



# **Idaho**

# **SMP Volunteer**

# **Handbook**



## **Welcome and thank you letter from the Administration on Aging**

On behalf of the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), I want to welcome you to the 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 AoA's 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 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 SMP.

Sincerely,

Barbara Dieker  
Administration on Aging

## History of the SMP Program

In 1995, the Administration on Aging (AoA) 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 was 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 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 and volunteers have reached more than 3 million people through some 83,000 group education sessions since the program began in 1997.

### **SMP Program Milestones**

- 1995 – Operation Restore Trust (ORT) brings together the Administration on Aging and other federal agencies in a coordinated effort to fight Medicare and Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse.
- 1997 – Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act establishes 12 demonstration projects to “utilize the skills and expertise of retired professionals in identifying and reporting error, fraud and abuse.” HIPAA provides Health Care Fraud & Abuse Control program funding to AoA for consumer education.
- 1998 - In the program's first year, more than 3,600 volunteers delivered 1,300 education and counseling sessions that reached 41,000 people. AoA increases the number of cooperative agreements for the program from twelve to eighteen.
- 2002 - AoA convenes its first National Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program Conference in Washington, D.C. Its purpose is to share successful practices, strengthen collaboration between federal, state and local partners, and honor outstanding senior volunteers. 51 Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) projects, located in 45 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, are in operation.
- 2003 – AoA convenes three regional Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program Conferences in the DC area, Dallas, and Seattle. The SMP program has projects in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
- 2004 – SMP projects refer 1,700 cases to Medicare contractors for follow-up.
- 2007 – SMART FACTS reporting system launches and AoA introduces a national SMP logo and outreach materials.
- 2008 – Together with the National Hispanic Council on Aging, the AoA establishes the National Hispanic SMP project to focus education and outreach efforts on Spanish speaking communities in south Florida and Texas.

- 2010 – The Department of Health & Human Services, through the AoA, launches a national public awareness campaign about Senior Medicare Patrol with Fraud Prevention Public Service Announcements (PSAs), fact sheets, and other information resources. The AoA provides media toolkits, training and support to the SMPs to ensure effective placement and response to the PSA. Also, SMPs receive special capacity building grants enabling many to hire Coordinators of Volunteers.
- 2011 – Working with volunteer management consultant Linda Graff and Associates, the AoA and SMP Resource Center disseminate a comprehensive set of new volunteer program management policies that will take effect in stages over three years, beginning in June 2013.
- 2012 – New AOA mandated Volunteer Risk and Program Management program policies and procedures published for implementation by state SMP programs.

## What is the SMP program?

**What do SMPs do?** The SMP program, also known as Senior Medicare Patrol program, helps Medicare and dual eligible Medicaid beneficiaries avoid, detect, and prevent health care fraud. In doing so, they help protect older persons and promote integrity in the Medicare program. Because this work often requires face-to-face contact to be most effective, SMPs have recruited nearly 4,500 volunteers nationwide to support this effort. SMP volunteers serve in many ways, including outreach, education, and one-on-one counseling. Most are Medicare beneficiaries themselves and are thus well-positioned to assist their peers.

SMP staff, including paid staff and volunteers, conduct outreach to Medicare beneficiaries in their communities through group presentations, exhibiting at community events, answering calls to the SMP help lines and meeting individually with clients. Their main goal is to teach Medicare beneficiaries how to:

- Protect their personal identity
- Identify and report errors on their health care bills, and
- 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, SMPs do more than educate. When Medicare beneficiaries cannot act on their own behalf to address these problems, the SMPs work with family caregivers and others to address the problems, and if necessary, make referrals to outside organizations that can intervene.

**How do SMPs Work?** The U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) provides funding through the Older Americans Act for the SMP projects. In 2011, the Older Americans Act grants for SMP projects totaled \$9.1 million. Also, in fiscal year 2011, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in partnership with AoA provided an additional \$9million to the SMP projects to expand the capacity of the program and to increase outreach and education efforts in areas with high Medicare fraud rates.

SMP projects operate in all fifty states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. A National Hispanic SMP also receives AoA funding to provide support and technical assistance to the SMP projects for outreach and education to the Hispanic communities nationwide. At the state and local levels, SMPs rely on hundreds of partnerships with host organizations that include Area Agencies on Aging, faith-based organizations, and State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), to help achieve the program's goals. Paid staff members at host organizations sometimes are responsible for recruiting and supervising SMP volunteers.

SMP projects receive technical assistance and training from the National Consumer Protection Technical Resource Center (the SMP Resource Center) based in Waterloo, Iowa. An additional \$3.312 million in HCFAC funds supported infrastructure and other support and capacity building activities for the SMP projects, including the SMP Resource Center.

SMP activities support the AoA's broader goals of promoting increased choice and greater independence among older adults. The activities of the SMP program also serve to enhance the financial, emotional, physical and mental well-being of older adults -- thereby increasing their capacity to maintain security and independence in retirement and to make better financial and health care choices.

In Idaho the SMP program is administered by the Idaho Commission on Aging. The Idaho Commission on Aging (ICOA) works with the Idaho Department of Insurance's Senior Health Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) program to accomplish statewide Medicare and Medicare fraud prevention education. SHIBA is the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for the state of Idaho.

The National Consumer Protection Technical Resource Center: The Center of Service and Information for SMPs website is located at <http://www.smpresource.org>.

## Organizational Structure

- The SMP program relies on SHIBA Volunteer Services Coordinators (eight in the state) and ICOA contractors to recruit, train, recognize and retain skilled volunteers who help provide statewide Medicare and Medicare fraud prevention education throughout the state.
- SHIBA is the state contact for the SMP program. SHIBA's toll-free phone number and website are referred to in literature and education about the program. ICOA contractors sometimes include their contact information on literature as well.
- The SMP program also relies on SHIBA to gather data from volunteers on their training and work activities. This data is then transferred to the SMP management information system referred to SMART FACTS.
- In 2012 SMP and SHIBA shared 212 volunteers statewide.
- ICOA contracts with the Area III Agency on Aging and CCOA—Aging, Weatherization, and Human Services Inc. to provide SMP outreach, education and counseling services focusing on beneficiaries who are Hispanic. These contractors provide a skilled staff person who works fulltime on SMP activities. SHIBA refers Hispanic people to these contractors for education and counseling.
- Since 2011 ICOA has received additional funding from the US Administration on Community Living/Administration on Aging to build the capacity of the SMP program. With these funds ICOA contracted with the following organizations to develop SMP recruitment, training and management programs:
  - Disability Action Center
  - Living Independence Network, Inc.
  - Living Independently for Everyone
  - Area I Agency on Aging
  - Area II Agency on Aging
  - Area IV Agency on Aging

## General Information

The SMP Program office is located at the Idaho Commission on Aging:

- Idaho Commission on Aging  
341 West Washington Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Boise, Idaho 83702  
208-334-3833  
Fax: 208-334-3033

SMP Contractors Offices:

- CCOA-Aging, Weatherization & Human Services, Inc.  
304 North Kimball Avenue  
Caldwell, Idaho 83605  
208-459-0063  
Fax: 208-455-2230  
[www.ccoaidaho.org](http://www.ccoaidaho.org)
- Area I Agency on Aging of North Idaho  
North Idaho College  
2120 Lakewood Dr., Ste. B  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
(208) 667-3179  
(800) 786-5536  
Fax: (208) 667-5938  
[www.aaani.org](http://www.aaani.org)
- Area II Agency on Aging  
Community Action Partnership  
124 New 6th St.  
Lewiston, ID 83501-2133  
(208) 798-4192  
(800) 877-3206  
Fax: (208) 298-0985  
[www.cap4action.org](http://www.cap4action.org)

- **Area V Agency on Aging**  
214 East Center Street  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
208-233-4032  
(800) 526-8129  
(FAX) 208-233-5232  
<http://www.sicog.org>
- **Area VI Agency on Aging**  
935 E. Lincoln Rd.  
Idaho Falls, ID 83405  
(208) 522-5391  
(800) 632-4813  
Fax: (208) 522-5453  
[www.eicap.org/programs/seniors](http://www.eicap.org/programs/seniors)

**SHIBA offices are located at:**

- **Coeur d'Alene Office**  
2005 Ironwood Parkway  
Suite 143  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
(208) 666-684  
1-800-488-5725
- **Boise Office**  
700 West State Street  
Boise, ID 83720-0043  
(208) 334-4353 or (208) 334-4278  
1-800-247-4422
- **Twin Falls Office**  
1445 Filmore  
Suite 1104  
Twin Falls, ID 83301  
(208) 736-4713  
1-800-488-5731
- **Pocatello Office**  
353 N. 4th Avenue  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
(208) 236-6044  
1-800-488-5764

SHIBA website <http://www.doi.idaho.gov/shiba/shwelcome.aspx>

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

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

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

CMS: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) administers the Medicare program and oversees state administration of the Medicaid programs. The Center for Program Integrity is a bureau within CMS that works with various contractors to identify potential fraud, waste and abuse in the original, fee-for-service Medicare program. The Center for Drug and Health Plan Choice is responsible for overseeing the Medicare Advantage (Part C) and Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) programs. An Administrator appointed by the Secretary of HHS heads CMS.

HHS: The 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.

DoJ: The 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: The HHS 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.

## Sample SMP Volunteer Handbook

SHIP: The State Health Insurance & Assistance Programs provide counseling services to Medicare beneficiaries and assist them in applying for assistance programs, comparing and choosing health plans, and appealing claims denials.

SMP: Senior Medicare Patrol programs provide education about Medicare fraud prevention to Medicare beneficiaries and families. SMP's also provide education about other types of fraud and scams through presentations, printed materials, Scam Jams and other activities.

## **SMP Volunteer Program Management Policies**

A comprehensive set of program management policies guide the operation of the SMP volunteer program. The policies resulted from a project that began in 2010 to assess and identify the risks involved in the operation of the SMP volunteer program, and to provide guidance and resources to program managers to help them manage the identified risks. This Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) project continues through 2013. The Administration on Aging (AoA) initiated the VRPM project with these factors in mind:

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

The primary purpose for the VRPM project, and the development of a comprehensive set of program management policies, is to enable SMP programs to manage their volunteer programs more safely, effectively, and productively. Safety is a concern for both volunteers and the people—many of who are vulnerable seniors—who benefit from the SMP program's services. The VRPM project also promotes effectiveness by setting a high standard of care in regard to volunteer services. The creation of national standards for this important area of program operations will enhance the program's results.

As an SMP volunteer, you have an obligation to know and understand the policies and how they affect and protect you. Your supervisor and other SMP staff will refer to the policies as they manage you and the other volunteers in the program. The policies address:

- Definitions of key terms
- Volunteer role classifications and position descriptions
- Risk management and insurance requirements
- Incident reporting and response procedures
- Volunteer rights and responsibilities
- Coordinator of volunteers role

## Sample SMP Volunteer Handbook

- Screening procedures
- Orientation and training
- Performance management
- Boundaries and ethics, including relationships with beneficiaries
- Confidentiality
- Grievances and complaints
- Recognition
- Information and data security, and
- Much more

This handbook contains information, below, on some of the policies that most interest volunteers such as roles, rights and responsibilities, orientation and training, screening, dismissal, and complaints and grievances. If you would like to see the complete set of SMP volunteer program management policies, ask your supervisor or coordinator of volunteers.

One thing to keep in mind is that the SMP volunteer program management policies apply to all state and local organizations, also called “host organizations,” that recruit and retain volunteers to perform SMP duties, and to all the SMP volunteers who work under them. In some cases, host organizations may have volunteer policies in place in addition to the SMP policies. If you find that the different policies are in conflict or are causing confusion, please discuss the problem with your supervisor and/or the coordinator of volunteers.

## Volunteer Roles

The SMP program operates with six standard volunteer roles. State and local programs may create additional roles to meet specific volunteer program and community needs. Information about the roles and the responsibilities connected with them are set forth in position descriptions. SMPs may create position descriptions that combine elements of the standard roles. A position, for example, may combine the “staffing exhibits” and “making group presentations” roles below into a position called “outreach volunteer.” SMP program managers 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.

The six standard SMP volunteer roles are:

- **Distributing information:** This role involves transporting and disseminating SMP information materials to sites and events, and may include presenting prepared copy or performing scripted activities for small groups.
- **Assisting with administration:** This role involves such work as copying, filing, data entry, and placing outbound phone calls in support of SMP activity
- **Staffing exhibits:** This role involves staffing information kiosks or exhibits at events such as health fairs. Volunteers who staff exhibits provide general information about SMP to the public and answer simple inquiries.
- **Making group presentations:** This role involves giving substantive presentations on SMP topics to small and large groups, with the opportunity for interaction with the audience during time set aside for Q & A and discussion.
- **Counseling:** 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.
- **Handling complex issues and referrals:** This role involves in-depth interactions with beneficiaries who are reporting specific instances of health care fraud, error, and abuse. Volunteers who serve in this role may act on behalf of a beneficiary to correct an error or refer suspected fraud and abuse to appropriate authorities.

The SMP considers four roles—staffing exhibits, making group presentations, counseling, and handling complex issues and referrals—to be “positions of trust.” This means that the roles involve access to beneficiaries or other vulnerable people, personal or confidential information, or to money or other valuables. The four positions of trust are subject to more rigorous screening procedures than the roles involving administration and information distribution. If you decide to transfer from one role to another, please keep in mind that you may be required to undergo a more intensive screening process to qualify for placement in the new role.

## Sample SMP Volunteer Handbook

The SMP asks volunteers to confine their activities to those tasks and responsibilities described in the position description for their specific role(s). Each volunteer role has responsibilities as well as limits to those responsibilities. A volunteer who is trained to make group presentations, for example, should not handle complex issues and referrals unless she or he formally qualified for that role after completing any required screening procedures and training.

For more details about the scopes of responsibility in the six standard volunteer roles, see the role descriptions in the Appendix.

## Rights and Responsibilities

SMP program volunteers have certain rights and responsibilities that are good to keep in mind during the course of your volunteer service. Because the program's leadership sees volunteers as a valuable resource to the program and the communities it serves, volunteers have rights, for example, to meaningful work, support, and recognition for the work they do.

At the same time, the SMP program expects volunteers to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to comply with the program's Volunteer Policies, and to remain loyal to the program's values, goals and procedures. Volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the SMP program, and agree that the SMP may decide to end a volunteer's relationship with the SMP or to change the nature of the volunteer's assignment when appropriate.

As an SMP Volunteer, you have a right to:

- Receive meaningful work assignments
- Treatment as an equal co-worker
- A safe work environment
- A respectful work environment free of harassment
- Receive orientation and training
- Receive effective supervision
- Receive constructive feedback on a regular basis
- Receive informal and formal recognition
- Receive clear information about the boundaries for the work you are to do and not to do (see the position description for your volunteer role)
- Receive all the pertinent information you need to perform your work 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 personnel file
- Examine the contents of your personnel file
- Make complaints and file grievances
- Resign from your volunteer service at any time

As an SMP Volunteer, you have a responsibility to:

- Provide 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 the SMP program only to the extent that your position description and role specifically authorize, and not to present yourself as a spokesperson for the SMP program in a formal sense
- Use your affiliation only in the interests of the SMP program, and not to promote religious or political beliefs or personal business dealings
- Inform your supervisor of any conflicts of interest that may arise after placement in your volunteer position
- Report any abuse that you may witness involving the program's beneficiaries or clients
- Report incidents such as accidents, injuries, errors, and the like to your supervisor
- Report on your volunteer activities on a timely basis
- Protect the confidentiality of the program's beneficiaries and/or clients
- Follow procedures to ensure the security of clients' electronic and hard copy data
- Report changes in your health status or medical treatment that might adversely affect your performance to your supervisor
- Notify your supervisor of absences that will prevent you from performing an assigned task
- Complete required training programs, including continuing education programs

The list above shows many, but not all, of the rights and responsibilities for SMP program volunteers. For the specific policy language on these and other rights and responsibilities, see the *Volunteer Risk and Program Management Policies Manual*.

Here are some examples that we hope will help clarify some of these responsibilities.

**Representing the SMP** Volunteers who are trained to make group presentations are authorized to discuss, and answer questions about, approved SMP education programs. In that limited capacity, they are free to identify themselves as being affiliated with the SMP. They should not, however, hold themselves out as public spokespersons for the program in connection with media inquiries or questions related to official policy positions.

**Reporting Conflicts of Interest** One concern for SMP program managers is the appearance of an implied endorsement for a volunteer who is known to the community for his or her business and/or political interests. After discussing the circumstances with a volunteer, a program manager may decide that a person who is engaged in health care sales, or who is running for a seat on the city council, is unsuited for making SMP group presentations because of the danger of blurring the lines between the person's volunteer activity and his or her business or personal interest. Please bring any business, political, or personal activity that arises that may conflict with the mission and goals of the SMP program to your supervisor's attention.

**Reporting Incidents** If you are involved in an accident, suffer an injury, experience harassment, or witness abuse of a beneficiary while you are on duty as an SMP volunteer, you have a responsibility to report the incident to your supervisor or the coordinator of volunteers. Complete and submit an incident reporting form (see Appendix) as soon as possible.

**Volunteers Who Drive** If your volunteer position involves driving a motor vehicle on behalf of the 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
- Carry liability insurance on your vehicle
- Notify your supervisor or coordinator of volunteers if your insurance coverage lapses
- Notify your supervisor or coordinator of volunteers 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)

## Orientation and Training

Orientation and training are essential to developing the knowledge and skills that SMP volunteers need to serve the people of their communities effectively. Orientation takes place shortly after the SMP accepts a volunteer into service. Its aim is to explain, among other topics, the:

- Purpose and values of the SMP
- Nature and operation of the program or activity in which the volunteer will participate
- Purpose, duties and requirements of the role the volunteer is accepting

**Training Programs** The SMP has established minimum training requirements and programs for the various volunteer roles. 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 managers give them work assignments.

The SMP Resource Center and state SMP programs make these training programs available online at [www.smpresource.org](http://www.smpresource.org).

**SMP Foundations Training:** This training program provides SMP volunteers and staff with a foundation of knowledge in three main content areas including the SMP program, Medicare basics, and Medicare fraud and abuse. Both classroom and online training options are available. Participants should allow 4 to 6 hours to complete the entire online course.

If your host agency or contractor wants to substitute or supplement this Foundations training with SHIBA training, the host agency must request authority from the SMP Director in advance.

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

**SMP Counselor Training:** The goal of this program is to provide SMP staff and volunteers with the necessary skills and resources to handle one-on-one counseling sessions and simple inquiries consistently and effectively. In addition for Medicare fraud prevention training (SMP training) counselors are thoroughly trained about the Medicare program by SHIBA and are considered SMP/SHIBA volunteer counselors.

**Complex Issues & Inquiries Training:** This training program is offered on an ongoing basis for SMP staff and volunteers who handle complex issues. At this time, a webinar series and related resources are available for training about how to conduct Complex Issues and Referrals. Complex issues are reported to the SMP Director for entry into the SMP SMART FACTS data management and referral system for referral to the appropriate regulatory agency.

In addition to the formal training programs for the various SMP volunteer roles, volunteers may receive on-the-job training through coaching and feedback of a supervisor or a veteran volunteer mentor. The SMP may also require attendance at periodic continuing education training programs to provide informational updates and/or additional skills training. The SMP encourages volunteers to build their skills through training while serving with the SMP.

## Insurance

SMP host agencies and contractors discuss local liability and accident insurance, including automobile liability insurance policies here.

Your SMP may provide liability and accident insurance for volunteers who are engaged in SMP business. You should discuss this with your SMP Volunteer Program manager and determine how the coverage coordinates with your other insurance plans. SMP volunteers who drive their own vehicles for SMP business are to carry automobile liability insurance policies at their own expense. In the event of an accident or damage while a volunteer is driving her or his own vehicle for SMP work, the volunteer's own automobile insurance coverage comes into play. We encourage you to consult your own insurance agent about your SMP driving activities and to make sure that your coverage provides adequate protection.

If you accept a volunteer role that involves driving your own vehicle, a program manager will ask you to sign a certification of automobile insurance coverage that will be added to your personnel file. Supervisor will verify that the coverage remains in effect at least annually. If your automobile insurance coverage lapses, please notify your supervisor immediately so that she or he can adjust work assignments as needed.

Ask your local SMP host agency or contractor to describe the process for reporting accidents and filing claims, including the name of a contact person, e.g., the volunteer's supervisor or the organization's business manager.

## Performance Management

The SMP program's success is measured in terms of outcomes related to public education about fraud, waste, and abuse in Medicare, and to assisting individual beneficiaries in identifying and reporting instances of suspected health care fraud, waste, and abuse. A key expectation in SMP volunteer program management is that program managers will provide the support volunteers need to successfully achieve the program's education and assistance goals. A constructive and success-oriented performance management system is in place to guide supervisors as they work to encourage productive and satisfying volunteer involvement in the SMP program.

**SMP Performance Management System** The performance management system has three components: supervision, performance evaluation, and corrective action. Each component includes a range of techniques that supervisors can use to promote high performance. The guiding principle of performance management is to match the type and extent of supervisory intervention to the nature of a 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:

**Supervision** The SMP has an obligation to provide supervision and support for the program's volunteers. This means that supervisors have a responsibility to manage the work that volunteers do, and to determine the kind of guidance and support that each volunteer needs. The supervision that you receive as an SMP volunteer should reflect the principle of positive, constructive and success-oriented guidance that underpins the SMP volunteer performance management system. You should expect to receive feedback, consultation, information, and meaningful assignments from your supervisor.

**Performance Evaluation** Volunteers in the SMP program receive periodic evaluation of their work. This is a more formal process than one finds in a supervisor's day-to-day feedback and provides a more detailed assessment of each volunteer's performance, on-the-job behavior, achievements, and areas for improvement. This process gives you and your supervisor an opportunity to exchange feedback, ideas, and suggestions. Your supervisor will also use the performance evaluation process to update your personnel file, including changes in your volunteer role, contact information, and the like. She or he will document the substance of the performance evaluation and any improvement plans to which you mutually agree and place them in your file.

**Corrective Action** SMP program managers may take corrective action when a volunteer's behavior is serious enough to require intervention, and when its continuation or repetition is unacceptable. The 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 volunteer's inability to resolve the problem continues.

Corrective action in the SMP program includes a range of interventions that aim to help volunteers make needed improvements when their performance and/or behavior do not meet expectations. Interventions may include additional training, coaching, adjustment of volunteer duties, or reassignment to a different role. In more serious cases, interventions may involve formal disciplinary actions such as warnings, suspensions, and dismissal. If you would like to learn more about the SMP's corrective action process, ask your supervisor for the program's corrective action protocol. All SMP programs are to have a written corrective action protocol in place by December 2013.

**Grievances and Appeals** A volunteer who has a complaint about, or grievance with, staff, other volunteers, beneficiaries or partner organizations should communicate the concern to her or his supervisor. If the complaint or grievance involves the volunteer's own supervisor, she or he should convey the concern to the next person in the SMP program's chain of command. The SMP also has an appeals procedure through which a volunteer can request review of a formal corrective action decision, including dismissal.

## Recognition

The SMP program greatly appreciates the many and varied contributions of its volunteers to the program's success. Program managers recognize and reward volunteer service both formally and informally. Informal recognition may take the form of feedback on the results of a volunteer's work, a thank you note, a birthday card, or an invitation to participate in the decision-making for a project or activity.

The SMP program strives to recognize 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 volunteers who may deserve special recognition or awards.

Every other year the Administration on Aging solicits nominations for national SMP awards for volunteer excellence. Award winners receive a citation for their exemplary service and an expenses paid trip to a biennial national SMP conference. State SMP Program Coordinators are asked to submit nominations for these national awards.

## Volunteer Separation

**Resignation** Volunteers may resign voluntarily from their service with the SMP program at any time. If you intend to resign, please notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

**Discipline & Dismissal** The SMP accepts volunteers with the understanding that the volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the SMP. Volunteers who do not follow the rules, policies, and procedures of the SMP program, or who repeatedly fail to perform an assignment satisfactorily despite supervisory support and appropriate interventions, are subject to disciplinary action or dismissal. Involuntary dismissal is typically a last resort, used only when other appropriate steps have been taken. Ideally, the supervisory staff will discuss with a 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:

- Gross misconduct
- Serious misjudgment that may undermine trust in the volunteer or cause harm to others
- Insubordination, including failure or unwillingness to perform essential responsibilities in the volunteer's role or to accept direction from supervisory staff
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on volunteer duty or representing the SMP
- Theft or other illegal acts
- Loss of a license (e.g., driver's license) required to carry out assignments
- Unauthorized use or misuse of SMP equipment or materials
- Harm, abuse or mistreatment of beneficiaries, co-workers and other persons
- Serious and repeated failure to follow SMP policies and procedures
- Inability to meet physical, cognitive or emotional standards of performance
- Repeated failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily
- Unresolvable conflict of interest
- Serious breach of boundaries

**Immediate Dismissal and Suspension** Some behaviors are so unacceptable that, upon verification, they constitute grounds for immediate dismissal. If a question exists about the

unacceptable behavior, the SMP will temporarily suspend the volunteer from service pending the results of an investigation.

Grounds for immediate dismissal include:

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

**Exit Interview** Some SMP programs conduct exit interviews with outgoing volunteers. If your program conducts exit interviews, please participate and answer the questions candidly. Your responses will help managers identify the SMP volunteer program's strengths and weaknesses, and to make improvements where needed. We encourage your participation.

## Volunteers with Disabilities

The SMP program values the service of volunteers with disabilities. Program managers strive to include volunteers with disabilities in all facets of the program to the extent that an individual's physical capacity allows, and to ensure access to all SMP program facilities. When requested, the program will make reasonable accommodation to meet the special needs of volunteers with disabilities.

### Appendix

- Volunteer Role Descriptions

**Your SMP host agency or contractor may add other forms such as:**

- Incident Reporting Form
- Expense Reimbursement Form



## Volunteer Role: Assisting with Administration Sample Role Description

### *Instructions for using this volunteer role description*

### **Purpose**

To provide administrative support to the work of SMP paid and volunteer staff in their mission to empower Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers to identify billing mistakes and prevent and detect health care fraud, error, and abuse.

### **Suggested Activities**

SMP volunteers who assist with administration handle tasks such as copying, general filing, and making outbound phone calls in support of SMP activities, for example, locate and reserve training space, confirm participant attendance, etc. Volunteers who assist with administration may perform other tasks as mutually agreed, including:

- Word processing
- Data entry
- Scheduling presentations and other outreach activities
- Collating
- Internet searches
- Fulfilling requests for information and materials
- Handling mail and correspondence

### **Limitations**

Volunteers who assist with administration do not receive inbound phone calls or field questions from the public. Instead they defer requests for information and assistance to paid staff or volunteers who are qualified to handle simple inquiries and/or provide one-on-one counseling.

### **Measures**

- Timely completion of assigned tasks
- Satisfaction of SMP staff regarding quality of work

## **Qualifications**

- Good oral and written communication skills
- Computer literacy, including familiarity with internet
- Ability to operate office equipment
- Ability to work and get along well with others from diverse backgrounds

## **Time Commitment**

Volunteer schedules are flexible. The local SMP coordinator of volunteers works with each volunteer who assists with administration to determine the number of hours the volunteer works each month, and to schedule the work accordingly. Because of the training SMP volunteers receive, they are asked to commit to a minimum of one year.

## **Location**

SMP volunteers who assist with administration work at the offices of the local SMP host organization or other assigned location.

## **Supervision**

SMP volunteers report to the local SMP program coordinator or coordinator of volunteers and, when appropriate, to the statewide SMP program coordinator.

## **Benefits**

SMP volunteers receive training on the basics of Medicare and Medicaid as it relates to dually eligible beneficiaries, fraud, error, and abuse. Volunteers who assist with administration receive additional training on office procedures and the safe use of equipment. All SMP volunteers have the satisfaction of participating in a national effort to educate Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and the general public about health care fraud, errors, and abuse. They receive recognition for their contributions to the program.



## Volunteer Role: Counseling Sample Role Description

### *Instructions for using this volunteer role description*

#### **Purpose**

To empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, error, and abuse by educating them in individual counseling sessions.

#### **Suggested Activities**

SMP counselors discuss individual situations with beneficiaries and/or their caregivers and may review Medicare Summary Notices (MSN), billing statements, medical records, and other related financial and health documents. Counselors also educate beneficiaries about how to prevent, detect, and report Medicare fraud, error, and abuse. Counselors listen carefully to the beneficiary's or caregivers account of a situation and determine whether to:

- Share information with, or provide an explanation to, the beneficiary or caregiver
- Send the beneficiary or caregiver to an SMP staff person or volunteer who handles complex issues, or
- Send the beneficiary to another more applicable organization for assistance (such as the SHIP, QIO, 1-800-Medicare, etc.)

When an SMP counselor decides to refer a beneficiary's case to a staff person or volunteer who handles complex issues, the counselor may receive and confidentially transmit the beneficiary's documents to that person with the SMP's confidentiality and data security procedures in mind. Counselors provide their services in person or by telephone. Counseling may take place at locations such as senior centers, SMP or Medicare education events, and libraries, to name a few.

#### **Limitations**

Counselors may receive and hold confidential beneficiary documents such as MSN and medical records only when referring a case to a staff person or volunteer that handles complex issues, unless the counselor is also designated as a complex issues volunteer.

## Measures

This activity is measured by the number of counseling sessions the volunteer provides and an evaluation tool, such as a client feedback form.

## Qualifications

- Good oral communication skills
- Active listening skills
- Ability and willingness to learn and share information related to preventing, detecting, and reporting health care fraud, error, and abuse
- Ability to explain Medicare coverage and program integrity rules and procedures in terms that beneficiaries can understand
- Ability to work and get along well with others from diverse backgrounds
- Ability to request assistance as needed, i.e., to refer complex issues and/or when the answer to a question is not known by the volunteer

## Time Commitment

Volunteer schedules are flexible. The local SMP coordinator of volunteers works with each volunteer to determine the number of hours the volunteer works each month, and to schedule assignments accordingly. Because of the training SMP One-on-One Counselors receive, they are asked to commit to a minimum of one year.

## Location

SMP counselor volunteers work at the offices of the local SMP host organization and at sites in the community where SMP activities such as presentations and information dissemination take place.

## Supervision

SMP volunteers report to the local SMP program coordinator or coordinator of volunteers and, when appropriate, to the statewide SMP program coordinator.

## Benefits

SMP volunteers receive training on the basics of Medicare and Medicaid for dual eligible beneficiaries, fraud, abuse, and typical scams. SMP counselors receive additional training on counseling skills, available local service providers (such as SHIP, AAAs, etc.) and triage procedures. All SMP volunteers have the satisfaction of participating in a national effort to educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and the general public about health care fraud, error, and abuse. They receive recognition for their contributions to the program.



## Volunteer Role: Making Group Presentations Sample Role Description

### *Instructions for using this volunteer role description*

### **Purpose**

To empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, error, and abuse by educating them on SMP topics through substantive presentations to groups in the community.

### **Suggested Activities**

Make 5 to 30 minute presentations using SMP-approved materials and scripts to audiences that consist of Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and/or other members of the public who want to gain awareness of the SMP program and the national effort to prevent, detect, and report fraud, error, and abuse in the health care system. Group presentations also include an opportunity for Q & A with the audience about covered topics and information. These presentations may take place at:

- Senior centers and community centers
- Health fairs and senior fairs
- Medicare education events
- Meetings of civic or faith-based organizations
- Meetings of health care providers
- Meetings of local law enforcement officials
- Libraries
- Universities and colleges

Identify other audiences and locations where in depth presentations may be appropriate.

### **Limitations**

Volunteers who make group presentations are limited to providing general information about SMP, Medicare and Medicaid fraud, error, and abuse, and related topics. They do not engage beneficiaries in individual discussions about personal information or situations other than to answer simple inquiries. They defer requests for counseling to SMP volunteers who are qualified to provide one-on-one counseling.

Insert date

## Measures

This activity is measured by attendance numbers and an evaluation of the presenter's effectiveness in conveying information about SMP topics and program goals.

## Qualifications

- Good oral communication and public speaking skills
- Ability and willingness to learn and share information related to preventing, detecting, and reporting health care billing mistakes, fraud, and abuse
- Ability to work and get along well with others from diverse backgrounds
- Ability to operate audiovisual equipment (e.g., Power Point program, laptop, and projector)
- Ability to travel to presentation sites throughout the community
- Valid driver's license
- Automobile (or other vehicle) Insurance

## Time Commitment

Volunteer schedules are flexible. The local SMP coordinator of volunteers works with each volunteer to determine the number of hours the volunteer works each month, and to schedule assignments accordingly. Because of the training volunteers who make group presentations receive, they are asked to commit to a minimum of one year.

## Location

Volunteers who make group presentations work at locations throughout the community.

## Supervision

SMP volunteers report to the local SMP program coordinator or coordinator of volunteers and, when appropriate, to the statewide SMP program coordinator.

## Benefits

SMP volunteers receive training on the basics of Medicare and Medicaid as it relates to dually eligible beneficiaries, fraud, error, and abuse. Volunteers who make group presentations receive additional training on presentation skills. They have the satisfaction of participating in a national effort to educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and the general public about health care fraud, errors, and abuse. They **<insert if applicable: attend an annual volunteer appreciation event and>** receive recognition for their contributions to the program.



## Volunteer Role: Handling Complex Issues

### *Instructions for using this volunteer role description*

#### **Purpose**

Volunteers who handle complex issues assist Medicare beneficiaries in reporting specific instances of suspected health care fraud, error and abuse. They help beneficiaries distinguish error from potential fraud or abuse and, as a result of their research, may act on a beneficiary's behalf to correct an error or refer suspected fraud and abuse to appropriate authorities. Because SMPs work closely together in a unique relationship with Medicare and Medicare fraud and abuse investigators, they have the ability to provide individual assistance and expedited referrals when beneficiaries report suspected fraud, error, and abuse. Through this relationship, volunteers who handle complex issues respond to beneficiary concerns about health care fraud.

#### **Suggested Activities**

Volunteers who handle complex issues respond to beneficiary and caregiver inquiries that involve complaints of fraud, error, and abuse by:

- Interviewing the beneficiary and/or caregiver in person or by telephone
- Obtaining signed release of information form from the beneficiary or beneficiary's designee
- Obtaining detailed information related to the report of fraud, error, or abuse
- Gathering information and documentation about the case, such as Medicare Summary Notices (MSN), Explanation of Benefit (EOB) records, billing statements, other financial records that contain confidential personal identifying information, or legal documentation related to the complaint
- Reviewing and evaluating information and documentation about the case with a SHIBA volunteer Coordinator
- Researching issues using SMP Manuals and other Medicare program integrity resources
- Providing completed complex issues form and associated documentation of suspected fraud, error, or abuse to SMP headquarters to be reported in the SMART FACTS reporting and referrals system and for reporting to the appropriate government entity for investigation
- Assessing the case for further investigation and/or referral
- Supporting and following up with beneficiaries as their reported issue moves through the investigation and resolution process

## Measures

This activity is measured by the number of complex issues the volunteer handles, the number of referrals, the dollar value of questionable health care charges, and the number of successful resolutions to beneficiary complaints of health care fraud, errors, and abuse.

## Qualifications

- Successful completion of the SMP Complex Issues Training
- Good oral communication skills
- Active listening skills
- Research and case management skills
- Ability and willingness to learn and share information related to preventing, detecting, and reporting health care billing mistakes, fraud, and abuse
- Ability to follow case referral protocols
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to work and get along well with others from diverse backgrounds
- Computer literacy, including ability to use the Internet and on line reporting programs
- Patience and persistence

## Time Commitment

Volunteer schedules are flexible. The local SMP coordinator of volunteers works with each volunteer to determine the number of hours the volunteer works each month, and to schedule assignments accordingly. Because of the training SMP volunteers receive, they are asked to commit to a minimum of one year.

## Location

Volunteers who handle complex issues work at the offices of the local SMP host organization or at other approved locations at the discretion of the SMP.

## Supervision

SMP volunteers report to the local SMP program coordinator or coordinator of volunteers and, when appropriate, to the statewide SMP program coordinator.

## Benefits

SMP volunteers receive training on the basics of Medicare and Medicaid for dually eligible beneficiaries, fraud, abuse, and current scams. SMP Complex Issues Volunteers receive additional training on case development and management skills, and procedures for referring complaints for further investigation. All SMP volunteers have the satisfaction of participating in a national effort to educate and empower

Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and the general public about health care fraud, errors, and abuse. They receive recognition for their contributions to the program.



## Volunteer Role: Staffing Exhibits Sample Role Description

### *Instructions for using this volunteer role description*

#### **Purpose**

To empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and the general public to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, error, and abuse by providing outreach through staffing of information kiosks or exhibits at events.

#### **Suggested Activities**

Provide general information about the SMP and health care fraud, error, and abuse at events by:

- Transporting kiosk materials and supplies to events
- Distributing written information about the SMP program and its services
- Distributing written information about preventing and identifying health care fraud, error, and abuse
- Answering general questions about the SMP program and its services
- Responding to simple inquiries

#### **Limitations**

Volunteers who staff exhibits are limited to providing general information about the SMP program and fraud, error, and abuse in Medicare and Medicaid. They do not engage in discussions of personal information or situations. They defer requests for counseling to staff or volunteers who are qualified to counsel beneficiaries and/or caregivers.

#### **Measures**

This activity will be measured by the number of exhibits the volunteer staffs, the number of people who visit the exhibit, and the number of SMP education and information materials (e.g., brochures and fact sheets) taken by those attending the event.

#### **Qualifications**

- Good oral communication skills
- Ability to transport and carry SMP education and information materials to outreach events

- Valid driver's license
- Automobile (or other vehicle) insurance
- Ability and willingness to learn and share information related to preventing, detecting, and reporting Medicare fraud, error, and abuse

## **Time Commitment**

Volunteer schedules are flexible. The local SMP coordinator of volunteers works with each volunteer who distributes information to determine the number of hours the volunteer works each month, and to schedule assignments accordingly. Because of the training SMP volunteers receive, they are asked to make a minimum commitment of one year.

## **Location**

SMP volunteers who staff exhibits work at sites throughout the local community.

## **Supervision**

SMP volunteers report to the local SMP program coordinator or coordinator of volunteers and, when appropriate, to the statewide SMP program coordinator.

## **Benefits**

SMP volunteers receive training on the basics of Medicare benefits and Medicare fraud, error, and abuse. They have the satisfaction of participating in a national effort to educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers, and the general public about health care fraud, error, and abuse. They receive recognition for their contributions to the program.