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NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

15 NAC 4

TITLE 15 AGING SERVICES

CHAPTER 4 SENIOR COMPANION VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

4-001 SCOPE AND AUTHORITY: These regulations govern the Senior Companion Volunteer Program. The regulations are authorized by and implement the Nebraska Senior Companion Volunteer Program Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 81-2273 to 81-2283, and Section 81-2210.

4-002 DEFINITIONS

Department means the Department of Health and Human Services.

Direct service contractor means any public or private nonprofit organization that::

1. Is not currently receiving federal funding for the federal senior companion program; and
2. Demonstrates the ability to provide the services specified in these regulations.

Frail elderly means a person who:

1. Is 60 years of age or older;
2. Has a physical, mental, or emotional health limitation; and
3. Needs assistance to achieve and maintain independent living.

In-home supportive services means those long-term care services provided by a person residing at the same location as the client.

Non-stipended volunteer means an individual who is 60 years of age and provides companion services at least four hours a week without receiving payments for service hours provided.

Senior companion volunteer means an individual who is:

1. Sixty years of age or older; and
2. Provides companion services for frail elderly individuals.

Stipend means a payment per hour of service to a senior companion volunteer that enables him or her to serve without cost to his/herself.

4-003 SENIOR COMPANION VOLUNTEERS

4-003.01 Eligibility Criteria: An individual must meet the following requirement to serve as a senior companion volunteer.

4-003.01A An individual must be age 60 or older, no longer in the regular work force, determined by a physical examination to be capable of serving adults with

exceptional or special needs without detriment to either themselves or the adult served, and willing to accept supervision as required.

4-003.01B Eligibility may not be restricted on the basis of education, experience, citizenship, race, color, creed, belief, sex, national origin, handicap, or political affiliation.

4-003.01C Volunteers include both stipended (payment per hour of service) and non-stipended senior companions. Stipended volunteers cannot have an annual income, from all sources, exceeding 125% of the federal poverty level,

4-003.01D Recruitment and selection of a volunteer may not be based on any requirement of employment experience or formal education.

4-003.02 Terms of Service: Volunteers who receive stipends serve a total of sixteen hours a week, usually four hours per day. Travel time between the volunteer's home and place of assignment may not be considered part of the service schedule and is not stipended. Travel time between individual assignments is a part of the service schedule. Meal time may be part of the service schedule only if meals are taken with the individual served, and the taking of meals together is deemed by the sponsor and the volunteer station to be beneficial to the person served.

4-003.03 Direct Benefits for Volunteers: The direct benefits for stipended volunteers include payment per hour of service, insurance, transportation, meals, physical examinations, recognition and uniforms (if necessary). Direct benefits may not be subject to any tax or charge or be treated as wages or compensation for the purposes of unemployment insurance, temporary disability, retirement, public assistance, or similar benefit payments or minimum wage laws. Direct benefits, provided by the direct service contractor, include:

1. Insurance:
  - a. Accident insurance;
  - b. Personal liability insurance; and
  - c. Excess automobile insurance;
2. Meals: Within the limits of available resources and project policy, senior companions must be provided or must receive assistance with the cost of meals taken during their service schedule;
3. Physical examinations: Senior Companions must have a physical examination prior to assignment and annually thereafter;
4. Appropriate recognition will be provided for senior companions;
5. Stipends: Eligible and authorized senior companions will receive a stipend of \$2.55 per hour of service. When more than one member of a household serves as a senior companion, only one member is entitled to a stipend; and

6. Transportation: Senior companions must be provided transportation or receive assistance with the cost of transportation to and from volunteer assignments and official project activities, including orientation, training and recognition events.

#### 4-003.04 Senior Companion Assignments

4-003.04A Assignments and activities must involve person-to-person relationships with the individuals served and may not include service to the volunteer station. Appropriate activities may include but are not limited to: personal care, nutrition duties, social/recreational activities, home management, information and advocacy, and respite care.

4-003.04B Individuals served by senior companions must be adults, primarily older adults, who have one or more physical, emotional, or mental health limitations and are not receiving in-home supportive services although in need of assistance to achieve and maintain their highest level of independent living. Program priority will be given to the frail elderly who:

1. Are bedfast or too frail or too ill to be transported to special programs;
2. Have withdrawn from all social interaction or are confined due to psychological problems; or
3. Desire but are unable to participate in adult day services programs because openings are unavailable.

#### 4-004 DIRECT SERVICE CONTRACTORS

4-004.01 Direct Service Contractor Eligibility: The Department must award grants only to public agencies and private non-profit organizations that have the capacity to accept and the capability to administer these grants. Only grantee organizations which do not have senior companion programs as of July 13, 2000 are eligible for these state grants.

4-004.02 Direct Service Contractor Responsibility: The direct service contractor is responsible for all programmatic and fiscal aspects of the project. The direct service contractor must:

1. Designate a project director who is directly responsible to the sponsor for the management of the project;
2. Provide for the recruitment, assignment, supervision, and support of senior companions. Special efforts must be made to recruit and assign persons from minority groups, handicapped, and hard-to-reach individuals;
3. Provide financial and in-kind support to fulfill the project's local share commitment;

4. Provide the senior companions with not less than the minimum accident, personal liability, and excess auto liability insurance;
5. Provide for appropriate recognition of the senior companions and their activities;
6. Establish personnel practices and service policies for senior companions, including grievance and appeal procedures for both volunteers and project staff;
7. Maintain project records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and provide for accurate and timely preparation and submission of reports required by the Department;
8. Provide necessary training prior to the start of service and quarterly thereafter;
9. Provide or arrange for direct benefits (insurance, meals, physical examinations, recognition, stipends, and transportation);
10. Ensure that appropriate liability insurance is maintained for owned, non-owned, or hired vehicles used in the project;
11. Develop a realistic transportation plan for the project based on lowest cost transportation modes; and
12. Conduct an annual appraisal of the volunteers' performance and an annual review of volunteers' income eligibility.

#### 4-005 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

4-005.01 Solicitation of Proposals: The Department must seek applications from direct service contractors on the form attached to the regulations and incorporated by this reference. Any eligible organization may file an application for a grant. Solicited applications are not assured of approval and may have to compete with other solicited or unsolicited applications.

#### 4-005.02 Grant Review and Award Process

4-005.02A The Department must review grant applications to ensure the program requirements are complied with and that required documentation has been attached.

4-005.02B The Department must award available funds to those applicants whose proposals provide the best potential for serving the purpose of this program.

4-005.02C Individual project grants of up to a maximum of \$50,000 will be awarded for a two-year period.

4-005.02D Receipt of a grant award does not preclude a direct service contractor from applying for a grant that begins in the second year of the two-year period covered by the original grant.

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4-005.02E Local match may be in the form of cash or in-kind resources. Local match must be equal to or greater than 10% of the amount of the grant.

4-005.03 Program Monitoring & Reporting: The Department must monitor program activity funded through these grants. Grantees must submit quarterly program reports to the Department describing the number of volunteers, hours of service, persons served, and expenditures.

**NEBRASKA SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM APPLICATION FOR FUNDING**

Applicant

Address

City  Zip Code

Contact Person

**Budget**

	Grant	Local Cash	Local In-Kind
Administration	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Personnel			
Travel			
Insurance			
Office Costs			
Other			
Volunteer Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Stipends			
Travel			
Meals			
Physical Exams			
Other			
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

Please attach a Budget Justification describing the costs in each category.

Service Area

	Stipend	Non-Stipend
Number of Volunteers by End of Year 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Volunteers by End of Year 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Individuals Served by End of Year 1   
 Individuals Served by End of Year 2

Special Emphasis (optional)