



**Thank You for Volunteering!!!**

Volunteer Manual

**Our Vision**

A world in which everyone ages  
with grace and dignity.

**Our Mission**

To provide essential home and community-based care that maximizes  
independence.

**Our Values**

Dignity. Choice. Care.

## **Welcome To Volunteers**

Welcome to the Senior Connections Volunteer Program! You have just joined a select group of dedicated people who assist in providing proper nutrition, a warm and dry place to live, a helping hand, and so much more to hundreds of homebound elderly adults in DeKalb County and metro Atlanta.

At Senior Connections, our volunteers are the heart of our organization. Your participation allows us to utilize funds that would otherwise cover administrative costs and put them toward program expansion to help additional seniors. By volunteering just 3 hours of your time each week, you save Senior Connections \$60. When you consider that we can provide a week's worth of meals for only \$25, you can see how much a difference your volunteering makes.

However, helping our organization is only the beginning. By assisting in meal packaging in the kitchen and meal delivery you provide much needed services to seniors in your community. Taking time to visit while delivering a meal helps a senior maintain the mental faculties needed to stay in their home as well as the necessary nutrition to take medications or avoid starvation. The small things that we often take for granted are the things our seniors need the most.

Again, thank you for your commitment to Senior Connections and the seniors we serve.

Welcome aboard.

### **Senior Connections**

Walt Bryde, Chairman of the Board of Directors

Debra Furtado, Chief Executive Officer

Sharon Steele, Director of Development

## The History of Senior Connections

Since 1973, Senior Connections has made it possible for thousands of seniors to age in the comfort and familiarity of their own homes—surrounded by the things that matter to them the most. With the support of committed volunteers, donors and partners, we improve the quality of life for hundreds of seniors each year, as well as provide compassionate, long-term solutions to issues that affect our growing senior population.

The philosophy of Senior Connections is based on the premise that aging is a normal developmental process and the agency strives to create an atmosphere that acknowledges the value of human life, individually and collectively, while promoting wellness, wholeness and self-sufficiency.

Our programs include:

**MEALS-ON-WHEELS** – Modeled after the National Meals-on-Wheels Association of America, Senior Connections was the first to offer this program to DeKalb County senior residents 38 years ago. Seniors receive a hot, nutritious home-delivered meal each weekday or a weekly supply of frozen meals. On average, we provide 3000 meals per day to seniors in need.

**NEIGHBORHOOD SENIOR CENTERS** – The Centers offer independent, self-managed living activities for more than 400 senior participants to come together on weekdays for social and educational sessions. Senior Connections provides weekday lunches for seniors at the centers, knowing that this is often the only balanced, nutritious meal they may have.

### DeKalb County Neighborhood Senior Centers:

DeKalb-Atlanta	25 Warren Street, Atlanta, GA 30317	404-451-3568
Bruce St/E. Atlanta	2484 Bruce Street, Lithonia, GA 30058	404-353-9114
North DeKalb	5238 Peachtree Road, Chamblee, GA 30341	770-455-7602
Scottdale	3262 Chapel Street, Scottdale, GA 30079	404-353-8971
South DeKalb	1931 Candler Road, Decatur, GA 30032	404-353-8932

**HOME REPAIR PROGRAM** – Seniors in the community continually rate home repair as the most needed service for them to remain in their homes. Funding is limited but Senior Connections repairs homes when possible.

**IN-HOME CARE PROGRAM** –Senior Connections was the first agency to provide this service in DeKalb County. Senior Connections also offers this program in Fulton County. Personal Care, Homemaker Services and Respite Care services are offered.

**CATERING** – Our Connections Catering provides full catering services and all proceeds support our Meals On Wheels program. Learn more at [www.connections catering.org](http://www.connections catering.org)



#### Did You Know...

- That Senior Connections receives funding from a variety of sources? We use these funds (federal, state, county, individual donations, grants and corporate sponsorships) to ensure we never have to tell a senior no because they can't afford the services they need.
- Please consider helping us tell our story by setting up presentations at your business, social or faith-based organizations. Our presentation only takes about 15 minutes and the rewards are endless.

## **Senior Connections Volunteer Program**

### **Convenience**

Senior Connections strives to create an environment where giving is easy and part of one's daily routine.

- Our Meals on Wheels delivery routes take 60-90 minutes to complete with an average of 6-8 stops. Weekday deliveries are picked up between 10 and 11 AM. with a goal for all meals to be delivered no later than 1:00. Saturday deliveries begin at 9 a.m. and can be completed in the same amount of time.
- We offer three convenient Meal Pickup Locations:
  - Decatur First United Methodist Church – 300 East Ponce de Leon Ave, Decatur, GA (Mon-Fri) – Site Manager(s): – 678-469-3476
  - Lithonia – 2484 Bruce Street, Lithonia, GA (Mon-Fri) –Site Manager: Elveria McElhaney – 678-437-4029
  - Chamblee – 5238 Peachtree Road, Chamblee, GA (Mon-Sat) – Manager Volunteer Services: Allison Glass – 404-488-6167
- Kitchen volunteers are welcomed between 7:00 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday - Friday. at our Chamblee/North DeKalb office with a 3-hour minimum commitment usually expected. Come join the fun in the kitchen by helping to package our meals.
- We also have Emergency Volunteers – those with flexible schedules who can be called at the last minute to fill in for an open delivery route.

### **Meals on Wheels Volunteers**

This program is intended to provide at minimum 1 well-balanced meal, 3 to 5 times per week for elderly persons who are unable to prepare a nutritionally balanced meal for themselves and do not have family available to do so. Clients say that the best part of having a meal delivered is the daily visit with the volunteers.

### **Qualifications:**

- Be available to deliver between 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. for Monday-Friday routes, or be available to deliver between 9-11 a.m. for Saturday routes.
- 18 years of age and possess a valid Driver's License, dependable vehicle, and current auto insurance.
- Pass a background check that adheres to the policy set forth in this manual.
- Be dependable.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Ability to relate to elderly persons, be a good listener, be kind, and above all, be friendly.
- Must be willing to commit for at least 3 months. It is very important that we work with the same volunteers as a high turnover causes undue stress for our senior clients. At the very least, maintain a regular schedule of daily, weekly, biweekly and or monthly.

### **Duties:**

- Report to pickup meals site by designated time.
- Log in and record any changes to your contact information. Log your time in.
- Call your Volunteer Site Manager should you have an emergency or scheduling conflict. If you cannot reach your Volunteer Site Manager, please call 770-455-7602 during business hours and ask for Volunteer Services. After hours, call 404-488-6167.
- Before you leave the meal pickup site, count your meals for accuracy, double-checking the number of clients found on the route sheet.
- Check the route sheet for any changes. These may include new stops, cancelled meals for a certain day, special instructions, etc.
- Deliver meals to clients. Visit with each one briefly.
- Return all coolers, meal bags, and route sheet to the meal pickup site. Log your time out and the number of miles driven.

### **For Successful Deliveries, Follow These Procedures:**

- Arrive on time at meal site; double check route sheet and packed meals.
- Follow driving instructions or follow your own GPS; please keep the client-delivery order the same as the route sheet.
- Upon arriving at each client's home, review route sheet for any special instructions such as go to back door, confirm meal type such as diabetic, regular, or renal. (Each meal has a special label on it as to type of meal.)
- Knock loudly and give clients plenty of time to answer. Remember, some are slow moving and need extra time.
- If no answer at the door, call the client on the phone – phone numbers are on the route sheet. Often they are home but do not hear you at the door.
- Greet the client in a respectful manner by using Ms. or Mr. and their last name.
- Feel free to engage them in a brief conversation. If you experience someone who is very talkative, simply excuse yourself by saying you have more clients to deliver to and must be on your way.
- After knocking and calling with no answer, return with the meal(s) to your vehicle. **DO NOT LEAVE MEALS** unattended on the porch or anywhere at clients' homes. Please leave a food safety flyer explaining why we can't leave meals unattended. All meals must be handed to the individual who answers the door. Since you now have an extra meal, you may offer it to subsequent clients ONLY if it is the same meal type.
- For Monday through Friday deliveries, return all undelivered meals, meal bags, coolers, and route sheets to the meal site. For Saturday deliveries, call the site manager number (shown at the top of the route sheet) to report completion of deliveries. Return route sheets and signed meal acceptance in provided envelopes.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Many times, the volunteers are the only people seniors see each day. Your visit is important to them. Take a minute or two to listen. Your smile and genuine interest means so much to many of our clients. Also because of isolationism, a client may ask you to do them a small favor and assist them in some way. Please do not feel obligated (explain that you have other meals you need to deliver, for example). If you don't mind and have the time, we certainly do not object. Please **DO** let us know if a particular client has extra needs so that we

may recruit another volunteer to meet that particular need at another time. Please provide feedback if a client seems particularly frail or appears unable to maintain their independent living status.

**Remember** - If you have any concerns about your seniors, contact our Site Volunteer Managers.

### **Central Kitchen Volunteers**

Central Kitchen Volunteers assist kitchen staff in the packaging of over 3000 meals each day. The Senior Connections Central Kitchen is located at 5238 Peachtree Road, Chamblee, GA 30341. Supervisors within the kitchen will oversee volunteers depending on assignment.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Be available to assist between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Be dependable.
- Ability to follow detailed instructions on how to operate equipment and portion food. No volunteer will be asked to perform a duty which with they are uncomfortable.
- Before being scheduled in the kitchen, volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Application and Waiver of Liability.
- Young people are also welcome to help in the kitchen, but due to safety issues, the minimum age for the kitchen is 12 and he/she must be accompanied by an adult. Age 16 and older may work in the kitchen unaccompanied.

#### **Duties:**

- Report to kitchen at designated time.
- Log in and record any changes to your contact information. Log your time in.
- Call your site supervisor (meal delivery) or the main number 770-455-7602 and ask for volunteer services, should you have an emergency or scheduling conflict.
- **Adhere to all food safety requirements including wearing appropriate aprons, gloves and hair nets which will be provided; closed-toe non slip shoes, long pants (no shorts or capris), shirts with sleeves (no tanks), and you can wear a baseball hat in lieu of a hair net. No large, dangling earrings or large jewelry items permitted. No cell phone use is permitted in the kitchen while volunteering. If you are required to carry phone for emergencies or job, it must be set on vibrate in a pocket and you must step away from your volunteering activity before answering.**
- Follow instructions given by supervisory kitchen staff.
- Sign out upon completion of tasks. It's important to log your time in and out, particularly if you require any type of documentation for community service work.

### **Community Service Volunteers**

Senior Connections welcomes community service volunteers, either through the court systems or for school requirements. However, a \$5 donation will be assessed to offset the cost of a background check. Please note the following responsibilities for those volunteers filling community service hours.

- **It is your responsibility to remember to sign in and out in the volunteer log. If you sign in and forget to sign out, you will be credited for no more than 2 hours, no matter how long you stayed.**
- It is your responsibility to ask your supervisor to sign your daily hour sheet as required by the court system. We do not accept, nor keep, copies of these sheets.
- It is your responsibility to notify us that you have completed your hours and that you need a letter from Senior Connections stating hours served. We will confirm your hours based on our sign in logs. Allow at least 24 hours for a copy of the letter to be prepared.
- As a community service volunteer working in our kitchen, you will be asked to fulfill any tasks necessary to the successful operation and completion of daily meals. This may include, but is not limited to: packing meals and breads, taping boxes, helping cooks, washing or drying dishes, sweeping up and cleaning food line area, or other duties as assigned.
- Regarding scheduling of hours, we will work with you as much as possible; however, please allow enough lead time to get your hours done. “Finding work” for your deadline isn’t possible – remember, you are here to help seniors!

## **OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Clerical/Senior Centers/Special Events**

- Clerical projects can be set up for volunteers at any of our Neighborhood Senior Center sites based upon need. These projects include data entry, filing, assisting to serve lunch, etc.
- Neighborhood Senior Centers periodically need volunteers to assist with special events and/or group trips. These volunteer needs will be sent out to all volunteers via email.
- Senior Connections hosts events throughout the year where volunteers are needed. Duties sometimes include set-up, registration, crowd control, break-down, etc. These volunteer needs will be sent out to all volunteers via email.

**Group Volunteer Opportunities** - Do you belong to a group seeking volunteer opportunities? We can help! Contact us to schedule a one-time or regularly scheduled group volunteer activity. Sharing a route with your coworkers, family or friends makes it easy to volunteer with Senior Connections. Call 404-488-6167 to learn more.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Volunteers who come in contact with seniors at their home may discover that a client has fallen or needs help. There have been times when a client may have remained unnoticed or unassisted for many hours if it had not been for the volunteer who discovered them.

If you discover the meal recipient has fallen, is hurt, very ill, confused, or unconscious, **DO NOT MOVE THE SENIOR OR ADMINISTER FIRST AID. CALL 9-1-1.**

It is important that you do not try to provide any hands on assistance if you are NOT knowledgeable in life saving techniques. Senior Connections does not recommend CPR and/or first aid be administered by uncertified individuals. Certified individuals administering CPR or First Aid will do so at his or her own risk and responsibility, and not that of Senior Connections.

**CALL 9-1-1 FOR THE POLICE OR AN AMBULANCE.**

Keep the person still and warm. Ensure the area around the recipient is safe. Please do not lift the senior from the floor. Lifting or moving may cause more harm to the senior or to you.

Do not come in contact with blood, bodily fluids or administer any medication. You may, however, assist in locating nitroglycerin for a person with angina.

**IN ALL SITUATIONS, DO NOT LEAVE UNTIL HELP HAS ARRIVED.**

While waiting for professional assistance to arrive, contact Volunteer Services by calling 404-488-6167, or your appropriate Site Manager at numbers previously listed.

**General Volunteer Policies**

**Equal Opportunity**

Senior Connections provides equal volunteer opportunities to all volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran.

**Ethical Standards**

We are committed to conducting our business in accordance with the law, and with integrity, honesty, and fairness. This applies to our dealings with clients, with suppliers, volunteers, and with each other. You should not do anything in the course of Senior Connections business that violates the law or your own personal ethics, nor should you be asked to do so. If you become aware of a situation which you believe violates appropriate legal or ethical standards, please discuss it with your Site Volunteer Manager, the Manager of Volunteer Services or anyone else in management so that we can resolve it. Your privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

All employees, volunteers and contractors of Senior Connections are prohibited from:

- Using the client's car for personal reasons
- Consuming the client's food or beverage
- Using the client's telephone for personal calls
- Discussing political or religious beliefs or personal problems with clients
- Accepting gifts or financial gratuities (tips) from the client or client representative
- Lending or borrowing money or other items to/from the client or client representative
- Selling gifts, food or other items to, or for, the client
- Bringing other visitors (i.e. children, friends, relatives, pets) to the client's home unless they too have registered to be a volunteer.
- Smoking in the client's home, with or without permission from the client or client representative
- Remaining in the client's home after services have been rendered, other than the brief visit which is encouraged during meal deliveries.

**Open-Door Policy**

We are dedicated to preventing and resolving problems through open, positive communication among all volunteers and management. If you have a question, a concern, a problem, or a complaint, we urge you to discuss it with your Site Volunteer Manager or the Manager of Volunteer Services. It is management's obligation to listen and respond to volunteer concerns in an open-minded manner and to work together to find an appropriate solution.

### **Suggestions And Volunteer Feedback**

We are dedicated to the process of constant improvement and welcome any input from volunteers that can help us accomplish this end. We urge you to submit any suggestions on how we can improve our products, our service, our relationships with customers, volunteers, or suppliers, the efficiency of our operation, Senior Connections policies or working conditions. We specifically urge you to communicate feedback from our clients and customers as to how we can better satisfy their needs and to pass these suggestions on to management.

### **Emergency Conditions**

If severe weather conditions exist and an officer of the company (or designated representative) decides to close Senior Connections for the remainder of the day, a designated phone system extension, 311, will serve as the means of notification. Every volunteer can dial the main company phone number at 770-455-7602 and then hit 311.

Senior Connections' business closing announcement is broadcast on the following radio stations: B98.5, KISS104.1, 97.1, 95.5 and 750WSB. Typically, but not always, Senior Connections will follow the DeKalb County School System closing announcements.

Meals on Wheels recipients are provided with shelf-stable meals so that they will have something to eat in the event that weather or other emergency situations keeps us from our regular delivery schedule.

### **Background Check**

All volunteer applicants at Senior Connections are required to consent to a background check as a condition of volunteering. Any applicant found to have a **criminal or driving** history unacceptable to the management of Senior Connections or who is unwilling to disclose personal information required to complete the background check will be assigned to an area with staff supervision.

### **Commitment To Confidentiality**

Senior Connections has developed certain information, products, processes, procedures, customer lists and information, etc., which are an important part of our business and, in the case of client information, is protected by HIPPA. It is essential for all volunteers to realize that this information is confidential, proprietary and is the property of Senior Connections. It is a violation of your responsibility to Senior Connections for any volunteer to share this information with any other party or to use it for your own purposes. Keeping this information confidential is a specific condition of your volunteer involvement with Senior Connections.

Your job may entail working with some personal client information. It is imperative that this information be kept strictly confidential. This confidential information should be discussed only with people who are authorized to receive this information. Under no circumstances should you reveal any of this information to those unauthorized to receive it.

Violation of this commitment to confidentiality will lead to discipline, including possible termination of volunteer status and/or legal action. This policy applies to information about our customers and suppliers and would be in direct violation of HIPPA rights.

### **Volunteer Privacy**

Senior Connections respects the privacy of each of its volunteers. As stated in the Confidentiality Policy above, all volunteer information maintained by Senior Connections is kept in the strictest of confidence. Except in the case of emergency, Senior Connections will not contact any person or entity listed on the Volunteer Application, regarding any issue outside volunteer service to Senior Connections, without the volunteer's permission.

### **Statement Of Disclaimer**

This handbook should be used as an outline of the basic volunteer policies, practices and procedures for our organization. You should use this handbook as a reference to understand Senior Connections-specific programs and policies, although it does not include all of Senior Connections' policies and practices.

This handbook does not form an express or implied contract or promise that the topics discussed in it will be applied in each situation. Senior Connections may add to the topics of this handbook or revoke them from time to time. Senior Connections will try to keep this handbook current, but there may be times when policies, programs or procedures will change before this material can be revised.

This handbook applies to Senior Connections, including any of its operating units. Nothing in this handbook should be considered as creating an express or implied contract or promise concerning the policies or practices that Senior Connections has implemented or will implement in the future. Accordingly, Senior Connections retains the right to establish, change and abolish its policies, practices, rules and regulations, as it sees fit. The application and interpretation of these and other Senior Connections policies and practices rest with Senior Connections.

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF  
VOLUNTEER SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
(To be completed and attached to completed volunteer application)**

As a new Senior Connections' volunteer, I acknowledge that (initial all items):

\_\_\_ I have received a volunteer orientation session on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I have been given a copy of the Volunteer Manual that governs Volunteer Services for the organization.

\_\_\_ That I may be included in volunteer photographs and Senior Connections may use these photos with my permission in marketing and promotional materials.

And if true:

\_\_\_ I am a community service volunteer and acknowledge all policies listed on page 8 of the Volunteer Welcome Manual.

By my signature below, I agree that I have read the manual, understand all the policies and shall abide by them while I am a volunteer of Senior Connections.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RELATIONSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE/CELL NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ ALT.# \_\_\_\_\_

OPTIONAL:

- Yes, I use Facebook and will 'Like' Senior Connections
- Yes, I use Twitter and will 'Follow' Senior Connections
- Yes, I subscribe to LinkedIn and will 'Link' with Senior Connections (Georgia) so that my business associates will learn more about Senior Connections
- Try and schedule a "Senior Connections" presentation at my work, social group or church

**For office use only:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date rcvd: \_\_\_\_\_ First Assignment (Duty/Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Received By \_\_\_\_\_ (Sign) Enter Assgn. in C/E \_\_\_\_\_