



Connecting Older Adults with Community-based Resources and Options

## **Benefits Access Volunteer Position Description**

### **Purpose**

The Benefits Access program is designed to ensure that all older adults in suburban Cook County are enrolled into the public benefit programs for which they are eligible. The Benefit Access program will focus on: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which assists with food costs; Medicare Savings Programs (MSP) which assists with Medicare premiums; Extra Help which assists with Medicare prescription costs and Medicaid which assists with healthcare costs.

### **Position Description**

We are seeking a volunteer to help us reach older adults. The volunteer will assist in connecting clients with public benefit programs by providing education, screening them for eligibility and enrolling them into all public benefits for which they are eligible. The volunteer will also educate members of the community about the available benefit programs. The volunteer will provide assistance and referrals on other issues as needed. The volunteer should plan on committing 4 hours per week for at least one year.

### **Orientation/Training**

An orientation to AgeOptions and on-going learning opportunities on public benefit programs will be provided. The volunteer will be trained through a two-step process. Before interacting with clients, the first step of training will focus on public benefit applications. After the volunteer is comfortable with completing applications the second step of training will focus on community outreach. There will be additional training opportunities as needed.

### **Responsibilities**

- Provide clients with information and assistance about public benefits programs
- Assess eligibility for public benefits by completion of an over-the-phone financial intake
- Enroll clients in benefit programs
- Follow-up to make sure benefits are received
- Comply with AgeOptions policies and guidelines including those for confidentiality and documentation of counseling services

The volunteer will, after adequate training, have the opportunity to participate in community outreach. Outreach may include:

- Conducting Presentations
- Attending Senior Fairs
- Organizing Outreach Events
- Organizing Outreach Materials

### **Qualifications**

- Good written and oral communication skills
- Comfort with working with clients over the phone
- Skilled in the basics of computer use and proficient in navigating the internet
- Willingness to learn
- Creative problem solver

- Ability to work and get along well with others from diverse backgrounds
- Valid driver's license and automobile (or other vehicle) insurance

### **Time and Place**

The volunteer will usually work out of the AgeOptions office in Oak Park on weekdays during business hours. During the first step of training the volunteer will spend their time in the office. During the second step of training the volunteer will have flexibility to work in and out of the office through opportunities to attend outreach and enrollment events in suburban Cook County.

### **On-Site Supervision**

The volunteer will report to Elizabeth Steimel, Community Engagement and Benefits Access Specialist.

### **Benefits**

- Make a valuable contribution to the well being of older adults and the community as a whole
- Learn about public benefits programs for older adults
- Gain new or improve computer skills
- Enhance communication and interpersonal skills
- Interact with a diverse group of people
- Network with fellow volunteers and establish new connections

### **Contact**

For more information on the Benefits Access program, please contact Elizabeth Steimel at (708) 383-0258 or [volunteer@ageoptions.org](mailto:volunteer@ageoptions.org).