



# DUMMERSTON CARES VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

**Postal Address:**  
**P.O. Box 302, West Dummerston, VT 05357**

**Dummerston Cares HELPLINE:**  
**(802) 257-5800**

## **DUMMERSTON CARES, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**2016-17**

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<b>John Wilcox, Treasurer</b>	<b>257-0674</b>

### **HANDBOOK'S PURPOSE**

**The Volunteer Handbook's purpose is to introduce volunteers and others to Dummerston Cares: its history and organization, mission, programs, financial support, the importance and place of volunteers in Cares, and Cares volunteer policies and procedures. Volunteers are absolutely essential to the success of Cares mission to everything from their recruitment to orientation and training, program service and support must be done with full knowledge of the organization and how they are expected to serve Cares clients.**

**August 4, 2017**

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## **DUMMERSTON CARES IN SUMMARY**

### **HISTORY, MISSION, ORGANIZATION, PROGRAMS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Founded by Shirley Perkins and Beverly Lavoie, a small group that also included June Levinson, Jean Momaney, Mary Tyler and Judy Enello, founded Dummerston Cares in 2005. Major programs in its first years included establishment of a Helpline telephone service, an emergency fuel fund, and social and information luncheons at the Community Center. Jean was helpful in serving as treasurer. In 2016, with Shirley's move from Dummerston, there was need for fresh energy and direction for Dummerston Cares. With help from the Congregational Church and Transition Dummerston, Dummerston Cares reorganized as a non-profit under Vermont law. Bylaws were adopted, a Board was elected and Federal IRS tax exemption status was secured. Dummerston Cares is an all-volunteer organization led by a volunteer Board.

The **mission of Dummerston Cares**, as stated in the bylaws, is *to strengthen the Dummerston community through support of all residents with health and other wellness needs through services, programs and resources of its own and those of related local, regional and state organizations and agencies.*

Current programs include Helpline, Emergency Fuel Fund, Rides Program, Friendly Visitors, Corps Chores, Medical Equipment Loan Program, and Welcome Baskets.

Financial support for Cares comes from individual tax-deductible donations, the Town of Dummerston, and the Dummerston Community Chest. Government and foundation grants are being looked into for specific projects.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are the heart and soul of Dummerston Cares, providing Board leadership as well as carrying out all of the organization's direct programs and services. They provide compassionate, kind and thoughtful attention through actions in support of residents with health and related wellness needs. In a word, volunteers are the ones who provide "helping hands for our neighbors" through Cares programs and services.

### **DUMMERSTON CARES BOARD**

The bylaws of Dummerston Cares, Inc. provide for 5-9 directors, all of whom are volunteers and serve staggered 3 year terms. The Board manages all of the Cares affairs, including initiation of programs and services to carry out Cares' mission, development of standards for programs and services, appointment of committees as needed, securing of needed funds, overseeing of expenditures, and a reporting on its activities at its annual meeting in September each year. Detailed information on the Board's composition, officers, meetings, administration and other subjects can be found in the Cares bylaws.

### **FRIENDS OF DUMMERSTON CARES**

Friends of Dummerston Cares includes volunteers, donors, and others who support Cares in a variety of ways. There are now over 125 Friends. This number continuously increases as Cares reaches out and serves more and more people in town. Friends are looked to by the Board for help in connecting with people who can benefit from Cares programs and services, assistance in developing and carrying out new programs, and for provision of financial aid when needed for basic support and new programs and services.

# **VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **QUALITIES OF A VOLUNTEER**

- Commitment to the Dummerston Cares mission and to the specific program(s) in which the volunteer is participating
- Ability to relate to clients being served
- Skills and abilities appropriate for the program in which the volunteer is committed
- Ability and willingness to accept direction
- Flexibility in accepting specific assignments
- A desire to learn and grow as a person
- Willingness to ask questions and ask for guidance

## **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A VOLUNTEER**

Our volunteers are representatives of the Dummerston Cares organization in the community. Their specific roles, responsibilities and tasks are determined by the program or service for which they have volunteered.

## **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT**

Among the ways by which volunteers may be recruited are the following:

- Personal contact
- Mailings to our Friends list
- Articles and notices in Views of Dummerston and other public media
- The Cares website and possible future social media outlets

## **APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Each Cares program has its own volunteer application form which asks for basic contact data along with information pertinent to the purpose and operation of the specific Cares program.

## **ORIENTATION AND TRAINING**

Prior to beginning service in a Dummerston Cares program, a volunteer is introduced and oriented to Dummerston Cares as an organization, its mission, and in a general way how its programs and volunteers will function. The specific program for which s/he is volunteering will then be reviewed. Topics covered include confidentiality, support and direction, reporting, conflict of interest, and gifts, among others. There will also be opportunity for a new volunteer to speak with experienced volunteers about what service in the program involves. S/he may be invited to accompany an experienced volunteer in his/her association with a client or in whatever activity s/he is engaged. Information on Dummerston Cares program policies and procedures will be given to the new volunteer.

In-service training and collaboration with other volunteers in the program in which the volunteer is engaged, will be provided where appropriate.

## **SUPPORT AND DIRECTION OF VOLUNTEERS**

Support and direction of a volunteer is provided primarily by the Cares Program Coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for volunteer orientation and training, which may include the participation of Board members or others. Further, the coordinator handles the volunteer's placement or activity assignment and provides guidance on all policies and procedures related to the program in which the volunteer serves.

## **REPORTING OF CONCERNS**

Any concerns that a volunteer has in performing his/her service will be taken up with the Program Coordinator. If the issue is not resolved, or if an additional opinion or view is needed, the coordinator will communicate this to the Board president who will speak with the coordinator and volunteer about the concern or ask another Board member to do so.

## **AVAILABILITY AND ABSENCE**

Volunteers are expected to fulfill the responsibilities to which they have agreed. If a volunteer is prevented from carrying out a specific assignment due to weather or personal emergency, s/he must notify the Program Coordinator or a Board member with as much advance notice as possible. Volunteers will also notify the Program Coordinator well in advance, regarding times when they cannot be available for service due to travel or other circumstance.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Dummerston Cares volunteers may learn personal or sensitive information about the clients with whom they associate and work. This information, as well as the identification of the clients, is to be held in strict confidence. Any breach of this expectation of confidentiality may be harmful to the safety and well-being of clients and other volunteers and will reflect negatively on the professionalism of the Dummerston Cares organization. Volunteers are required to sign a statement indicating they understand that protection of confidential information is required for continued service as a Cares volunteer.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Individuals who serve in the capacity of a Cares volunteer shall not, at the same time, assist a client in a fiduciary role, including but not limited to: power of attorney, executor of a will, representative payee, or guardian of a client. His/her interaction with Cares clients shall be limited to responsibilities and tasks as defined by the specific Cares program(s) which s/he represents.

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

A volunteer shall not engage in any partisan political activity during volunteer hours or while representing Dummerston Cares in any way.

## **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

A volunteer shall not engage in any form of religious instruction during volunteer service hours or while representing Dummerston Cares in any way.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

A volunteer shall not discriminate in her/his service to clients on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual or gender orientation, age, religion, marital or civil union status, veteran status, or political affiliation, or on the basis of disability.

## **GIFTS**

No volunteer may accept gifts of money or goods from a client. "Gift" is defined as goods with a sale value of \$10 or more, or money in any amount. Donations may be made directly to Dummerston Cares. Because a volunteer may be regarded as a friend by the person served, the volunteer may, on occasion, accept an item of less than \$10 value such as a cup of coffee, baked goods, or a small, handmade item.

## **CLIENT ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY**

If an emergency situation occurs while a volunteer is in Cares service with a client, the volunteer should call 911 and follow the directions given by the 911 operator. The client's emergency contact person and the volunteer's Program Coordinator should also be informed immediately.

## **VEHICLE SAFETY AND INSURANCE WHERE APPLICABLE**

When a volunteer uses a private vehicle in a Cares program, the vehicle owner's liability insurance provides the coverage in the event of an accident during a volunteer trip. Cares recommends that volunteers maintain third-party liability limits of no less than \$100,000 per person bodily injury, \$300,000 per accident, \$100,000 property damage and uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage.

## **RELEASE FROM LIABILITY**

A volunteer holds Dummerston Cares harmless from any kind of liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind, that may arise in his/her volunteer activity and service, with respect to bodily injury, personal injury, illness or death.

## **ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUGS**

While delivering a service in a Cares program, volunteers shall not use alcohol or any substance that might impair his/her service to a client. Smoking is not permitted when a volunteer is in a client's home or in a vehicle with a client, unless both parties agree otherwise. Volunteers who are non-smokers and prefer or require that clients not smoke in their presence should make this known to the Program Coordinator in advance.

## **RESIGNATION AND TERMINATION**

Whenever possible, volunteers are asked to give at least two weeks written notice before ending their service. This will give the Program Coordinator time to bring appropriate closure to the volunteer's assignment(s). Retired volunteers are considered "Honorary Volunteers" and are invited to attend volunteer recognition events.

Volunteers may be dismissed in the case of chronic absence from carrying out their program assignment, refusal to adhere to program policies and procedures, inability or repeated difficulty in performing assigned duties, violation of the confidentiality policy, acceptance of gifts or fees for services, or any other action that is deemed unlawful or inappropriate and discredits the program specifically and Dummerston Cares as an organization.

## **VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION**

Dummerston Cares believes strongly in expressing continued appreciation of those who serve as volunteers in its programs. Recognition may include certificates of appreciation, milestone anniversary gifts, birthday cards, and luncheon or other volunteer recognition events.

# **DUMMERSTON CARES PROGRAMS**

## **TELEPHONE HELPLINE**

**802-257-5800**

### **PURPOSE**

The Telephone Helpline service has been in operation since the founding of Dummerston Cares in 2005. This is a non-emergency service that allows a resident (or his or her family or caregiver) to call the above number and request help or information.

### **HELPLINE VOLUNTEER ROLE**

The Helpline volunteer monitors messages on the Helpline telephone daily, one or more times, and responds to the caller within 24 hours. The volunteer fills out a client needs request form and contacts the appropriate Cares Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will, then, contact the caller directly. If the Helpline volunteer knows that Cares doesn't currently provide the help requested, to the extent possible s/he will provide information about other resources and services that may be helpful to the caller.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND SUPPORT OF HELPLINE VOLUNTEER**

The volunteer must have telephone communication skills and knowledge of Cares programs and how to contact each Program Coordinator. Basic knowledge of resources and services available in related organizations and agencies is also essential. To this end training and resource materials are provided for Helpline volunteers. Sources of support for volunteers may include other Helpline volunteers, as well as personnel of other agencies such as Senior Solutions and SEVCA.

## **FRIENDLY HOME VISITORS**

### **PURPOSE**

The Friendly Home Visitors program matches volunteers with housebound neighbors or senior home residents for informal social visits. This service is available to any resident, who has limited mobility which may be temporary or long-term due to injury, illness, a chronic condition, or some other situation.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Friendly Visitor coordinator receives and considers for approval all requests for the Friendly Home Visitor service. After conducting an interview with the potential client, the coordinator will recommend an appropriate Friendly Visitor/Client match for each case. The Friendly Visitor is responsible to the Program Coordinator. The Program coordinator will receive follow-up reports and evaluations about each Friendly Visit made by the volunteer.

### **VOLUNTEER ROLE**

A Friendly Visitor's role is to provide caring companionship for the client through conversation and, where appropriate, sharing of memories and interests, reading aloud, letter or note writing, games or cards, crafts, music, arts projects or anything else of interest to the client. A Friendly Visitor cannot provide nursing services or administer medications and should not be asked to do so. S/he should also not be asked to assist with the client's meal preparation, mobility or bathroom requirements.



## **SKILLS AND MOTIVATION OF FRIENDLY VISITOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers have varied backgrounds and experiences, but come to Cares with a common motivation to provide a positive, uplifting interaction with their clients. Before acceptance as a Friendly Visitor, the volunteer will have participated in a detailed orientation about Cares policies and Friendly Visitor requirements, as arranged by the Program Coordinator.

## **SUPPORT FOR FRIENDLY VISITORS**

Support, guidance and direction is provided primarily by the Program Coordinator. Also, volunteers meet periodically to discuss issues and concerns and share useful information and tips, always maintaining strict confidentiality of clients.

See the Friendly Visitor packet for more information on the Friendly Visitors Program.

## **RIDES PROGRAM**

**PURPOSE.** The Rides Program is a free transportation service for residents who need transportation to medical appointments. Rides are available to immediate area hospitals and providers and as far away as Lebanon, NH and Boston, MA. This program is carried out by a corps of volunteer drivers and is supplemented by the regional Current “dial-a-ride” transportation service.

In special cases, rides can be requested for non-medical services such as grocery shopping or another social or arts event.

## **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Program Coordinator receives transportation requests from the Helpline Volunteer or other sources, matches them with an approved Cares volunteer driver or suggests referral to the Current transportation service. Requests for the Cares Rides service are desired several days in advance if possible.

## **VOLUNTEER DRIVER'S ROLE**

The volunteer driver transports the client to her/his medical appointment, and, if possible, waits for him/her while s/he is at her/his appointment, and brings her/him home. Provision is made for appointments that are unusually long, and/or, if another volunteer is needed to transport the client back home.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND LIABILITY OF DRIVER**

The application for a volunteer driver provides assurance of a driver's safe driving history. A copy of the driver's license and proof of auto liability insurance must be provided annually. The personal auto liability insurance of an unpaid driver volunteering for a charity provides coverage in the event of an accident during a volunteer trip. Dummerston Cares suggests that volunteers maintain third-party liability limits of no less than \$100,000 per person bodily injury, \$300,000 per accident and \$100,000 property damage. Uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage is also recommended.

## **DRIVER BENEFIT**

Volunteer drivers may be entitled to a deduction (per mile driven) as a charitable contribution on their tax returns if deductions are itemized.

## **CHORES CORPS PROGRAM**

### **PURPOSE**

This program assists residents who are in need of help with minor home repairs and household chores because s/he cannot do them themselves or afford to pay someone to do them, so that s/he can live safely and comfortably in her/his own home.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The coordinator oversees the program, recruits and directs volunteers, makes initial visits to clients to do a needs assessment, matches volunteers with clients, and communicates with the Cares Board about any issues or concerns that arise.

### **VOLUNTEER ROLE**

A detailed list of the kinds of repairs and chores can be found on the volunteer application form. Examples include: light housekeeping (sweeping, dusting, vacuuming); replacement of furnace filters; repair or replacement of door locks, handles, springs and closers; help with weatherization; cleaning of gutters; yard maintenance; and snow shoveling. Work beyond a volunteer's scope is also identified.

### **VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS**

A volunteer has sufficient technical knowledge, practical experience, physical health and strength to do the repairs and/or chores for which assistance is requested. S/he must also must be sensitive, caring and accepting of the client and the client's lifestyle.

### **SUPPORT FOR CHORES CORPS VOLUNTEERS**

Support is provided primarily by the Program Coordinator. Should the volunteer have safety concerns for themselves or for the client., s/he should report these concerns to the Program coordinator.

## **MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM**

### **PURPOSE**

This program provides durable medical equipment to residents recovering from injury or illness and other situations where such equipment is needed.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Coordinator oversees the securing and storage of equipment, receives applications for its use, conducts needs assessments, delivers equipment, and recovers equipment when no longer needed. The Program Coordinator also maintains an inventory of equipment and its location, equipment maintenance requirements, and repairs that are needed (and who will do them) if broken equipment can be fixed and retained. Requests for medical equipment should be made with at least three days' notice if possible.

### **VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTER'S ROLE**

Transporters help with the pick-up of equipment offered to Cares and in its delivery to a client and pick-up when the client is through with it.

## **WELCOME BASKET PROGRAM**

### **PURPOSE**

Welcome baskets are delivered to new residents as a way of welcoming them to the Dummerston community. Each welcome basket contains information about Dummerston and products from local businesses and gifts from individuals such as homemade food, maple syrup, jams, pickles and other creations made by town residents.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Program Coordinator maintains the baskets and items for them, communicates with the Town Clerk and others to know when newcomers move to town, and then fills and delivers the baskets.

## **EMERGENCY FUEL ASSISTANCE**

### **PURPOSE**

Cares has an Emergency Fuel Fund for residents who use oil or propane and need emergency assistance for winter home heating. This program works cooperatively with State and SEVCA fuel assistance programs, the Windham County Heat Fund, and the Congregational Church's Wood Pantry which provides free firewood to residents with a wood furnace or stove and need assistance with winter heating.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Fuel Assistance Coordinator receives requests for fuel assistance, gives the person the application for information on his/her fuel need and fuel dealer, reviews his/her household income and family situation, checks whether s/he has received this assistance in the past and from whom, and related questions. The coordinator then reviews the application and determines if the application should be sent to the SEVCA Fuel Assistance Coordinator for consideration for State or SEVCA fuel assistance or to the Congregational Church's Wood Pantry coordinator for firewood help.

If the applicant's situation is such that the Cares Fuel Fund should be used, the coordinator makes arrangements with the applicant's fuel dealer for provision of the heating fuel that's needed.

The Program Coordinator must have basic knowledge of the State, SEVCA, Windham County Heat Fund, and Congregational Church Wood Pantry fuel assistance programs and ability to evaluate applications for assistance in ways that make use of these programs as well as the Cares Fuel Fund.

### **SUPPORT FOR FUEL ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR**

Support is provided in informational material on the State, SEVCA, Windham County Heat Fund, and Congregational Church fuel assistance programs. The coordinator will have contact persons in each of these programs to answer questions that come up and to make referrals of fuel fund applicants where appropriate.

# VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## It is your right:

To be assigned a task that is worthwhile and challenging.

To receive the orientation, training and direction needed to do the job.

To feel that your efforts have real purpose and contribute to the program's mission.

To receive useful feedback and evaluation for the volunteer service that you perform.

To be treated with respect and as an equal partner in the program.

To be trusted with confidential information to carry out your assignments.

To be kept informed about relevant matters with the program.

To expect that your time will not be wasted by inadequate planning or coordination by the program.

To ask any questions that will clarify a task or assignment.

To give program input as to how to better accommodate the needs of volunteers.

## It is your responsibility:

Not to take on more responsibility than you can handle.

To meet time commitments or to provide notice so alternative arrangements can be made.

To perform the tasks assigned to you to the best of your ability.

To provide feedback on ways your tasks might be better performed.

To follow program policies and procedures.

To respect the confidences entrusted with you.

To be open-minded and respectful towards opinions shared with you.

To notify the program in advance of absences or schedule changes that may affect them.

To accept reasonable assignments without complaint.

To communicate and work with others within the program if a task calls for it.



### **Volunteer Acknowledgement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have received and read a copy of the Dummerston Cares Volunteer Handbook, which outlines the programs, policies and procedures and expectations of Dummerston Cares, as well as my responsibilities as a volunteer.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of this handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in the handbook provided by Dummerston Cares. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation that may arise during my volunteer activities, but serves as a general guide to the goals, policies, procedures and expectations of Dummerston Cares.

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Cares Program(s) for which I wish to volunteer.

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Volunteer Name (Please Print)

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Volunteer Signature

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Date