



***F A I T H***  
***I N A C T I O N***

***Faith in Action of McHenry County***

**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**Preserving the Independence of Our Senior Citizens  
In McHenry County since 1998**

**815-455-3120**

**[www.fiamchenrycounty.org](http://www.fiamchenrycounty.org)**

**7105 Virginia Road, Suite 21  
Crystal Lake, IL 60014**



Dear Volunteer,

We are pleased that you have selected Faith in Action for your volunteer service. You will find that the blessings you receive much outweigh the time you give. Thank you in advance on behalf of the McHenry County seniors that you will serve.

We have outlined the guidelines necessary to keep the program running smoothly for the care receivers, office staff, and for you as the care giver. Please keep this handbook nearby for reference when you have questions, and please do not hesitate to call or email us to make suggestions in order to enhance your volunteer service.

You are an everyday hero and we truly appreciate your service. We are here to assist you, please call.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Anderson  
Executive Director

## **VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**As a Volunteer, you have the right to expect the following from your Volunteer service:**

- ◆ To be treated with the same consideration and respect as a paid employee
- ◆ To have your Volunteer role thoroughly explained
- ◆ To know to whom you are responsible and who will answer your questions
- ◆ To have meaningful tasks to perform
- ◆ To not have a Volunteer position which replaces a paid employee
- ◆ To have all these things done in a spirit of friendliness and cooperation so that Faith in Action will continue to be known as “a great place to volunteer!”

**As a Volunteer, you have the responsibility to do the following:**

- ◆ Treat your placement with the same consideration and respect you would a paid job
- ◆ To understand your roles thoroughly ask questions, if needed
- ◆ To request an alternative placement if your current placement is no longer fulfilling
- ◆ To be reliable and on time
- ◆ To give adequate notice if you will be absent or leaving a placement
- ◆ To let Faith in Action know of any problems or concerns
- ◆ To honor the confidentiality guidelines



## About *Faith in Action* of McHenry County

### **Our Mission**

*Faith in Action* of McHenry County is a network of religious congregations, community agencies, and civic-minded individuals with a tradition of concern for others. Our purpose is to work with the seniors of our community who live at home to assist them and their families in maintaining their independence, dignity and quality of life.

### **Our Goal**

Provide volunteer services to seniors living at home who request assistance in fulfilling their needs.

### **History**

*Faith in Action* of McHenry County became its own 501 (c) 3 organization upon the receipt of a Robert Woods Johnson Foundation grant of \$25,000.00 in 1998. The *Faith in Action* program was founded on the ideal of community volunteerism of neighbors helping neighbors. We provide over 600 services each month to seniors throughout all of McHenry County. With the senior population constantly growing the need for *Faith in Action* services continues to increase.

We are the grateful recipients of McHenry County Senior Service Grants, McHenry County Community Foundation Grants, Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation grants, Retirement Research Foundation Occupational Capacity Building Grant, Mental Health Resource League Grants, and Community Development Block Grants. Other funding comes from donations and fund raising events. These funds allow us to keep in place an Executive Director and an Office Coordinator. *Faith in Action* maintains a small office site with a scheduling and planning center that is staffed by volunteers. *Faith in Action* is devoted to supporting seniors in our community who are 60 and older who live at home in McHenry County.

# Volunteer Processes

## Background Checks

In order to ensure a safe environment, all volunteers will be required to submit to a criminal history background check and a reference check prior to acceptance as a volunteer. Individuals who refuse to comply with this request will not be accepted as a volunteer.

## Driving Record

Volunteers whose volunteer work requires operation of a motor vehicle must present and maintain a valid driver's license and a driving record acceptable to our insurer. You will be asked to submit a copy of your proof of automobile insurance to Faith in Action and when your current policy expires, proof of coverage will again be needed.

## Equal Volunteering Opportunity

Faith in Action provides equal volunteering opportunity for everyone regardless of age, sex, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, marital status, sexual orientation, political belief, or disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions. All matters relating to volunteering are based upon ability to perform the job, as well as dependability and reliability.

## Training

In addition to initial training, subsequent educational sessions will be offered. These are designed to enhance your understanding of your role as a volunteer for older adults.

## Confidential Information

We have an obligation to our care receivers to maintain their confidentiality and respect their privacy. Every care receiver served by Faith in Action has the right to confidentiality. But at the same time, every volunteer must use his or her best judgment. If you are aware of a care receiver issue that requires immediate help, please inform the office.

## Time Sheets

Faith in Action's financial stability is based on service hours provided by volunteers. Time Sheets provide this method for tacking hours and mileage. (A sample time sheet is provided .) There are a number of ways volunteers can report their hours.

- a. Utilize the form available on the web site:  
www.fiamchenrycounty.org
- b. Copy and complete the sample form and mail to: Faith in Action, 7105 Virginia Rd, Ste. 21, Crystal Lake, IL 60014
- c. Hours and mileage may be e-mailed to:  
staff@fiamchenrycounty.org
- d. Telephone your hours and mileage to: 815-455-3120
- e.

We have an obligation to our care receivers to maintain their confidentiality and respect their privacy.

## Going to be out of town or need a break

If you plan to be absent for a week or more please call the office to be placed on a temporary inactive list.

## Grievances and Harassment

Policies on file.

## Gifts, Tips & Soliciting

Do not accept any tips or gifts from care receivers, their families or friends. We do not want to create an atmosphere where our care receivers feel obligated to reward Faith in Action staff for doing their job.

Also, you may not promote or solicit your own business enterprise, political agenda or religious beliefs while volunteering with us. Solicitation for a private charity is also prohibited.



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## General Guidelines for Service

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1. Do not provide any hands on care, such as:
  - ◆ Lifting
  - ◆ Bathing
  - ◆ medical procedures
  - ◆ handling of medications
2. If a medical emergency occurs while you are serving a FIAMC care receiver:
  - ◆ CALL 911
  - ◆ Notify the FIAMC office as soon as possible 815-455-3120
  - ◆ If possible, notify the care receiver's family or their emergency contact
3. If you are certain the care receiver is home but has not come to the door
  - ◆ If you are unable to enter the home call them on your cell phone or use a neighbor's phone.
  - ◆ If you are able, enter the home and determine what kind of assistance is needed.
  - ◆ If care receiver has fallen – DO NOT attempt to help them up or move them, CALL 911.
  - ◆ Contact the FIAMC office 815- 455-3120
4. You should perform only assigned duties. If you are asked to do more and have the time, this is acceptable. Just remember to document your time.
5. If unable to complete the assignment because of time commitments, you should let the care receiver know when you will return and notify FIAMC office.
6. FIAMC recommends that you not give your telephone numbers to the care receiver. This will reduce the risk of the care receiver becoming dependent on you for all assistance.
7. If your personal situation changes and you are unable to perform assignments, the FIAMC office should be notified as soon as possible and also call the care receiver.
8. The volunteer is expected to personally contact the care receiver one or two days prior to service.
9. You should:
  - ◆ Be an active listener, sharing personal experiences and special interests if appropriate.
  - ◆ Never offer advice on legal, medical, financial, or personal issues.
  - ◆ Never loan money to the care receiver and never accept money for service provided. Donations to FIAMC are accepted. Provide an envelope for the care receiver to mail money into the office. You may accept cash provided you are willing to mail it or bring it to the office. You might want to provide a receipt for the care receiver.
10. Be alert to changing needs of the care receiver and inform FIAMC so an assessment can be made.
11. Volunteers may not accept any gifts of value from a care receiver, nor be included in their wills, estates, etc.
12. If a care receiver wishes to donate money for your assistance they should be told to mail the money to the FIAMC office. If they insist that you accept the money, thank them and let them know that you will see that the money is mailed or delivered to the FIAMC office.
13. RESPECT CONFIDENCES. Care receivers are not subjects for dinner table conversations. You are expected to be familiar with the guidelines for particular tasks to be performed.
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## Spirituality: Frequently Asked Questions

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What is meant by your name – Faith In Action?

The name is intended to reflect the fact that people who volunteer for Faith in Action may come from many different churches, congregations, and temples. Some volunteers come to FIA as members of no religious group at all. The bond that ties volunteers together is the desire to love one another and to share that love instrumentally by helping to meet the needs of others. Regardless of what background people come from, most believe in loving and helping their neighbor. FIA is a place where people can live out what they believe.

Why do we talk about spiritual issues?

There is no such thing as a person who is not spiritual. All people have a yearning and desire to make sense out of our world and spirituality is one way in which that is done. Health care systems now are adopting a new definition of health to include physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well being. Care receivers may ask volunteers about spiritual issues. As a volunteer, you may not be able to answer every question, but hopefully this section and the training session will give you some guidance when tough questions are asked.

Can I witness (evangelize) to the care receivers I serve?

The goal of Faith in Action is to provide care, compassion, and concern for those in need. While volunteers are providing care, care receivers might ask, "Why are you a volunteer?" It is perfectly acceptable to share with the care receiver that you are acting out your faith. If they ask where you worship or what you believe, it is acceptable to share your answers with them. Your faith is a great part of who you are. One of the wonderful things about FIA is that people are given the opportunity to share who they are and learn who others are also. However, it is not acceptable to be pushy with what you believe. We don't require care receivers to believe the same as we do. A healthy way to approach faith issues is to focus on the care receiver and what they believe.

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May I invite care receivers to attend church with me?

Yes, but you should never make it a condition of your care or diminish the level of care they are receiving if they do not accept your invitation. Remember that a care receiver may feel pressured. They may think that if they don't respond positively that you will not continue to care for them. It is best to allow them to ask if they can go with you.



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## Transportation

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1. When you accept an assignment, the office volunteer scheduler will provide you with necessary information including directions to the care receiver's home. Verify needs yourself is your care receiver blind, does he/she walk with a cane etc. YOU should call the care receiver and confirm that the information is still valid and confirm date and time.
2. When arriving at a care receiver's home, identify yourself as a volunteer from FIA of McHenry County who is assisting the care receiver.
3. After arriving at the care receiver's appointment, make arrangements with the care receiver either to wait during the appointment or to return at a specific time. It is advisable that you notify the receptionist of your intent regarding staying with the care receiver or leaving, and leave your cell number.
4. If you leave, you should meet the care receiver at the same place the care receiver was left and at the agreed upon time.
5. Be aware of the physical limitations of the care receiver in regard to climbing steps or walking distances. Drop the care receiver as close to the appointment door as possible. **Do not park in handicap parking** unless proper identification is displayed in the car. If pavement is wet or icy, instruct care receiver to wait to allow you to assist to prevent falls. You should offer your arm in the manner of escorting a person.
6. Seat belts must be worn at all times by the driver and passengers.
7. If weather is inclement and poses a safety hazard or you are uncomfortable with providing transportation on an inclement weather day inform the office and the care receiver as soon as possible so the appointment can be rescheduled.
8. You are to obey all traffic laws, regulations, and speed limits. You are expected to be a safe and courteous driver.
9. If the care receiver has a vehicle that is designed specifically for a care receiver's disability, contact the office regarding the circumstances.
10. A copy of your CURRENT proof of insurance is required. Additionally the state minimums for automobile liability insurance are not sufficient. We recommend at least \$100,000. **Illinois Auto Insurance regulations:** Illinois is a tort state, in tort states you are responsible for the injuries you cause as a result of an accident. Rates are determined by the driving habits of the drivers within a state. The state's liability minimums are 20/40/15. That is \$20,000 per individual for bodily injuries you cause to the other persons, and up to \$40,000 for all, and \$15,000 for damage you cause to the other party's personal property.
11. When funding available, mileage reimbursement of \$.30/per mile may be requested after 50 miles have been driven.



## Friendly Visits and Respite Care

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Pointers for developing a relationship:

1. Use your own good common sense, tact and courteous consideration. Remember, the visit is not for you, but for the person you are visiting. Ask yourself whose needs you are meeting. Ideally, both will benefit. If not, the person's needs come first.
2. Respect your care receiver's living space. Call him/her by their last name unless invited to do otherwise. Ask permission to turn off the TV if it is turned on; after visit offer to turn it back on.
3. Be accepting of moods, opinions, and interests; and avoid controversy.
4. Let your care receiver lead the conversation, unless he or she is shy and needs drawing out. Talk about news of the day to discover areas of interest. Personal history can be a good place to start a conversation. The following topics may bring an eager response:
  - ◆ Inventions (TV, electricity) and the changes they have brought
  - ◆ Their first car
  - ◆ Courting
  - ◆ Clothing and hairstyles
  - ◆ Their family
5. Avoid showing pity, but do not be falsely cheerful. Listen to a care-receiver's troubles in silent sympathy, restraining the impulse to offer good advice or moral counsel, show that you care for and accept them.
6. Remember that your care receiver may be experiencing much that is negative. Your most helpful attitude will be one of empathy, caring, and acceptance. Such statements as "Cheer up, things will get better", are not helpful.
7. Do not discourage talk about death. Allow your care receiver to express their thoughts and feels on this most important topic.
8. Help orient your care receiver if he/she loses track of time, date, person or place.
9. Do not avoid uncomfortable silences.
10. Enjoy your visit. Although visitation requires concentration and hard work, it can also be uplifting to you.
11. Set your boundaries and don't feel guilty about not giving more than you have committed. Keeping your set appointments made and your real presence when visiting will make the relationship satisfying and meaningful to you both.
12. In serving care receivers referred from the community, FIAMC volunteers are not to impose their religious beliefs. However, if care receivers request prayers or referrals to congregations, then FIAMC volunteers may respond with appropriate assistance.
13. DO NOT:
  - ◆ Make a promise you may not be able to keep
  - ◆ Advise care receivers about business or legal matters
  - ◆ Give physical care
  - ◆ Give medicine or medical advice

Your friendly calls fight the epidemic of loneliness prevalent in our society.



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## Errands and Shopping - Guidelines

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1. Encourage a specific day for shopping. Call your senior the day before your appointed shopping date to confirm plans. Call again right before you leave home.
2. Do not give your senior your telephone number or say that you are on call as needed. Inform your senior to call the FIAMC office for other appointments. If you agree to another shopping day or a routine shopping day/week, please notify the office.
3. Make sure that your senior makes a shopping list for you, which includes brand names and sizes. Review this list and anticipate problems and ask questions.
4. Ask your senior what to do if the preferred item is not in stock. Should you buy another brand and or omit that item from the list? Expect to make an occasional mistake and don't let it concern you.
5. Find out if economy is important. If you notice a less expensive brand than the one specified, does your senior want you to buy it instead?
6. For your protection, it is wise to write and sign a receipt for cash, banking cards, checks, or food stamps received from your senior prior to shopping.
7. If your senior indicates that some help would be appreciated, assist with unpacking and sorting purchases.
8. Plan to spend a short time with your senior chatting after shopping if possible.
9. **RESPECT CONFIDENCES.** Care-receivers are not subjects for dinner table conversations.



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## ***Light Housekeeping / Minor Home Repairs***

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1. Call the care receiver the day before the appointed task to confirm time and plans.
2. Do not give the care receiver your telephone number, or say that you are on call as needed. Inform the senior to call the FIAMC office for further appointments.
3. Keep the tasks to what was agreed on when the appointment was made. If the senior requests other tasks, explain that another appointment should be made.
4. Ask ahead of time if the care receiver has equipment necessary for the task or if cleaning supplies, or yard implements rake, ladder, brooms, etc. need to be brought to the home. If supplies need to be purchased, the senior should pay for the supplies ahead of time unless there is a financial problem.
5. If you are unable to complete the assignment due to lack of tools and/or materials, let the care receiver know that additional items are needed and that you will call to reschedule the work. Notify FIAMC of the problem. 815-455-3120.
6. Do not attempt to perform a task which has not been approved by FIAMC, or one which requires special skills or equipment you are not experienced at or trained to handle.
7. Always remember to respect the care receiver and their property.

What constitutes “light housekeeping”?

- ◆ Vacuuming
- ◆ Light dusting with duster, no moving of knick-knacks
- ◆ Mopping
- ◆ Windows—inside only as needed, not on a regular basis
- ◆ We **do not** do walls, tubs, toilets, dishes

The homeowner supplies the cleaning products.

Minor Home Repairs:

- ◆ Each request will be evaluated based upon available volunteers.

What about “yard-work”?

- ◆ Spring/Fall yard raking
- ◆ Pulling weeds (small gardens only)
- ◆ Trim bushes around walk-ways
- ◆ Gutters, 1 story homes ONLY

Yard Maintenance

Mowing, twice per month only  
No dirt or gravel spreading

Snow removal, on a limited basis as a volunteer can be found

The homeowner supplies the needed implements to get the job done.



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## Volunteer Office Staff – Call center

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### Position Summary:

- Staff the FIAMC call center
- Respond to care receiver requests for services
- Evaluate new care receiver request, notify intake coordinator for processing
- Refer care receivers to other agencies when necessary
- Understand and explain our services to others
- Track and record care receiver/care giver matches
- Attend to current volunteer needs, receive new volunteer requests
- Quarterly staff luncheon/meeting
- Other office duties as assigned such as copying, filing, telephone surveys, newsletter mailings, etc.

### Skills:

- Excellent customer service and telephone communication
- Pleasant telephone voice
- Ability to utilize FIAMC tracking procedures
- Confidentiality a must
- Desire to interact with and assist the senior Population
- Desire to serve God and others (no evangelism)

### Working Conditions:

- Works in a typical office setting

### Hours:

- Three hours minimum, may work two or more shifts on same or alternate days as desired.

Office Hours: 9 – 3, three hour shifts Monday – Friday



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## Legacy Corps Members

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You may find yourself desiring more from your volunteer experience. Legacy Corps may be your answer. This program provides additional opportunities for you as a volunteer while increasing FIAMC's capacity to meet the needs of McHenry County senior citizens

In order to be a Legacy Corps member you must complete an application and return it to the Faith in Action office **before March**. Recruiting for the program is only conducted once per year. Your application will be reviewed, you will be interviewed, and if selected for the program you will be provided 20 hours of pre-service training.

As a Legacy Corps member you complete 450 hours of service: 80% hands on service, and 20% training. This equals about **10** hours a week. A portion of the \$2,000 annual living allowance is paid out every two weeks. Additionally, a \$1,250 educational award is earned by completing the service that can be used at an accredited institution. Hours can be earned by phoning your care receiver, by transporting your care receiver etc. You may also give hours to the Faith in Action office.

Legacy Members may only take advantage of these awards for two years; afterwards, you may continue to serve Legacy Corps and Faith in Action as non stipend members.

## Standards of Conduct

By accepting to volunteer with us, you have a responsibility to Faith in Action of McHenry County and to your fellow volunteers to adhere to certain guidelines of conduct. Faith in Action of McHenry County tries to keep rules to a minimum. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights, but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected and necessary. When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow volunteers to follow the rules of conduct, then our organization will be a better place to volunteer for everyone.

### Unacceptable Activities

Generally speaking, we expect each person to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious unacceptable activities are noted below. Your avoidance of these activities will be to your benefit as well as the benefit of Faith in Action of McHenry County. If you have any questions concerning any volunteer or safety rule, or any of the unacceptable activities listed, please see the volunteer coordinator for an explanation.

- Willful violation of any agency rule; any deliberate action that is extreme in nature and is obviously detrimental to Faith in Action of McHenry County.
- Negligence or any careless action which endangers the life or safety of another person.
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited at any Faith in Action of McHenry County event designed for the participation of minors.
- Possession or use of all illegal drugs or other illegal substances is prohibited.
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism.
- Unauthorized possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, weapons or explosives on agency property or while on duty.
- Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence, or making threats of violence toward anyone on agency premises or when representing Faith in Action of McHenry County; fighting, or horseplay or provoking a fight on agency property, or negligent damage of property.
- Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by the volunteer coordinator.
- Threatening, intimidating or coercing fellow volunteers on or off the premises at any time, for any purpose.
- Theft of agency property or the property of fellow volunteers; unauthorized possession or removal of any agency property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from management; unauthorized use of agency equipment or property for personal reasons; using agency equipment for profit.
- Dishonesty; willful falsification or misrepresentation on your application for volunteering or other volunteer records; alteration of agency records or other agency documents.
- Breach of confidentiality of personnel information.
- Malicious gossip and/or spreading rumors; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another volunteer on the job; willfully restricting volunteer output or encouraging others to do the same.
- Immoral conduct or indecency on agency property.



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## Termination Policy

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Faith in Action of McHenry County is an at-will agency and has the right to terminate a volunteer without cause, but will always consider the cause leading to the termination. In general, failure to adhere to policies of Faith in Action is cause for immediate release.

Faith in Action of McHenry County has the right to ask a volunteer to leave the facility immediately.

Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Gross misconduct or insubordination
- ◆ Reporting for a volunteer assignment under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- ◆ Theft of property or misuse of agency funds, equipment or materials
- ◆ Falsifying statements on the application or during the interview process
- ◆ Illegal, violent or unsafe acts
- ◆ Abuse or mistreatment of care receivers or volunteers
- ◆ Releasing confidential information
- ◆ Unwillingness to support and further the mission of the organization