

# Community Connector Volunteer Handbook



[www.Shipresources.org](http://www.Shipresources.org)  
[info@shipresources.org](mailto:info@shipresources.org)

# Index

Organization Overview.....3

Community Connector Volunteer Program Overview.....4

Volunteer Policies.....4

Training Procedures.....7

# ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

## **SCRC Mission Statement**

The Shippensburg Community Resource Coalition is a collaborative effort to provide quality social services and youth programs that are accessible and safe and that recognize the dignity and worth of each person. Our goal is to help community members reach their full potential.

## **Volunteer Program Philosophy**

The Shippensburg Community Resource Coalition has a commitment to form meaningful partnerships with our volunteers. Our volunteers are an important part of the successful operation of the organization. We are truly thankful for the support and commitment offered to us. Without it, our mission could not be fulfilled. We believe that every member of the SCRC group is valuable and everyone's time, talents, and efforts are to be appreciated, respected, and recognized. The work of every volunteer is valued equally and all volunteers are treated with dignity and respect.

## **SCRC General Information**

The Shippensburg Community Resource Coalition (SCRC) Committee developed from an ad hoc group of community stakeholders who explored the need for a homeless shelter in Shippensburg in 2009. There is now an established board of directors and there have been regular meetings since April 2010 where we have prioritized needs and worked on the structure of programs and services. The Shippensburg University Foundation serves as the fiscal umbrella for the SCRC and is a 501c3 nonprofit organization.

## **Purpose and Objectives:**

- To provide a central hub for social services including the coordination of community and church-sponsored services (food banks, clothing banks, etc.)
- To provide a central hub for youth programming including tutoring and recreational activities.
- To provide counseling services
- To partner with existing stakeholders such as the school district and Shippensburg University to meet educational and community needs.

For more information, please visit [shipresources.org](http://shipresources.org).

# COMMUNITY CONNECTOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## **Position description:**

The Community Connector program is a basic information and referral program that will connect community members with the services that can support them. Community members often need help finding the information and programs that can best suit their needs. The Community Connector's role is to provide the information that will empower clients to reach out to the supportive services that can assist them.

## **Requirements:**

Volunteers must obtain and provide copies of PA criminal history and PA child abuse clearances. Information about how to apply for these can be found on the SCRC webpage here:  
<http://shipresources.org/>

## VOLUNTEER POLICIES

### **Section A: GENERAL SCRC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Section B: COMMUNITY CONNECTOR SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Section C: CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### **A. GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE:** Please contact us as soon as possible if you are not able to fulfill your volunteer service for any reason - illness, scheduling conflict, etc.

**VALUABLES:** Please try to avoid bringing valuables with you as the SCRC cannot be responsible for any damage or loss. If you need to bring a purse (etc.), discuss safe storage with your supervisor.

**VOLUNTEER HOURS:** When you arrive, check in with your supervisor so they know you have arrived. Document the time you arrived by signing-in and when you are done for the day sign-out so that we can keep track of your volunteer hours. Please ask your supervisor what procedure you are to use as it varies from program to program. If you need to keep track of hours for your own requirements (i.e. school volunteer requirements) please be sure to bring appropriate paperwork along and discuss with the supervisor.

**ORIENTATION AND TRAINING** will be provided to all volunteers as necessary. A general orientation to the SCRC and training specific to the job they will be doing will be provided by the supervisor of the volunteer position.

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS:** The SCRC takes the safety of children, youth and vulnerable adults very seriously and conducts background and reference checks on volunteers in compliance with Pennsylvania's Child Protective Service Laws. Adult volunteers that are acting in lieu of or on behalf of a parent and/or have direct contact with children because of providing care, supervision, guidance or control of children, are required to receive the clearances as required by law.

Prospective volunteers must obtain the following clearances:

- Report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP); and
- Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services (Child Abuse)

Additionally, a fingerprint based federal criminal history (FBI) clearance submitted through the PSP or its authorized agency is required when:

- The volunteer has not been a Pennsylvania resident continuously for the past 10 years.

Volunteers who are not required to obtain the FBI clearance must swear or affirm in writing that they are not disqualified from service based upon a conviction of an offense under the law.

Clearances obtained within the previous 36 months may serve in a volunteer capacity for any program, activity or service.

**CHILDREN:** For some volunteer positions, children are welcome to volunteer with you. There are other volunteer positions where children are not allowed for safety reasons. Please check with your supervisor prior to volunteering about bringing children along with you. If you do have children with you, they must remain under your supervision. They must abide by the same standards that we have for volunteers.

**DRESS** according to what is appropriate and comfortable for your volunteer position. We are an organization that sees many clients of diverse background so we ask that volunteers be respectful in dress and do not wear attire that could be offensive or advertise products such as alcohol. Please ask your supervisor if you have any questions regarding what is appropriate dress.

**MEALS:** Check with your supervisor prior to volunteering if you need to know whether or not a meal will be provided.

**RECOGNITION** will be an ongoing process. As a volunteer, you have the right to be acknowledged and appreciated for your valuable contribution to SCRC.

**REFERENCES** are always gladly provided for volunteers upon request. Position descriptions, sign-in sheets and time cards serve as tools for preparing references.

**SOCIAL SERVICE PARTICIPANTS AND VOLUNTEERING:** To encourage maximum feasible participation in the SCRC agency, participants in the social service programs are encouraged to volunteer at the agency. Participation within a program unit/program department providing the client direct service will be of their own free will and will not be a condition of receiving assistance or in exchange for assistance given. Volunteering will not impact the type of quality of serviced received nor will it be used to permit or prohibit participation.

**VOLUNTEER PROFILE:** As a SCRC volunteer, we will record the contact information you provide and the hours you volunteer in our volunteer records. The SCRC recommends that you keep your contact information up to date in your volunteer profile.

**USE OF FACILITY:** Volunteers may have access to the facility and its equipment when staff is available to supervise. Usage of technological equipment, such as computers, internet, fax machines, copy machines and printers is limited to those who are trained to use the equipment. The equipment should only be used to fulfill your volunteer duties and not for personal use, unless your supervisor gives you permission.

**PROHIBITED WEAPONS:** SCRC policy prohibits all persons (including employees, volunteers, customers, invitees, guests or other visitors) from carrying a prohibited weapon of any kind in to an SCRC event or program, unless the person is licensed to carry the weapon. Prohibited weapons include any form of firearm, explosive device or other item that is generally considered to be a weapon.

**RESIGNATION:** Volunteers are requested to notify their supervisor two weeks before leaving when at all possible. The staff appreciates your time, talents and interests, and knows that changes will occur.

**DISMISSAL** of a volunteer is a serious consideration. A meeting between staff, the volunteer and a member of the SCRC Board of Directors (or a designated representative) will occur before dismissal, in an effort to reach a resolution. Dismissal of a volunteer may take place if a volunteer is unreliable, irresponsible, disruptive, demonstrating inappropriate behavior or failing to adhere to the policies and procedures of the SCRC and its programs.

**ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** may be in place for specific programs. Your supervisor will notify you of specific policies you need to be aware of for your volunteer opportunity.

## **B. COMMUNITY CONNECTOR PROGRAM SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to this organization, its staff, and its clients. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated fairly, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the organization.

### **Orientation and Training Policy**

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the agency, all pertinent policies and procedures, and the work to which the volunteer has been assigned. Volunteers will receive specific training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment.

Basic interviewing and interpersonal communication skills will be reviewed as well as information on the social services that are available in the area to use for referrals.

### **Safety Policies**

You and the SCRC share responsibility for establishing and maintaining a safe work environment. The SCRC will attempt to ensure a safe work environment and to comply with federal, state, and local safety regulations. In turn, you are expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all of your work activities. You are asked to report any unsafe conditions to a staff member immediately. Any accident, which results in injury, regardless of how insignificant, must be reported promptly. If you feel you are in an unsafe situation please report that information immediately to the program coordinator.

## **C. POLICIES GUIDING VOLUNTEER CONDUCT**

### **Standard of Conduct**

The lasting impression that volunteers make on those they serve and work with reflects directly on all staff, volunteers and board members of the SCRC. All words and deeds should help build our volunteer program and its reputation for quality. We strive to treat others with dignity and respect.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Volunteers and staff are expected to act professionally. Should a volunteer have a grievance concerning their work environment, they should report it promptly to the AmeriCorps VISTA program coordinator. Every effort will be made to achieve speedy and effective resolution, and all complaints will be treated

confidentially. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for complaints involving sexual harassment or child abuse.

### **Confidentiality**

As a volunteer of the SCRC you may have access to confidential information (information regarding medical treatment or diagnosis, financial information regarding contractual arrangements or other transactions, information regarding homes or income of clients). Volunteers must ensure that the program's confidentiality policy is followed. Volunteers are required to sign the confidentiality policy form prior to beginning their volunteer service.

### **Partisanship**

While volunteering on behalf of the SCRC, volunteers must never present partisan information (supporting or endorsing political parties or candidates for office) in accordance with our organization's 501(c)(3) status.

### **Proselytizing**

SCRC program participants, staff and volunteers hold a variety of political, social, religious, and personal beliefs. Volunteers must be respectful of the views and opinions held by others with whom they come in contact while volunteering with the organization. Volunteers must refrain from advocating or proselytizing for any political, social, and/or religious beliefs in these situations. SCRC maintains no one religious affiliation.

## **TRAINING OVERVIEW**

### **Training procedures:**

- A. Must volunteer at Shippensburg Produce and Outreach's distribution for 2 weeks
- B. Read through the SCRC resource guide
- C. Read through the Community Connector resource binder and manual
- D. Complete mandated reporter training by following the link below:  
[https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu/webapps/portal/execute/tabs/tabAction?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=2\\_1](https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu/webapps/portal/execute/tabs/tabAction?tab_tab_group_id=2_1)

Other topics to be covered during training include:

- A. Active listening skills
- B. Effective communication skills
- C. Confidentiality
- D. Overview of social services in the area that can be offered to clients
- E. Overview of paperwork and forms to be used including confidentiality form, intake form, etc.