

# RSVP of Dane County

# Policy Manual



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## POLICY MANUAL

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## I. FOREWORD

Organizations are formed to accomplish a mission to meet certain societal needs. People are called upon to share their talents and experiences to accomplish the identified mission.

Organizations which are governed by volunteer Boards of Directors and managed by employed Executive Directors and professional staff, sometimes need clarification of their responsibilities and working relationships.

The statement that the Board develops policies and the staff implements those policies is not sufficient in outlining roles of Board and staff. There are times when staff gather and provide information for the eventual development of policy and there are times when members of the Board of Directors provide knowledge and counsel to staff when carrying out the intent of policy.

This Policy Manual clarifies the roles and responsibilities in the performance of tasks and in the making of decisions. These clarifications should facilitate a more efficient, effective, and smoothly functioning RSVP organization.

## II. PREFACE

Background: The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Dane County, Inc. (RSVP) is a private non-profit agency formed in 1972 and incorporated in 1977. It was funded by a grant from ACTION, which has now become the Corporation for National Service. Currently there are over 750 RSVPs nationwide. RSVP of Dane County is one of 7 programs in Wisconsin.

Legal Status: In accordance with the requirements of the Federal Government's Corporation for National Service, the Board of Directors for RSVP of Dane County is the legal sponsoring entity of RSVP (called the "grantee"). It is self-incorporated and is responsible for all programmatic operations, financial and regulatory compliance.

Vision: Improved quality of life for all Dane County citizens through significant senior volunteer service.

Mission: To make a positive impact in the community by recruiting volunteers 55 and older to help nonprofit and public agencies deliver priority services to people of all ages, providing Dane County with a valuable human resource – seniors in volunteer service.

RSVP seeks to:

- Utilize the skills, knowledge, and life experiences of people who are retired, helping them to lead healthy, productive lives.
- Respond to increasing requests from nonprofit and public agencies for volunteers to help meet critical needs.
- Increase the variety of volunteer opportunities for older adults.
- Provide opportunities for intergenerational projects and age-integrated activities.
- Plan programming in cooperation with the groups, agencies, and institutions with which it is involved, as needed and requested.
- Involve senior volunteers in planning and decision-making on community programs, boards, and committees.
- Increase public awareness concerning contributions and needs of people age 55 and over and improve the image of aging.

### Values

The Board and Staff share the following values which guide us through our day-to-day decisions and drive our actions. These beliefs guide the work of RSVP of Dane County.

1. We believe every volunteer is a unique person deserving respect and genuine interest. We strive to provide high-quality service rendered in a timely and courteous manner.

2. Each employee is entitled to a fair workplace.
3. We seek to develop pride in the organization and pride in individual volunteer contributions.
4. We promote high standards of ethical behavior and integrity.
5. We promote an atmosphere of openness and trust through direct communication and careful listening while valuing confidentiality.
6. We seek to develop a high level of morale throughout the organization.
7. We believe each individual has dignity, self-worth, value, desires, needs, wants and expectations which should be respected.
8. People's dignity, their ability to learn through meaningful experiences, and their desire to have control over their environment are enhanced through programming activities and services provided through RSVP.
9. RSVP does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, student status or any other requirement or category under federal, state or local law. RSVP reserves the right to change categories in accordance with the law.

### III. RSVP BOARD POLICIES

In this document, Board policies are stated in two ways: (1) broad goals or statements of purpose and (2) prescriptive job responsibilities. These policies give direction to roles and responsibilities and to decision-making in the management and operation of the organization. They provide the framework for development of procedures, the "how to" steps designed to implement policies.

1. Formal adoption of policies shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board. Only those statements, so adopted and documented, shall be regarded as official Board policy, as well as advisable procedure if so described and recorded.
2. Policies introduced and recommended shall be adopted only when acted upon at two consecutive regular and/or special Board meetings, with at least a one month separation between meetings. Thus, time shall be given to permit further study and also give opportunity for interested parties to respond. However, temporary approval may be granted by the Board, in lieu of formal policy approval, to meet emergency conditions or special events which will take place before formal action can be taken.

3. Adoption of new policies, or changing existing policies, is solely the responsibility of the Board. Proposals for new policies, or changes to existing policies, may be initiated in writing by any Board member, resident of Dane County, or employee of RSVP. The proposed policy or change in policy shall be referred to appropriate staff for input, and consultation with appropriate standing committee(s) of the Board prior to public discussion of the proposal.
4. Each standing committee of the Board is responsible for yearly evaluation of policies, recommendation for revision of existing policies, and creation of new policies necessary to carry out their respective responsibilities.
5. The counsel of an attorney shall be sought if there should be a question of the legality of any policy existing and/or proposed.
6. In the development of its policies, the Board may seek judgement and counsel of appropriate personnel before adopting such policy.
7. The Board shall evaluate how its policies have been executed and shall strive to keep its policies current.
8. A policy, not established by law or contract, may be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of the Board members present at a regular or special meeting duly in session, and in accordance with RSVP By-Laws.
9. Board Policy is not to be confused with government legislation, rules or regulations.
10. Decision-making should be made at the lowest appropriate level contingent upon existing Board policy and management procedures.

#### IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. The role of the Board of Directors is to provide direction, definition, knowledge, and advice in the management and operation of the RSVP organization.
2. The Board serves as the official link between the RSVP organization and the communities of Dane County.

3. The Board creates and protects the values, mission and vision of RSVP.
4. The Board determines, applies, monitors, and assesses its own structure, processes, and performances and policies. It acts proactively with a focus on strategic development and counsel.
5. The Board is accountable (to itself, staff, participants, funders and the public) for competent accomplishment of Board obligations.
6. The Board will assess the outcome of RSVP activities and monitor compliance with funders' requirements through internal reports, external reports or special studies.
7. It hires and assures effective performance of the Executive Director which is considered synonymous with RSVP organizational performance.
8. Robert's Rules of Order will be consulted as appropriate.
9. Official decisions of the Board of Directors shall be determined only at a duly constituted Board meeting or by the Executive Committee, with subsequent ratification by the full Board.
10. Topics or items for information, discussion, and/or action at meetings of the Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors shall be screened and placed on the agenda as recommended by chairpersons of standing committees, officers, and/or the Executive Director as outlined in the current By-laws.
11. Each standing committee, ad-hoc committee or task force, that may be created from time to time, shall evaluate the activities in its realm of responsibility, and shall make annual reports to the Board, or as otherwise directed, on evaluation findings.
12. The Board, through its designated committees, shall oversee the development, revision, and implementation of all policies included, or about to be included in this Policy Manual.
13. Individual members of the Board should have personal integrity, avoid conflict of interest, be nonpartisan, and serve as advocates for RSVP to the public.

14. Board members will become familiar with the regulations, problems, and issues involving RSVP.
15. Board members should be willing to serve on committees and attend Board meetings so as to contribute knowledge and counsel to the Board and staff of RSVP.
16. The Board is responsible for its own orientation and training.

#### V. DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. The Executive Director is responsible to the RSVP Board of Directors for the day-to-day operation and management of the RSVP organization in accordance with the By-Laws, Board policy, and government regulations.
2. The Executive Director shall keep abreast of societal trends, issues, and RSVP developments, and is responsible for providing up-to-date information and counsel to the Board so it can make rational and logical decisions to accomplish its role and responsibilities.
3. He or she should maintain a working environment where all staff, volunteers, and program participants are treated fairly in a humane and respectful manner.
4. The Executive Director shall hire, assign, and evaluate all employees, and ensure equitable compensation, benefits, and working conditions for all employees. This should be done in consultation with the Personnel Committee.
5. He or she shall maintain or strengthen the financial health of RSVP and prepare the annual budget in cooperation with the appropriate Board Committee for presentation to the Board for approval at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the fiscal year.
6. The Executive Director is responsible for promoting, developing, maintaining, and publishing RSVP Management Rules/Procedures in cooperation with appropriate Staff and Board Committees.
7. He or she shall be responsible for promoting, developing, and fostering participation in RSVP programs and service.



8. He or she shall protect the assets of RSVP. Security against illegal entry, vandalism, pilferage, fire and other hazards shall be provided or arranged. Records and funds shall be kept in a secure place, under lock and key when required. Adequate insurance for replacement value of property and equipment shall be provided.
9. The Executive Director shall be responsible for all RSVP contracts and agreements and serves as an authorized agent.
10. He or she shall advise and recommend on matters relating to remodeling, purchase, sale, and rental of facilities, equipment and supplies. Maintenance of facilities and equipment shall be at high standards for health, safety, and economy and longevity of operation.
11. The Executive Director is responsible to implement compilation of all administrative reports, such as budget, tax reports to local, state and federal agencies, worker's compensation and liability insurances, and other reports requested by the Board.
12. He or she oversees proper accounting, bookkeeping, accounts payable, accounts receivable, etc. for all RSVP programs and services, contributions, and grants received, providing such reports and records as are required by various official agencies and the Board of Directors. He or she arranges for the annual audit of above. He or she signs all checks as directed by the treasurer.
13. The Executive Director represents the employees to the Board and the Board to the employee.
14. He or she represents RSVP to the public and all agencies, organizations, and institutions with which there is potential involvement. He or she seeks help and advice as appropriate.
15. The Executive Director may cancel, suspend or delay any RSVP activity due to an emergency, dangerous weather, or other safety hazard.
16. He or she is responsible for carrying out all other professional responsibilities that the Board may request or delegate.
17. The Executive Director is responsible for all orientation and training sessions for staff and volunteers.

18. The Executive Director is responsible for Risk Management of RSVP: analyzing risk, purchasing adequate insurance to transfer the risk, avoiding risk and/or reducing risk through policies and procedures.

## VI. BOARD & STAFF COMMITTEES

Committees are appointed or elected to consider (recommend action or manage) an important topic, subject, issue, problem, concern, event, activity, task project or function. Ad hoc committees usually consider a single precisely defined task or mission, and disband after the task or mission is completed. Standing committees usually have a broader charge to consider a variety of related topics in a functional area and continue over a longer period of time as long as the need exists.

The purpose and need for committees should be carefully analyzed so as to avoid duplication of effort and to facilitate efficient and effective use of valuable staff and Board member time. The value of the potential outcomes should be considered.

### BOARD COMMITTEES:

1. Board Committees exist primarily to help the Board in its work in governance and not the work of staff in operations and management. Board Committees may be formed to provide leadership and direction to major functions, e.g. needs assessment, program planning, evaluation, financial development, marketing, community relationships, personnel recruitment and development. Board Committees may include but are not limited to: Recognition, Community Program Assessment, Agency Evaluation, Governmental Affairs, Nominating & Board Development, Personnel (Ad hoc), Annual Meeting (Ad hoc). At least one Board Member shall serve on each Board Committee.
2. Each Board Committee should have one employee or staff representative to facilitate communication and planning between Board Committees, Staff Committees, Executive Director, volunteers, and other employees. This representative should facilitate the collection of needed information and secretarial help.
3. Board Committees should prepare recommendations with appropriate supporting documentation for action and decision-making by the Board of Directors.

4. Board committees should screen and prepare recommendations for amending Board Policy.
5. Duties, responsibilities, plans, projects, and activities of Board Committees shall be developed and carried out as directed by the Board of Directors.
6. Board Committees should communicate through Board Committee chairs or representatives at meetings of the Board.

#### STAFF COMMITTEES:

1. Staff Committees exist primarily to help the staff in its work in management of operations. They are organized at the discretion and approval of the Executive Director. Staff committees may include but are not limited to: Transportation, Intergenerational, FLIP, Learn & Serve, BABES, Community Services, Group Projects, TRIAD, Fund Development, Marketing. The number of committees, whether the committee would be ongoing, ad hoc or project and makeup of the committee will be the determination of the Executive Director and RSVP staff.
2. Staff Committees may seek assistance from Board Members, staff, other agencies and individuals as appropriate. Board Members may volunteer their time and expertise but without authority as a representative of the Board.
3. Duties, responsibilities, plans, projects, and activities of staff committees shall be developed and carried out as directed by the Executive Director.
4. Staff Committees should communicate through Staff Committee representatives at general staff meetings.

#### VII. BOARD/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

1. Within the framework of the Board Policies, it is required that Board Committees, Staff Committees, employees, and volunteers work cooperatively together for the common good of RSVP.
2. All personnel shall keep their immediate supervisor informed of the activities so as to facilitate communication and reports to the Board.

3. Working relationships of employees to the Board shall be through the Executive Director.
4. Nothing provided herein is intended to hinder the free and open flow of ideas and assistance between the Board, employees, and volunteers.

#### VIII. PERSONNEL POLICIES

Refer to RSVP Personnel Policies, revised October, 2013.

#### IX. FISCAL POLICIES

1. The Board recognizes that money and money management comprise the foundational support of RSVP.
2. The Fiscal Year shall be the period January 1 to December 31.
3. Budget planning shall be an integral part of programmatic planning so that the budget may effectively express, implement, and account for all programs, services, and activities conducted by RSVP.
4. In approving the operating budget, it will be the Board's intent to provide optimum programming consistent with financial resources to support such programming.
5. The Board encourages advance planning and exploration of all practical and legal resources of funding through grant applications and other funding sources.
6. Adoption and modification of agency budgets shall be by resolution at a Board meeting after being recommended by the Executive Director.
7. The system of accounts shall provide for appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies. The system shall be used for all business transactions and budgeting documentation to establish uniformity of system and procedures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
8. Major expenditures (over \$2000) shall be approved by the Board and shall take into consideration the quality of product, conformity to specifications, and delivery terms.

9. The petty cash fund is for short-term reimbursement within budgetary guidelines and shall not be used to supplement a budget item that is depleted.
  
10. The books and accounts shall be audited by an independent Certified Public Accountant recommended by the Executive Director and approved by the Board. The audit report shall be presented to the Board at the Annual Meeting in June.