

Sample:

Senior Corps Accomplishments Survey

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Senior Corps is conducting the national Accomplishments Survey to gather and compile information about the accomplishments of its RSVP, Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent volunteers. Nearly 3,200 Senior Corps volunteer stations have been randomly selected to participate in this study in spring 2004.

A. BACKGROUND ON THE SURVEY

1. What is the purpose of this survey?

Through the Accomplishments Survey, the Corporation for National and Community Service is gathering information about Senior Corps volunteer programs that will help demonstrate to the public and to national, state and local stakeholders the great value of Senior Corps volunteers in meeting needs in their communities.

The results will be shared in a series of user-friendly national accomplishment reports that Senior Corps grantees can use to demonstrate the many contributions of RSVP volunteers, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions.

Senior Corps will also use some of the results to report information about the Senior Corps to the Congress – thus minimizing the level of additional information and data collection on its network of grantees.

2. What is the focus of this survey?

The Accomplishments Surveys will address two primary topics:

- The contributions of Senior Corps volunteers in meeting needs in their communities, and
- Ways that volunteer station supervisors manage and support Senior Corps volunteers.

3. Who is administering the survey?

The Accomplishments Survey project is being administered by Westat, a private research firm under contract with the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency that administers the Senior Corps programs.

4. When will the results be released?

The Corporation will issue reports on the findings in September 2004.

5. Why is it important for me to participate in this survey?

By participating in the survey you will play an important role in documenting the importance of Senior Corps volunteers to community organizations such as yours. Your response is critical to providing a complete picture of our volunteer programs. The results of this survey will help quantify and convey the accomplishments of the Senior Corps volunteers and will more clearly establish their value to organizations like your own. The responses you provide will not be shared with Senior Corps Project Director, and your relationship with the Senior Corps Project will not be affected by your responses to this survey.

B. THE PROCESS

1. How was I selected to participate in this survey?

Individual organizations (“volunteer stations”) were selected by a national random selection method from among all the 65,000 RSVP, Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion projects in the United States. The chances that your stations would be selected were greater for stations with large numbers of volunteers or where volunteers provided uncommon services, such as in homeland security activities.

2. Is participation in the survey voluntary?

A high response rate to this survey is critical in helping Senior Corps demonstrate an accurate and complete picture of our senior volunteer programs. With your participation in this survey we are able to use the results to make a strong case to Congress and other stakeholders. The survey results will also support your efforts to promote and fund your programs locally. So, while individual involvement is voluntary it is important and we hope we can count on your participation.

3. Will my responses be kept confidential?

The information you provide through the survey will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone but the researchers conducting this study without your permission, except as otherwise required by law.

4. How many other Senior Corps volunteer stations are being surveyed?

3,150 randomly sampled Senior Corps volunteer station supervisors: 1,850 RSVP stations, 650 SCP stations, and 650 FGP stations.

5. What is the deadline for completing the survey?

Please return the survey within two weeks of receiving it from your project director.

6. Where do I return the completed survey?

Return your completed survey directly to Westat in the pre-addressed, pre-paid return envelope enclosed in your survey packet. **Please do not return the completed survey to the Senior Corps project director with whom you work.**

C. THE SURVEY

1. Why did I receive only a portion of the survey?

Senior Corps volunteers perform many service activities to meet a variety of needs, and the full scope of this survey is broad and lengthy. To ease the task of survey respondents, we have attempted to shorten, simplify, and target the sections of the survey that each respondent receives.

Your survey packet is customized to include only the service categories that Senior Corps volunteers address at your organization. This information was obtained from the Senior Corps Project Director who coordinates with your organization.

2. What do I do if I did not receive the appropriate survey packet for the services my Senior Corps volunteers performs?

Call 1-888-446-1292 or send an e-mail to KathyMorehead@westat.com and you will receive the appropriate survey packet. Westat will inform the Senior Corps project director of the change.

3. What is the time period covered by the survey?

In most cases, the reporting period is October 1, 2002 to September 30, 2003. For school-based services, the reporting period is the 2002-03 academic school year: September 2002 to June 2003.

4. What is the purpose of the Volunteer Management questions?

The questions related to volunteer management will help Senior Corps better understand the true value that its volunteers bring to an organization as well as the challenges of managing those volunteers.

5. How do I respond to questions in the Volunteer Management section if they do not apply to my organization?

Mark the “don’t know” or “does not apply” response.

6. How do I fill in the survey?

Please fill in the blank spaces provided with information from your records about each of the activities that Senior Corps volunteers carry out for your organization. The survey asks about the numbers of Senior Corps volunteers, volunteer hours, and the nature of the accomplishments for a particular activity.

Please avoid duplicating services—select the single best place, in your view, to describe an activity.

Please refer to the sample question in your survey.

7. What if I do not have exact numbers of beneficiaries for some services?

If numbers are hard to specify, please provide your best estimate.

8. Do I count the same beneficiaries more than once if they receive more than one kind of service from my organization's volunteers?

If beneficiaries receive different services (i.e., in a VA hospital the same person might receive substance abuse counseling *and* treatment for physical disabilities), then that person should be counted for each service received.

You should not count the same service in different sets of questions. For instance, a volunteer might provide services to a special education class of elementary school children. That class should be counted as beneficiaries in either special education or elementary education, but not both.

9. What if my organization's volunteers provide services not listed in the survey?

At the end of the survey package there is space provided for Other Services. Please add information in this table that does not fit elsewhere in the survey.

D. ASKING QUESTIONS

1. Where can I find additional information?

Your Senior Corps Project Director has been provided additional information about the survey process.

2. Who do I contact with additional questions?

If you still have additional questions about the survey or how to complete it, please feel free to contact Westat:

- **1-888-446-1292**
- **KathyMorehead@westat.com**