



Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers

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FAITH
IN ACTION

Mission: To enable the elderly, disabled persons, and families to maintain their independence, dignity and quality of life by complementing the care they are presently receiving and providing support to those without other arrangements.

Welcome!

We are very excited to have you join Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers (IVC) in service to this community and the wonderful people who live here. Your willingness to share your time and efforts is truly appreciated.

Ginny Sojka

Volunteer Coordinator

Robin Madson

Director

History

Established in March 1996, IVC is a faith supported program that coordinates volunteers to serve those in need. IVC, local churches, Portage County Health & Human Services, the Aging & Disability Resource Center, and other organizations work together to fill the care giving needs that are beyond any particular congregation or denomination. In January 2004 IVC became a United Way of Portage County internal program.

Purpose

Individuals in our community have needs such as a helping hand around the house, a ride to the grocery store, or a friendly visit but currently do not have family, neighbors, or friends to offer this assistance. IVC fills service gaps with dedicated volunteers who provide assistance to elderly, disabled, and families in need free of charge with nominal eligibility requirements..

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring—all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

Dr. Felice Leonardo Buscaglia

Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers

OUR MISSION



To Enable the elderly, disabled person, and families to maintain their independence, dignity, and quality of life by complementing the care they are presently receiving and providing support to those without other arrangements.

WHO DOES INTERFAITH HELP

Interfaith is a GAP PROVIDER

This means we work with churches and other community agencies to provide services that they alone cannot provide. We provide:

- Services other agencies may not have funding or resources to
- Services for those who don't have other resources available to them such as financial means, or support from family or friends

Interfaith provide services to individuals ACROSS THE LIFESPAN!

Although the majority of those we provide service for are among the elderly and/or disabled population, we do not refuse service to those at other stages of life or need. We extend a helping hand to individuals who may find themselves in need due to medical, mental, or employment issues.

WHAT SERVICES DOES INTERFAITH PROVIDE?

We first provide **INFORMATION AND REFERRAL.** We work hard to assure that each care receiver knows, understands, and utilizes the resources they currently have.

When we have determined we can be of assistance we utilize you the volunteer to provide services that give **CARE AND SUPPORT.**



Interfaith Volunteer Opportunities

CARING SERVICES

Friendly visits:

Enjoy friendly visits and share time with a care receiver. Visits may include spending time at his/her house or going out.

Transportation:

Provide a ride to and/or from a care receiver's destination. Rides may include medical appointments, prescriptions, going to the bank, etc.

Shopping:

Take a care receiver to shop at a store. Shopping could include groceries or purchases at other stores.



Errands:

Do an errand or two for a care receiver. You may be asked to go to the bank, pick up a package, shop, etc.

Writing letters: Write friendly letters to a care receiver. This service would allow you to become a pen pal with a care receiver.



Reassurance through phone contact:

Touch base with a friendly phone visit. Enjoy a conversation over the phone and make a connection with someone.

Assistance with daily living skills (excludes personal care):

Provide help with daily tasks. This service may include minor cleaning, cooking, letter writing, bills, etc.

Reading:

Read to someone who has troubles with their eyesight.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Newspaper on Disc:

Read the Stevens Point Journal and Portage County Gazette onto digital recorders for individuals with special needs. The care receiver can then listen to the news each week.

Minor home repairs (SHRP):

Fix small home repairs for the care receiver. Some small fix it jobs that can't be done by a care receiver in or outside of the house. Interfaith volunteers are not able to install weight bearing devices.



Yard Work:

Help out with small yard work tasks. Some yard work may consist of mowing, raking, brush removal, gutter cleaning, etc.

Snow Shoveling:

Shovel snow for those who are not able to themselves. Areas to be shoveled may include driveways, sidewalks and steps.

IVC Matching Process

The Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers office receives telephone requests from individuals and families in need of assistance: The IVC coordinator collects the appropriate information regarding the individual and the service request, screens the care receiver and determines if the individual qualifies for the program, reviews volunteer service area preference and availability listings, and then calls volunteers to find a match for the service request. When the coordinator finds an available volunteer, the name and phone number of the care receiver is given to the volunteer. The coordinator then calls the care receiver and informs him/her of the matched volunteer's first name. Volunteers' phone numbers and last names are not given to care receivers or their families. We advise you keep your personal information private so there is no abuse of the system. You may, however, decide to share your telephone number if you develop an on-going relationship with the care receiver.



Reminders for Interfaith Volunteers

- Always call the care receiver to confirm the day and time at least one day before the service.
- When arriving to provide a service, introduce yourself as “ _____ ”, the Interfaith Volunteer Caregiver assigned to assist them.
- Only provide services that have been coordinated through IVC. The care receiver must request services through the IVC office-any “extra requests” from a care receiver should not be fulfilled unless verbal approval has been given from the IVC office. Some exceptions exist- such as if the care receiver needs to stop and fill a prescription following a medical visit. Please make sure to inform the IVC office of any added exceptions such as this for proper documentation.
- The volunteer care giver should never administer medications but may be present if the care receiver self-administers medications.
- Use of or intoxication from alcohol and/or other drugs is not permitted by volunteers or care receivers during times of providing or receiving services. Notify the office with any concerns and do not provide service.
- Smoking is not allowed in the home or in car with a care receiver.
- Whatever capacity you volunteer in, report any concerns about mental, emotional, physical, social or economic conditions, and elder abuse or neglect to the Interfaith Volunteer Services Coordinator.
- Confidentiality is a must! Never share information about a care receiver with anyone but the IVC staff. See confidentiality agreement on page 5.
- IVC carries volunteer insurance which is used over and above the volunteer's own coverage. The coverage summary includes:
 - excess accidental medical:** applies while you are traveling directly to and from, and while participating in, volunteer activities.
 - excess volunteer liability:** applies when you are liable for bodily injury or property damage arising from performance of volunteer duties.
 - excess automobile liability:** applies only after your own insurance is exhausted, or the policy's retention has been exceeded. Transportation volunteers must carry adequate automobile insurance and a valid driver's license.
- If the request is arranged to take place outside of the care receiver's home, do not enter their residence.
- Never enter the home of a care receiver if when they do not answer the door. Contact the IVC office first. If the office is closed, contact local law enforcement or 911 in case of an emergency. Decisions about the care receiver's welfare are made by the person or their family, not by IVC.

Reminders for Interfaith Volunteers Cont'd.

- Tips from care receivers should not be accepted but volunteers can suggest supporting the work of IVC by giving a donation to the program.
- If you wish to create an on-going relationship with an individual, contact the IVC Coordinator and it can be arranged.
- Volunteers are responsible for contacting the program coordinator if they cannot keep the appointment or for any other problems that might arise.
- Volunteers are an important link in communicating changes in the needs and condition of care receivers. Please call the office to refer those potential needs.
- Proselytizing activities are not endorsed by Interfaith, please refrain from initiating any activities that could be viewed as such.

Transportation:

- Be aware of the physical limitations of the care receiver and be sure they have all that they need before leaving their residence.
- Assist care receivers with getting in and out of the vehicle, maneuvering curbs and steps, on slippery surfaces, and with carrying bags (if able).
- When giving the care receiver a ride to an appointment, be sure to check in with the receptionist, whether you stay or leave, so there is no confusion when the care receiver's appointment ends.
- Under no circumstances should you operate a care receiver's vehicle.
- Please do not use your cell phone while driving a care receiver. In case of an emergency, pull over.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times!
- You will be informed of the time commitment involved for each transportation request, however please plan for some time flexibility for each of these requests.

Errands, Minor Home Repairs, and Yard Work:

- For shopping errands, have a detailed list with brand name, size, cost and preference if an item is not available. Return the store receipt and change promptly.
- When doing any kind of housework, food preparation, yard work or small fix-it jobs, get detailed lists of the appliances, tools, supplies, ingredients, etc. before beginning their request and clarify who is providing and/or purchasing these items.
- Wear appropriate clothes or safety gear.

Friendly Visits:

- Remember that your visit may be the high point of the care receiver's week. Plan activities that both of you can enjoy doing together.
- When preparing food, please be sanitary and discuss the care receiver's allergies and dietary needs.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Confidentiality is the legal right to privacy. Any information regarding a client learned through conversations or contained in a client's file is confidential information. No information should be released to anyone (including family members) without proper authorization. This is a violation of state and federal law. Anyone who discloses information without a current, signed, authorization form can be held liable for damages or it could be grounds for defamation or an invasion of privacy allegations. Both volunteers and Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers can be held liable, but as a volunteer you can also be held liable for civil and criminal penalty. This can include criminal charges, fines and/or jail time. Any volunteer that violates the confidentiality of any client will be terminated from volunteering at Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Portage County.

Volunteers are required to respect the privacy of all Interfaith Volunteer Caregiver clients and to follow the guidelines of confidentiality listed below.

1. Names of recipients are not to be mentioned in social settings or outside of normal day-to-day business operations of Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers.
2. Situations that would cause another person to know the client are not to be discussed with anyone except the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers staff. Signs of elder abuse that is either suspected or observed should be reported to Interfaith Volunteer Caregiver staff.

In-Home Care Visits

Interfaith administers home care visits to every new care receivers. This is to help assure the home is safe for the volunteer, to complete the signup process with the care receiver, assuring they know and are utilizing all the potential resources available to them and that they understand what services Interfaith can and cannot provide.

PROHIBITED HARASSMENT

It is the Interfaith policy to maintain an environment for our volunteers and care receivers that is free of unlawful discrimination and verbal, physical, visual and sexual harassment.

This policy refers to, but is not limited to, unlawful harassment and discrimination in the following areas: 1) age, 2) race, 3) color, 4) national origin, 5) religion, 6) sex, 7) sexual orientation, 8) marital status, 9) handicap, and 10) veteran status.

Verbal harassment includes racial, sexual, or ethnic jokes and insults. Physical harassment includes unwelcome touching, grabbing, and pinching. Visual harassment includes sexually suggestive pictures, posters, photographs, or cartoons, or other materials intended to reflect negatively on an individual's race, national origin, ancestry, religion or sexual preference.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, sexual remarks, requests for sexual favors, or the creation of an intimidating or hostile work environment demeaning to an individual because of his or her sex or sexual preference. Sexual harassment undermines the employment relationship by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment and will not be tolerated.

Spiritual harassment: We are a faith supported agency which means many volunteers and care receivers may be people of various faiths. Although spiritual discussions are not prohibited, **proselytizing is**. Let any faith discussion be at the initiative of the care receiver and always done with gentleness and respect.

Harassment may also refer to behavior, which is personally offensive, impairs morale, and interferes with the work effectiveness of employees. Any unlawful harassment of employees by other employees will not be permitted, regardless of their working relationship.

In fulfilling their obligation to maintain a positive and productive environment for the Interfaith volunteers and care receivers, the Director is expected to immediately halt any unlawful harassment of which he becomes aware by emphasizing Interfaith policy and, when necessary, by more direct action.

Complaint Procedure. Individuals who believe they have been subject to harassment from either a volunteer or a care receiver should make it clear to the offender that such behavior is offensive to them and should immediately bring the matter to the attention of the Director. In the event the complaint is against the Interfaith Director, the volunteer or care receiver should bring the matter to the attention of the United Way's Executive Director, as soon as possible.

The Director (or Executive Director) will promptly, and to the extent possible, confidentially investigate all complaints of harassment. **It is important for volunteers and care receivers who feel they have been harassed to report incidents to Interfaith Director.** Interfaith prohibits any retaliation against an individual who has complained of harassment, or against any individual who participates in the Interfaith investigation of the complaint.

Any volunteer or care receiver found to have engaged in any type of unlawful harassment or discrimination shall be subject to termination from Interfaith's program.

Volunteering with Aging & Disabilities

Hearing and Visual Impairment:

Hearing impairment is one of the most common sensory changes experienced by the elderly. It affects people's ability to communicate, isolates them and diminishes enjoyment of sound-oriented activities. It can be very disheartening and may cause individuals to withdraw from life's activities. Writing out important information, such as times and dates, can be helpful when making arrangements with a hearing-impaired person. Always face them when speaking and avoid tapping them to get their attention. Do not shout. It distorts the message. Lower your pitch. Learn if one ear hears better than another and direct your voice accordingly. Eliminate background noise. Use simple short sentences.

Those who are newly blind may be frightened, while those who have been blind for some time may be very independent. Not all of those who are visually impaired are totally blind. Respect their ability to assist in planning whatever aid they require. Encourage independence but always politely offer assistance. Speak naturally, identify yourself and use their name when starting a conversation, especially if others are present. Offer your arm rather than taking theirs. Stop before obstacles and describe what you intend to do while letting them know their position in relation to the surroundings. A light touch on the arm may be acceptable but respect their space.



Mobility Impairment:

The causes of physical disability range from accidents to genetic conditions to diseases. Aging greatly increases the chance of broken bones and deteriorating strength, which also impairs mobility. To improve interaction, sit at eye level with those in a wheelchair. Keep the chair, cane, crutches or walker within reach of the care receiver and always ask if assistance is needed. Do not lean on their support device or otherwise “invade” their space.

Mental Impairment:

Some causes of mental impairment are genetic disorders, physical trauma, accidents, drug abuse, poor prenatal care, malnutrition, child abuse, chemical poisoning, Alzheimer's disease and aging. Treat the care receiver as an adult, not like a child. Talk directly to the person, not through someone else. Be patient, give instructions slowly, in short sentences and one step at a time when needed. Talk slowly not loudly. As people age, more time may be needed to learn a new task, short term memory is impaired and it becomes difficult to process more than one thing at a time.

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible disease that attacks the brain, impairing memory, disrupting thinking, and altering behavior. There is no cure for this disease presently, but physical and social activity, as well as proper nutrition and a calm environment are helpful in decreasing the symptoms of agitation, anxiety and sleeplessness. Be responsive with compassion, verbally and non-verbally. Remain emotionally present for the care receiver. Kindness and generosity, as well as patience, will make working with older adults with Alzheimer's or dementia less difficult. Some of the symptoms of Alzheimer's are forgetfulness, disorientation, personality changes, declining motor skills, losing one's way to familiar places, forgetting the names of family and friends, loss of verbal and reading skills and finally, the total inability to care for oneself.

Listen, acknowledge their feelings & gently remind them why you are there.

Tracking Volunteer Hours

Your time and commitment is valuable and extremely important for keeping accurate record of your volunteer hours and mileage. These records assist Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers in applying and sustaining funding, as well as ensuring the best possible service to our care receivers.

Below is a sample of the form that volunteers should fill out each month and send through mail or email to the IVC office by the 5th of each following month. Or report hours through the website: http://unitedwaypoco.org/Interfaith_Volunteer_Caregivers.php

Calling volunteer hours in to the coordinator at the IVC office is also an available option.



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Monthly Volunteer Report

Name _____ Phone _____ Month _____
 Total Hours _____ Church _____ Coordinator _____
 Number of Trips _____

Date	Care Receiver	Services Provided	Mileage	Hours	Comments
3/17/09	Susan Chesney	Transportation	15	2.5	

PLEASE RETURN BY THE 5TH OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH. THANKS !