

# Cupertino Senior Center

## Volunteer Handbook



CUPERTINO

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**VOLUNTEER NOTES**

**I. Welcome**

The Cupertino Senior Center is pleased to welcome you to our volunteer program. We appreciate your interest and are grateful that you have chosen to share your time and talent with us. In whatever capacity you have chosen, we hope that you find your experience at the senior center fulfilling and gratifying.

This handbook is designed to help ensure your success as a senior center volunteer. To help you succeed in your new volunteer endeavor, this handbook covers basic information ranging from volunteer duties and practices to opportunities and procedures.

Again, on behalf of the senior center staff and participants, we welcome you to our volunteer program. We appreciate your support and interest in making the City of Cupertino Senior Center a special place for our members.

## **IX. Staff Contact Information:**

As a volunteer, if you are ever unsure as to what to do, go to a staff person for help and/or advice. Staff is here to help and enhance your volunteer experience.

Front Desk	(408)777-3150
Volunteer Coordinator	(408)777-3152
Recreation Coordinator	(408)777-3375
Office Assistant	(408)777-3532
Senior Recreation Supervisor	(408)777-3374
Case Manager	(408)777-3155
Travel Coordinator	(408)777-3198
Recreation Specialist	(408)777-3153
Facility Attendant	(408)777-3150

The staff welcomes you as part of our team to make the Cupertino Senior Center the best it can be.

## **II. Vision and Mission**

As part of the City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Department, the Cupertino Senior Center contributes many fine programs to our community. The department's vision of supporting a "Positive, Healthy, Connected Community" is the cornerstone for programs and activities at the senior center.

The senior center's mission is to provide a welcoming and friendly senior center for everyone 50 years and older, enhancing a healthy lifestyle through quality education, recreation, services, travel, socials, and volunteer opportunities.

The mission of the volunteer program is to provide opportunities for community service by supporting projects and programs that help seniors maintain a healthy, enjoyable, and independent lifestyle. Volunteers benefit by contributing their skills, abilities, and knowledge for the betterment of the community and receive satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment, and personal development.

## **III. History of the Senior Center**

In 1965, the Cupertino Live Long and Like It Club #5, a senior citizens activity and social club, was taken under the wing of the City of Cupertino with a membership of about fifteen people. The City of Cupertino opened the Senior Drop-in Center located in the former parks and recreation department building on the Memorial Park site in 1974. This small building was known as "The Little Blue House" and over two hundred senior members participated in activities and services during the first year the drop-in center opened. In 1980, the City of Cupertino built a new 5,500 square foot senior center and the senior membership increased to seven hundred. By 1998, the senior center membership had grown to 1,800 members, and the Cupertino Council approved a new 15,000 square foot senior center that opened in 2001.

Today, the Cupertino Senior Center is a focal point for senior activities in our community. It serves over 2,300 senior members for classes, services, volunteer opportunities, trips, and socials.

#### **IV. Getting Started on Your Volunteer Service**

Prospective volunteers must fill out a volunteer application and submit it to the senior center for evaluation by staff. Qualified applicants will be invited to participate in an interview process, and may be required to complete a fingerprinting background check, depending upon the assignment.

##### **Volunteer Qualifications**

Volunteers must be current members of the senior center and 50 years old or older.

Selection of the volunteer is based on his/her qualifications for a specific assignment or project as determined by the senior center staff and based on the needs of the senior center.

A volunteer cannot serve in a volunteer capacity where a conflict of interest exists or if a current City of Cupertino employee.

##### **Recording Volunteer Hours**

Volunteers are required to keep track of their service hours by filling out a volunteer hours sheet located in the volunteer binder at the front reception desk.

All volunteers who fulfill twenty (20) or more hours in a fiscal year, (July 1-June 30), will qualify for an invitation to the Annual Volunteer Recognition Lunch.

#### **VIII. Safety**

Safety of everyone in and about the senior center is a primary concern of all the staff and volunteers. Every effort should be made to see that each person has a healthful and enjoyable experience while at the center. If you observe anything that appears unsafe, please notify a staff person immediately (wet floor, blocked exit, unsafe equipment, etc.)

##### **Volunteer Accidents or Injury**

Volunteers who are injured should report their injury to their supervisor as soon as possible. If a volunteer requires immediate medical attention, contact the supervisor to inform them of the situation. If necessary, call 9-911, then advise the supervisor. Staff will fill out and submit the appropriate paperwork.

##### **Emergency Response**

Emergency response is called when an incident occurs that could have serious adverse effects on the health or safety of staff, volunteers, members, the community or the environment. These incidents may be the result of accidents, fires, terrorism, workplace violence, explosions or acute unplanned releases of hazardous materials, or natural disasters, such as earthquakes or other external factors.

The senior center's emergency response team will wear the following uniform to identify them as emergency responders. The white hard hats are for Incident Commander and alternate. The blue hard hats are emergency response team members.

## VII. Tips on being An Excellent Volunteer

For a successful experience, the following points should be carefully considered:

- Be patient with everyone
- Dress appropriately, be on time, and ready to help
- Be friendly, warm, and courteous
- Have fun while you are volunteering
- Enthusiasm is very important! It is great to have a positive attitude
- Bring a strong sense of responsibility and dependability, be present when you are expected
- Have a sincere interest in serving people
- Be able to listen, have good judgment, tact, patience, cheerfulness, kindness, and a sense of humor
- Recognize the importance of each individual. Take time to talk to others
- Set a good example as others may be influenced by your attitude and behavior
- Help create a friendly environment of support and understanding
- Attend volunteer meetings and/or training sessions
- Make suggestions, your input is welcome and important
- Tell your friends about the senior center and encourage them to join and volunteer
- Promote our senior center programs and trips whenever appropriate

## V. Volunteer Assignments

Our senior center benefits greatly from having member volunteers covering different assignments as listed below. The senior center is happy to work with community organizations when the need arises.

**Volunteer Advisory Council:** The Volunteer Advisory Council meets bi-monthly with Cupertino Senior Center staff to develop ideas, discuss issues, and plan events to make the senior center even better. The board member positions are: President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary-Treasurer, and 17 committee chair positions.

**Desk Volunteer:** The desk volunteer is the “window to the senior center,” where visitors get their first impression of the center. Front desk volunteers register seniors for membership, trips, and programs. They answer phones and give out information regarding the center. This is a people-oriented job with detailed task assignments and requires computer training on the center’s CLASS Program; computer skills are desirable. Most shifts require a 4-hour per week commitment.

**Entertainment Coordinator Assistant:** Assist the center’s recreation coordinator and volunteer coordinator in researching low-cost entertainment for the monthly Birthday Bash, monthly socials, international luncheons, and special holiday events.

**Host:** Meet and greet participants and speakers for lectures, special events, socials, and services. Introduce speakers and prepare refreshments as needed. This group meets quarterly to choose what events they would like to host.

**Kitchen:** Prepare meals for center luncheons, serve, and clean up. Training will be provided on proper food handling and safety.

**Needlecraft Group:** The senior center needlecrafters are a social group that uses donated yarn to make baby blankets and lap throws that are donated to local hospitals. All levels of needlecrafters are welcome to join on Thursdays from 11:15am-1:30pm. Some projects can be done at home. Yarn donations are welcome.

**Newsletter Crew:** This group meets on even numbered months, usually the third or fourth Friday morning, to collate and prepare the senior center's newsletter for mailing. This is a fun and social activity that provides a much-needed service to the senior center.

**Photographer:** Attend and photograph senior center events and programs for albums, brochure covers, press releases, and the city's website.

**Special Events Committee:** This group organizes special events such as cultural celebrations, fund-raising, and social events. Volunteers are needed to assist with planning and presenting these events.

**Translator:** Volunteers are needed to act as translators in various languages for services, guest speakers, and written flyers. This is an on call assignment and will be contacted as needed.

**Bingo Program Caller:** The center's bingo program is looking for volunteers willing to be bingo callers. This position requires running the bingo machine and clearly calling out the bingo numbers. Bingo meets every Friday from 1-3:30 pm. Training is provided.

**Librarian:** Help organize the books, magazines, and puzzles located in the senior center. This is a great volunteer position for those who enjoy books and offers the flexibility of creating your own schedule.

**Travel Desk Volunteer:** Assist the center's travel coordinator with various computer, phone, and paperwork tasks.

## **Keys**

Keys that are required for the successful running of your program will be available to you as needed. You will sign out the keys, and they become your responsibility until the end of the program. You will return and sign in the keys at the end of the program. You are not authorized to check out any keys without your supervisor's approval. If you lose the keys, please notify your supervisor immediately. For security reasons, do not label keys with the facility's name.

## **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program**

The Cupertino Senior Center is a registered RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) site. RSVP is offered through the Office on Aging, in partnership with the National Corporation for Community Service, and is run through the City of San Jose's Department of Parks and Recreation and Neighborhood Services. RSVP promotes volunteerism by offering adults, 55 and older, the opportunity to meet a variety of community needs through various volunteer services. All Cupertino Senior Center volunteers who meet the age requirement may register for RSVP and use their senior center volunteer hours toward the program. To find out more about the benefits of RSVP, contact the senior center's volunteer coordinator at (408) 777-3150. RSVP may be reached at (408) 979-7906.

## **Lost and found**

Lost and found articles should be placed in the lost and found drawer located at the front reception desk. Please fill out the form with the date and location the item was found.

## **Mail Drawer**

Located at the front reception desk is the mail pick up drawer. This is a place members can leave items for instructors or the Better Part TV group can leave DVD's for pick up. Please fill out the form located in the drawer indicating who left the item and who the item is intended for. That way if it is not picked up in a timely manner, we have contact information.

### **City Equipment**

Any office equipment may only be used for city business. Telephone must be available for city business. Please do not use the telephone for personal calls. When answering the telephone, please say, "Cupertino Senior Center, (your name), may I help you." If you need to put a call on hold, please use the hold button. Volunteers shall not request or permit the use of city owned vehicles, equipment, facilities, or materials for personal use or financial gain. The copy machine is for city business. There is a 10 cent per page fee to use the copy machine for personal use.

### **Harassment-Zero Tolerance Policy**

The City of Cupertino is committed to providing a work environment in which volunteers are treated with respect and dignity. The city has zero tolerance for harassment, discrimination, and retaliation by employees and volunteers be it a single act or multiple acts. The city prohibits all forms of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation on the basis of protected classifications or activities that occur on the job or at the work site, including acts of employees and volunteers. Violations of this zero tolerance policy will not be tolerated, and perpetrators will be subject to sanction or disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

### **Electronic Communication Policy**

This policy sets guidelines for using City of Cupertino resources in accessing the Internet that retain its values for obtaining information while also assuring its appropriate use in conducting city business.

Each volunteer should exercise good judgment and common sense in using the Internet. Personal use should be brief. Unauthorized or improper use of the city's Internet connection may result in terminating access to it. The city will monitor monthly Internet use by user name.

**Historian:** Keep records and pictures of center events. Organize photo albums, newspaper clippings, web printouts, event programs, and the chronology of events for the senior center's archives.

**Computer Instructor:** Work with the senior center's recreation specialist to teach various computer concepts and programs such as word processing, Excel, digitally organizing photographs, social networking, and email. Computer instructor should be able to answer technical questions in classes and labs.

**The Better Part:** This weekly senior TV production program uses skills of camera operation, audio, switching, videotaping, and editing. Training is provided.

**Volunteer Registered Nurses:** Registered nurses volunteer to take blood pressure readings for seniors on a weekly basis.

**Rhythmaires Band:** A group of volunteer senior musicians and singers provide musical programs for the enjoyment of the members and the public, especially for seniors in nursing homes, senior care facilities, and for special functions at the Cupertino Senior Center. Practices are held at the senior center 9:30am to 11:30am every Friday. Performances are generally limited to one hour at various venues.

**Friendly Visitor:** Volunteers in this program will be visiting homebound seniors at their home. Friendly visitors will be assigned to one client with whom they will visit once a week to provide socialization and mental stimulation. All the clients are from the Cupertino Senior Center Case Management Program who are frail elders living independently in their own homes. All clients live in Cupertino or West San Jose. This position requires fingerprinting, references, and a background check.

## **VI. Volunteer Guidelines**

The volunteer coordinator assigns volunteers to the appropriate staff person in conjunction with their chosen volunteer position. The volunteer coordinator will also provide support with any questions or issues relating to staff, members, or other volunteers. Our primary goal is to provide a setting for growth and fulfillment while meeting the needs of the senior center members and program activities.

Volunteers need to be on time for their assignments. If you are unable to keep your volunteer schedule or might be late, please contact the volunteer coordinator or staff as soon as possible by phone, e-mail, or in person. If you are planning a vacation or need time off from your scheduled shift, please notify the staff so that arrangements can be made to cover your assignment.

Please do not report for your volunteer work after consuming any alcohol or drugs.

No smoking or non-emergency personal phone calls while on duty.

Volunteers shall be considerate, tolerant, patient, courteous, and fair with others.

Volunteers shall operate all equipment safely and use safe means of carrying out their duties.

As a volunteer, you may be privileged to information that is confidential in nature. If you are uncertain about information you have heard, please refer to staff. It is important that members are protected against exploitation and undue embarrassment.

## **Senior Center Hours**

The Cupertino Senior Center is open for business Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm. As a city facility, we follow the city's holiday schedule.

## **Volunteer Training**

Volunteer training will be provided by staff throughout the year. These well-planned volunteer training sessions will focus on skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to fulfill assigned responsibilities. Please attend all volunteer trainings that are specific to your program.

## **Appropriate Appearance While Volunteering**

You will be given a nametag, which should be worn whenever you are on assignment.

Your appearance is the first indication to the public as to your credibility as a volunteer. The Cupertino Senior Center does not restrict your grooming habits. We do ask, however, that you present a respectable image to the public while on duty.

Jewelry that constricts one's ability to perform his/her required job task or that may present an unsafe working condition should not be worn.

Many people have allergic reactions to scents, please limit the use of personal fragrances worn while volunteering.