



# Volunteer Handbook



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## Introduction

HCSS works to help people maintain independence and enhance their quality of life. HCSS offers Transportation, Hot & Frozen Meals on Wheels delivery, Day Away program, Overnight Respite, and Housekeeping Services.

## Our Mission

Uniting a caring community that supports people to live with dignity.

# Services you Can Volunteer With:



## Transportation

Our transportation service provides trips for social purposes and non-emergency medical appointments. We provide transport to those who meet the eligibility criteria by trained volunteers. Our volunteers use their personal vehicles and paid drivers utilize wheelchair accessible vans. This service is also available for long-distance medical appointments. Volunteers do receive mileage for their trips, which is paid out monthly. One can also donate mileage back to HCSS if they wish.

## Friendly Visiting

This program matches volunteers to an isolated senior or adult living with a disability on a regular basis. The visits will generally be in the client's home, but the volunteer can also schedule social phone calls. The purpose of this program is to provide socialization and opportunities to interact with others. Clients and volunteers of the friendly visiting program provide information about their interests and background to match interests for a successful visiting relationship.



## Meals on Wheels

Hot meals are available for individuals who are having difficulty obtaining and/or preparing nutritious meals on a short-term or long-term basis. A hot meal is delivered directly to the client's home on a regularly scheduled basis. Meals are usually delivered at lunch time Monday through Friday.

Each day's hot meal consists of a meat or fish, vegetables, bread, soup or salad and dessert.

Frozen meals are ordered by clients and delivered by volunteers on a bi-weekly basis. This popular program offers a wide range of entrées, desserts, soups, sides, and breakfast items.

Hot & Frozen Meals on Wheels are provided to individuals who cannot obtain and/or prepare adequate and nutritious meals for themselves.

Volunteers receive mileage for their delivery, which they can also donate back if they choose.

### **Some examples of our Meals clients include those:**

- physically unable to prepare meals.
- have difficulty using kitchen appliances.
- do not have the necessary food preparation skills.
- have inadequate cooking facilities.
- are not motivated to prepare and eat healthy meals (depression, loss of a spouse, etc.)
- are living alone and homebound.
- are living with someone unable or unwilling to provide nutritious meals.
- pregnant and/or postpartum families.
- are recovering from medical procedures or surgery.
- caregiver on holiday.

## Day Away

The Day Away Program is a community program that provides socialization and medical monitoring for adults. Our clients come to the program and take part in a wide variety of activities, assisted by professional staff and trained volunteers. A meal with friends, a game of cards, music, exercise, crafts and just visiting are common activities. Transportation to and from the program can be arranged. There is also a Community Stroke Rehabilitation Day program offered at our Hanover site. Volunteers will be working at specific Day Away sites with staff and clients.

## And more!

Watch for our Volunteer Newsletter for other opportunities to volunteer like administrative volunteering at our head office, or at fundraising events. Ask your Volunteer Resources Coordinator for more information.

# Policies and Procedures:



## Training

HCSS will ensure that all volunteers have access to ongoing training to ensure quality service delivery.

- a. Training begins during the orientation period for each new volunteer.
- b. Training will be ongoing and specific to the volunteers within each program. Volunteers will be actively involved in determining their education/training needs and how best to address them.
- c. Recognizing that learning styles vary, training may be provided on both an individual basis and group basis. Training may involve a variety of techniques: audio-visual resources, books and articles, experiential learning, guest speakers, etc.
- d. Volunteers working within some programs may be asked to participate in training new volunteers.

Education/training may include:

- a. Relevant information on the community.
- b. Education on specific health conditions of clients and risk factors that may impact the volunteer's position.
- c. Their role and limitations in supporting/providing services to the clients.
- d. Emergency policies and procedures.
- e. Risk management.
- f. Continuous quality improvement.
- g. Ethno-cultural sensitivity/awareness of diversity issues.
- h. Information on personal growth/affirmation.
- i. Privacy and confidentiality techniques training.
- j. Evaluation by volunteers of their training is incorporated in improving future education sessions.

Attendance at education opportunities beyond those offered by HCSS will be encouraged and promoted as they relate to the training needs of the volunteer group and to the personal needs of the individual volunteer.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-3-20.*

## Code of Conduct

Volunteers of HCSS must always observe the highest standards of professional ethics. In representing HCSS, volunteers should be aware of the degree to which they have authority to act on the Agency's behalf. It is improper conduct for a volunteer to imply the Agency's support of actions, products, candidates, etc., when in fact they are simply expressing a personal opinion.

Where any possible conflict of interest exists or may develop, or if in doubt, volunteers are required to declare to the agency the full extent of any other employment when accepted into a volunteer position. Also, any changes to that outside commitment must be disclosed to the Agency when they occur.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-10*



## Rights of Volunteers

- a. To be treated as a co-worker, not just free help
- b. To a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, education, and skills
- c. To a well-planned program of training and supervision
- d. To volunteer training opportunities and the opportunity to work in various HCSS service areas with clients with greater needs if this is of interest to the volunteer.
- e. To sound guidance and direction
- f. To a variety of experiences based on the volunteer's interest, training, and background.
- g. To be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, and to have respect shown for an honest opinion.
- h. To recognition in the form of promotion and rewards, and through day-to-day expression of appreciation
- i. To have access to a reliable emergency on-call system when transporting clients outside of regular business hours.

## Responsibilities of Volunteers

- a. To respect the privacy of clients by maintaining confidentiality.
- b. To be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value (worth) of the job to be done.
- c. To be loyal to the organization and its policies and procedures.
- d. To maintain the dignity and integrity of the organization with the public.
- e. To understand the job he or she undertakes, its responsibilities and the skills required by the volunteer.
- f. To carry out duties promptly and reliably to the best of their ability.
- g. To be willing to learn and participate in orientation and training programs, and to continue to learn on the job.
- h. To accept the guidance and decisions of the program staff.
- i. To maintain a smooth-working relationship with other volunteers, clients, caregivers and HCSS employees and stay within the bounds of the volunteer placement description.
- j. To contribute to supervision by self-evaluation and willingness to ask.
- k. To handle all client information (name, address, phone number, trip details, etc.) with care ensuring that unauthorized people do not gain access to them.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-1-10*

## Conflict of Interest

All Volunteers of the HCSS dealing directly or indirectly with persons doing or seeking to do business with HCSS, must act in the best interests of the Agency and of the citizens of the community without favour or preference based on personal considerations.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-40*

## Confidentiality

All information concerning clients, agency personnel, or other confidential Agency information must be safeguarded. Volunteers must respect confidentiality whether such information is available to them in the normal performance of their duties or occasionally and/or inadvertently received. Any information obtained by an individual in the role of an Home & Community Support Services Grey Bruce (HCSS) volunteer is included in this policy. Volunteers must exercise all reasonable care and caution in protecting printed or written information from casual observation, unauthorized perusal, or other abuse. Volunteers must not divulge confidential information disclosed to them within or outside the Agency unless required to do so in the normal performance of their duties expressly authorized by the Agency.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-20*

## Reasonable Care

The first type of client information is written information such as client records or documents or any other client-related information that exists in either paper or electronic form. If a volunteer is required to remove this information from its usual storage place, special care must be taken. The information should be kept on the person at all times and when not in use, it should be safeguarded so that it cannot be easily tampered with by a casual observer. When the information is being used, it should be concealed from onlookers.

The other type of client information which volunteers will have access to is verbal information. This includes any information about a client that a volunteer learns as an agent of HCSS. All information obtained in this way is to be considered confidential and volunteers should never reveal it unless they are doing so as part of their normal function as a volunteer. Confidentiality extends to interaction with other volunteers or employees of HCSS. If the person does not need to know the information to perform their job, they should not have access to it. Gossip or stories about an HCSS is not permitted.

The final situation that volunteers need to be concerned with is indirectly revealing information. This situation would most likely happen when volunteers accompany or see clients in public. Volunteers should avoid discussing confidential information in public and they should avoid acting in a manner that clearly identifies their client as a recipient of HCSS support.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-20*

## Personal Harassment

Volunteers of HCSS are entitled to work in an environment free from any personal or sexual harassment from staff, clients, or other volunteers and to have any complaints in this area dealt with by management.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-30*

## Gifts From Clients

Volunteers of HCSS are not to accept any remuneration/gifts beyond approved client fees.

A client may, from time to time, wish to give a small gift as a token of appreciation, and this is acceptable (i.e., chocolate, or a coffee shop gift card). Volunteers are to never accept cash or personal property belonging to the client, or their caregiver. The volunteer will notify their team leader or Volunteer Resources Coordinator when gifts are received from clients.

Volunteers may not suggest a tip for service in addition to the predetermined fee.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-50*

## Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers will refrain from being involved in the legal and financial affairs of whom they are serving. Volunteers will maintain a professional relationship with clients.

If a client of HCSS requests assistance with banking, bill payment, etc., the volunteer may discuss the process with the client, but not perform any tasks related to money transfer or legal documents.

Volunteers will not become involved in family conflicts. The volunteer should listen and be supportive to the client, without adding personal opinions or providing advice.

If a client is asking advice or drawing a volunteer into matters of a highly personal nature or matters which make the volunteer uncomfortable, the volunteer has the right to terminate the conversation and minimize contact with the client until appropriate staff members can be notified.

Conversely, the volunteer will refrain from drawing the client into their personal or family affairs. Should HCSS staff become aware of inappropriate involvement, immediate action will be taken.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-60*

## Right of Refusal

It is the right of volunteers to a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, education, and skills. HCSS recognizes that a volunteer may refuse to serve a client, and this is the volunteer's right.

If a volunteer receives a client assignment which they feel uncomfortable with, the volunteer should immediately contact the appropriate HCSS staff member.

The staff member would then discuss this with their Team Leader/Director who would then review the situation with the volunteer and make any reasonable adjustments to the volunteer's duties.

If such adjustments are not possible within that program of HCSS, the staff member will explore alternate placements within the agency in consultation with the Volunteer Resources Coordinator.

If no alternatives can be found, the volunteer may choose to resign their position within the agency or remain inactive until a more suitable assignment is found.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-70*



## Inappropriate Activities for Volunteers

The following are activities judged to be inappropriate for any volunteer of HCSS:

- a. Those activities for which the volunteer has not received training.
- b. Those activities which have been identified in the individual program plan as the responsibility of paid staff.
- c. Those activities which could put the volunteer or the client at risk.
- d. Those activities which would not be covered under the agency's liability insurance.
- e. Those activities which could breach any existing agreements, contracts, professional policies, or standards of practice.
- f. Those activities that would put the client's privacy at risk.
- g. Volunteers cannot run personal errands when the client is in the vehicle or when this activity will delay the scheduled pick-up time of the client.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-4-100*

## Volunteer Discipline Procedure

Discipline is of a positive nature with emphasis on correcting the problem rather than punishing the volunteer. It puts the onus on the volunteer to restore to a level of performance which is compatible with the requirements of the position and the Agency.

There are three steps that will be taken that are as follows:

- a. Oral Warning
- b. Written Warning
- c. Final Warning, which leads to dismissal or demotion.

## Grounds for Dismissal

- a. Breach of confidentiality.
- b. Use of alcohol/illegal drugs while on assignment.
- c. Abuse of clients or co-workers.
- d. Providing private transportation to an active HCSS client for a fee.
- e. Insubordination.
- f. Theft or relevant criminal activity.
- g. Breach of agency policy.
- h. Lies or falsification of records.
- i. Unwillingness or inability to support and further the mission of the organization and/or objectives of the program.
- j. Inappropriate use of client records.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-5-30*

## Volunteer Resignation

Volunteers, whenever possible, are asked to provide staff of HCSS with advance notice of resignation so that staff can arrange for a replacement.

An exit interview may be arranged with the Volunteer Resource Coordinator in order to accomplish the following:

- a. Provide personal recognition of the volunteer's contribution.
- b. Ensure return of HCSS property.
- c. Ensure client's privacy and personal information is protected.
- d. Elicit feedback affecting the program.
- e. Elicit feedback on the volunteer experience.
- f. And if appropriate, extend an invitation to return at a later date.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-5-20*

## Volunteer Absence/Vacation

Volunteers are asked to notify HCSS if they are unable to attend to their volunteer duties, as well as when they have planned absences.

- a. The Volunteer will inform the appropriate HCSS staff member of dates and times they will be unavailable.
- b. The volunteer is asked to provide as much prior notice as possible, to allow the staff member to arrange for a replacement.
- c. If flexible hours would accommodate the volunteer, negating the need for their absence, this will be negotiated with the appropriate HCSS staff member.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-5-10*

# Emergencies & Medical:

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## Client Found or Becomes Unconscious:

Due to the nature of the client group which HCSS serves, there is potential for problems or emergencies to arise. Volunteers finding a client unconscious, or observing a client become unconscious, will immediately institute emergency measures.

- a. Assess the situation to ensure it is safe to render care to the client.
- b. The volunteer will not move the client as the client cannot give consent while unconscious, unless the client is in immediate danger, i.e., a situation involving fire, or vehicular traffic, etc.
- c. If trained in CPR, the volunteer will start CPR. If not trained, the volunteer will seek the assistance of someone with CPR training.
- d. Regardless of whether CPR is initiated, the volunteer will call 911 or emergency services.
- e. The volunteer will stay with the client until the ambulance arrives.
- f. The volunteer will provide what details are available to assist the ambulance service.
- g. Once the ambulance service provides care to the client, the volunteer will immediately contact HCSS.
- h. Staff at HCSS will notify the hospital emergency department of any relevant additional information pertinent to the client.
- i. Staff will contact the family or emergency numbers listed.
- j. HCSS staff will ensure that an incident report is completed.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-6-20*

## Client Not Home:

Due to the nature of the client group which Home & Community Support Services Grey Bruce (HCSS) serves, there is a potential for problems or emergencies to arise. Volunteers encountering a client not at home when delivering a prearranged service must immediately inform HCSS staff to ensure that a wellness check is conducted.

If a client is expected to be at home when the volunteer arrives - for meal delivery, to pick up the client for a prearranged trip or for a friendly visit - and the client does not come to the door to receive the service, the volunteer will act as follows:

- a) Call HCSS head office and let their agency contact know that the client was not home to receive the service as soon as possible.
- b) It is not the responsibility of the volunteer to enter the home to look for the client.
- c) If delivering Meals on Wheels, the volunteer will return to the meal provider, unless otherwise instructed.

**NOTE:** If volunteering for Transportation, please wait 15 minutes before leaving and calling HCSS staff to account for any unseen delays.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-6-10*

## Motor Vehicle Accident

The volunteer is responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle and the safe transportation of the client to and from their destinations. Circumstances beyond the volunteer's control such as accidents and emergency situations must be reported immediately.

When the volunteer is involved in an accident while providing a ride for HCSSGB the following steps should be taken:

- a. The volunteer will assess injuries to the client, self and others involved.
- b. The volunteer will render care and assistance in an emergency to the client or others if, and only if, the volunteer feels capable of rendering such assistance without danger to the injured person or the volunteer himself.
- c. The volunteer will ensure the police and ambulance are contacted if required.
- d. Once the immediate emergency is dealt with, the volunteer driver will contact the Team Leader.
- e. It is the responsibility of HCSS Staff to notify the client's family or emergency contact person in the event of an emergency or unusual medical condition.
- f. The Team Leader must complete an *Incident Report* (Form ADM-1) as per Policy ADM-6-50 and will require information from the volunteer.
- g. The volunteer will take responsibility to contact his insurance company.

*For more information, ask to see policy no: VM-6-30*

# Frequently Asked Questions:



- **How many deliveries do I need to sign up for?**  
There is no mandatory number for you to sign up for. You can sign up for weekly deliveries, or monthly deliveries, it's up to you!
- **What does ADP stand for?**  
ADP stands for Adult Day Program, also known as the Day Away Program.
- **Can I volunteer for more than one program? Or switch?**  
Absolutely! You can volunteer for more than one program at any given time, or switch to another program at any time.
- **Who do I talk to if I'm having conflict with a staff member of HCSS?**  
Please reach out to the Volunteer Resources Coordinator if you're having conflict with a staff member.
- **Can I change my mind about whether I receive mileage reimbursement or a charitable tax receipt?**  
Yes! Please reach out to the volunteer resources coordinator for help facilitating this change.
- **Can I accept tips from clients?**  
No, it is HCSS Policy that volunteers don't accept tips from clients. This is to ensure that there is no room for misinterpretation regarding whether or not a client has paid their fees.
- **How will people know that I am a volunteer?** Each volunteer will receive an ID badge denoting that they are a volunteer. This badge should be always worn while you volunteer.
- **What should I wear while volunteering?**  
Whatever makes you feel comfortable and capable of completing your volunteer duties. Some of our specific volunteer opportunities may require or suggest clothing options, but you will be provided with that information during orientation.
- **What do I do in the circumstances of inclement weather?**  
If the weather conditions are such that it feels unsafe to drive, please reach out to your contact within the agency to let them know that you are unable to volunteer until the weather improves.
- **How old do you have to be to volunteer?** Our volunteers must be 18 years old to volunteer, or volunteer with a guardian who is over the age of 18.
- **If I choose to donate my mileage, what happens?**  
Your mileage is donated back into HCSS to use wherever we need it most! You will also receive a charitable return at the end of the year with the mileage that you have donated.
- **How do I keep my phone number private when calling a client?**  
To block personal phone number dial #31# then telephone number. If using Bell, dial \*67 then the telephone number.



## Contact:



Need Assistance? Please call:

519-372-2091 or 1-800-267-3798

Press 1 for Intake

Press 2 for Day Away & Respite

Press 3 for Meals on Wheels

Press 4 for Housekeeping

Press 5 for Transportation

Press 6 for Volunteer Opportunities

**Press 7 for After Hours Emergency Assistance**

Press 8 for Friendly Visiting

Press 9 for Donations & Fundraising

