

Volunteer Recruitment Resource Guide



In the quiet hours when we are alone and there is nobody to tell us what fine fellows we are, we come sometimes upon a moment in which we wonder, not how much money we are earning, nor how famous we have become, but what good we are doing. – A.A. Milne



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

Table of Contents

SHINE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT RESOURCE GUIDE 3

About the Resource Guide 3

Content 3

Scope and Application..... 3

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT PROGRAM 4

Principles of Marketing 4

Pre-Recruitment Considerations..... 5

 WIIFM..... 5

 Diversity 6

Recruitment Goals 8

Recruitment Strategies 10

Evaluation..... 12

SHINE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT RESOURCE GUIDE

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) is proud to have staff and leadership that are dedicated to helping elder Floridians understand their insurance options. The foundation of our program and services is, however supported by the daily efforts of our unique volunteer corps. As a volunteer driven organization, SHINE cannot thrive without volunteers.

Currently, there are over 400 volunteers committed to serving the more than 3.2 million Medicare beneficiaries in Florida. It is easily understood why we need more volunteers to serve the increasing population of Medicare beneficiaries in the state.

About the Resource Guide

This guide is intended to provide local SHINE program leadership with information and tools to maximize volunteer recruitment efforts through the development of a comprehensive recruitment program and plan. This resource guide will help you to identify what these key elements mean to your local SHINE program. Developing a recruitment plan should be a team effort. Likewise this guide incorporates knowledge, best practices and tools from renowned volunteer organizations and from your very own esteemed agency.

Content

This guide contains the following:

- Recruitment Program Development Narrative & Resources
- Volunteer Recruitment Tools
- Additional Resources

Scope and Application

A recruitment plan is one of the most important tools managers of volunteer programs can develop – from growing the program to special events. Use this resource guide to help generate ideas and help you develop your local recruitment plan. Keep in mind that some concepts may not be a good fit for your particular community or recruitment focus.

Additionally, your recruitment plan should be continuously reviewed, updated and revised according to the current situation or community in which your local SHINE program exists. Use this guide to help determine factors and methods for your plan's evaluation.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

Recruiting is based on the principles of marketing that should be standard training for all volunteer programs. Understanding basic principles of marketing then, will lead to a more comprehensive and effective recruitment plan. Below is a brief module on the principles of marketing.

Principles of Marketing

The principles of marketing, usually associated with the operation of a business enterprise, are equally pertinent to the promotion and support of non-profit, community and volunteer organizations. Marketing is about creating and retaining internal and external customers (supporters) for your organization. Adherence to the following steps will increase the effectiveness of your volunteer recruitment efforts.

Clarify your objectives. What specifically do you hope to accomplish through your marketing or, in this case, volunteer recruitment campaign (see *Recruitment Goals*)? Are your objectives realistic? Many organizations are unsuccessful in their promotional efforts because their objectives are vague (e.g., "educate the public").

Define your product. What are your organization and local program's goals? What goods and services are you "selling"? What is your present image? For example, are you viewed as a credible organization? Do you need to update your product or change your image for greater appeal?

Your objectives determine your product (see *Recruitment Goals*). The more specific and appealing your goals are, the easier it will be to market them. Organizations like businesses are effective when they offer something people want.

Assess your competition. What other groups are offering similar services or resources? How well do you stack up to that competition? What is unique about the goods and services you offer? You may wish to modify your "product" or combine forces with your competition. (When collaborating, be sure to avoid any conflicts of interest.)

Target your audience. Develop a list of "prospects" (specific groups and individuals that you would like to reach with your message). Concentrate your efforts. Collect information on this target audience. Become familiar with their concerns, needs and interests. Target your appeal to those needs.

Develop a marketing strategy. Consider using one or more of the following forms of promotion to reach your targeted audience (also see *Medium*):

- Personal selling – Oral presentation to an individual or group.

- Direct mail – a printed message directed to a specific individual or group.
- Publicity – the planting of newsworthy information with news media.
- Printed materials – handouts, brochures, fact sheets, fliers, general mailers.
- Marketing – any paid, non-personal presentation of information.

Which technique(s) would be most effective in reaching each of the individuals or groups you have targeted?

Make contact. Decide who will do what by when. Review the individuals and groups on your prospect list, and assess who in your organization or community has the strongest contacts with each. The more personal the approach, the more potent. The number one reason most people get involved in (or support) a group or a cause is because a friend, relative, business associate or neighbor asked them to.

In using mass media for public relations, concentrate your efforts on meaty, timely feature articles (in contrast to meeting announcements and reports). Suggest eye-catching headings: "Women's Club to Donate Kidney Machine" instead of "Women's Club Holds Meeting." Such publicity can help people become familiar with who you are. Focus on the good works of the organization and program rather than on your need for support.

In conclusion, good marketing involves clear objectives, defining your product, targeting your audience, developing a marketing strategy, and then making personal contact.

Pre-Recruitment Considerations

Getting people to turn out and to volunteer needed positions has become an increasing challenge for many groups—this trend is not unique to SHINE.

Why

We all know that generally speaking volunteers are needed to help “get the job done.” What exactly does that mean? What job(s) is there to be done? Some reasons volunteers are needed for SHINE include (also see, Recruitment Strategies):

- To provide counseling to over 3 million Florida Medicare beneficiaries
- To educate beneficiaries, families, caregivers and others providing care for people with Medicare
- To increase awareness and understanding of SHINE, the Area Agency on Aging and the Department of Elder Affairs.

WIIFM

When considering the benefits of volunteering with SHINE place yourself in the prospective volunteer’s shoes and ask, “What’s in it for me (WIIFM)?”

People naturally like to help others and to feel needed, but they need to know how their efforts will benefit them as well. Some benefits of volunteering with SHINE include:

- ✓ Professional development
- ✓ Advanced health insurance education
- ✓ Ability to network
- ✓ Civic reciprocity

(Also see, Recruitment Strategies)

What

Focus on what—what are the specific skills, interests, view points, prior experiences, personality traits, and resources needed. Make a list. Check the 2 or 3 most essential attributes.

Recruitment will be easier and more effective if preceded by a conscious, well-thought-out selection process.

In this process, you will also want to review the roles currently filled by volunteers and determine the capacity in which you need additional volunteers.

Who

Once you've decided what, then ask yourself WHO--who (what person or persons) can provide the essentials you have just identified. Your objective is to match the needs of the position with the skills and interests of the individual. Often organizations reverse these two steps. They decide who, and then dream up reasons why the individual should participate. Clarify what is needed, and then identify who. Individuals tend to respond favorably to an appeal to their unique abilities and interests.

Diversity

Building a diverse group of volunteers will broaden the opinions and ideas for recruiting and counseling clients. A diverse group helps to address cultural sensitivity and create a more culturally competent volunteer corps.

Knowing Your Community = Knowing Your Volunteer Pool

- Seek out areas that will have potential volunteers who possess the skill sets you need. Be sure to differentiate between potential volunteers, partners and clients.
- Research the makeup of the community and its sectors, which include schools, churches, neighborhoods, service organizations, senior groups and grassroots organizations.

Diversity Dos and Don'ts

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize that volunteering is viewed differently.• Provide positive images of the target populations when publicizing SHINE.• Take a practical approach to recruit by connecting with target group community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assume that minorities do not wish to volunteer outside of their own communities.• Forget to include images of the target populations in recruitment materials.

Recruiting Those with Disabilities

The first thing to realize when recruiting people with disabilities as volunteers is that they are present in the community, not segregated into "special" gathering places. Therefore, people with disabilities will be in the audience when you present at schools, churches, clubs, etc. All presentations should acknowledge the desire to have people with disabilities participate in volunteer activities and the willingness of the organization to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. The simplest place to start is with your local telephone directory to look up agencies associated with disability services. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

- Independent living centers
- Schools or programs that work specifically with the disabled population
- Vocational rehabilitation agencies
- Disability service groups

Barriers to Diversifying

There are some barriers to be aware of when recruiting for specific populations, which may include:

- Written or spoken language barriers
- Differences in literacy levels
- Those with low socioeconomic status may not be able to afford the expenses related to volunteering
- Some ethnic groups such as African-American and Hispanic are sensitive to screening, particularly if the individual views it as a way to prevent them from volunteering
- Difficulties in finding transportation to sites outside of their communities
- Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) compliance issues at counseling sites or events, preventing the participation of disabled volunteers

How

How do we usually recruit people to participate? We call for volunteers. "Willingness to serve" often is our only criteria. Be cautious with this approach. Calling for volunteers can imply that the job is so unimportant that we are willing to accept anyone. Did you ever think of it this way?

Most people won't volunteer themselves. Yet we often insist that people do so. Calling for volunteers eliminates from our consideration a large pool of qualified individuals. This is not to say that you should never call for volunteers. It is very appropriate for short-term commitments,

e.g., "Who could work at the food booth Saturday?" Key positions, however, are too important to be left to chance. Recruit specific to roles you need to fill.

Recruitment Goals

Did you know that over 90% of people never actually do any goal setting activities in their life? This is a vital part of any recruiting, retaining or recognition plan. But few people do this. So, here are seven goal setting steps to ensure outstanding volunteer recruitment.

STEP 1 - Write It Down Now

Many people speak of their goals but never write them down. Goals not written down are at best wishful thinking. You have to commit them to paper as this is the fastest way to move from thoughts to action.

STEP 2 – It's about Quality Not Quantity

Keep it simple and clear. Decide on only a few quality goals rather than a large number of goals. Otherwise, you will become discouraged trying to achieve such a very long, long list. Write down just a few goals to address the volunteer recruitment needs you have identified.

STEP 3 - Ask More Questions

Through asking several questions you can go from generic statements such as "I would like to recruit more volunteers" to bull's-eye goals. For example, if one goal is to recruit more volunteers, then ask yourself: "How many new volunteers do I want to recruit – 10, 20 or 50? What type of people am I looking for? Age range, languages spoken? What skills am I looking for? Administrative skills, people-based skills?"

STEP 4 - Be Very, Very Specific

By asking yourself many questions you become very clear and really specific in your goals. You can now focus your efforts. By asking questions, your specific recruitment goal will evolve. It could be to recruit 10 more Haitian, Creole-speaking volunteers aged 45 to 65 with presentation skills to conduct educational presentations for potential partners, volunteers and clients for up to 4 hours per week. Clear. Specific. Goals.

STEP 5 - Time for an Action Plan

Brainstorm an action plan by listing all the actions that will be required. Then take your list and rearrange each action in order. Beginning with the first action you have to take, then the second, then the third action and so on.

STEP 6 - Give Each Action a Deadline

Determine a realistic deadline for each action step – that is, a date and time to complete each action. This will help you to get moving immediately and pace yourself through completion of the goal.

STEP 7 - Gather the People You Need Around You

The last step is to understand you are not alone. Get others to assist you. For instance, the best people to assist you in recruiting volunteers are your current volunteers. Could you use them as part of your recruiting team? Do involve others to help you achieve these goals.

Use these seven steps and you will really escalate your success in volunteer recruitment. You can also take these seven steps to achieve goal setting success in all other areas of volunteer management such as retention and recognition.

Example	<p>Goal: Recruit 10 more Haitian, Creole-speaking volunteers aged 45 to 65 years with presentation skills to conduct educational presentations for potential partners, volunteers and clients for up to 4 hours per week.</p> <p>Action: Write a letter to the director of Patisipasyon Se Fos Haitian Coalition soliciting a presentation opportunity. Follow-up within two weeks by phone.</p> <p>Action: Conduct a team SHINE outreach presentation with a coalition literacy instructor in English and Creole targeting their clients aged 65 older. Make a separate record of individuals interested in volunteering.</p> <p>Action: Conduct a small group SHINE volunteer recruitment presentation with coalition staff, volunteers and clients expressing interest in SHINE.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Deadline: August 1, 2010</p>
----------------	---

Recruitment Strategies

The goal of any recruitment plan in itself should be the identification of three key elements: Motivation, Message(s) and Medium. While we have already covered much of what encompasses Motivation (see Pre-Recruitment Considerations, *Why* and *WIIFM*), the recruitment Message and Medium also warrant the volunteer manager's attention.

Messaging

"Free gift inside!"

"Dear Jim, You have been specially selected."

"Calling all Volunteers."

Every day people are bombarded with headlines like these that are designed to grab their attention. In a world full of marketing and information - delivered in all sorts of media from print to websites, billboards to radio, and TV to text messages - every message has to work extremely hard to get noticed.

As marketing, and in this case volunteer recruitment, becomes more and more competitive, marketing becomes more and more sophisticated (see *Principles of Marketing*). Yet the basic principles behind marketing messages remain - that they must attract attention and persuade someone to take action. Follow the *Attention-Interest-Desire-Action* (AIDA) formula when developing volunteer recruitment messages to inspire action such as joining SHINE. These four steps can help guide you through the process.

Attention/Attract

In our media-filled world, you need to be quick and direct to grab people's attention. Use powerful words, or a picture that will catch the targeted individual's eye and make them stop and consider what you have to say next.

Interest

This is one of the most challenging stages: You've got the attention of a chunk of your target audience, but can you engage them enough so that they will want to spend their precious time understanding your message in more detail?

Gaining the potential volunteer's interest is a deeper process than grabbing their attention. They will give you a little more time to do it, but you must stay focused on their needs. This means helping them to pick out the messages that are relevant to them quickly.

Desire

The Interest and Desire parts of AIDA go hand-in-hand. As you are building the individual's interest, you also need to help them understand how what you are offering can help in a real way. The main way of doing this is by appealing to their personal needs and wants.

So, rather than simply saying "Our lunchtime seminar will educate you on volunteer opportunities with SHINE", explain to the audience what's in it for them (see *WIIFM*): "Learn what you need to know about Medicare, and save time and frustration for you and your neighbors, by volunteering to be a SHINE counselor."

Action

Finally, be very clear about what action you want your audience to take; for example, "Complete a SHINE Volunteer application today and schedule your one-on-one appointment for more information" rather than just leaving people to work out what to do for themselves.

These are the four steps you need to take your audience of potential SHINE volunteers through if you want them to visit your website, attend a presentation, or to complete a volunteer application.

Also keep in mind when developing recruitment messages:

- Your audience may know nothing about SHINE. Consider what they need to know first. Pretend that you have 15 seconds to explain your position to a potential volunteer. What will you say?
- It is usually best to use simple, direct language. Do not use long seemingly impressive words.
- Describe your clients in a way that the prospective volunteers can decide if they feel comfortable working with that population.
- Show photographs, slides or videos that dispel some of the stereotypes of elders. For example, people assume elders are frail, weak, or very old. Show the broad base of individuals we assist and who currently volunteer for SHINE.
- Also clarify who can volunteer for the program. People may assume based on the nature of the work that is performed that they are not welcome or qualified to serve with SHINE.
- Be prepared to answer questions about the program's successes and failures, and characteristics that set SHINE apart from other programs.

Tip: Use the concept of being an unbiased service that provides its volunteers professional training as a heavy selling point. Also, we have not been able to directly influence health care policy, but we have assisted hundreds of thousands of Medicare beneficiaries know and exercise their rights, as well as save on their health care costs.

Medium

Reaching a wider audience, including seniors, means thinking broadly about what constitutes communication and how best to communicate. A first step is to define the means or "medium" you use to reach senior clients and customers. An effective communications program will combine some or all of the following tools to communicate the intended message to the target audience:

- Television
- Radio
- Print/Publications
- Collateral Materials
- Outdoor
- Point of Sale
- Online/Internet
- Social Media
- Events
- Spokespersons
- Sponsorships/Partnerships
- Direct Mail
- Promotional Items
- Word of Mouth
- Collateral Materials (e.g., brochures)
- And More!

The tools used depend on the strategic goals, the objectives of the communication program, the profile of the target audience, the various advantages and disadvantage of each tool, and the budget. However, regardless of the tool used, be sure to maintain consistency and clarity in message.

Evaluation

Many people regard evaluation as the final step in a process, however, it should represent the means for starting anew, the clasp that closes the proverbial circle of life for your recruitment plan. To evaluate your recruitment plan, rate the time and effort involved, the responses, and costs to decide on the overall effectiveness. Continue to use the strategies and actions that rate well and remove the rest, as your time is better spent on methods yielding positive results.

Continuously evaluating your recruitment activities is also a way to make sure you are on track with the set goals. Whether you are progressing positively towards your goals or struggling a bit along the way, continue to look for ways to refine and enhance your overall plan. Ask your recruitment team: Can we simplify this? How can we do this better? What do we need to change? It is important to make changes to your plan as you learn from the recruitment experience.

Do not be disappointed with setbacks to your plans, they are all part of learning. Understand that even the best designed recruitment plans will not always immediately result in volunteers flocking through the door. Be realistic about what can be achieved. Continue to tweak and test your ideas and be patient. There is still an enormous number of potential volunteers just waiting to be recruited and retained by you.

Toolkit

Recruitment Plan Development: Tools and Resources

2010

Always remember, first impressions do count. Recruitment materials need to be tailored to address the interests and needs of each target audience. Step into the shoes of others before taking the pen in hand. State, regional and national offices are valuable resources.

Contents

SHINE Volunteer Recruitment Tools.....	3
SHINE Local Program Self-Assessment Form.....	4
SHINE Volunteer Recruitment Plan Template.....	5
Sample Media Release	6
SHINE Volunteer Recruitment Resources	7
SHINE State Office Support and Contacts.....	8
Volunteer Centers.....	8
Volunteer Service Organizations.....	8
Silver Edition	9
Recruitment Resources.....	9

SHINE Volunteer Recruitment Tools

SHINE Local Program Self-Assessment Form

This form is designed for your local program to assess 1) How many volunteers you currently have, 2) What role they play and 3) What areas you may have additional needs.

Goal: To recruit _____ volunteers between _____ and _____ including:

County	Active Volunteers	Counselors	Recruiters	Educators/ Trainers	Administrative Helpers	Marketers	Mentors	Leaders
Current Total								
Need?								

Barriers or Challenges (i.e., no desire to move to leadership roles): _____

SHINE Volunteer Recruitment Plan Template

RECRUITMENT GOAL (1):

Action Steps	Timeline	Proposed Costs	Outcome	Challenges/ Best Practices
1.				
2.				

RECRUITMENT GOAL (2):

1.				
2.				

RECRUITMENT GOAL (3):

1.				
2.				

RECRUITMENT GOAL (4):

1.				
2.				

This local program recruitment plan was developed as a collaborative effort by:

SHINE Liaison	_____
	Signature
Executive Director	_____
	Signature
Date Mailed to Department of Elder Affairs: __ / __ / __	

NOTE: The completed Volunteer Recruitment Plan and Updates must be co-signed by the SHINE Liaison and the Executive Director. The completed Volunteer Recruitment Plan must be received at the Department of Elder Affairs no later than **May 31, 2010**.

Sample Media Release

[Insert Agency Logo]

Media Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Name, Title

Phone Number (Office)

Cell Number, if appropriate (cell)

Email

Making a Difference for People with Medicare

[Name of Agency] Needs Your Talents and Skills

[City, State]-Navigating Medicare can be tough for many seniors. From prescription drug plans to private health plans to deceptive insurance agents, it's not surprising that people with Medicare are confused about their health insurance and their options. Fortunately, there is an organization that they can turn to for help.

Florida's Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE) program works with people to help them understand their Medicare benefits, bills and rights. SHINE services are free, unbiased, confidential, and available to all Floridians Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers.

Volunteers play a critical role in providing SHINE services and helping seniors. Each volunteer makes a unique difference to people with Medicare. Volunteers help educate people about Medicare, market the SHINE program, assist with administrative tasks, work on special projects and more. No matter what your interests or abilities, SHINE has an opportunity for you.

[Add a client (or volunteer) quote or story from your PSA]

SHINE is looking for dedicated and resourceful volunteers with all sorts of talents and skills. You can be part of a dynamic team, meet new people and set your own schedule. If you're looking for a meaningful way to help your friends, neighbors, and community, please call the SHINE liaison today at [direct agency phone number.]

###

[Add your agency's organizational profile]

SHINE Volunteer Recruitment Resources

SHINE State Office Support and Contacts

Name	Title	Phone Number	Email
Andrea Gary	Publicity and Outreach Manager	850-414-2069	garya@elderaffairs.org
LaVonia Sampson-Jones	Recruitment Specialist	850-414-2028	sampsonjonesl@elderaffairs.org

Volunteer Centers

Volunteer Centers are local agencies that connect people with volunteer opportunities. Volunteer Centers offer a free account to post volunteer opportunities. To register for the account follow these steps:

1. Go to <https://www.1-800-volunteer.org/1800Vol/SearchVCForOrganization.do>
2. Search for your local Volunteer Center
3. Contact the most appropriate Volunteer Center to register for an account
4. Your local Volunteer Center will notify you via e-mail once your account information has been approved
5. Begin using 1 800-Volunteer.org to post volunteer opportunities

Volunteer Service Organizations

Volunteer Service Organizations are those organizations either faith-based or nondenominational that provide volunteers to serve for specified periods in positions within the community. These may be good resources to recruit volunteers.

Some faith-based organizations include:

- Brethren Volunteer Service
- Episcopal Church Volunteers for Mission
- Interns for Peace
- Jesuit Volunteer Corps
- Jewish Organizing Initiative
- Lutheran Volunteer Corps
- Mennonite Voluntary Service
- United Methodist Volunteers in Mission
- Volunteers of America

Nondenominational volunteer service organizations include:

- Senior Corps
- AmeriCorps
- VISTA Volunteers
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Senior Volunteer Services

Silver Edition

The Silver Edition website is Florida's new easy-to-use source of help for persons age 50 and over who are looking for a job or volunteer opportunities. Use this site to post volunteer opportunities. <http://silver.employflorida.com>

Recruitment Resources

There are several sites that may provide ideas or tips on recruitment which include:

<http://www.energizeinc.com>

<http://www.idealists.org/>

<http://www.volunteermatch.org>

<http://www.pointsoflight.org>

<http://www.serviceleader.org>

<http://www.volunteerresource.org>

<http://www.avaintl.org>

<http://www.gosv.state.md.us>

<http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov>