



Calgary Seniors'  
RESOURCE SOCIETY

# VOLUNTEER MANUAL

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” -Helen Keller



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# Welcome

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Calgary Seniors exists to reduce the social isolation of vulnerable seniors, and to support them to live in their homes as long as possible. Our goal is to ensure that no senior falls through the cracks – and we strive to accomplish this by engaging the community through our connectors and volunteers.

At Calgary Seniors, we focus on prevention: dealing with core issues around social isolation, abuse and neglect, housing, transportation, and critical needs. Above all, we want to ensure that no senior is left behind. Through our social work and seniors social supports we ensure our clients have access to resources and social support to maintain the best quality of life possible.

Did you know that...

- 70-80% of adults in Calgary, over the age of 55 live alone in their own homes, with little social support
- Socially isolated individuals experience higher rates of physical and mental illness, injury, malnutrition, fraud and abuse, due to challenges with accessing the transportation and resources required to meet basic needs,
- More than two thirds of Calgary Senior clients are deemed low income based on Statistics Canada criteria, which increases their risk of social isolation, illness and injury

Calgary Seniors relies on the support of hundreds of volunteers to deliver our programs. Volunteers also act as our ambassadors and promote Calgary Seniors to potential clients, volunteers, members and donors.

Fast facts for 2018 impact:

- 1600+ seniors social supports clients
- 1,250 volunteers provided over 89,000, hours of service  
(If these volunteers were paid a wage of \$24/hr, the cost of their contribution would be \$2.1 million)

We're thrilled that you have chosen to generously donate your time as a volunteer for our agency. Thank you for wanting to make a difference in the life of a senior. All members of Calgary Seniors recognize and appreciate the valuable contribution that you, as a volunteer, make to our organization. We are pleased to welcome you to our team, and hope your volunteer experience will be fun, meaningful and rewarding.

# Our Stories



## **Kim and Florence**

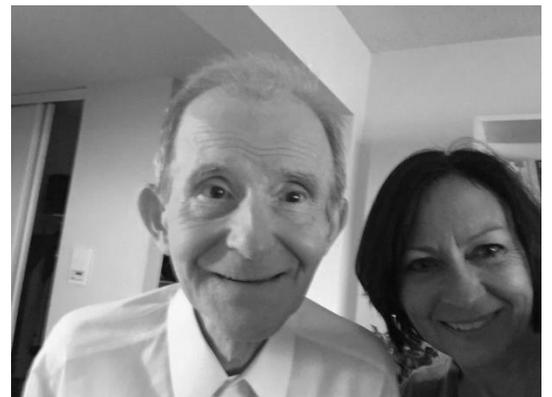
*Matched through Shopping Companion  
since March 26, 2015*

I've been taking Florence out every other week for shopping trips for around 3 years now. We hit it off right away, having many common interests, such as knitting, gardening, cooking, and finding the best deals. Our shopping trips are not just about providing a way to purchase needed items, they are also about companionship. We always make time to sit down and have lunch, and we update each other on our latest news from the last couple of weeks. My volunteer experience with the Calgary Seniors' Resource Society has been very important to me and helped inspire me to pursue a career where I can continue to work and connect with more seniors.

## **Bev and Andrej**

*Matched through Friendly Visiting and  
Phone Friends since Nov 29, 2010*

“When I was visiting Andrej during one of his hospital stays, when I was leaving he said that I had given him the most precious gift; the gift of my time.”



# Overview of Programs & Services

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller

We provide a depth of support to vulnerable seniors, which results in meaningful and effective change to their overall well-being and quality of life.

**Fact:** *Isolated seniors are more likely to experience mental and physical illness, injury, malnutrition, fraud and abuse.*

- Calgary Seniors’ programs emphasize:
- Innovation & creativity
  - Strategic and calculated risk taking
  - Long-term change

**SENIORS SOCIAL SUPPORTS** ignites Calgarians to provide practical, social and emotional support for vulnerable seniors, and in turn, their lives are enriched by the meaningful relationships that are created.

## Activating & Mobilizing the Community

### Friendly Visiting:

We match a senior with a volunteer who will visit weekly and/or take the senior on social outings if appropriate.

### Phone Friends:

We match a senior with a volunteer who will call daily to provide a wellness check and a social connection.

### Escorted

#### Transportation:

We dispatch volunteer drivers to pick-up seniors from home, drive them to medical appointments, stay with them throughout and take them home again.

### Shopping Companion:

We match a senior with a volunteer who takes them shopping once every two weeks. In addition to the shopping, this program has the added benefit of social connection.

### Practical Kindness (previously QMV):

We arrange for volunteers to provide one-time or short-term urgent social assistance.

### Pet Assist:

We match a senior with a volunteer who will provide assistance with pet care, aiming to keep both, the senior and pet, healthy and together as long as possible.

### Caring Companion:

We match a senior care recipient with a volunteer who will provide weekly companionship for the senior while also allowing the caregiver to take a break for themselves.

### Take Care, Be Aware:

We arrange for specialized program volunteers to speak to seniors groups about fraud awareness and prevention.

### Social Transportation:

We are working to develop a social transportation program for vulnerable seniors based on our Assisted Shopping model.

### Cyber-Seniors:

We are developing a program where volunteers help seniors use technology to engage socially with their peers, friends, and family.

### Senior Intimacy:

We have identified a gap in services & supports related to seniors and intimacy & are working on developing new resources.

### Caregiver Peer to Peer Mentorship:

We match volunteers, who are experienced caregivers, with new caregivers in need of support.

C U R R E N T L Y   I N   E X P L O R A T I O N

*In 2018, 1,254 volunteers provided 89,002 volunteer hours through Calgary Seniors’ Seniors Social Supports department. If these volunteers were paid a wage of \$24 per hour, the value of their contribution would be \$2,136,048.*

## Outreach Services

Our team of Registered Social Workers meets with seniors and provides support, referrals, information and resources. Our Outreach workers offer a variety of support services to clients confidentially and completely free of charge and will come to out to the senior's home to complete an assessment. Examples of the types of assistance we can provide include:

- Assessments, including providing current options and a plan for ongoing support
- Assistance with forms and applications to ensure all critical needs are met
- Advocacy to assist seniors in navigating complicated processes and ensure they receive clarification when necessary
- Information and referrals to the community resources available to them

Our outreach team is the designated service provider to the north east of Calgary and the northern section of the south east as a member of The Way In Network.

## SeniorConnect

Calgary Seniors developed the SeniorConnect program in 2004, when a senior man named Lincoln Ray died in his home and was left undiscovered for 3 months. He was isolated, and those in his community didn't recognize the signs that he was in distress. After this tragic incident we decided it was necessary to find a way to educate Calgarians about this serious issue and give them a way to report seniors who they are concerned about. We wanted to be sure that no other senior fell through the cracks.

SeniorConnect helps us achieve this goal with a three step process. First, we educate community groups on the signs of a senior at risk so they know how to identify who may need support. Second, in partnership with The Distress Centre, we provide a 24/7 help line where community members can report a senior they are concerned about. Third, we have our registered social workers respond to referrals from the Distress Centre, and ensure that the senior is aware of the community supports available and offer assistance as required.



# Volunteer Program Standards

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## **Core Training**

Calgary Seniors provides standardized core training to all volunteers, regardless of specific positions. The goal of the training is to familiarize volunteers with the purpose, structure and programs of Calgary Seniors.

Core Training gives all Calgary Seniors volunteers consistent information about Calgary Seniors, our clients and the role of volunteers in the organization.

## **Senior Connect Training**

All Calgary Seniors volunteers are also required to complete our online SeniorConnect e-Learning course [www.seniorconnectcalgary.org](http://www.seniorconnectcalgary.org). This SeniorConnect training helps individuals recognize the signs and symptoms that a senior may be at risk, which is critical for volunteers in all roles.

## **Supplementary Training**

Seniors Social Supports provides ongoing opportunities for volunteers to participate in optional, supplementary training. The workshops and training sessions cover a range of topics related to both personal and professional development and are offered quarterly. Seniors Social Supports will also share community training opportunities to volunteers that are open to the public.

## **Supervision & Evaluation**

Supervision will vary depending on the volunteer position. Not all individuals will be directly supervised during service, however all volunteers will have a clearly identified contact person to access if help is needed. Calgary Seniors staff members will be available during regular office hours - Monday to Friday 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

Formal evaluations will only be carried out if requested by a volunteer (for example if a volunteer wishes to use their experience with Calgary Seniors in subsequent job applications). Students who are volunteering with their parents may request a report of their volunteer hours for school purposes.

## Recognition

Recognition is a form of appreciation and acknowledgement of a volunteer's efforts. A goal of the Calgary Seniors volunteer program is to regularly and consistently acknowledge volunteer contributions, both formally and informally. We appreciate feedback from volunteers on the appropriateness of our recognition program.

Recognition may include things such as:

- Annual volunteer recognition celebration.
- Individual personalized thank-yous, including photographs, cards and/or e-mail.
- Selection and profiling of outstanding volunteers in the Calgary Seniors newsletter & website.
- Nomination for Calgary Seniors annual Donna Seland Award (presented at the Annual General Meeting).

With your permission, your accomplishments as a Calgary Seniors volunteer may be shared with the public, funders and other supporters.

## Record Management

A file will be composed for every Calgary Seniors volunteer that may contain, where applicable, their:

- Volunteer application form
- Reference checks
- Police Information Check
- Driver's abstract and proof of vehicle insurance
- Record of contact
- Record of recognition
- Any reported incidents or concerns assessment form
- Photo identification (*eg. Driver's License*)
- Volunteer agreement forms

Information will not be used for purposes other than those related to Calgary Seniors operated programs or business purposes. Your information will be handled with respect, and will not be sold, given away, or provided to parties outside of Calgary Seniors without your consent, unless the law requires that it be shared.

# Volunteer Conduct

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## Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all property or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This includes, but is not limited to, information relating to staff persons, volunteers, clients or other person and program business, financial data, donor names and business records.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may not only result in dismissal from Calgary Seniors, but in personal liability. Any and all external inquires shall be directed to your supervisor or Calgary Seniors Seniors Social Supports.

## Conflict of Interest

A volunteer shall not knowingly take advantage of, or benefit from information obtained in the course of their volunteer duties. Any situations where a volunteer may have conflict of interest should be avoided and disclosed to their supervisor.

Volunteers shall not witness wills nor act as executors for clients.

## Organizational Affiliation

Volunteers will seek consultation and approval prior to:

- Conducting lobbying efforts
- Initiating collaborations and/or joint initiatives or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligation.

Volunteers shall not use Calgary Seniors identification or facilities to conduct private business or solicit sales for personal gain, request contribution or solicit Calgary Seniors clients concerning political or religious groups or community issues contrary to positions taken by Calgary Seniors.

## Recording & Reporting Hours

Record keeping is important in recruitment, training, recognition and even fundraising. The annual funding we receive as a non-profit agency is partially based on the commitment of our volunteers. Calgary Seniors is required to submit a year-end report to our funders with the total number of volunteer hours provided. **All Calgary Seniors volunteers are required to track their volunteer contributions and submit them to Seniors Social Supports at the end of each quarter.**

## Dress Code

As representatives of Calgary Seniors, volunteers, like paid staff, are responsible for presenting a positive and professional image to clients and the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the requirements of their position. It is expected that individuals ensure their stomach is covered and that there are no offensive words or graphics on clothing or accessories.

## **Informed Consent for Photographs, Recordings and/or Testimonials**

All Calgary Seniors volunteers are asked to sign an informed consent form for photographs, recordings and/or testimonials. This form grants permission to Calgary Seniors to utilize photographs, recordings and testimonials to publicly promote the organization. Calgary Seniors will use their discretion to ensure the photographs and/or testimonials are used in an appropriate and sensitive manner. The volunteer's address will not be publicized.

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

While conducting volunteer duties on behalf of Calgary Seniors, volunteers are prohibited from:

- Being under the influence of, possessing, selling or other involvement with illegal drugs
- Being under the influence of alcohol and/or cannabis
- Abusive use of controlled substances including medical marijuana

## **Harassment, Discrimination & Abuse**

Calgary Seniors is committed to being a leading agency in the community. It maintains the importance of the community participating and benefiting fully from its services. Therefore, volunteers should be reflective of Calgary's community. The Calgary Seniors volunteer program seek to eliminate any systemic barriers to full participation and provide an environment that is free of harassment, discrimination and abuse.

Incidents of discrimination, harassment and abuse will not be tolerated. All complaints by volunteers, paid staff and clients will be taken seriously. Appropriate action will be determined by the Calgary Seniors Seniors Social Supports and the Seniors Social Supports Manager with cooperation of the complainant.

Harassment is any comment or conduct that is known, or should be reasonably known, to be inappropriate and unwelcome. It can consist of a comment or action that disparages or causes humiliation for a person. Calgary Seniors mandates that all staff, volunteers and clients have freedom from harassment and discrimination based on: race, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, age, marital status, family status, disability and physical appearance.

## **Conflict Procedure**

Volunteers should make every effort to solve problems cooperatively and informally prior to starting a conflict procedure. A conflict procedure is not the appropriate vehicle for resolving interpersonal conflicts. If problems cannot be solved informally or if the issue is a matter of client, staff or volunteer safety, health, abuse or discrimination, the conflict should be reported to Seniors Social Supports. All complaints will be treated in a confidential manner.

## **Absenteeism**

Calgary Seniors recognizes that a volunteer may be unable to fulfill their duties due to emergencies such as illness or family health. If possible, please try to give program staff and your senior client a minimum of 24-hour notice of any absences. One month notice is appreciated for periods of absences such as vacation or other special circumstances. Continual absenteeism will be considered as grounds for dismissal. Extended periods of absence will be discussed on an individual basis.

*If a volunteer is ill, they are strongly urged to refrain from visiting with or providing rides to Calgary Seniors clients.*

## **Statutory Holidays**

Calgary Seniors recognizes the following general holidays and the office will be closed on these days: New Year's Day, Alberta Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

## **Acceptance of Gifts**

Acceptance of money or gifts of significant financial value from clients is grounds for dismissal. Acceptance of small tokens of appreciation (*e.g. chocolates, flowers, baking*) is acceptable. For clarification, please ask Calgary Seniors Seniors Social Supports.

## **Resignation**

If a volunteer decides to discontinue their volunteer activities, or are unable to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in their job description, they will notify Seniors Social Supports in a timely manner. Two week notice of resignation is appreciated. All volunteers who are resigning will be asked to participate in a voluntary exit interview.

## **Volunteer Dismissal**

Volunteers serve Calgary Seniors at the sole discretion of the agency. Volunteers may be discharged without warning for just cause. Calgary Seniors has the right to request a volunteer to leave immediately.

Conditions of immediate dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing volunteer duties
- Theft or misuse of agency or client's funds, equipment or materials
- Lies or falsification of material
- Abuse, harassment or mistreatment of Calgary Seniors clients, staff, other volunteers or stakeholders
- Acting outside of the authority granted by Calgary Seniors
- Any illegal or violent activity while performing volunteer duties
- Willfully endangering the safety of others
- Entering into a legal relationship with a Calgary Seniors client e.g. marriage/ guardianship
- Negligent or willful damage of property
- Failure to abide by any volunteer conduct policies

Dismissal may also occur due to performance problems. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Unfriendly, discourteous or uncooperative attitude when dealing with clients, staff or volunteers
- Continual tardiness or absence
- Unsatisfactory work performance based on duties assigned in volunteer job description

## **Public or Media Statements**

In the case of any accident or emergency involving Calgary Seniors clients, volunteers or staff, do not issue a statement or talk to the media. It is extremely important to limit conversation about the accident to those with the need and the right to know. Anyone you talk to may be subpoenaed and you may inadvertently disclose harmful information. All statements to the media must originate from Calgary Seniors. Please direct inquiries to the Calgary Seniors Executive Director.

# Appendices

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## **The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement**

Volunteer Canada developed and launched the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement in 2001, and released an updated code in 2012. The code articulates the overarching values, guiding principles and organizational standards for volunteer programs in a non-profit organization:

## **The Value of Volunteer Involvement**

Volunteer involvement:

- is fundamental to a healthy and democratic society in Canada. It promotes civic engagement and active participation in shaping the society we want
- is vital for strong, inclusive, and resilient communities. It promotes change and development through the collective efforts of those who know the community best.
- builds the capacity of organizations. It provides organizations with the skills, talents, and perspectives that are essential to their relevance, vitality, and sustainability.
- is personal. It promotes a sense of belonging and general wellbeing.
- is about building relationships. It connects people to the causes they care about, and allows community outcomes and personal goals to be met within a spectrum of engagement.

## **Guiding Principles for Volunteer Involvement**

Volunteers have rights. Non-profit organizations recognize that volunteers are vital human resources that will commit to the appropriate infrastructure to support volunteer engagement.

Volunteers have responsibilities. Volunteers make a commitment and are accountable to the organization.

## **Organizational Standards for Volunteer Involvement**

- The Board of Directors and senior staff acknowledge, articulate, and support the vital role of volunteers in achieving the organization's purpose or mission. Volunteer roles are clearly linked to the organization.
- Volunteers are welcomed and treated as valued and integral members of the organization's human resource team.
- A policy framework that defines and supports the involvement of volunteers is adopted by the organization.
- The organization has a clearly designated individual(s) with appropriate qualifications responsible for supporting volunteer involvement.
- Risk management procedures are in place to assess, manage, or mitigate potential risks to the volunteers, the organization and its clients, members, and participants that may result from the delivery of a volunteer-led program or service. Each volunteer role is assessed for level of risk as part of the screening process.
- Volunteer roles contribute to the mission or purpose of the organization and clearly identify the abilities needed. Volunteer roles involve volunteers in meaningful ways that reflect their skills, needs, interests, and backgrounds.
- A clearly communicated and transparent screening process, which is aligned with the risk management approach, is adopted and consistently applied across the organization

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## Cont'd

- Volunteers receive an orientation to the organization, its policies, and practices appropriate to each role. Each volunteer receives training specific to the volunteer role and the needs of the individual volunteer.
- Volunteers receive the level of support and supervision required for the role and are provided with regular opportunities to give feedback.
- Standardized documentation and records management practices and procedures are followed and are in line with current relevant legislation.
- Volunteers are engaged and supported within the organization through the integration and intentional use of current technology. New opportunities to strengthen volunteer engagement and capacity through the use of technology are evaluated continually.
- The contributions of volunteers are acknowledged by the organization with ongoing formal and informal methods of recognition, applicable to the volunteer role. The value and impact of volunteer contributions are understood and acknowledged within the organization and communicated to the volunteer.
- An evaluation framework is in place to assess the performance of volunteers and gauge volunteer satisfaction. The effectiveness of the volunteer engagement strategy in meeting the organization's mandate is also evaluated.

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## Volunteer Intake Process

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### Recruitment

Recruitment is the process of encouraging people to volunteer their time with Calgary Seniors. Our recruitment goal is to create a diverse volunteer force that reflects Calgary's population and diverse range of skills and backgrounds. Calgary Seniors has an ongoing volunteer recruitment plan.

Volunteers who are interested in volunteering are encouraged to submit an application form through our website ([www.calgaryseniors.org](http://www.calgaryseniors.org)) or directly to the Calgary Seniors office.

### Volunteer Requirements

All volunteers must be over the age of 18. Individuals under 18 are welcome to accompany an adult volunteer if they first request permission from Seniors Social Supports. Due to the considerable investment made in screening and training volunteers, Calgary Seniors require volunteers to commit to a minimum of six months of service. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

Clients may work as volunteers when such volunteering does not conflict with their role as a client or create conflict of interest.

### Screening

Calgary Seniors maintains the right not to accept an individual as a volunteer. Prospective volunteers may be rejected as a result of information gained during the screening process or due to other factors. Calgary Seniors Seniors Social Supports staff will make an effort to direct the prospective volunteer to another opportunity within the community that may be more suitable. All information obtained during the screening process is considered confidential.

### Interview

Each volunteer position with Calgary Seniors requires specific skills, certain temperaments and experiences or assets. The goal of the interview process is to match a prospective volunteer with the demands and requirements of available volunteer positions and to determine a mutually acceptable assignment.

## Reference Check

Every volunteer is required to submit two personal or professional references. Individuals who refuse to comply will not be accepted as a Calgary Seniors volunteer.

## Police Information Check:

- As a Calgary Seniors volunteer, you will be working in a position of trust with a senior client. In order to help protect Calgary Seniors clients, all volunteers are required to submit a Police Information Check (PIC). Individuals who refuse to comply will not be accepted as a volunteer.
- At the discretion of Seniors Social Supports, a volunteer may commence volunteering prior to the PIC report being received.
- PIC reports must be submitted to Calgary Seniors within 3 months of the volunteer interview.
- If the PIC report comes back unsatisfactory, the prospective volunteer will be asked to disclose the offense to Seniors Social Supports. Individuals who refuse to disclose will not be accepted as a Calgary Seniors volunteer.
- Calgary Seniors reserves the right to refuse a volunteer based on a previous criminal offense. Refusal will be decided by Seniors Social Supports and the appropriate program staff.
- PIC reports must be renewed every 5 years; however, Calgary Seniors may request a new PIC check after one or more years of service.

## Driver's Abstract & Proof of Insurance

All Escorted Transportation and Shopping Companion volunteers must provide the following, prior to beginning as a volunteer.

- 5 year driver's abstract
- Proof of vehicle insurance with \$1,000,000 liability coverage
- Copy of current Driver's License

*Note: Any volunteers in the Friendly Visiting, Caring Companion, Quick Mobilize Volunteer or Pet Assist program who wish to provide transportation to their client must notify Calgary Seniors and provide the required documentation prior to doing so.*

- Volunteers are responsible for providing Calgary Seniors with updates to their vehicle insurance annually and the driver's license upon renewal.
- Driver's abstracts must be renewed every 5 years, however, Calgary Seniors may request a new driver's abstract at any time after three months. Calgary Seniors reserves the right to refuse a volunteer based on the content of the driver's abstract. Refusal will be decided by Seniors Social Supports in consultation with the appropriate program staff.
- It is the responsibility of the volunteer to ensure that their vehicle is safe and in good working order.

## Emergency and Safety Procedures

*All incidents and accidents involving Calgary Seniors clients and/or volunteers must be reported to the Seniors Social Supports Team immediately.*

If the senior does not answer the door for an arranged visit or phone call (Phone Friends only), wait 10 minutes and try again. If there is still no answer, wait 10 additional minutes and try again. If there is no response by the third attempt, please follow the procedures below:

1. Call the Calgary Seniors office at **403-266-6200** during office hours from 8:30AM to 4:30PM – Monday through Friday and talk with an available Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will attempt to contact the senior and their emergency contact if required. The Program Coordinator will notify the volunteers of any updates.
2. If out of business hours call the senior's emergency contact and ask them to check on the senior.
3. Call the hospital (Patient Location line) Contact the closest hospital to where the senior lives as a start:
  - Rockyview Hospital: **403-943-3000**
  - South Health Campus: **403-956-1111**
  - Peter Lougheed Hospital: **403-943-4500**
  - Foothills Hospital: **403-944-1110***Tell them that you are a volunteer checking up on a client. They may or may not give you information on your client.*
4. As a final resort, call the police non-emergency line at 403-266-1234 and request a house check/wellbeing check in case there is something wrong
5. Trust your gut! Always call **9-1-1** if you suspect a life threatening emergency.
6. Always follow up with your corresponding Program Coordinator to keep them informed on the situation so they can follow up appropriately.

## Vehicle Accident

After an accident, the Calgary Seniors volunteer is responsible for avoiding further damage and protecting the senior's interest. In case of an accident, the driver should stop immediately and take all necessary precautions to prevent additional harm:

- Pull off the road (*if you can do so safely*)
- Put the vehicle in park, turn off the ignition and engage the emergency brake
- Call for help as soon as possible. Stay with the senior if possible and have someone else call **9-1-1** to report the accident and your location.
- Check for injuries and provide first aid, if trained.
- Do not move any injured person as it is likely to cause further injury. Move only if the person is in immediate danger.
- Stay with the injured person and keep them warm. Provide comfort until help arrives.
- Never leave the scene of an accident
- It is usually safest to stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. If it is unsafe in the vehicle, then exit from the side away from traffic and be careful if you find it necessary to walk back onto the road.
- Gather information at the scene: exchange insurance and driver information; write down witness names, addresses, phone number and other information; note the names of any passengers in the other car and describe any visible injuries.

## Medical Emergency

In the case of a medical emergency, it is important to remain calm. Call **9-1-1** and report the emergency. Try to stay as close to the senior as possible and reassure them that help is on the way.

- Conduct CPR or first aid only if trained.
- Do not move the senior unless they are in immediate danger.
- Do not give the senior any medication without prior knowledge of the senior's medical condition. Only provide medication if requested by the senior or emergency personnel.
- Stay with the senior until help arrives.
- Report the incident immediately to Calgary Seniors.







# VOLUNTEER PREP KIT

- Client Match Contact Information • Volunteer Service Team Contact Information
- First Home Visit Risk and Safety Assessment • Volunteer Do's and Don'ts
- Friendship Building Exercise

# Volunteer Prep Kit

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## Client Match Contact Information

To be filled out and referred to once you have been permanently matched with a senior.

Senior Contact Information	
Senior's Name:	
Senior's Phone Number:	Alternative Phone Number:
Senior's Address:	
Confirmed Meeting Time:	
Emergency Contact Information	
Name:	Relationship to Senior:
Phone Number:	
Alternate Phone Number:	
Comment:	

*For any emergency and safety procedures, please refer to page 13.*

## Seniors Social Supports Team Contact Information

To be referred to by volunteers for any questions, general inquiries and ongoing communication.

Program	Corresponding Program Coordinator
Seniors Social Supports Manager	<b>Annastasia Stevens</b> Email: <a href="mailto:astevens@calgaryseniors.org">astevens@calgaryseniors.org</a>
Escorted Transportation Pet Assist	<b>Emma Rudolf</b> Office Phone (Direct): 587-349-5090 Email: <a href="mailto:erudolf@calgaryseniors.org">erudolf@calgaryseniors.org</a>
Shopping Companion Caring Companion	<b>Shannon Janewski</b> Office Phone (Direct): 587-349-5091 Email: <a href="mailto:sjanewski@calgaryseniors.org">sjanewski@calgaryseniors.org</a>
Practical Kindness - QMV Phone Friends	<b>Britanny Stretch-Carlyon</b> Office Phone (Direct): 587-349-5084 Email: <a href="mailto:bstretch-carlyon@calgaryseniors.org">bstretch-carlyon@calgaryseniors.org</a>
Friendly Visiting	<b>Amy Corcoran</b> Office Phone (Direct): 587-349-5089 Email: <a href="mailto:acorcoran@calgaryseniors.org">acorcoran@calgaryseniors.org</a>
Volunteer Intake	<b>Stacy Penner</b> Office Phone (Direct): 587-349-5087 Email: <a href="mailto:spenner@calgaryseniors.org">spenner@calgaryseniors.org</a>
Volunteer Engagement	<b>Jessica White</b> Office Phone (Direct): 403-265-5181 Email: <a href="mailto:jwhite@calgaryseniors.org">jwhite@calgaryseniors.org</a>

## First Home Visit Risk and Safety Assessment

A quick reference guide for volunteers to look for on their first home visit

### Internal Environment

- Does anyone other than the senior live in the home?
- Are pets and their environment being cared for?
- Are pets friendly and safe?
- Are there clear pathways or environmental hazards in the home?  
*(Clutter, slippery surfaces, fall hazards, poor lighting...)*
- Are there any visible fire risks?  
*(Combustibles, blocked fire exists, smoking, blocked vents...)*
- Are there smoke detectors?
- Are there any visible health hazards?  
*(Disease, cleanliness, dangerous substances, misuse of medication or drugs...)*

### External Environment

- Are there any tripping/slipping hazards outside the home?  
*(Broken steps, ice, uneven ground...)*
- Are there any neighbourhood concerns?  
*(Adequate lighting, neighbours, crime, vandalism...)*
- Litter or garbage that causes a threat?  
*(Needles, feces, condoms...)*

*If you notice any of the above, please immediately contact the program coordinator before your next visit.*

## Deaf & Hear Alberta

Refer to these Tips and Tricks on how to communicate with people effectively who have hearing loss:

- Get the person's attention before you start speaking
- Ensure good lighting
- Move to a quieter area
- Face the person
- Use body language and facial expressions

## Volunteer Do's and Don'ts

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive Listening</li> <li>• Redirection of negative fixations</li> <li>• Lively discussions</li> <li>• Respectful and conscious of word choices (<i>E.g. Sweetie, Honey, etc.</i>)</li> <li>• Recognize everyone is an adult with the right to make personal choices (<i>even bad choices</i>)</li> <li>• Ask before touching or helping (<i>inclusive to body and items – such as wheels chairs or walkers</i>)</li> <li>• Set and maintain healthy boundaries</li> <li>• Report or inform corresponding Program Coordinators about additional requests for assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not engage in inappropriate activities (<i>E.g. Pornographic material, drug use, excessive alcohol consumption, etc.</i>)</li> <li>• Avoid overriding or forcing opinions, views, and values/beliefs</li> <li>• Avoid getting involved in the seniors' family or personal disputes and drama</li> <li>• Do not bathe, toilet, assist in cleaning, administer medication with the senior(s)</li> <li>• Do not enter into an intimate relationship with the senior</li> <li>• Do not agree to becoming the senior's emergency contact or other legal witness/agent</li> </ul>

*If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your Program Coordinator.*

### Friendship Building Exercise

It can be difficult to know where to start when you are building a friendship with someone new! This list of questions is intended to help get the conversation rolling between volunteers and their senior friends. You can go through them in order, or pick and choose questions at random...it's up to you. Feel free to add more questions to the list before you meet your senior for the first time. We've left some extra spaces for that purpose. You may want to let the senior answer the question, and then answer it yourself. It's a fun way for you to get to know one another! *Have fun, be respectful, and most importantly, don't forget to be a good listener.*

### Questions to ask your senior:

- What is your full name?
- Were you named after anyone?
- Do you like your name?
- Where were you born?
- Did you grow up there?
- If not, where did you grow up?
- What kind of school did you go to as a kid?
- How did you get to school?
- Do you have any stories about your school days?
- Who were your friends? Who were your teachers?
- What was your favorite subject?
- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- Do you come from a large or small family?
- What was life like when you were young?
- What kinds of games did you play? Activities did you do?
- What were the holidays like?
- Which holidays did you celebrate?
- Which holiday was your favorite?
- How did you celebrate each holiday?
- What was your favorite tradition?
- Do you keep any of those traditions now?
- Did you ever marry and have kids?
- If yes, how did you meet your spouse?
- How did the proposal go?
- What was your wedding like?
- How many children did you have?
- Where were they born?
- Do you remember them as babies? Young children?
- Do you have grandchildren? Great grandchildren?
- Did you have a pet growing up?
- Do you like animals?



# SeniorConnect

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The SeniorConnect program offers a channel for concerned citizens to take action on behalf of a senior who may be at-risk, or in crisis in the community. This senior may be a friend, relative, or neighbour. With the help of the Distress Centre 24-hr help line (**403-266-4357**) you are able to discuss your concerns and make an anonymous referral. This referral initiates a prompt home visit by our SeniorConnect worker who will address immediate concerns with the senior, stabilize a crisis, and secure ongoing community supports. For more information please go to [www.seniorconnectcalgary.org](http://www.seniorconnectcalgary.org).

## Warning Signs that a senior may be at risk include:

### Personal Appearance

- Clothing not appropriate for weather
- Disheveled appearance
- Sudden or extreme weight gain or loss

### Physical Health Issues

- Loss of mobility
- Difficulty getting around
- frequent or chronic illness

### Mental Health/ Emotional State

- Aggression, shouting, swearing
- seeing things that aren't there
- Suspiciousness or lack of trust

### Social Problems

- Expresses loneliness
- No family or friends
- Housebound

### Economic Problems

- Unpaid bills stacked up
- Empty bank account, no food
- Power, gas, or phone cut off

### Addiction/Substance Abuse

- Frequent prescription refills
- Frequent consumption of alcohol and/or other substance
- Gambling/ economic issues
- Self-neglect, poor hygiene

### Caregiver Stress

- Complaints of feeling overwhelmed
- Caregiver is impatient/irritable
- No evident support system for caregiver
- Complaints of feeling trapped

### Risk of Suicide

- Speaks about giving up
- Puts affairs in order
- Gives possessions away

### Elder Abuse

- Expressed or observed fear
- Bruises, frequent injuries
- Untreated wounds, withdrawn

### Condition of the Home

- Excessive garbage, clutter
- Safety hazards, poor repair
- Many pets/pets appear neglected







**Calgary Seniors'**  
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