and sustainability of the SMP itself.

Compliance with all SMP volunteer policies is a minimum expectation of SMP volunteers. Failure to comply meets with a graduated response designed wherever possible to assist the volunteer to return to functioning inside the rules. Should reasonable efforts on the part of SMP prove unsuccessful, further disciplinary action is taken, up to and including dismissal.

Please work with your SMP Coordinator if you have any questions about the Illinois SMP policies and procedures.

## Volunteer Roles

The national SMP program operates with six standard volunteer roles. State and local programs may create additional roles to meet specific volunteer program and community needs. Information about these roles and the responsibilities connected with them are set forth in position descriptions. Some SMPs may create position descriptions that combine elements of the standard roles. A position, for example, may combine the “staffing exhibits” and “making group presentations” roles below into a position called “outreach volunteer.” SMP program managers should give you a copy of a position description that describes the purpose, duties, and qualifications for the role(s) in which you have agreed to serve. Below are brief overviews of each role. The six standard SMP volunteer roles are:

- Information Distribution: These volunteers work with SMP coordinators at their local partner agency to identify sites interested in receiving SMP materials, then disseminate educational materials to these locations throughout their community.
- Administration: These volunteers work with SMP coordinators at their local partner agency to provide administrative support for the SMP program.
- Exhibit/Community Outreach: These volunteers work with SMP coordinators at their local partner agency to provide outreach at fairs and exhibits (such as passing out educational materials for the SMP program).
- Group Presentation: These volunteers work with SMP coordinators at their local partner agency to give presentations to groups on the SMP message of preventing, detecting, and reporting health care fraud.
- Counseling: These volunteers work with SMP coordinators at their local partner agency to provide individual counseling about preventing, detecting, and reporting health care fraud.
- Complex Issues and Referrals: This role involves in-depth interactions with beneficiaries who are reporting specific instances of health care fraud, error, and abuse. Volunteers who serve in this role may act on behalf of a beneficiary to correct an error or refer suspected fraud and abuse to appropriate authorities.

The SMP considers four roles—exhibit/community outreach, group presentation, counseling, and complex issues and referrals—to be “positions of trust”. This means that these roles involve access to beneficiaries or other vulnerable people, personal or confidential information, or to money or other valuables. The four positions of trust are subject to more rigorous screening procedures than the roles involving administration and information distribution. **If you decide to transfer from one role to another, please**

**keep in mind that you may be required to undergo a more intensive screening process to qualify for placement in the new role.**

**The SMP asks volunteers to confine their activities to those tasks and responsibilities, described in the position description for their specific role(s).** Each volunteer role has responsibilities as well as limits to those responsibilities. A volunteer who is trained to make group presentations, for example, should not handle complex issues and referrals unless she or he formally qualified for that role after completing any required screening procedures and training.

If there are any concerns regarding volunteer duties and their requirements, volunteers should speak with their SMP Volunteer Specialist or local SMP Coordinator.

For more details about the scopes of responsibility in the six standard volunteer roles, see the Illinois SMP Volunteer Role Descriptions in Appendix I.

## Rights and Responsibilities

SMP program volunteers have certain rights and responsibilities that are good to keep in mind during the course of your volunteer service. Because the program's leadership sees volunteers as a valuable resource to the program and the communities it serves, volunteers have rights, for example, to meaningful work, support, and recognition for the work they do.

At the same time, the SMP program expects volunteers to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to comply with the program's volunteer policies, and to remain loyal to the program's values, goals and procedures. Volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the SMP program, and agree that the SMP may decide to end a volunteer's relationship with the SMP or to change the nature of the volunteer's assignment when appropriate.

As an SMP Volunteer, you have a right to:

- Receive meaningful work assignments
- Treatment as an equal co-worker
- A safe work environment
- A respectful work environment free of harassment
- Receive orientation and training
- Receive effective supervision
- Receive constructive feedback on a regular basis
- Receive informal and formal recognition
- Receive clear information about the boundaries for the work you are to do and not to do (see the position description for your volunteer role)
- Receive all the pertinent information you need to perform your work assignments
- Refuse any tasks or work assignments, especially when the assignment requires you to do something for which you have not been trained
- Security and confidentiality for the records in your volunteer file
- Examine the contents of your volunteer file
- Make complaints and file grievances
- Resign from your volunteer service at any time

As an SMP Volunteer, you have a responsibility to:

- Provide SMP services responsibly and objectively, without regard to the background or characteristics of the beneficiaries or clients you serve or with favoritism to specific services, providers, or products
- Represent the SMP program only to the extent that your position description and role specifically authorize, and not to present yourself as a spokesperson for the SMP program in a formal sense
- Use your affiliation only in the interests of the SMP program, and not to promote religious or political beliefs or personal business dealings
- Inform your supervisor of any conflicts of interest that may arise after placement in your volunteer position
- Report any abuse that you may witness involving the program's beneficiaries or clients
- Report incidents such as accidents, injuries, errors, and the like to your supervisor
- Report on your volunteer activities on a timely basis
- Submit updated contact information and emergency contact information as it changes
- Protect the confidentiality of the program's beneficiaries and/or clients
- Prohibit private meetings with beneficiaries including in the beneficiaries' home/room
- Follow procedures to ensure the security of clients' electronic and hard copy data
- Report changes in your health status or medical treatment that might adversely affect your performance to your supervisor
- Follow the venue's measures for safe food handling procedures (when food is involved in volunteer work)
- Comply with all relevant federal, state, or local laws and regulations regarding public health and safety
- Notify your supervisor of absences that will prevent you from performing an assigned task
- Complete required training programs, including continuing education programs

The list above shows many, but not all, of the rights and responsibilities for SMP program volunteers. For the specific policy language on these and other rights and responsibilities, contact your Illinois SMP Volunteer Specialist.

Here are some examples that we hope will help clarify some of these responsibilities.

**Representing the SMP** Volunteers who are trained to make group presentations are authorized to discuss, and answer questions about, approved SMP education programs. In that limited capacity, they are free to identify themselves as being affiliated with the SMP. No SMP volunteer should, however, hold themselves out as public spokespersons for the program in connection with media inquiries or questions related to official policy positions. Refer media inquiries to SMP staff at AgeOptions at (800)699-9043.

**Reporting Conflicts of Interest** One concern for SMP program managers is the appearance of an implied endorsement for a volunteer who is known to the community for his or her business and/or political interests. For example, after discussing the circumstances with a volunteer, the SMP Volunteer Specialist may decide that a person who is engaged in health care sales, insurance sales, or who is running for a seat on the city council, is unsuited for making SMP group presentations because of the danger of blurring the lines between the person's volunteer activity and his or her business or personal interest. Please bring any business, political, or personal activity that arises that may conflict with the mission and goals of the SMP program to your supervisor's attention.

**Protecting Confidentiality of Beneficiaries** As a volunteer with the Illinois SMP Program, you may have access to private information relating to beneficiaries, community members, health care providers and suppliers, volunteers, staff, your local host agency, AgeOptions, or other individuals or entities related to the SMP Program. This may include written or spoken information about an individual's Medicare, Medicaid, or Social Security number, other identifying information, health conditions, or the details of a potential fraud case.

You must treat all such information as confidential and discuss it only with your local SMP Coordinator or Illinois SMP staff at AgeOptions. Such information may not be shared with anyone else without the consent of Illinois SMP staff at AgeOptions.

If your volunteer position with the Illinois SMP Program ends, please continue to keep confidential information private and do not discuss it with anyone else.

Actions that do not follow these guidelines may put the Illinois SMP Program and the people we serve at risk. Such actions are in violation of SMP Program policies and will result in termination of my volunteer role with the SMP Program.

**Reporting Incidents** If you are involved in an accident, suffer an injury, experience harassment, or witness abuse of a beneficiary while you are on duty as an SMP volunteer, you have a responsibility to report the incident to your supervisor or Volunteer Specialist. Complete and submit an Incident Report (found in Appendix C) as soon as possible.

## Volunteers Who Drive

If your volunteer position involves driving a motor vehicle on behalf of the SMP program, you have additional responsibilities to:

- Abide by traffic laws, such as speed limit, seat belt, and cell phone laws, as you carry out your volunteer duties
- Carry liability insurance on your vehicle (see page 29)
- Notify your supervisor or Volunteer Specialist if your insurance coverage lapses
- Notify your supervisor or Volunteer Specialist if your driver's license expires or receives restrictions that limit your ability to carry out your volunteer duties
- Record and report mileage for reimbursement (if applicable)

Volunteers are encouraged to consult with their own insurance agents regarding the extension of their personal insurance to include community volunteer work. Specific information regarding such protection is available from your Illinois SMP Volunteer Specialist.

It is the volunteer's own automobile insurance coverage that comes into play in the event of an accident or damage while a volunteer is driving their own car for SMP work. Volunteers are advised to notify their own automobile insurance provider about their SMP driving activities and ensure coverage is in place and provides adequate protection.

**Please note: The Illinois SMP Program requires copies of your driver's license and vehicle insurance if you will be driving as part of your SMP duties.**

SMP volunteers are not required to drive or own a vehicle. However, if the agreed upon volunteer duties require travel, the volunteer is solely responsible for that travel. If travel involves driving, the Illinois SMP Program must have current copies of volunteers' driver's licenses and vehicle insurance cards on file. The volunteer must submit updated copies throughout the tenure of their volunteerism with the SMP.

The Illinois SMP Program cannot reimburse volunteers for mileage, gas, transportation fares, or any other expenses accrued while traveling to and from SMP events. Illinois SMP volunteers may check with their local host site Coordinator to see if their host site reimburses for mileage and other fares.

## Insurance

The Illinois SMP program does not provide liability and accident insurance for volunteers who are engaged in SMP business. SMP volunteers who drive their own vehicles for SMP business are to carry automobile liability insurance policies at their own expense. In the event of an accident or damage while a volunteer is driving her or his own vehicle for SMP work, the volunteer's own automobile insurance coverage comes into play. We encourage you to consult your own insurance agent about your SMP driving activities and to make sure that your coverage provides adequate protection.

If you accept a volunteer role that involves driving your own vehicle, SMP staff will ask you to sign a certification of automobile insurance coverage that will be added to your volunteer file. Your SMP Coordinator will verify that the coverage remains in effect at least annually. If your automobile insurance coverage lapses, please notify your supervisor immediately so that she or he can adjust work assignments as needed.

If you are involved in an accident while volunteering for SMP or driving as part of your SMP volunteer duties, notify your SMP Coordinator as soon as possible and submit an Incident Report (found in Appendix C).

## Illinois SMP Volunteer Venue Site Safety

The Illinois SMP program checks the safety of our outreach sites. When we schedule the outreach event, a Safety Checklist for Venue Site is completed. Volunteers may be involved in conducting the safety check. Please speak with your local SMP Coordinator and/or SMP Volunteer Specialist to find out when/how to conduct a safety check.

- Home visits by SMP volunteers to a beneficiary's residence are always prohibited. Please remember that in a senior building, a resident's room is their home. SMP Volunteers should never visit a beneficiary's home or room. Volunteers should only conduct SMP duties in the meeting spaces originally booked as the official venue site.
- SMP Volunteers should never write down or take beneficiary's personal information with them from a venue site. Instead, volunteers should instruct beneficiaries to call the Illinois SMP office at (800)699-9043.

The Safety Checklist for Venue Sites names a responsible party that must be available to the SMP Volunteer for the duration of the event. A volunteer should always be given the name and contact information for the venue's responsible party prior to arriving at the site.

**Note to volunteers:** If you have any serious safety concerns about the venue that the onsite staff cannot address to your satisfaction, pause to consider whether the event should go forward. If necessary, contact your SMP Coordinator or contact person to discuss the problem. If you cannot reach your SMP contact and your safety concerns are substantial - that is, you believe there is a reasonable risk of injury or harm to yourself or event participants - you are authorized to cancel the presentation. Offer apologies to participants as they arrive. Give a brief explanation for the cancellation without accusing or offending the venue's owners or staff. Give participants contact information to the Illinois SMP office to inquire about a different presentation opportunity in their area.

## Orientation and Training

Orientation and training are essential to developing the knowledge and skills that SMP volunteers need to serve the people of their communities effectively. Orientation takes place shortly after the SMP accepts a volunteer into service. Its aim is to explain, among other topics, the:

- Purpose and values of the SMP
- Nature and operation of the program or activity in which the volunteer will participate
- Purpose, duties and requirements of the role the volunteer is accepting

**Training Programs** The SMP has established minimum training requirements and programs for the various volunteer roles. Volunteers must complete the training required for their roles and demonstrate through testing that they have attained minimum levels of comprehension and skill, before Coordinators give them work assignments.

**SMP Foundations Training:** This training program provides SMP volunteers and staff with a foundation of knowledge in three main content areas including the SMP program, Medicare basics, and Medicare fraud and abuse. Participants should allow 4 to 6 hours to complete the entire online course.

**SMP Group Education Training:** This program provides presenters of SMP group education sessions with the necessary skills and resources to deliver the SMP message consistently and effectively to Medicare beneficiaries, caregivers and other interested groups.

**SMP Counselor Training:** The goal of this program is to provide SMP staff and volunteers with the necessary skills and resources to handle one-on-one counseling sessions and simple inquiries consistently and effectively.

In addition to the formal training programs for the various SMP volunteer roles, volunteers may receive on-the-job training through coaching and feedback of a supervisor or a veteran volunteer mentor. Attendance at periodic continuing education training programs to provide informational updates and/or additional skills may also be required. Volunteers are encouraged to build their skills through continuing education while serving with the SMP. The Illinois SMP Program offers continuing education such as Volunteer Conferences, Volunteer Calls, and our biweekly Fraud Alert emails. To find out more information, contact your SMP Volunteer Specialist.

**Safety Training** Volunteer trainings include discussions of safe work practices and methods for responding to potentially hazardous situations. Volunteers exercise caution in all work activities. (See the Illinois SMP Safety Checklist for Venue Sites in Appendix and the Illinois SMP Severe Weather and Disaster Safety Policy in Appendix G.)

Volunteers who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report such situations are subject to disciplinary action.

## **Reconfirming Background Checks**

The SMP has a policy on how often various background checks will be repeated. Criminal record background checks will be conducted every five years for position of trust volunteer roles. For volunteers who drive, driving record background checks will be conducted every five years as well.

## Performance Management

The SMP program's success is measured in terms of outcomes related to public education about fraud, waste, and abuse in Medicare, and to assisting individual beneficiaries in identifying and reporting instances of suspected health care fraud, waste, and abuse. A key expectation in SMP volunteer program management is that SMP program staff will provide the support volunteers need to successfully achieve the program's education and assistance goals. A constructive and success-oriented performance management system is in place to guide supervisors as they work to encourage productive and satisfying volunteer involvement in the SMP program.

**SMP Performance Management System** The performance management system has three components: supervision, periodic check-ins, and corrective action. Each component includes a range of techniques that supervisors can use to promote high performance. The guiding principle of performance management is to match the type and extent of supervisory intervention to the nature of a volunteer's responsibilities and capacity. It provides several avenues to demonstrate support and to acknowledge excellence. Here are some key points about the system's three components:

**Supervision** The SMP has an obligation to provide supervision and support for the program's volunteers. This means that coordinators have a responsibility to manage the work that volunteers do and to determine the kind of guidance and support that each volunteer needs. The supervision that you receive as an SMP volunteer should reflect the principle of positive, constructive and success-oriented guidance that underpins the SMP volunteer performance management system. You should expect to receive feedback, consultation, information, and meaningful assignments from your supervisor.

**Volunteer Check-Ins** Volunteers in the SMP program receive periodic review of their work. This is a more formal process than one finds in a coordinator's day-to-day feedback and provides a more detailed assessment of each volunteer's performance, on-the-job behavior, achievements, and areas for improvement. This process gives you and your volunteer coordinator an opportunity to exchange feedback, ideas, and suggestions. Your coordinator will also use this check-in process to update your volunteer file, including changes in your volunteer role, contact information, and the like. Your coordinator will document the volunteer check-in and any relevant plans to which you mutually agree and place them in your file.

**Corrective Action** SMP program managers may take corrective action when a volunteer's behavior is serious enough to require intervention, and when its continuation or repetition is unacceptable. The SMP corrective action is oriented toward success rather than focused on failure, and that the degree of intervention matches the nature of the performance or behavior issue, becoming more serious as the unacceptability of the behavior increases or the volunteer's inability to resolve the problem continues.

Corrective action in the SMP program includes a range of interventions that aim to help volunteers make needed improvements when their performance and/or behavior do not meet expectations. Interventions may include additional training, coaching, adjustment of volunteer duties, or reassignment to a different role. In more serious cases, interventions may involve formal disciplinary actions such as warnings, suspensions, and dismissal. If you would like to learn more about the SMP's corrective action process, ask your supervisor for the program's corrective action protocol.

**Grievances and Appeals** A volunteer who has a complaint about, or grievance with, staff, other volunteers, beneficiaries or partner organizations should communicate the concern to their coordinator. If the complaint or grievance involves the volunteer's own Coordinator, the volunteer should speak with the SMP Volunteer Specialist at AgeOptions. The SMP also has an appeals procedure through which a volunteer can request review of a formal corrective action decision, including dismissal. For further information on the appeals process, please contact the Illinois SMP Program Director.

## Recognition

The SMP program greatly appreciates the many and varied contributions of its volunteers to the program's success. SMP coordinators and staff recognize and reward volunteer service both formally and informally. Informal recognition may take the form of feedback on the results of a volunteer's work, a thank you note, a birthday card, or an invitation to participate in the decision-making for a project or activity.

The SMP program strives to recognize volunteers for all types of productive service, and not simply for the number of hours they work. We encourage you to identify and nominate other volunteers who may deserve special recognition or awards.

## Leaving the Program

**Resignation** Volunteers may resign voluntarily from their service with the SMP program at any time. If you intend to resign, please notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

**Discipline & Dismissal** The Illinois SMP accepts volunteers with the understanding that the volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the SMP. Volunteers who do not follow the rules, policies, and procedures of the SMP program, or who repeatedly fail to perform an assignment satisfactorily despite supervisory support and appropriate interventions, are subject to disciplinary action or dismissal. Involuntary dismissal is typically a last resort, used only when other appropriate steps have been taken. Ideally, the supervisory staff will discuss with a volunteer in advance the reasons for a possible dismissal if other corrective actions do not resolve the problem within a reasonable time frame.

Possible grounds for dismissal are listed below. The list illustrates the range of reasons for dismissal and is not intended to be comprehensive. Grounds for dismissal include:

- Gross misconduct
- Serious misjudgment that may undermine trust in the volunteer or cause harm to others
- Insubordination, including failure or unwillingness to perform essential responsibilities in the volunteer's role or to accept direction from supervisory staff
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on volunteer duty or representing the SMP
- Theft or other illegal acts
- Loss of a license (e.g., driver's license) required to carry out assignments
- Unauthorized use or misuse of SMP equipment or materials
- Harm, abuse or mistreatment of beneficiaries, co-workers and other persons
- Serious and repeated failure to follow SMP policies and procedures
- Inability to meet physical, cognitive or emotional standards of performance
- Repeated failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily
- Unresolvable conflict of interest
- Serious breach of boundaries

**Immediate Dismissal and Suspension** Some behaviors are so unacceptable that, upon verification, they constitute grounds for immediate dismissal. If a question exists about the unacceptable behavior, the SMP will temporarily suspend the volunteer from service pending the results of an investigation.

Grounds for immediate dismissal include:

- Fraud, theft or abuse in connection with SMP volunteer service
- Serious illegal act
- Gross negligence causing bodily harm in connection with SMP volunteer service
- Breach of confidentiality
- Reporting for volunteer service under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Using violence in the workplace

## **Volunteers with Disabilities**

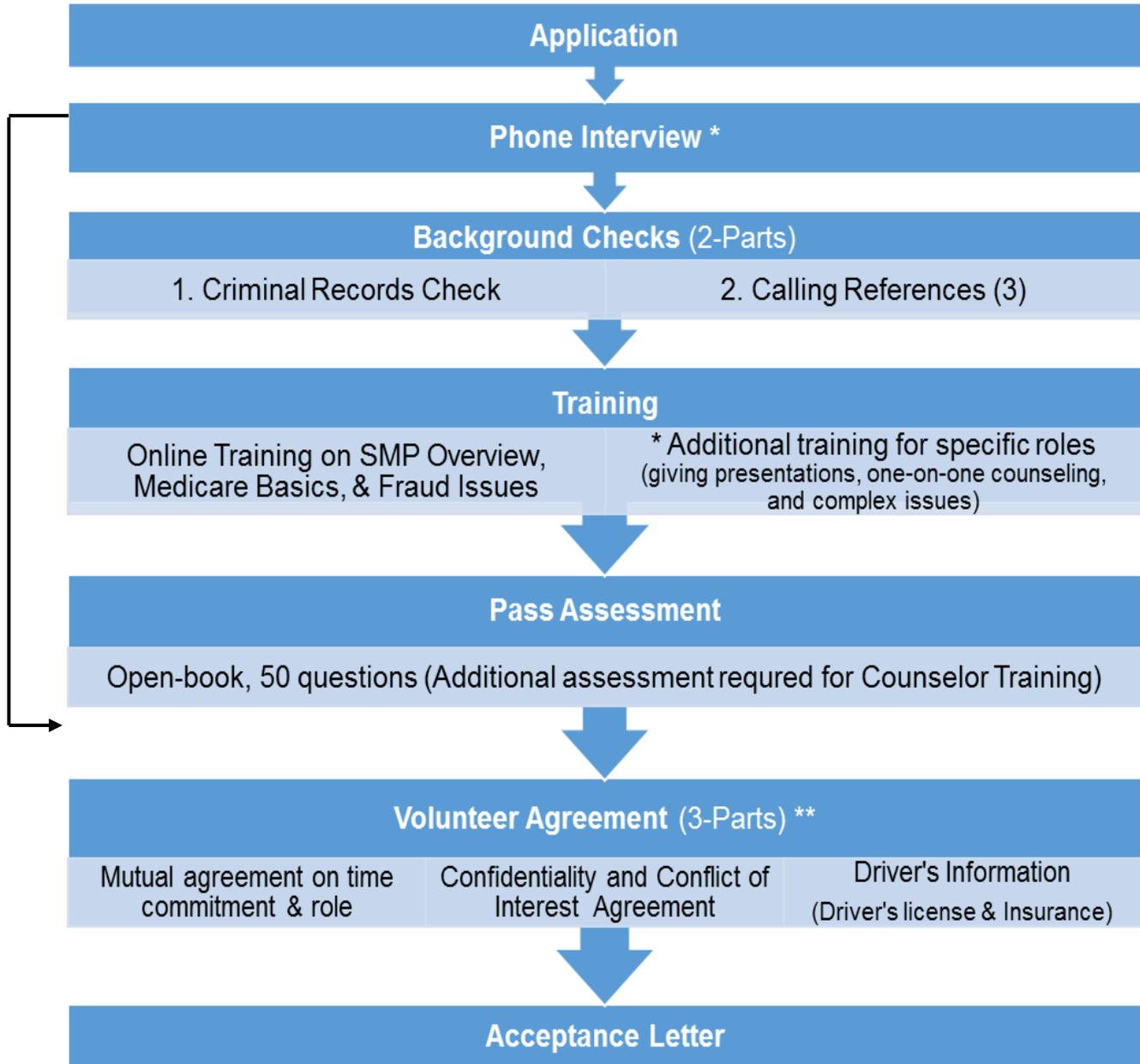
The SMP program values the service of volunteers with disabilities. Program staff strive to include volunteers with disabilities in all facets of the program to the extent that an individual's physical capacity allows, and to ensure access to all SMP program facilities. When requested, the program will make reasonable accommodation to meet the special needs of volunteers with disabilities.

Direct questions and requests for accommodation to AgeOptions at (800)699-9043.

## Appendices

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## Appendix A Illinois SMP Volunteer Screening Process



\* Volunteers with roles that will have no client contact or access to sensitive information will complete the application and phone interview and then skip to the Volunteer Agreement. If their role ever changes, they will need to complete the other screening steps.

\*\* All SMP Volunteers must complete a Volunteer Agreement.



## **Appendix B Illinois SMP Reporting Forms Webpage Link**

The Illinois SMP Program uses SIRS (SMP Information Reporting System) to track activity and report activity related to outreach and education and individual interactions. Volunteers may use SIRS to enter in their activities. However, volunteers should refrain from including any personal information in the reports they submit to SIRS. Please discuss how to report your activities, including your use of SIRS, with your local SMP coordinator.

The link to the reporting forms used by the Illinois SMP program is here:  
**[http://www.ageoptions.org/services-and-programs\\_SMP\\_Reports.html](http://www.ageoptions.org/services-and-programs_SMP_Reports.html)**



## Appendix C Illinois SMP Incident Reporting Form

Please use this form to report any incident involving an SMP volunteer, including:

- Injury to the volunteer, client, or program participant
- Accidents, including motor vehicle accidents
- Property damage, including damage to equipment
- Lost possessions, files, or equipment
- Abuse of a beneficiary or other individual
- Harassment and offensive remarks
- Error in judgment

### Information on the Affected Person or Organization

Check one:  Volunteer  Client / Program Participant  Paid Staff

Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Affected party's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Information on the SMP Volunteer (if not the affected party)

Volunteer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Information about the Incident

Check all that apply:  Injury  Accident  Property Damage  Lost Possession

Abuse  Offensive Remark  Harassment  Error  Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what happened, how it happened, factors leading up to the incident, what was said or observed. Please give as much detail as possible. (Attach separate sheet, if necessary):

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If there were witnesses, list their names/contact information (include yourself if you were the witness):

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**Complete the following (if applicable):**

Name of physician consulted (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of hospital or clinic (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Was incident reported to the police?  Yes  No

Police name and contact number (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Illinois SMP Coordinator Information (Person Filing this Incident Report)**

Agency/Organization name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For questions when using this form please contact the SMP Volunteer Specialist at AgeOptions, (800)699-9043.

Please fax or mail completed form to: SMP Volunteer Specialist, AgeOptions 1048 Lake Street, Suite 300, Oak Park, IL 60301-1102 Fax number: (708)524-0870.





## **Appendix D Illinois SMP Program Volunteer Driver Safety Guidelines**

Volunteers for the Illinois SMP Program provide their own transportation to complete their duties. This may involve driving their own vehicle. The Illinois SMP encourages its volunteers to practice safe driving at all times. The following are safe driving tips to consider (these are recommendations):

- Make sure you are legally entitled to drive the vehicle you are using
- Make sure you are using a vehicle that is safe and road legal
- Always have a current and valid driver's license
- Always have current and valid vehicle insurance
- Make sure you are fit to drive at all times behind the wheel
- Do not drive when affected by alcohol, drugs or medicines
- Do not drive when affected by illness
- Do not drive when you are too tired to do so safely

### **Planning Ahead**

It is important to plan your route before every journey. Planning in advance helps prevent unforeseen and risky circumstances, and you will be better prepared to deal with them if they do.

### **Give Yourself Time**

Plan your journey to allow sufficient time to complete it at safe speeds and without needing to exceed speed limits. Take into account foreseeable weather and traffic conditions.

### **Poor Driving Conditions**

Avoid driving in poor conditions and check the weather forecast before you set off, especially if there has been recent bad weather. If the reported advice is to only make essential journeys, please follow that advice and cancel your trip. (Please see the official Illinois SMP Severe Weather and Disaster Safety Policy in Appendix G for more information.)

### **Drugs**

Do not drive if you have taken any illegal drugs. They can affect your decision-making and driving skills, as well as your physical and mental condition and behavior.

## **Medicines**

Check with your general practitioner or pharmacist whether any over-the-counter or prescribed medicines you are taking are likely to affect your driving (for example, by causing drowsiness). If so, ask for an alternative medicine that does not cause side effects that could impair your driving, or avoid driving altogether while on medication.

## **Illness**

Illness can also affect our ability to drive. We can often be tempted to “soldier” on, when in fact it would be safer not to drive until we are feeling better.

## **Fatigue**

Consider whether you are likely to be drowsy or sleepy while driving. Tired drivers are more likely to crash, especially on long monotonous journeys, and in the early hours of the morning. If you are driving as a volunteer in the evening after a full day’s work in your normal job, you may also be more tired. Discuss any problems with your SMP Coordinator.

## **Speed Limits**

Make sure you know the speed limit of the roads you are using. Always stay within speed limits (including variable limits and temporary limits at roadwork sites) even if you think the limit is too low. Speed limits set the maximum speed for that road. However, please note there are some circumstances like driving around schools, driving on narrow roads, and driving when visibility is restricted just to name a few, when it is safer to drive at a speed less than the posted limit.

## **Distractions**

Driving requires your full concentration all of the time. Trying to do something else while driving will distract you as well as slow your reactions and increase the risk of crashing.

### **Mobile Phones**

A substantial body of research shows that using a hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving is a significant distraction, and substantially increases the risk of the driver crashing.

### **Eating, Drinking, Smoking, Tuning the Radio**

Many other things that might seem simple and innocent can be distracting when driving. Fatal crashes can, and do, occur because a driver chose to unwrap food, take a drink or light a cigarette while driving. Safe driving needs concentration; avoid unnecessary distractions.

## Safe Vehicle

### Before driving any vehicle, check to see:

- Tires are undamaged (no cuts or bulges), are at the correct pressure and have enough tread depth
- If there are any signs of vehicle damage
- If oil, coolant, and window wash levels are correct
- The brakes are working
- The lights and indicators are working
- The windows are not damaged
- The wipers are working
- The mirrors are correctly positioned and not cracked or broken
- All occupants are using their seat belts and head restraints are adjusted correctly
- All loads are securely restrained

If in any doubt how to check any of the above, read your vehicle's handbook and/or ask someone to show you.

### In your vehicle, keep copies of:

- The emergency procedures in your vehicle manual
- A copy of your current vehicle insurance
- A spare tire and tire replacement tools and jack
- A warm blanket
- A flash light and flares
- Small roadside cones and reflectors
- Drinking water

Please refer to page 24 of this handbook for more information about volunteers who drive.

Adapted in part from The Auto Club Group and Minnesota Safety Council 2010 Get There!: Your Guide to Traffic Safety (<http://chicago.aaa.com/assets/files/MemberServices/Global/PDFs/Get-There-Your-Guide-to-Traffic-Safety.pdf?valid>) and The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA.com).



## Appendix E Illinois SMP Safety Checklist for Venue Site

When scheduling a presentation, the SMP staff/volunteer who books the event should ask the following questions that pertain to the safety of both the SMP volunteer(s) and audience members at the presentation. The volunteer presenter should be informed of any safety issues. When the volunteer arrives at the venue, s/he should quickly assess the facilities. Any health and safety issues should be raised with the venue representative if possible. If a concern still exists, the volunteer should call the SMP Coordinator or agency point of contact for direction.

**Volunteer Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presentation Site** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date & Time** \_\_\_\_\_ **Estimated Number of People** \_\_\_\_\_

**SMP Coordinator/Point of Contact\*** \_\_\_\_\_

\*This person must be someone who can be easily contacted at the time of the event in case of emergency, whether that is the SMP Coordinator or someone else they designate at their agency.

Responsible Party at Venue Site (Required)		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Will a responsible party at the venue (e.g. staff or group leader) meet the volunteer and deal with any safety issues that may arise during the event, meaning that they will be at the event or accessible in case of emergency?
The volunteer presenter must have the responsible party's contact information:		
Responsible Party's Name: _____		
Responsible Party's Phone: _____		

**PLEASE NOTE:** A staff member or responsible party at the venue must be available during the presentation in case the volunteer encounters any emergency situation.

If the venue cannot guarantee this, **do not schedule the presentation.**

**Volunteers, if no responsible party is available on the day of the event, call your SMP Coordinator immediately.**

<b>Information for Volunteer Presenter</b>
Is there anything our volunteer should know about directions, parking or how to find your building entrance? Please describe: _____
If there are any safety issues related to the presence of older adults at the venue that we or our volunteer presenter should know about, please describe: _____
Is the venue accessible to persons with physical disabilities or limited mobility? Please describe any relevant information we or our volunteer presenter should know: _____
If this event is taking place in the evening, are the front of the building, the streets and parking lot well lit at night? _____
Is there anything else our volunteer should know (e.g., room setup, A/V technology, etc.)? _____

**Volunteer Checklist for Day of Event:**

- Ask the responsible party if s/he will be in the room. If not, where will s/he be?
- Is the room easy to find? If not, can you ask the responsible party for signs?
- If an extension cord or wires are needed for AV equipment, can they be taped down or placed to avoid where participants will walk? Ask the responsible party for help.
- Do the tables or chairs in the room seem sturdy? If there are any concerns, tell the responsible party.
- Are entrances and exits well-lit, easy to see, and unblocked?
- In case of emergency, are the emergency exits marked and uncluttered?
- After the event, scan the room to see if participants left any personal belongings or documents. If so, be sure to leave these with the responsible party before leaving.
- During the event, remember to ensure all participants can easily understand (see or hear) you. Always use a microphone if available. Encourage people to move closer.

**Please Remember:**

- Volunteers have the right to cancel a presentation if they have any serious safety concerns about the venue that the onsite staff/responsible party cannot address. Volunteers should contact the SMP Coordinator/contact person to discuss the problem.
- Home visits by SMP volunteers to a beneficiary’s residence are prohibited. SMP Volunteers should never visit a beneficiary’s home or room. Volunteers should only conduct SMP duties in the meeting spaces originally booked as the official venue site.
- SMP Volunteers should never write down or take beneficiary’s personal information with them from a venue site. Instead, beneficiaries should be instructed to call the Illinois SMP office at (800)699-9043.





## Appendix F Illinois SMP Severe Weather and Disaster Safety Policy

If an emergency, disaster, or severe weather occur while an SMP volunteer is performing volunteer work, the following, at a minimum, should be addressed:

- Seek a safe and adequately-supplied place of refuge. Seek guidance from on-site staff.
- Call for emergency assistance by dialing 911 from any phone.
- Contact your SMP Coordinator if possible. SMP Coordinators and volunteers should share appropriate contact information with each other before starting volunteer duties, in case an emergency situation arises.

Severe or inclement weather can make travel (e.g., leaving your home, walking, driving, or taking public transit) extremely dangerous. Examples of severe weather include snow, ice, flooding, strong wind, extreme cold or hot temperatures, and other weather that could make it dangerous to go outside or to travel. Always consider your safety when deciding whether or not to stay home during severe weather. **If there is any doubt, it is best to stay home.** In cases where severe weather makes going outside or travel unsafe, follow these steps:

### Local SMP Coordinators

- When severe weather is expected, SMP Coordinators should decide if conditions could make it dangerous for volunteers to leave their homes or travel.
- If a Coordinator determines early that conditions could be dangerous, they should call any volunteers scheduled to work and cancel their volunteer duties. If a Coordinator's office is closed, they should call any volunteers for that day to cancel their work.
  - Coordinators should call any sites at which volunteers are scheduled to work, particularly presentation sites, and cancel for that day. If appropriate, try to reschedule.
  - **Please note: Coordinators should always provide their volunteers with contact information for any sites where they would be volunteering, in case you cannot be reached and the volunteer needs to call the site directly.**

### Volunteers

- Volunteers always have the right to decide that weather would make it unsafe to leave their homes or to travel for their volunteer work. **If you feel unsafe, please stay home.**



- If a volunteer needs to stay home, they should call their local SMP Coordinator as early as possible and speak directly with the Coordinator or someone at their office, not voicemail.
  - When severe weather is expected, plan ahead and make a decision early. Whenever possible, if you need to miss an event or presentation, contact your Coordinator at least a day before to allow time for your Coordinator to reschedule.
- If you are unable to speak directly with the local SMP Coordinator or someone at their office to cancel your work, volunteers should:
  1. Contact SMP staff at AgeOptions for assistance: (800)699-9043.
  2. Call the contact at the site where you would have volunteered to inform them that you will not be able to come and that the Coordinator will follow-up to reschedule.

Always consider your safety when deciding whether or not to stay home. **If there is any doubt, it is best to stay home.**

**If you have any questions about the policies listed above, please contact the SMP Volunteer Specialist at AgeOptions (708)383-0258 or (800)699-9043**



## **Appendix G Illinois SMP Information Technology Policy**

To protect our SMP clients, we must ensure that their personal information is kept private and secure. This requires all SMP staff and volunteers to take cautious, proactive measures to do this at all times.

### **Handling and Reporting Sensitive Information to SMP**

Volunteers should refrain from collecting and transmitting personal client information via Internet or email. This can include client information (Social Security number, Medicare number, date of birth, driver's license number, financial account numbers, etc.) or names of providers or companies that may be involved in potential fraud or abuse.

If you have sensitive information to communicate with your SMP Coordinator, please communicate that information in a phone call.

Any individual who believes they have experienced fraud should be referred to the Illinois SMP hotline at (800)699-9043. (We prefer beneficiaries make the call to SMP on their own behalf, but if there is a circumstance where the individual cannot easily contact SMP, volunteers may collect client names and phone numbers only.) The volunteer may then share the client's name and phone number with SMP staff at AgeOptions, preferably by phone.

To protect client confidentiality, Counseling and Complex Issues and Referrals volunteers who conduct interviews with beneficiaries that involve the discussion of confidential information should have these conversations only in venues that prevent others from overhearing or viewing the information under discussion.

### **Using Computers at Partner Agencies**

Illinois SMP volunteers should familiarize themselves with the specific Information Technology protocols at their host agency and follow them. Talk with your SMP Coordinator for more information.

Illinois SMP volunteers who perform their duties at host agencies should use only the logins and files assigned to them. Volunteers should only use the Internet for SMP work while performing SMP duties.

Regardless of how diligent volunteers may be, there remains a possibility that data will be compromised. If this occurs, volunteers must immediately notify their SMP supervisor to fill out an Incident Report, which can be found in Appendix C.

### **Using Personal Computers for Outreach**

Illinois SMP volunteers are prohibited from using personal computers during outreach efforts. Presenters should always be prepared to give presentations without the use of technology. If presenters want to use PowerPoint presentations, they should utilize multimedia and technology options offered at venue sites.

### **SIRS**

SMP Information Reporting System (SIRS) is the web based, nationwide data tracking tool used by the SMPs to track and report activity related to outreach and education and individual interactions. Volunteers may use SIRS to enter in their activities. However, volunteers should refrain from including any personal information in the reports they submit to SIRS. Please discuss your use of SIRS with your local SMP coordinator.



## Appendix H Illinois SMP Volunteer Handbook Verification Form

Please complete this form and fax to:

(708)524-0870

Attn: SMP Volunteer Specialist

Or mail to:

SMP Volunteer Specialist

AgeOptions

1048 Lake Street

Suite 300

Oak Park, IL 60301-1102

I hereby certify that I have received the Illinois SMP Volunteer Handbook and have read it in its entirety.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_





## **Appendix I Illinois SMP Volunteer Role Descriptions**

Illinois SMP volunteers should only perform the roles assigned in their current SMP Volunteer/Agency Agreement and that they have been fully screened and trained to perform. If you have questions, contact your SMP Volunteer Specialist.

The following role descriptions can be found on the SMP Volunteer page at [http://www.ageoptions.org/services-and-programs\\_SMP\\_Volunteer.html](http://www.ageoptions.org/services-and-programs_SMP_Volunteer.html)

- Information Distribution Volunteer Role
- Administrative Role
- Exhibit Community Outreach Role
- Outreach and Schedule Volunteer Role
- Group Presentation Role
- Counselor Role