



Tennessee SHIP/SMP Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) Handbook

SHIP and SMP are national programs funded in part by the Administration for Community Living. In Tennessee, SHIP is administered by the Tennessee Commission of Aging and Disability and SMP is administered by the Upper Cumberland Development District in partnership with the Statewide Area Agency on Aging and Disability network and Family and Children's Service.

Updated: April 1, 2021

Welcome and thank you letter from ACL

On behalf of the U.S. Administration for Community Living, ACL wants to welcome you to the SHIP/SMP volunteer program and thank you for volunteering in the effort to protect the financial and emotional well-being of older Americans in our nation's fight against those who commit fraud, waste, and abuse in the Medicare program.

In recent years, the ACL partners in this fight—the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the HHS Office of the Inspector General, and the Department of Justice, including the FBI—have created the resources needed—including sophisticated technology and skilled local investigative and enforcement teams—to identify and prosecute criminals who steal hundreds of millions of dollars each year from Medicare and related health insurance programs. That is important work.

But in the end, we can't forget that no law or technology is as effective at preventing fraud as educated and informed consumers. Tips from Medicare beneficiaries helped take down a fraud scheme in Miami involving false claims for community mental health services. The investigation ultimately led to a judgment of \$3.8 million and a recovery of \$1.6 million against the defendants, including one who was sentenced to 3 years in prison and 3 years' probation.

Those tips likely would never have been made without the extensive outreach and educational efforts of the Florida Senior Medicare Patrol – the same outreach and educational work that you and other SHIP/SMP volunteers in your state are being trained to do or to support. Preventing fraud takes a lot of time, preparation and hard work. It's people like you who bear a heavy part of that load – without always seeing the most direct or obvious rewards.

Sometimes your efforts may result in a big takedown, but more often than not, you will be preventing fraud before it ever takes place. That can be a hard thing to measure, but the benefits for Medicare and America's seniors and people with disabilities are enormous. Since 1965, Medicare has been one of our country's greatest success stories. We have a responsibility to keep it strong for generations to come. And we can't do that without you. Thank you for volunteering with the SHIP/SMP.



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History of the SHIP and SMP Programs

SHIP History

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) was created under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. SHIPs mission is to empower, educate, and assist Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers through objective outreach, counseling, and training, to make informed health insurance decisions that optimize access to care and benefits. The vision of SHIP is to be the known and trusted community resource for Medicare information. Since the launch of Medicare Part D in 2006, the program has blossomed into a well-recognized service. Nationwide, over 12,000 paid staff members, in-kind staff and volunteers work in 1,300 local SHIP offices. Across the country, SHIPs have assisted hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries save millions of dollars. SHIP helps Medicare beneficiaries navigate a health care system that is growing more complex each year.

There are 54 SHIP programs located in each of the 50 states, DC, Guan, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Eighteen states have SHIPs located at their State Department of Commerce and Insurance. Tennessee SHIP, like 36 other programs, is housed mainly in their state's Area Agencies on Aging and Disability. SHIP counselors, in-kind staff and volunteers help beneficiaries and their families identify health insurance needs. SHIP provides outreach information to seniors and adults with disabilities and their families through meetings, seminars, classes, etc. They also provide objective information and counseling to assist consumers in making well-researched, informed decisions about their health care insurance needs.

SMP History

In 1995, the Administration on Aging (AOA), now the Administration for Community Living (ACL), became a partner in a government-led effort to fight fraud, error and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs through a ground-breaking demonstration project called Operation Restore Trust (ORT). ORT's purpose was to coordinate and target federal, state, local and private resources on those areas most plagued by abuse. Operation Restore Trust was announced at the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. The initiative focused on five states where fraud and abuse were most prevalent: California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas.

ORT brought together several agencies within the federal Department of Health and Human Services, including the Health Care Financing Administration (now the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services or CMS), the Office of Inspector General and the Administration on Aging, to fight health care fraud, waste, and abuse. These agencies also worked with partners in law enforcement such as the federal Department of Justice and state and local authorities.

In 1996, Congress enacted the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 (P.L. 104-191). Although HIPAA is best known for rules that protect patient confidentiality, the law also created the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control (HCFAC) program and authorized funding for AoA to support the effective training and mobilization of senior volunteers who provide consumer education to beneficiaries.

Another law enacted in that same session of Congress—the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997 (P.L. 104-208)—affirmed AoA’s role as a key partner in the fight against health care fraud by establishing the program that would come to be called the Senior Medicare Patrol program in 12 local demonstration projects. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) offered legislative language that directed the AoA to form projects that would recruit and train retired doctors, nurses, and other professionals to identify and report error, fraud and abuse.

A Senate Report explained the rationale for the newly created program by saying, “senior citizens are our best front line defense against these losses [from health care fraud and abuse], but they don’t have the information and experience needed” to recognize and accurately report cases of error, fraud, and abuse. The Senior Medicare Patrol would address this problem through volunteers who provide *consumer education* which is, along with provider education, one of the five primary purposes that the HIPAA lists as an authorized use of HCFAC funding.

As a result of this Congressional action, SMP in-kind staff and volunteers are now at work in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. They teach their peers to protect themselves against fraud, safeguard Medicare numbers, and examine Medicare Summary Notices and other documents to detect discrepancies and report suspicious activity. Allocations through the Older Americans Act and the HCFAC program help fund SMP program operations. According to a recent Office of Inspector General report, the SMP program’s paid staff, in-kind staff and volunteers have reached more than 3 million people through some 83,000 group education sessions since the program began in 1997.

All Americans—including people with disabilities and older adults—should be able to live at home with the supports they need, participating in communities that value their contributions. To help meet these needs, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) created a new organization, the Administration for Community Living (ACL). In 2013, the ACL brought together the efforts and achievements of the Administration on Aging, the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and the HHS Office on Disability to serve as the Federal agency responsible for increasing access to community supports, while focusing attention and resources on the unique needs of older Americans and people with disabilities across the lifespan.

In Tennessee, SMP offers assistance in educating beneficiaries on identifying and preventing Medicare and Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse. The SMP program is administered by the Upper Cumberland Area Agency on Aging and Disability. The Upper Cumberland Development District received the grant to administer the SMP program in 2001. The grant is funded in part by Administration on Aging. Prior to January 2006, the program name was Senior Medicare Patrol Project. The Upper Cumberland Development District provides statewide coverage through the participation of all nine Area Agencies on Aging.

TN SHIP/SMP Partnership

TN SHIP/SMP has recruited over 400 in-kind staff and volunteers statewide that serve in many ways, including but not limited to, outreach, education, administrative tasks, and one-on-one counseling. Most in-kind staff and volunteers work with Medicare beneficiaries or are beneficiaries themselves and are thus well-positioned to assist their peers. The main goals for TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff and volunteers are to:

- Inform beneficiaries of their Medicare Rights
- Identify and report errors with billing problems
- Accept complaints about beneficiaries medical care or treatment
- Identify plan choices
- Identify how Medicare works with other insurance
- Inform beneficiaries to protect their personal identity
- Help beneficiaries to identify deceptive health care practices, such as illegal marketing, providing unnecessary or inappropriate services and charging for services that were never provided.

In some cases, SHIP/SMPs do more than counsel and educate. When Medicare beneficiaries cannot act on their own behalf to address these problems, TN SHIP/SMP works with family caregivers and others to address the problems, and if necessary, make referrals to outside organizations that can intervene. Each local TN SHIP/SMP office has a budget to support volunteer services. Both programs work hand in hand to assist all Tennesseans throughout the 95 counties with their questions and concerns about Medicare issues.

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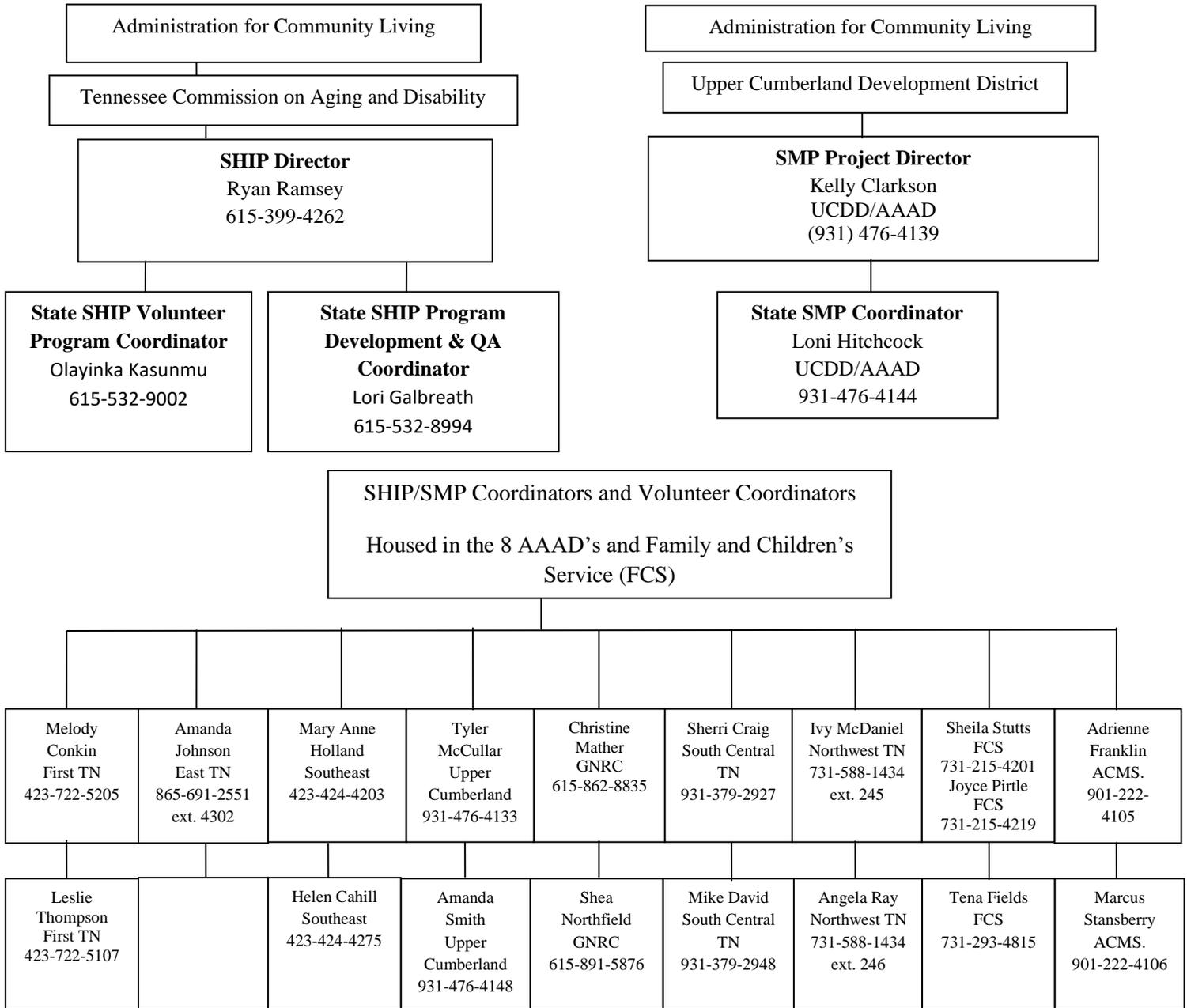
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Tennessee SHIP/SMP Organizational Structure



In-Kind Staff & Volunteers

TN SHIP/SMP Staff Directory

TN SHIP Hotline: 1-877-801-0044

TN SMP Statewide Fraud Hotline: 1-866-836-7677

State Directors:

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TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) Introduction

A comprehensive set of volunteer risk and program management policies guides the operation of the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program. These policies resulted from the Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) project that began in 2010 to assess and identify risks and to provide guidance and resources to program coordinators. All volunteer policies are administered without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation. The Administration for Community Living (ACL) initiated the VRPM project with these factors in mind:

- Growth of the SHIP/SMP programs
- Increased awareness about risks related to in-kind staff and volunteer involvement, for example, with in-kind staff and volunteers who have access to sensitive personal information
- The need to adapt to a changing environment for volunteering in which in-kind staff and volunteers assume responsibility for challenging and responsible tasks
- The SHIP/SMP program's higher profile in the media
- Expectations in the courts and public opinion for high standards and greater accountability in volunteer program

TN SHIP/SMP accepts and encourages the involvement of in-kind staff and volunteers at a range of levels and within all appropriate projects and activities. Involvement of in-kind staff and volunteers is a key component to the success of TN SHIP/SMP. Unless specifically stated, these volunteer policies apply to all in-kind staff and volunteers serving in any role in all programs and projects undertaken by or on behalf of TN SHIP/SMP. If you find that the different policies are in conflict or are causing confusion, please discuss the problem with your volunteer program coordinator. As a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer, you have the right to know and understand the policies and how they affect and protect you. TN SHIP/SMP may make changes to these policies with the permission of the Administration for Community Living and will be updated and discussed with state and regional TN SHIP/SMP staff each year to reassess policies.

Safety is a concern for all in-kind staff, volunteers, and the people we serve—many of whom are vulnerable seniors and disabled individuals—who benefit from TN SHIP/SMP services. Due to the nature of the sensitive information received by TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers we do not recommend minors be recruited at this time. The VRPM project also promotes effectiveness by setting a high standard of care regarding volunteer services. The creation of national standards for this important area of program operations will enhance the program's results. TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program Coordinators and other paid staff will refer to the policies as they coordinate you and the other in-kind staff and volunteers in the program.

If you would like to see the complete set of SHIP/SMP Volunteer Risk and Program Management Policies, ask your volunteer program coordinator.

In-Kind Staff and Volunteers with Disabilities

TN SHIP/SMP values the service of in-kind staff and volunteers with disabilities. Volunteer program coordinators strive to include in-kind staff and volunteers with disabilities in all facets of the program to the best of the in-kind staff and volunteer's ability, and to ensure access to all TN SHIP/SMP program facilities. When requested, the program will make reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of in-kind staff and volunteers with disabilities.

Volunteer Role Classifications and Position Descriptions

TN SHIP/SMP operates with 5 standard in-kind staff and volunteer roles. State and local programs may create additional roles, modify current roles, or combine current roles to meet specific volunteer program and community needs. TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program coordinators should give you a copy of a position description that describes the purpose, duties, and qualifications for the role(s) in which you have agreed to serve. In-Kind Staff and Volunteers can serve in the TN SHIP/SMP role(s) they choose for as long as they are able to fulfill the requirements of that role.

The five standard SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteer roles are:

- In-Kind Staff/Volunteer Counselor (Level 3): This role involves direct discussion with beneficiaries about their individual situations and may include review of personal information such as Medicare Summary Notices, billing statements and other related financial and health documents, enrolling beneficiaries in their healthcare options and applying for assistance programs to help pay their Medicare costs.
- MIPPA In-Kind Staff or Volunteer (Level 2) – This role involved direct discussion and assistance in applying for low-income assistance programs such as Low-Income Subsidy (or Extra Help) and Medicare Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, and QI-1) and enrollment in Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage plans.
- Public and Media In-Kind Staff/Volunteer (Level 2): This role involves transporting, disseminating, and presenting TN SHIP/SMP information and materials to sites, events, or groups. This role involves staffing information booths or exhibits at events such as health fairs. In-Kind Staff and Volunteers who staff booths or exhibits provide general information about TN SHIP/SMP to the public and answer simple inquiries.
- Administrative In-Kind Staff/Volunteer (Level 1): This role involves activities such as copying, filing, data entry, and assistance with mailings in support of TN SHIP/SMP activity.
- Media In-Kind Staff/Volunteer (Level 1): This role involves updating and maintaining the TN SHIP/SMP website, monthly newsletters, and social media outlets.

TN SHIP/SMP considers these five roles—in-kind staff/volunteer counselor, MIPPA In-kind staff/volunteer, public and media in-kind staff/volunteer, administrative in-kind staff/volunteer, and media in-kind staff/volunteer— to be positions of trust. This means that the roles involve access to beneficiary's personal or confidential information, or to money or other valuables. All in-kind staff and volunteer roles are subject to the same screening process.

In-Kind Staff and Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers have certain rights and responsibilities because in-kind staff and volunteers are valuable resources to the program and the communities they serve. At the same time, TN SHIP/SMP expects in-kind staff and volunteers to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to comply with the program's volunteer policies, and to remain dedicated to the program's values, goals and procedures. In-Kind Staff and Volunteers agree that TN SHIP/SMP may decide to end an in-kind staff or volunteer's relationship with the program or to change the nature of the in-kind staff or volunteer's assignment when appropriate.

As a TN SHIP/SMP In-Kind Staff and Volunteer, you have a right to:

- Receive meaningful assignments
- Treatment as an equal
- A safe service environment
- A respectful service environment free of harassment
- Receive orientation and ongoing training
- Receive effective coordination
- Receive constructive feedback on a regular basis
- Receive informal and formal recognition
- Receive clear information about the boundaries for the in-kind staff and volunteer role you are to do and not to do (see the position description for your in-kind staff or volunteer role)
- Receive all the pertinent information you need to perform your assignments
- Refuse any tasks or work assignments, especially when the assignment requires you to do something for which you have not been trained
- Security and confidentiality for the records in your in-kind staff or volunteer file
- Examine the contents of your in-kind staff or volunteer file
- Make complaints and file grievances
- To be granted a leave of absence when necessary
- Resign from your service at any time

As a TN SHIP/SMP In-Kind Staff or Volunteer, you have a responsibility to:

- Provide TN SHIP/SMP services responsibly and objectively, without regard to the background or characteristics of the beneficiaries or clients or with favoritism to specific services, providers, or products
- Represent TN SHIP/SMP only to the extent that your position description and role and not to present yourself as a spokesperson for TN SHIP/SMP in a formal sense, and also alert your volunteer program coordinator when you are unsatisfied with your assignment
- Use your affiliation only in the interests of TNSHIP/SMP, and not to promote religious or political beliefs or personal business dealings
- Accept direction, coordination, and support from designated TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program Coordinator

- Inform your volunteer program coordinator of any conflicts of interest that may arise after placement in your in-kind staff or volunteer position
- Ask questions and speak up in a constructive and effective manner when things are not right
- Report any abuse that you may witness involving the program's beneficiaries or clients
- Report incidents or hazards such as accidents, injuries, errors, unprofessional behavior and the like to your volunteer program coordinator
- Report on your in-kind staff or volunteer activities on a monthly and timely basis
- Protect the confidentiality of the program's beneficiaries and/or clients
- Follow policies and procedures to ensure the security of clients' electronic and hard copy data
- Notify your volunteer program coordinator of absences that will prevent you from performing an assigned task
- Attend all meetings and complete required training programs, including continuing education programs

Representing the SHIP/SMP

In-Kind Staff and Volunteers who are trained to make group presentations are authorized to discuss and answer questions about approved TN SHIP/SMP education programs. In that capacity, you are free to identify yourself as being affiliated with TN SHIP/SMP. You should not, however, hold yourself as a public spokesperson for the program in connection with media inquiries or questions related to official policy positions.

Remaining Non-biased

When counseling individuals or presenting materials to the public about Medicare it is vitally important that TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers remain non-biased. As counselors and presenters it is your responsibility to stay objective and not appear to sway a beneficiary's decision on their health care in any way. If it is brought to the TN SHIP/SMP staff's attention an in-kind staff or volunteer is not remaining non-biased corrective action will be taken.

Dress Code

Dress according to what is appropriate and comfortable for your in-kind staff or volunteer position. Please ask your volunteer program coordinator if you have any questions regarding what appropriate attire is.

Orientation and Training

Orientation and training are essential to developing the knowledge and skills that TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers need to serve the people of their communities effectively. Orientation takes place shortly after TN SHIP/SMP accepts in-kind staff or a volunteer into service.

Training Programs

TN SHIP/SMP has established minimum training requirements for the various in-kind staff and volunteer roles. TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program coordinators organize and conduct the training directly to in-kind staff and volunteers in-person or web-based. In some cases, veteran in-kind staff or volunteers may be asked to assist volunteer program coordinators in training. The advertisement of training will be publicized broadly and

through a variety of methods to ensure no exclusion and promote diversity. Potential in-kind staff and volunteers will be contacted within three business days to discuss interest in the program provided the volunteer program coordinator is in the office. While discussing the in-kind staff or volunteer's interest, if the volunteer program coordinator is not able to meet the potential in-kind staff or volunteer's needs, they may not recommend volunteering with the programs. In the case that there is no orientation or initial training scheduled at the time the in-kind staff or volunteer is interested in participating with the program; the volunteer program coordinator will maintain a wait list to keep prospective in-kind staff and volunteers informed of future training opportunities. In-Kind Staff and Volunteers must complete the training required for their roles and demonstrate through testing that they have attained minimum levels of comprehension and skill before program coordinators give them in-kind staff or volunteer placement for activities. Starting in 2020, testing is available via physical and electronic formats for all staff, in-kind staff, and volunteers. Testing will be based on the in-kind staff or volunteer role and given to all currently active in-kind staff and volunteers as well as new in-kind staff and volunteers at training. In-kind staff and volunteers may use any materials available to answer test questions including, but not limited to, the TN SHIP and SMP Volunteer Manuals, the Medicare and You Handbook, Medicare.gov, the internet, etc. To maintain certification, each in-kind staff or volunteer will have to pass this exam with a score of 85% or more on an annual basis. TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteers will have three (3) attempts to pass the test. Once the in-kind staff or volunteer has been active for thirty (30) days or more, the volunteer program coordinator may contact the in-kind staff or volunteer to make sure he/she is comfortable in their role. In-Kind Staff and Volunteers will also receive a training certificate of completion, testing certificate of completion and a welcome letter accepting them into the TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer program. In-Kind Staff and Volunteers may receive name badges once proof of active in-kind staff or volunteer status is achieved.

SHIP/SMP Counselor Training: The goal of this program is to provide TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff and volunteers with the necessary skills and resources to handle one-on-one counseling sessions and simple inquiries consistently and effectively.

SHIP Training: This training program provides TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff, and volunteers with a foundation of knowledge of Medicare.

SMP Foundations Training: This training program provides TN SMP staff, in-kind staff, and volunteers with a foundation of knowledge in two main content areas including the SMP program, and Medicare fraud and abuse.

SMP Group Education Training: This program provides presenters of TN SHIP/SMP group education sessions with the necessary skills and resources to deliver the TN SHIP/SMP message consistently and effectively to Medicare beneficiaries, caregivers, and other interested groups.

In addition to the formal training programs for the various TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteer roles, in-kind staff and volunteers may receive one-on-one training through coaching and feedback of a volunteer program coordinator or a veteran in-kind staff or volunteer mentor. TN SHIP/SMP may also require attendance at continuing education training programs to provide informational updates and/or additional

skills training. TN SHIP/SMP encourages in-kind staff and volunteers to build their skills through training outside TN SHIP/SMP sponsored training, such as conferences and seminars, while serving with the program.

TN SHIP/SMP program coordinators receive annual training provide by the TN SHIP/SMP Directors and State Coordinators to ensure effective volunteer management and coordination. Additional, TN SHIP/SMP funders and partners provide web-based and conference training to improve volunteer management skills for all paid staff.

In-Kind Staff, Volunteer and Paid Staff Relationships

TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers are to be acknowledged as partners to paid staff in implementing the mission and goals of the programs. In no way does in-kind staff or volunteer involvement risk the employment of paid TN SHIP/SMP staff. Volunteer program coordinators have a job description and, in many cases, previous volunteer coordination experiences that details their role and responsibilities for coordinating TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers. All TN SHIP/SMP program coordinators will work in conjunction with in-kind staff and volunteers to optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs. TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteer input may be requested upon program coordinator evaluations. In the instance of a non-TN SHIP/SMP paid staff person requests assistance from a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff (not employed by the SHIP/SMP grantee) or volunteer, that request must go through the volunteer program coordinator.

SHIP/SMP Volunteers from another state

Each SHIP/SMP across the country has a different standard of training for in-kind staff and volunteers. In the event a SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer moves to Tennessee and wishes to continue volunteer activity, the Tennessee State SHIP Volunteer Program Coordinator and/or the Tennessee SMP Program Coordinator will contact the staff person in the state the volunteer served. The coordinator(s) will work with the other state to determine the level of training the volunteer has, what type of activity the volunteer has done, whether the volunteer is in current good standing and if the volunteer has passed a background check. Once that is determined the coordinator(s) will work with the Regional Volunteer Program Coordinator to determine the certification exam level the volunteer will take. The volunteer will have 2 attempts to pass the exam to make sure they are knowledgeable about different aspects of Medicare. Additionally, the volunteer must complete the Tennessee Volunteer Application, sign the last 2 pages of this manual, pass a background check, and have a face-to-face visit with their Regional Volunteer Program Coordinator before they will be allowed to volunteer with the program.

Screening Procedures

All TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program coordinators have a process to keep all screening materials confidential and protected. This documentation will be retained based on the policy of the local agency that houses TN SHIP/SMP. Screening and acceptance will be conducted by the volunteer program coordinator. Acceptance as an in-kind staff or volunteer is not automatic.

In-Kind Staff and Volunteer Application

Every person interested in becoming a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteer must complete the TN SHIP/SMP In-Kind Staff/Volunteer Application. The application includes name, address, phone number, email, social security number, driver's license number, auto insurance information, and availability among other requests. In-kind staff and volunteers are notified a screening process will take place upon completing and signing the application. All information provided on the application should be correct to the best of your knowledge. Any false information on your application may result in disqualification or dismissal from the TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program. Once the in-kind staff or volunteer has been properly screened and trained they will be placed on a three (3) month probationary period. Upon changes in policy, current in-kind staff and volunteers will be subject to additional screening as required by the Administration for Community Living. Every 5 years, your volunteer program coordinator will update the screening process for each individual active in-kind staff or volunteer.

Background Checks

All in-kind staff and volunteers must be free from criminal and abusive history that could pose a risk to vulnerable adults. All in-kind staff and volunteers are subject to a criminal background check to include local criminal records check from local law enforcement records for all residences of the volunteer, if available.

An internet records clearance must be completed on each applicant and documented in an in-kind staff or volunteer's file. The internet records clearance involves a background check of the following: Drug Offender Registry (<https://apps.tn.gov/methor-app/search>), TN Felony Offender Database (<https://apps.tn.gov/foil-app/search.jsp;jsessionid=9HopBqVxzqG6AR8Aghq2P2sD>), National Sexual Offender Registry (<https://www.nsopw.gov/?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>), and Department of Health Abuse Registry (<https://apps.health.tn.gov/AbuseRegistry/>).

Conflict of Interest

TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers may not be licensed to sell health insurance or any related products. TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers cannot promote private, political, or personal interests as they go about performing the duties described in the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program policies and guidelines. To comply with this requirement, I agree to the following:

- I will in no way attempt to conduct market research, solicit, or persuade clients to purchase or enroll in a specific type of health insurance coverage, to switch from one carrier to another or to replace existing insurance coverage.
- I will not direct or persuade a client to go to a specific provider of service for treatment or to any profit-based billing services.
- I will not direct a client to a specific insurance agent/broker or accept bribes/kickbacks from insurance agents/brokers
- I will not disclose or use confidential or other personal information obtained from a client through my association with TN SHIP/SMP for personal gain or the gain of my employer or any other party.

- I fully understand that the misuse of personal and provided information will result in the termination as a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer and I personally will be held liable for such violations.
- I promise to not accept any gifts or honoraria from beneficiaries, their families, caregivers, or other representatives.

Code of Ethics

As a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer, I realize that a code of ethics applies to my work. In agreeing to serve, I assume certain responsibilities and expect to account for my actions. I will honor the TN SHIP/SMP program's goals and abide by its rules and regulations. I will keep confidential matters confidential, including all matters related to the operation of the TN SHIP/SMP program and all information regarding beneficiaries. I will adhere to the program's required standards of behavior and conduct.

I interpret volunteering to mean that the TN SHIP/SMP staff accepts me as a partner, and I expect to do my work according to the best of my abilities.

I promise to approach my work with an open mind, to participate fully in training according to the standards and practices of TN SHIP/SMP, and to bring my full interest and attention to the work. I believe my attitude toward in-kind staff or volunteer work should be that of a professional and I will devote the time and effort required to perform as such.

Protecting Confidentiality

TN SHIP/SMP considers the responsibility to protect the privacy and confidentiality of its clients of great importance. TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers share in this responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of all privileged information either electronic and/or hard copy forms to which they have access and must take all steps necessary to prevent personal and internal TN SHIP/ SMP program information from falling into the hands of unauthorized persons. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the following types of information regarding beneficiaries:

- Names
- Date of birth
- Address
- Social Security Number
- Contact information
- Medical information
- Reason for contacting TN SHIP/SMP

When an audience member at a public presentation requests one-on-one information, do not gather personal, financial, or other confidential information from the beneficiary in front of the group. Instead, refer the beneficiary for a more formal counseling session in an appropriate private location.

TN SHIP/SMP also occasionally handles complaints against providers. These cases involve sensitive information that should be protected. Complaints of fraud, error, and abuse are considered potential or suspected fraud, error, and abuse. Thus, TN SHIP/SMP does not accuse providers of fraud, error, or abuse. In some circumstances, TN SHIP/SMP research and follow up with providers may be sufficient to determine if a billing error occurred. However, only an investigation by the proper authorities can substantiate claims of fraud and abuse.

Sharing Information: When is it okay to share personal client information?

Sometimes sharing information is necessary to resolve problems. In this case, the in-kind staff or volunteer must have permission from the Medicare beneficiary. There are four ways this can happen:

- 1) The beneficiary (or legal representative) is physically present or on the phone with the counselor while discussing personal information with other entities, and the beneficiary grants verbal permission.
- 2) The beneficiary is present or on the phone while on a 3-way conference call and gives verbal permission to discuss personal information, or
- 3) The beneficiary gives written permission for the counselor to discuss personal information to resolve problems being discussed with counselor.
- 4) The beneficiary gives verbal permission in person or over the phone for TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff, or volunteers to use his/her Unique ID number to call Medicare on their behalf to try and resolve an issue. Unique ID numbers (a CMS-developed system) may access specific health insurance information from certain agencies for the purpose of assisting individual consumers.)

Computer Safety

Keeping Client Information Safe

Because TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers help Medicare beneficiaries handle billing problems, claims disputes, and in making important health insurance decisions, it is not only important that we protect their personal information, but it is also the law!

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA, Title II), directed by the US Department of Health and Human Services, was developed to meet the growing need for stronger safeguards for maintaining an individual's health privacy.

Included among the many procedural standards is the "Privacy Rule" which bans the release of certain individually identifiable health data without prior written authorization.

In general, the HIPAA Privacy Rule requires that states ensure that individually identifiable health care information remains confidential and secure. Failure to comply subjects the state to civil and criminal penalties.

Securing Computer and Paper Records

All client information should be protected, both on computer files and in paper files. Documentation of counseling sessions and/or interactions with beneficiaries should be saved onto a secure system. Paper files

should be kept in locked filing cabinets. When leaving a workstation for any length of time, files should be closed and locked with the key kept in separate place. When leaving a workstation, documentation containing personal client data should not be left out in open view. Place client documents in a file and lock them inside.

Internet

TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff, and volunteers are prohibited from using internet in inappropriate ways while conducting TN SHIP/SMP activities. Some TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteers may have access to the TN SHIP/SMP online data systems, STARS and SIRS (SMP Information Reporting System). These volunteers will be reasonable for entering data into these systems correctly in a timely fashion. Many local TN SHIP/SMPs have social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. that in-kind staff or volunteers can assist with updating. All updates must be approved by your volunteer program coordinator before being posted publicly.

Reporting stolen or lost consumer information

No matter how diligent in-kind staff or volunteers may be there remains a possibility that data will be misplaced or stolen. **If this occurs, in-kind staff and volunteers will immediately notify the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program coordinator and complete an Incident Reporting Form (see pages 33-34).**

In-Kind Staff and Volunteer Safety

TN SHIP/SMP maintains the safety and welfare of in-kind staff and volunteers vitally important. In-kind staff and volunteers have an obligation to ensure that they do not work or conduct themselves in a way which will endanger the health and safety of themselves or anyone else. The following points are intended to draw attention to the hazards and dangers which are commonly found in offices and to give some guidance on how accidents can be prevented.

In-Kind Staff and Volunteer Service Environment

TN SHIP/SMP promotes a comfortable and productive service environment for all in-kind staff and volunteers. In keeping with this policy, sexual, racial, religious, ethnic, or other kinds of harassment of volunteers is a violation of this policy and will not be tolerated. We expect in-kind staff and volunteers to treat each other, those we work with, and TN SHIP/SMP paid staff with respect. In the instance of a dispute at the activity site, the volunteer program coordinator may allow in-kind staff or volunteers to cease activity if the in-kind staff or volunteer is not comfortable in the environment. Please let your volunteer program coordinator know if you experience any difficulties.

In-kind staff and volunteers must follow all safety guidelines and standards while participating in TN SHIP/SMP activities. In-kind staff and volunteers observing a potentially hazardous working condition must, if they cannot correct it, report it to their volunteer program coordinator and complete an Incident Reporting Form (see pages 33-34). The volunteer program coordinator may take corrective action or contact the appropriate person for action.

Home Visits



Home visits by TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers to a beneficiary's home are not recommended. An exception to this recommendation is made only when the beneficiary is unable to travel to a TN SHIP/SMP location and/or arrangements for an alternative location cannot be made. The following protocol is recommended:

- Two in-kind staff or volunteers make the home visit together.
- Notice of the visit is provided to at least one TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff, or volunteer along with travel start and projected return times, beneficiary name, address, and phone number.
- At least one of the two visitors have a charged and working cell phone.
- In-kind staff and volunteers who do not feel comfortable as they approach the home or who become uncomfortable or threatened during a visit terminate the visit in a non-confrontational manner and report the event to their volunteer program coordinator as soon as possible.

Violence in the Service Environment

TN SHIP/SMP strongly believes that all in-kind staff and volunteers should be treated with dignity and respect. Acts of violence will not be tolerated. Any instances of violence must be reported to the volunteer program coordinator and an Incident Reporting Form completed (see pages 33-34). All complaints will be fully investigated.

Disaster Plan

In-kind staff and volunteers are to follow the disaster plan that is in place at the location they are doing service. Disasters include, but are not limited to, fire, earthquake, tornado, and an active shooter. Communication with your volunteer program coordinator is recommended to notify him/her of your safety and location once it is safe.

Illness or injury

All TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff and volunteers should isolate if they are sick until at least 10 days after their symptoms appear AND 24 hours with no fever (temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher) without the use of fever-reducing medications (medicines that contain ibuprofen or acetaminophen). If TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff and volunteers become sick while working or volunteering, they should promptly separate themselves from other people and go home until at least 10 days after their symptoms appear.

TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff and volunteers should stay home when the following symptoms persist:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- A dry, hacking, or productive cough
- Purulent (green, yellow, thick, or unusual) nasal or eye drainage
- Diarrhea
- Skin rashes or eruptions, such as scabies, chicken pox or impetigo

- Complaints or earache, severe stomachache, sore throat, or severe headache.
- Red throat, swollen glands around jaw, ears, and neck
- Nausea and vomiting
- Lethargy (general complaint of muscular aches and pains)
- Head or body lice must be treated with appropriate medication before volunteering

TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff and volunteers may resume in person working or volunteering after 10 days of their symptoms appeared and 24 hours with no fever as defined above.

If injured or exposed to a bodily fluid or hazardous material to open skin or mucous membrane while participating in TN SHIP/SMP activities, in-kind staff and volunteers must inform their volunteer program coordinator or the safety officer immediately. An Incident Report Form (see pages 33-34) must be completed within two business days of the injury/exposure and sent to the volunteer program coordinator.

Substance abuse

The possession or consumption of alcohol or illicit or misuse of drugs, is prohibited. In-kind staff and volunteers are prohibited from reporting for service under the influence of a controlled substance. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal.

Smoking

Smoking is limited to the designated outside smoking areas as long as it is permitted on the property. Please ask your volunteer program coordinator if there is a designated smoking area.

Harassment

Harassment is any behavior that demeans, humiliates, or embarrasses a person and that a reasonable person should have known would be unwelcome. It includes, but is not limited to, actions (e.g. touching, pushing), comments (e.g. jokes, name-calling), or displays (e.g. posters, cartoons). It may be a single incident or continue over time. Harassment is also a breach of human rights on protected grounds such as race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, medical condition, disability, political activity, marital status, sexual orientation, sex, or age. Disrespectful behavior, also known as personal harassment, is prohibited when volunteering for TN SHIP/SMP.

Abuse of authority, also prohibited when volunteering for TN SHIP/SMP, occurs when a person uses authority unreasonably to interfere with a person or their work. It includes humiliation, intimidation, threats, and coercion. It does not include normal coordinator activities, such as counseling, performance evaluation, and discipline, if these are not being done in a discriminatory manner.

All TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program coordinators have a responsibility to stop harassment. The volunteer program coordinator will make sure everything is done to stop it as soon as it is detected whether or not a complaint has been made. All incidents of abuse must be reported to your volunteer program coordinator and/or the safety officer immediately and an Incident Report Form (see pages 33-34) be completed. There will not be punishment or reprisal if you report any form of harassment.

Prohibited Weapons

Many locations where TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers will be doing activities prohibit weapons of any kind on the premises. We ask that in-kind staff and volunteers adhere to the weapons policies of the locations they serve. Prohibited weapons may include, but are not limited to, any form of firearm, explosive device or other item that is generally considered to be a weapon.

Tools and equipment

TN SHIP/SMP will provide staff, in-kind staff, and volunteers with the necessary tools and resources required for their work. In-kind staff and volunteers will be held accountable for any loss or damage to assigned tools, equipment, or resources. In-kind staff and volunteers should report any malfunctioning equipment to their volunteer program coordinator as soon as possible.

Media communication

All media contact will be handled through the Area Agency on Aging and Disability Directors. No other staff, in-kind staff, or volunteers are authorized to give interviews or make comments/statements to the media, unless given permission by the Area Agency on Aging and Disability Director.

Falls

The majority of accidents in an office are due to falls. Falls generally result from untidiness in the working environment such as leaving equipment and files lying on the floor, trailing flexes such as telephone wires or electrical cables, worn or damaged floor coverings, stair treads and risers, spilt liquids and from standing on chairs or boxes instead of using proper steps and ladders. In-kind staff and volunteers also have a duty to ensure that, if in the course of their activity they will have to use steps or ladders to reach files stored on the upper shelves of filing racks, they have available for use a sensible pair of shoes and do not attempt to climb up in unsuitable shoes.

Lifting and carrying

If a load is on the floor or low down always bend your legs and lift with the back straight. Do not attempt to lift or carry too much at a time. If moving heavy loads about for any distance, always use a trolley to avoid putting undue strain on the back. Do not attempt to carry more than you can comfortably manage. Do not carry so much that you cannot see where you are going. Be especially careful when negotiating stairs while carrying things. Always use the handrail and don't carry so much that you are unable to do so. Do not place or leave any objects in passages or on stairs which could cause someone else who is carrying something to walk into or fall over them.

Office equipment

Generally normal office equipment is not in itself dangerous, provided it is used sensibly and as intended. Filing cabinets can be very heavy when full, so to avoid overturning, only one drawer at a time should be opened and drawers should always be closed when not in use. Try to spread the load evenly between the drawers and preferably to put more into the lower drawers than the top as this helps to prevent overturning. Filing cabinets should be positioned so there is ample room available when the drawers are fully opened, both for working space at the cabinet and for passing by.

Nothing should be stored on top of high filing racks or without adequate support at the ends. Storing items on the top of a rack makes them too difficult and dangerous to retrieve, even using steps. Heavy objects such as bricks or blocks should not be placed on racks, and particularly not on the higher shelves or on the top of racks, to keep files upright or to act as end stops because of the obvious danger of their falling off onto someone. Similarly, racks should never be moved while loaded or with loose objects on the shelves or top of the racks.

Wooden furniture which is damaged or splintered should be reported. Be particularly careful with metal furniture which may have sharp edges on shelves or drawers.

Obstructions

General tidiness in the office is essential to ensure safety and efficiency as well as safeguarding the visual appearance of the office. All floors, passageways, walkways, stairs, and other access routes must be kept clear of goods and equipment.

Accidents

All accidents, no matter how minor, should be recorded on the Incident Reporting Form (see pages 33-34). First Aid boxes are available in all state offices. Check with your volunteer program coordinator to see the policy at the counseling locations. It is in your own interest to familiarize yourself with this information. If you have any difficulty in finding a First Aid notice applicable to your activity site consult your volunteer program coordinator

Insurance Requirements

TN SHIP/ SMP in-kind staff and volunteers who drive their own vehicles for TN SHIP/SMP business are to carry automobile liability insurance policies at their own expense. In the event of an accident or damage while an in-kind staff or volunteer is driving her or his own vehicle for TN SHIP/SMP work, the in-kind staff or volunteer's own automobile insurance coverage is liable. We encourage you to consult your own insurance agent about your TN SHIP/SMP driving activities and to make sure that your coverage provides adequate protection.

If your in-kind staff or volunteer position involves driving a motor vehicle on behalf of the SHIP/SMP program, you have additional responsibilities to:

- Abide by traffic laws, such as speed limit, seat belt, and cell phone laws, as you carry out your volunteer duties
- Notify your volunteer program coordinator if your insurance coverage lapses
- Notify your volunteer program coordinator if your driver's license expires or receives restrictions that limit your ability to carry out your volunteer duties
- Record and report mileage for reimbursement (if applicable)

If you accept an in-kind staff or volunteer role(s) that involves driving your own vehicle, the volunteer program coordinator will ask you to sign the last page of this handbook which will have a statement of verification of automobile insurance coverage that will be added to your file. The volunteer program coordinator will verify that the coverage remains in effect at least annually. Some local TN SHIP/SMP agencies may have volunteer liability insurance, but it is not a requirement at this time.

Volunteer Separation

Resignation

In-kind staff and volunteers may resign voluntarily from their service with TN SHIP/SMP at any time. If you intend to resign, please notify your volunteer program coordinator as soon as possible. Please note that if you resign, reacceptance as a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer are not automatic. Reacceptance is based on past performance and the results of an updated screening process and background check.

Discipline & Dismissal

TN SHIP/SMP accepts in-kind staff and volunteers with the understanding that the in-kind staff and volunteers serve at the discretion of TN SHIP/SMP. In-kind staff and volunteers who do not follow the rules, policies, and procedures of TN SHIP/SMP, or who repeatedly fail to perform an assignment satisfactorily despite volunteer program coordinator support and appropriate interventions, are subject to corrective action or dismissal. Involuntary dismissal is a last resort, used only when other appropriate steps have been taken. The volunteer program coordinator will notify an in-kind staff or volunteer in advance the reasons for a possible dismissal if other corrective actions do not resolve the problem within a reasonable time frame.

Possible grounds for dismissal are listed below. The list illustrates the range of reasons for dismissal and is not intended to be comprehensive. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Gross misconduct
- Disregard for confidentiality
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while participating in a TN SHIP/SMP activity or representing TN SHIP/SMP
- Theft or other illegal acts
- Unauthorized use or misuse of TN SHIP/SMP equipment or materials
- Harm, abuse or mistreatment of beneficiaries, program coordinators, in-kind staff, volunteers, and other persons related to your TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer roles
- Serious and repeated failure to follow TN SHIP/SMP policies and procedures
- Repeated failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily
- Unresolvable conflict of interest
- Serious breach of boundaries
- Unwillingness or failure to attend mandatory training sessions

Immediate Dismissal and Suspension

Some behaviors, upon verification, constitute grounds for immediate dismissal. If a question exists about the unacceptable behavior, TN SHIP/SMP will temporarily suspend an in-kind staff or volunteer from service pending the results of an investigation.

Grounds for immediate dismissal include:

- Fraud, theft, or abuse in connection with TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer service
- Serious illegal act
- Gross negligence causing bodily harm in connection with TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer service
- Breach of confidentiality
- Reporting for in-kind staff or volunteer service under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Using violence during in-kind staff or volunteer service

Exit Interview

TN SHIP/SMP may conduct exit interviews with outgoing in-kind staff and volunteers. If your volunteer program coordinator conducts exit interviews, please participate, and answer the questions candidly. Your responses with your volunteer program coordinators identify the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program's strengths and weaknesses, and to make improvements where needed. We encourage your participation.

Performance Management

TN SHIP/SMP's success is measured in terms of outcomes related to counseling and public education about Medicare and fraud and abuse. A key expectation in the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program is that volunteer program coordinators will provide the support in-kind staff and volunteers need to successfully achieve the program's assistance and education goals. A constructive and success-oriented performance management system is in place to guide volunteer program coordinators as they work to encourage productive and satisfying involvement in the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program.

The performance management system has three components: Coordination, Performance Evaluation, and Corrective Action. Each component includes a range of techniques that volunteer program coordinators can use to promote performance. The guiding principle of performance management is to match the type and extent of volunteer program coordinator intervention to the nature of an in-kind staff or volunteer's responsibilities and capacity. It provides several avenues to demonstrate support and to acknowledge excellence. Here are some key points about the system's three components:

Coordination

TN SHIP/SMP has an obligation to provide coordination and support for the program's in-kind staff and volunteers. In-kind staff and volunteers are informed of the volunteer performance management system during orientation or initial training. This means that volunteer program coordinators have a responsibility to manage the work that in-kind staff and volunteers do and to determine the kind of guidance and support each in-kind staff and volunteer needs. The coordination that you receive as a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer should reflect the principle of positive, constructive, and success-oriented guidance that strengthens the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer performance management system. You should expect to receive feedback, consultation, information, and meaningful assignments from your volunteer program coordinator. It is possible for a veteran in-kind staff or volunteer to assist the volunteer program coordinator in coordination efforts of fellow in-kind staff or volunteers.

Performance Evaluation

In-kind staff and volunteers with TN SHIP/SMP receive periodic evaluation of their work. This is a formal process than one finds in volunteer program coordinators feedback and provides a more detailed assessment of each volunteer's performance, behavior, achievements, and areas for improvement. This process gives you and your volunteer program coordinator an opportunity to exchange feedback, ideas, and suggestions. Your volunteer program coordinator will also use the performance evaluation process to update your file, including changes in your role, contact information, and the like. He or she will document the performance evaluation and any improvement plans to which you mutually agree and place them in your file. Your volunteer program coordinators communicate in-kind staff and volunteer activity and evaluations to the Statewide SHIP Volunteer Program Coordinator and the SMP Program Coordination on a monthly basis.

Corrective Action

TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program Coordinators may take corrective action when an in-kind staff or volunteer's behavior is serious enough to require intervention and/or when it is continued or repeated. The TN SHIP/SMP corrective action process is progressive in that it is oriented toward success rather than focused on failure and that the degree of intervention matches the nature of the performance or behavior issue, becoming more serious as the unacceptability of the behavior increases or the in-kind staff or volunteer's inability to resolve the problem continues.

Corrective action with TN SHIP/SMP includes a range of interventions that aim to help in-kind staff and volunteers make needed improvements when their performance and/or behavior do not meet expectations. Interventions may include additional training, coaching, adjustment of in-kind staff or volunteer duties, or reassignment to a different role. In more serious cases, interventions may involve formal warnings, suspensions, and dismissal.

Recognition

TN SHIP/SMP greatly appreciates the many and varied contributions of its in-kind staff and volunteers to the program's success. Volunteer program coordinators recognize and reward in-kind staff and volunteer service both formally and informally. Formal recognition may take the form of an invitation to a recognition event or an award for service. Informal recognition may take the form of feedback on the results of an in-kind staff or volunteer's work, a thank you note, a birthday card, or an invitation to participate in the decision-making for a project or activity. TN SHIP/SMP strives to recognize in-kind staff and volunteers for all types of productive service, and not simply for the number of hours they work. We encourage you to identify and nominate other in-kind staff and volunteers who may deserve special recognition or awards.

TN SHIP/SMP volunteer program coordinators are encouraged to nominate outstanding in-kind staff and volunteer for recognition on a local, state, or national level when opportunities arise. Additionally, volunteer program coordinators may assist in-kind staff and volunteers with references or letters of recommendation to help improve future career opportunities.

Each TN SHIP/SMP office conducts separate or collaborate on in-kind staff and volunteer recognition events in each of the 9 regions. Please ask each of your volunteer program coordinators about specific information about their in-kind staff and volunteer recognition events. TN SHIP/SMP paid staff are recognized at annual state training for their program accomplishments.

Incident Reporting and Response Procedures

Emergency Contact Procedures

The in-kind staff and volunteer application asks you to provide an emergency contact in case an incident occurs so your volunteer program coordinator will know who to contact on your behalf. You can find the contact information for your volunteer program coordinator on pages 7-11 of this handbook as well.

Reporting Incidents

If you are involved in an accident, suffer an injury, experience harassment, or witness abuse of a beneficiary while you are participating in an in-kind staff or volunteer activity, you have a responsibility to report the incident to your volunteer program coordinator. If you witness abuse, you have a responsibility to report the abuse to Adult Protective Services. Complete and submit an Incident Reporting Form (see pages 33-34) as soon as possible. Your volunteer program coordinator will respond to any reported incidents within two business days provided the volunteer program coordinator is in the office.

Reporting Conflicts of Interest

One concern TN SHIP/SMP has is the appearance of an implied endorsement for an in-kind staff or volunteer who is known to the community for his or her business and/or political interests. After discussing the circumstances with an in-kind staff or volunteer, the volunteer program coordinator may decide that a person, who is engaged in his or her business and/or political interests, is unsuited for making TN SHIP/SMP group

presentations because of the danger of blurring the lines between the person's in-kind staff or volunteer activity and his or her business or personal interest. Please bring any business, political, or personal interest to your volunteer program coordinator's attention.

Grievances and Appeals

Grievances Procedures

In-kind staff and volunteers with complaints or grievances with, staff, other in-kind staff or volunteers, beneficiaries or partner organizations should communicate those to the local TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program Coordinator. All complaints will be treated as confidential. Every effort will be made to achieve speedy and effective resolution of the situation and the in-kind staff or volunteer is kept informed of the progress of this effort. The final decision regarding resolution and related actions rests with the TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program Coordinator with guidance from the Area Agency on Aging and Disability Director.

Appeals Procedure

TN SHIP/SMP also has an appeals procedure through which an in-kind staff or volunteer can request review of a formal corrective action decision, including dismissal. The in-kind staff or volunteer may appeal a decision to their TN SHIP/SMP Coordinator in writing within 10 business day of receipt of the decision. The TN SHIP/SMP Volunteer Program Coordinator will take the appeal to their Area Agency on Aging and Disability Director. The Area Agency on Aging and Disability Director will issue the final decision in writing within 30 days from the date of the appeal.

Acronyms and Definitions

ACL: Administration for Community Living, an operating division within the federal Department of Health and Human Services with headquarters in Washington, DC and regional offices in ten cities, includes the Administration on Aging, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, and the Office on Disability.

AOA: Administration on Aging, an agency within the Administration for Community Living, administers all programs funded by the Older Americans Act, including SMP.

AAAD: Area Agency on Aging and Disability is responsible for planning and delivery of services under the Older Americans Act for a geographic region within a state.

CMS: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) administers the Medicare program and oversees state administration of the Medicaid programs.

HCFAC: Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control is a program authorized for the AoA to support effective training and mobilization of senior volunteers who provide consumer education to beneficiaries.

HHS: Department of Health & Human Services is one of two departments within the executive branch of the federal government responsible for administering the Health Care Fraud & Abuse Control (HCFAC) program of which the Medicare Integrity Program (MIP) is a part. The Administration on Aging (AoA), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) are units within HHS. The Secretary of HHS holds a cabinet-level position.

HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act is a set of rules that protect patient confidentiality.

In-kind staff: Employees of other organizations who perform SHIP/SMP-connected work as part of their own ongoing paid work responsibilities.

DOJ: Department of Justice is the other federal department that administers the HCFAC program. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, an agency within the DOJ, works with the HHS Office of Inspector General to investigate health care fraud and apprehend alleged perpetrators. The DOJ's U.S. Attorney offices throughout the country prosecute criminal health care fraud cases.

OIG: Office of Inspector General investigates Medicare and Medicaid fraud, and refers criminal cases for prosecution to the U.S. Attorney offices. The OIG has authority to issue civil monetary penalties and exclude providers from the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Volunteer Program Coordinator is the paid TN SHIP/SMP staff person whose main responsibility is the recruitment, training, retaining and coordination of volunteers in their region



Incident Reporting Form



Use this or an agency approved form to report any incident involving TN SHIP/SMP staff, in-kind staff or volunteer, including:

- Injury to the staff, in-kind staff, volunteer, client, or program participant
- Accidents, including motor vehicle accidents
- Property damage, including damage to equipment
- Lost possessions, files, or equipment
- Abuse of a beneficiary or other individual
- Harassment and offensive remarks
- Error in judgment

TN SHIP/SMP Information

Agency/Organization name: _____

Contact person/Volunteer Program Coordinator: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Information on the TN SHIP/SMP In-Kind Staff/Volunteer

In-Kind Staff/Volunteer's name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Information about the Incident

Check all that apply: Injury Accident Property damage Lost possession/client information
 Abuse Offensive remark Harassment Error
 Other (please describe) _____

Date of the incident: _____ Time of the incident: _____

Check one: In-Kind Staff/Volunteer Beneficiary/Client Program participant Paid staff Other

Affected party's name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____



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Location of the incident: _____

Describe what happened, how it happened, factors leading up to the incident, what was said or observed (attach separate sheet, if necessary):

Witness name: _____ Telephone number: _____

Address: _____

Witness name: _____ Telephone number: _____

Address: _____

Name of physician consulted (if applicable): _____

Telephone number: _____

Name of hospital or clinic (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Was incident reported to the police? Yes No

Police contact (if applicable): _____

Reporter Information

Reporter's name: _____

Reporter's title (if applicable): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Nature of In-Kind Staff and Volunteer Service

- I understand that as a member of the TN SHIP/SMP volunteer team the program relies upon in-kind staff and volunteers to serve Medicare beneficiaries and their community by providing time-limited or other discreet tasks. The scope of responsibilities varies for each team member.
- I understand that the TN SHIP/SMP program is administered locally and as a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer I will represent the program with integrity.
- I understand that my responsibilities may include providing accurate and objective counseling and assistance with Original Medicare, Medicare Savings Programs, Medicare health plans, Medicare prescription drug plans, referring Medicare fraud, waste or abuse issues, and related health insurance coverage for Medicare beneficiaries, their representatives and caregivers, or persons soon to be eligible for Medicare.
- I understand that my responsibilities may include the use of internet-based programs to help clients identify and compare health and prescription drug plan options.
- I understand that my responsibilities may also include educating the public on Medicare, fraud, waste and abuse and health insurance issues that affect older Americans and people with disabilities.
- I understand that my in-kind staff or volunteer activities may need to take place at specific counseling sites, by telephone, or at clients' homes when certain conditions make it necessary.
- I understand that I must submit monthly documentation of my activities to my volunteer program coordinator.
- I understand that TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers provide services free of charge to any Medicare beneficiary who seeks assistance from the program.
- I understand that TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers will not discriminate against anyone who seeks assistance from the program, include family members.
- I understand that political and religious ideologies should never be brought into conversation. When these and other topics are brought up by the client, the TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer needs to remain a neutral party and be as respectful as possible to the client.
- I understand that it is important that SHIP/SMP in-kind staff and volunteers take great care in managing their relationships with beneficiaries. I understand that I will respect the personal boundaries of beneficiaries.
- I understand that I will not enter into a financial transaction with a beneficiary.
- I understand that if I identify needs of a beneficiary outside the boundary of the in-kind staff or volunteer's role, that I will bring these needs to the attention of the volunteer program coordinator for referral to the appropriate community services.

In-Kind Staff or Volunteer Agreement

(Please initial by each number signifying that you have read and understood the section)

- ___ 1. I have read and understand I will serve in the role(s) that I can perform to the best of my abilities.
- 2. I have read and understand I will attend initial and update trainings as required.
- 3. I have read and understand that I have a valid driver's license and current liability insurance on any vehicle used for TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer purposes, if applicable.
- 4. I understand that as a TN SHIP/SMP in-kind staff or volunteer I will have access to information regarding TN SHIP/SMP program operations, its partners, and beneficiaries.
 - I have read and understand “protecting confidentiality” in this handbook and understand its purpose to protect information related to its operations, partners, and beneficiaries, and I accept my responsibility to abide by this obligation.
 - I have read and understand that I may discuss TN SHIP/SMP beneficiary or internal TN SHIP/SMP program information only with other staff members, in-kind staff, or volunteers, as appropriate or necessary to fulfill my role.
 - I have read and understand that I will conduct all conversations with clients with the utmost privacy, away from others who could overhear confidential information.
 - I have read and understand that I will not mention the name or other details about beneficiaries, providers, or other TN SHIP/SMP clients in conversation with people outside TN SHIP/SMP.
 - I have read and understand that I will safeguard written or electronic information about individual beneficiaries and providers.
 - I have read and understand that breach of confidentiality is very serious and carries with it the possibility of corrective action, including dismissal.
- 5. I have ready and understand the code of ethics in this handbook and agree to follow it carefully and cheerfully.
- 6. I have read and understand the conflict of interest policy in this handbook and agree to follow it carefully and report any conflicts to the volunteer program coordinator.
- 7. I have read and understand that a breach of this agreement may result in corrective action, including dismissal.
- 8. I have read, understand, and agree to follow the Nature of In-Kind Staff and Volunteer Services on page 33.
- 9. I have read and understand that I must submit monthly documentation of my activities to my Regional Volunteer Coordinator.
- 10. I have read, understand, and agree to follow all policies and procedures listed in this handbook.

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In-Kind Staff or Volunteer's name (printed): _____

In-Kind Staff or Volunteer's Signature _____

County _____ Date _____

Volunteer Program Coordinator's Signature _____

County _____ Date _____