

## Community Advocate Senior Medicare Patrol Volunteer

### *Purpose:*

To empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries and their families to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, error and abuse. Community Advocate Volunteers serve this purpose by supporting the SMP program in a variety of ways including, administrative work, distributing information, and working with the media.

### **Benefits of serving as an SMP Volunteer:**

SMP Volunteers are an integral part of a national effort to reduce health care fraud. By serving as a Community Advocate, SMP volunteers have access to professional development opportunities that grow their knowledge of the Medicare program as well as enhance their skills, if that is desired. As an SMP volunteer, you are also contributing to the well-being of Medicare beneficiaries and the community as a whole!

### **Community Advocate Volunteers may participate in some or all of the following activities:**

- Direct discussions with beneficiaries, caregivers, and/or family members about their individual situations and may include reviewing personal information such as Medicare Summary Notices, billing statements, and other related financial and health documents.
- Administrative support such as copying, filing, data entry, and placing outbound phone calls in support of SMP activity.
- Transporting and disseminating SMP information materials to sites and events.
- Participating in media outreach efforts
- Working with staff or other volunteers on a variety of SMP-related projects as needed

### **Orientation/Training:**

- Complete the SMP Foundations Training online
- Complete additional trainings as necessary (e.g., Counselor Training)
- Receive orientation about the Illinois SMP Program and about their local host agency

### **Responsibilities/Requirements:**

- Complete administrative tasks by deadlines determined by volunteer and their local SMP supervisor
- Transport and disseminate hard copy SMP-approved materials to predetermined sites.
- Ability to communicate openly with staff and other volunteers
- Complete SMP Foundations training as well as any role-specific trainings required
- Consent to criminal records and personal references check once every five years
- Valid driver's license and automobile insurance (if driving)
- This is a flexible position! Community Advocate volunteers work with their local SMP

supervisor to determine what projects they will participate in.

**Qualifications:**

- Good written communication skills
- Ability and willingness to learn and share information related to the Medicare program and the ways to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors and abuse within it
- Basic proficiency in Microsoft programs, specifically Microsoft Word and Excel
- Ability to work in an office setting in a professional manner with people from diverse backgrounds

**Time Commitment:**

The SMP program offers flexibility to its volunteers. There is no hourly or weekly requirement. However, because of the amount of training required, SMP volunteers are asked to serve a minimum of one year.

**Limitations:**

Volunteers serving as a Community Advocate may from time to time come into contact with confidential personal information. Volunteers should adhere to confidentiality and data security procedures outlined in the IL SMP handbook. Volunteers are limited to providing general information about SMP and related topics and defer complicated SMP cases and issues to the SMP Hotline at AgeOptions (800) 699-9043. Community Educators cannot have a current, active license to sell insurance (life, health, medical, etc.) and may not volunteer while running for political office.

**Supervision and Location:**

SMP Volunteers report to their local SMP supervisor or, when appropriate, to the statewide SMP Volunteer Coordinator. Most Community Advocate volunteers serve at their local SMP site, but volunteers who distribute information travel to sites throughout their local community.

**Reporting:**

SMP Volunteers will be informed by their SMP supervisor if they have any reporting responsibilities.

**Contact Information:**

Volunteers are always encouraged to contact their local SMP supervisor for support. Volunteers are also welcome to contact the statewide Volunteer Coordinator with any questions or concerns at AgeOptions by calling (800) 699-9043.