



AGENCY ON AGING AREA 4 VOLUNTEER GUIDE

Thank you for joining our mission to support and empower older adults in our community. This guide is your guide to making a meaningful impact—whether you're assisting with outreach, providing companionship, delivering meals and a friendly smile to homebound adults, or helping connect people to vital resources.

Inside, you'll find everything you need to get started and feel confident in your role. Together, we're creating a community where every older adult feels seen, supported, and valued.



@agencyonaging4
www.agencyonaging4.org

AGENCY
ON AGING
AREA 4



WELCOME

We are so pleased that you have decided to dedicate some of your time and talents to benefit older adults and people with disabilities in our community. Working as a volunteer can be immensely rewarding for you, our staff, and for the participants in the many programs and activities overseen by the Agency on Aging Area 4 (AAA4).

We hope this guide will help you feel prepared for and supported during your volunteer assignment. We will work together to form a connection that serves our program goals, the needs of the community, and your expressed desire to make a difference through service for others.

In choosing to volunteer with AAA4, you are joining a dedicated group of individuals and agencies whose sole goal is to help older adults and people with disabilities live their lives to the fullest measure of their abilities.

Often, we are meeting older adults and people with disabilities at a time of challenge and transition and the assistance that we provide helps to sustain their independence and to facilitate healthy and effective engagement with supportive services.

Within this guide and with the information you will receive during the Volunteer Orientation we will outline our responsibilities to you and yours to us. To be a volunteer you will be required to attend several trainings that are designed to assure that all our services to the older adults and people with disabilities in our various programs are delivered efficiently, safely, respectfully, and most importantly, with care and compassion. This Volunteer Guide contains policies and procedures for our volunteers.

Again, WELCOME, and thank you for joining with us to assure that older adults and people with disabilities in our region have options to assist them to live longer, live safely, and live well in the environment of their choice.

Pam Miller
Executive Director, Agency on Aging Area 4

ABOUT AGENCY ON AGING AREA 4

Helping Older Adults Age Independently Since 1973

Agency on Aging Area 4 (AAA4) supports adults aged 60+, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers across seven Northern California counties: Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba.

Our role as Area 4's Agency on Aging includes bringing programs and services to the community by working with local organizations already serving specific communities and/or populations. We work together to improve the well-being and independence of older adults across the seven-county region we serve by helping consumers:



Connect to Resources

We provide information, identify and connect consumers to local resources, and provided individualized case management.



Address Hunger & Food Insecurity

We help consumers apply for monthly food benefits and home-delivered meals and offer education to support their nutritional needs.



Protect Rights & Prevent Elder Abuse

We connect consumers to low- and no-cost legal assistance and investigate elder abuse complaints in long-term care facilities.



Improve Health

We provide nutrition and fall prevention education and an in-home counseling program to help aging adults improve their quality of life.



Support Caregivers

We fund partners who oversee caregiver support programs and/or offer in-home and out-of-home respite.



Age Independently

We oversee residential repairs, transportation, co-living, and other programs to help consumers thrive in their communities.

OUR SHARED MISSION: VALUES THAT SHAPE VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Agency on Aging Area 4 is committed to making a meaningful impact in every community we serve.

To fulfill this mission, we rely on the dedication, integrity, and shared values of our volunteers and staff. Each volunteer plays a vital role in building trust with the individuals and communities we support. Our work is grounded in a shared passion for service and a commitment to the values that guide our mission.

These values are best demonstrated when we:

- Act with compassion, respect, and empathy toward all individuals
- Uphold the highest standards of honesty and accountability
- Embrace diversity and foster an inclusive environment
- Collaborate with others to strengthen our collective impact
- Approach every task with professionalism and a spirit of service
- Advocate to eliminate ageism and ableism
- Honor the wisdom and dignity and choices of those we serve
- Act as conscientious stewards of our resources
- Strive for excellence and equity when translating our mission into action

PLEDGING TO SERVE TOGETHER

OUR PLEDGE TO YOU

- To create a welcoming, respectful, and supportive environment
- To offer meaningful opportunities that align with your skills and interests
- To provide clear role descriptions, training, and ongoing support
- To listen to your feedback and continuously improve the volunteer experience
- To ensure you feel valued as a vital part of our team

YOUR PLEDGE TO AAA4

- To accept assignments that match your abilities and availability
- To follow all Agency guidelines and policies
- To communicate any conflicts, concerns, or changes in availability
- To maintain confidentiality and respect professional boundaries
- To support our mission of improving the lives of older adults and people with disabilities

CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: AN OVERVIEW

Volunteering with Agency on Aging Area 4 is an opportunity to make valuable personal connections while also improving the lives of aging adults and people with disabilities.

Whether you have just a few hours a month or as much as 20 hours a week, we can match you with a rewarding opportunity to make a positive impact on our aging community.

Ready to get started?

Review volunteer opportunities below, making sure to note which activities are available in each county and the requirements to serve.

For more information about each opportunity, such as what to expect and time commitments, visit www.agencyonaging4.org/volunteers.

CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	SERVICE AREAS & REQUIREMENTS	NEVADA	PLACER	SACRAMENTO	SIERRA	YOLO	YUBA & SUTTER	APPLICATION & PACKET	BACKGROUND CHECK	SECURITY TRAINING	DMV RECORDS CHECK	SPECIALIZED TRAINING
<p>Become an Ambassador of Aging Learn about aging services in your community by supporting staff at outreach and other events.</p>			●	●		●	●	●				
<p>Be Someone's Caring Caller Engage in weekly friendly phone chats with your aging neighbors from the comfort of your home.</p>		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
<p>Support Administrative Staff in Office Volunteer to welcome visitors, make copies, scan documents, and other tasks.</p>				●				●	●	●		
<p>Deliver Fresh Meals and Friendly Smiles Make Meals on Wheels deliveries to homebound residents of Yuba and Sutter counties.</p>							●	●	●	●	●	
<p>Advocate for Elders' Rights Support staff in investigating elder abuse complaints as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman.</p>		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●

TAKING THE FIRST STEP: HOW TO APPLY

Ready to apply? Here's what to expect:

1 Explore Opportunities

Visit www.agencyonaging4.org/volunteer to check out our current volunteer openings. Click the "APPLY HERE" link at the bottom of the page to access Mon Ami, our online volunteer management system.

2 Complete the Online Interest Form

Fill out the quick online form. Once you're done, you'll receive an email confirmation inviting you to schedule a short phone interview with our staff.

3 Schedule a Phone Interview

Chat with a representative from the program you're interested in. It's your chance to learn more, ask questions, and make sure the role is a good fit for you.

4 Review & Complete Volunteer Onboarding Packet and Background Check

After your interview, we'll email you the full onboarding packet which includes a few documents to print, read, sign, and return to us. We will also send you some quick forms along with instructions for completing your background check. Once your background check is cleared, you're ready to move onto final steps in the onboarding process.

5 Attend Orientation and Trainings

After your onboarding is complete, we'll invite you to an online orientation and any role-specific trainings you may need.

6 Start Volunteering!

Our Volunteer Coordinator will connect you with your preferred program, and your volunteer journey begins—welcome aboard!

If you have any questions or concerns at any point during the onboarding process or in the course of your volunteer service, please feel free to reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator or your program supervisor. We want you to be able to enjoy this opportunity with confidence in your understanding of the expectations and in your ability to fulfill them.

You can always reach us at volunteer@agencyonaging4.org.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

The following policies are meant to serve as guidance during your volunteer service. Your adherence to some of these policies is required by law. Others represent policies developed by AAA4 for its staff and volunteers to ensure a fair, equitable, safe, and successful work environment for your benefit and for the benefit of the clients that you will be serving. Please direct any questions or concerns that you may have about your ability to follow these policies to your program manager. Failure to follow policies may result in immediate termination of the volunteer relationship.

Confidentiality

Agency on Aging Area 4 expects that all volunteers will respect client confidentiality at all times. Volunteers shall regard information relating to clients, volunteers, employees, and the Agency in general—written or otherwise—as confidential. Information regarding a client's or clients' records, and personal or family history, must never be communicated to anyone other than the professional personnel who require such information to assist consumers or as required by law. Volunteers are prohibited from accessing consumers' records without an appropriate, job-related reason and must refrain from discussing consumers in common areas of the office in any area where they may be overheard by other consumers, staff, or visitors.

Any communication about a consumer that is requested by an outside person or unauthorized agency cannot not be released without the consumer's prior written consent. All such requests must be directed to your supervisor.

Conflicts of Interest

Agency on Aging Area 4 expects all volunteers to maintain the highest standards of integrity and impartiality in their service. Volunteers must avoid any situation that could create a conflict between their personal interests and the interests of the Agency or its clients.

A conflict of interest arises when a volunteer's personal, financial, or professional interests interfere—or appear to interfere—with their responsibilities to the Agency. This includes, but is not limited to, seeking personal financial gain, offering services outside the scope of your volunteer role, or making referrals that are not part of the Agency's approved services or network of funded partners.

Volunteers are not permitted to use their position to influence clients for personal benefit or to provide services beyond those outlined in their volunteer assignment without prior approval from the program manager. Any requests from clients for additional services must be referred to the program manager for review and appropriate action.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS (con't.)

Elder Abuse & At-Risk Adults

Agency on Aging Area 4 is committed to the safety and well-being of all clients. Volunteers are expected to remain alert to signs of elder abuse or neglect and to take appropriate action when concerns arise. Elder abuse includes any act or failure to act that results in harm or serious risk of harm to an older adult. This may involve physical or emotional injury, financial exploitation, or the failure to provide for basic needs such as food, shelter, personal care, or medical attention. Abuse can be intentional or the result of neglect, and it may be caused by caregivers, family members, or others in a position of trust.

Volunteers must report any suspicions of abuse, neglect, or exploitation to a supervisor immediately. Similarly, if a volunteer becomes aware that a client is unable to meet essential needs due to physical or mental impairments, substance use, or other serious challenges, this information must also be shared with your supervisor so that appropriate support can be arranged.

All volunteers are required to complete training on their responsibilities as Mandated Reporters during Volunteer Orientation. This training will provide guidance on recognizing signs of abuse and the proper procedures for reporting concerns.

Communication

Agency on Aging Area 4 expects all volunteers to communicate in a respectful, professional, and inclusive manner at all times. Volunteers should avoid using language that may be perceived as unprofessional, insensitive, inflammatory, or offensive. This includes both verbal and written communication.

Respect for individual differences—including cultural, social, and personal values—is essential. Volunteers are expected to reflect the values of the Agency in their interactions with clients, staff, fellow volunteers, and members of the public. Any inquiries from the media must be referred directly to your staff supervisor, who will coordinate with the Executive Director as appropriate. Volunteers should never speak on behalf of the Agency unless specifically authorized to do so.

Dress Code

Agency on Aging Area 4 expects volunteers to maintain a neat, clean, and appropriate appearance while representing the Agency. Clothing should be casual and comfortable, while still reflecting the professionalism of your role. Volunteers should avoid wearing clothing with language or graphics that may be considered offensive, inappropriate, or disruptive to a respectful environment.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS (con't.)

Unlawful Harrassment

Agency on Aging Area 4 is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all. Harassment of any kind—whether by a volunteer, staff member, program participant, or anyone encountered through your volunteer service—is strictly prohibited.

Harassment may be intentional or unintentional and can include verbal, physical, or visual conduct that demeans, threatens, or offends. This includes, but is not limited to, derogatory remarks or behavior related to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic. Volunteers who experience or witness harassment must report it to their program manager immediately. All reports will be addressed promptly, respectfully, and confidentially.

Discrimination

AAA4 strictly prohibits discrimination in the terms, conditions, or privileges of volunteer service based upon the following: race; religious creed, dress or grooming practice; color; national origin; ancestry; physical handicap; medical condition; marital status; sex or sexual orientation; gender identification or gender expression; traits historically associated with race including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles.

AAA4 also strictly prohibits retaliation against any person who has filed a complaint of discrimination based upon the grounds set forth above. Complaints of discrimination should be made to your program manager. As with harassment, allegations of discriminatory behavior will be promptly, fully, and discreetly addressed and resolved.

Gifts

Volunteers and their immediate families are not allowed to accept gifts of any significant value from program participants. Volunteers are not to give, offer, or promise, directly or indirectly, anything of significant value to any client. This includes gifts of food or beverages as those may not be allowed within a client's dietary restrictions.

Personal Property

Volunteers are asked to refrain from bringing unnecessary personal property and/or personal property of significant value to work. Volunteers are expected to exercise reasonable care with respect to their personal property. AAA4 is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal property. Articles of personal property found on the premises should be returned to the owner, if known, or turned in to a supervisor or manager.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS (con't.)

Health and Safety

AAA4 is committed to providing its volunteers with a safe and healthy work environment. To do so requires the involvement of all staff and volunteers in constantly practicing safe work habits and in maintaining all work areas in a safe and healthy condition.

Safe work environments are maintained when everyone present remains aware of their surroundings and brings attention to potential safety hazards, particularly those that might cause slips, trips, or falls. It also requires that volunteers wear clothing and footwear that is appropriate to safely navigate the workspace. Any “near” accident or potentially unsafe condition should be reported immediately to the program manager who can act to eliminate unhealthy or unsafe conditions or practices.

Reporting Accidents

For your health and safety, any injury or illness sustained while you are serving as a volunteer must be reported immediately to a supervisor or manager. Minor cuts and bruises will be attended to by first aid. Where an injury is more serious, appropriate medical intervention will be initiated. Reporting such injury or illness will protect your right to any potential compensation and care.

Workplace Safety and Threats of Violence

AAA4 is committed to providing a safe environment for all volunteers, staff, and clients. Any message or behavior—written, spoken, or implied—that suggests violence must be treated as a serious threat and reported immediately. If you witness or receive a threat of violence from a program participant, fellow volunteer, client family member, or member of the public, notify your supervisor or program manager without delay.

In the event of a credible threat of physical harm, remove yourself from the situation and seek a safe location. Call 911 immediately, and remain sheltered until law enforcement arrives. Once it is safe to do so, contact your program supervisor to report the incident.

Drug-Free Workplace

Agency on Aging Area 4 follows federal drug enforcement laws and regulations. Volunteers are strictly prohibited from the unlawful possession, use, or influence of controlled substances while performing volunteer duties. Volunteers are expected to report for service physically and mentally fit to carry out their responsibilities.

No volunteer may serve while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, or any substance—including prescription or over-the-counter medications—that may affect their ability to perform safely and effectively. Volunteers may not drive on behalf of the Agency or its funded partners if they are believed to be impaired for any reason.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS (con't.)

Smoke-Free/Tobacco-Free Workplace

Smoking, vaping, and use of chew/dip are prohibited inside the workplace, including the restrooms, inside care facilities, and inside the homes of program participants. Smoking, vaping, and/or chewing/dipping during volunteer-related meetings at any location also are prohibited.

Fragrances in the Workplace

Volunteers are encouraged to keep use of personal fragrances to a minimum in order to maintain a healthy work environment, respecting that co-workers, clients, and visitors may have chemical sensitivities.

Firearms-Free Workplace

The possession of firearms (loaded or unloaded) or weapons on Agency or funded partner premises or at volunteer-related functions or during the performance of your volunteer assignment, regardless of any lawful “carry” permit, is strictly prohibited.

Use of Personal Vehicles

For some volunteer duties, AAA4 does require that volunteers maintain an acceptable driving record. Volunteers shall maintain a valid California driver's license and show proof of such at least annually and to renew their license in a timely manner prior to expiration. If a volunteer's driver license becomes invalid, suspended, revoked, or if they are arrested for a driving infraction, the volunteer agrees to report such information to their supervisor immediately.

Any accidents or traffic violations must be presorted to a supervisor immediately if they occur during the course and scope of your duties. Failure to report a motor vehicle accident that occurs while volunteering for AAA4, no matter how minor or insignificant, may result in the termination of the volunteer position. Should a volunteer who is required to drive an AAA4 vehicle lose his/her driver's license, personal insurance coverage, or AAA4 provided insurance coverage, the volunteer may be subject to the same action including, but not limited to termination of the volunteer position.

Volunteering At Will

Unless otherwise specified, volunteering with AAA4 is strictly at will and is for no fixed or definite term. This means that the volunteer service may be terminated with or without cause and with or without advance notice at any time by you or us. Nothing in this handbook or in any document or statement shall limit the right to terminate the volunteer service at-will. No supervisor, employee or volunteer of the organization has any authority to enter into an agreement for volunteer service for any specified period of time or to make an agreement for volunteer service other than at-will. Only the Executive Director of the company has the authority to make any such agreement.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
AGENCY ON AGING AREA 4 VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:**

Julie Beckner, Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@agencyonaging4.org

www.agencyonaging4.org/volunteer



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