



Suburban Cook County Senior Companion Program:

The Senior Companion Program (SCP) provides individuals who are at least 55 years of age, and living at or below 200% of the poverty income guideline, with meaningful volunteer opportunities within their own communities. SCP volunteers receive a non-taxable hourly stipend, mileage reimbursement and a meal on days volunteered, enabling them to serve at no cost. All volunteers receive 20 hours of training prior to their first assignment.

Volunteers most commonly spend time in private homes but may also provide visits in a variety of care settings, such as retirement homes, adult day care centers, and nursing homes if needed. They help adults with special needs, such as those with developmental/physical disabilities, mental illness or frailty achieve and maintain the highest possible level of independent living. SCP volunteers provide companionship and assistance to an average of 2-3 clients. A volunteer might take a homebound senior grocery shopping, assist an individual with developmental disabilities learn a new life skill or escort a frail adult to a medical appointment. There is no cost to the clients for these services.

Without the help of Senior Companions, many older adults would not be able to continue living at home and would need more expensive, less personal care.

Can you be a Senior Companion? Senior Companions are:

- Over 55 years of age and live in suburban Cook County;
- Can volunteer 15 to 40 hours per week;
- Have a limited income (in order to receive the stipend); and
- Love to help their neighbors.

Senior Companions become part of a team of caregivers. They alert doctors and family members to potential health problems. Senior Companions also provide short periods of respite to primary caregivers such as family members.

As a Senior Companion, you'll receive:

- Pre-service and on-going training
- Supplemental insurance
- Help with transportation costs
- A small stipend for those who are income eligible
- The joy of helping others live on their own.

The individuals helped by Senior Companions receive:

- Assistance with important daily tasks
- Encouragement to remain active
- A watchful eye to notice when they need extra care
- A friendship that can last a lifetime.

You don't need medical or technical skills to be a Senior Companion. All you need to know is how to be a friend. Senior Companions offer adults contact with the world outside of their homes and make their lives less lonely. Along the way, Senior Companions find out that few things feel as good as knowing you're needed.

SCP is sponsored by Center of Concern and is a program of the National Senior Service Corp.

To become an SCP volunteer or for more information, please call Mary O'Reilly, Senior Companion Director, at 847- 242-8010 or e-mail at moreilly@centerofconcern.org .

You can also find more information at www.centerofconcern.org and <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/senior-corps-programs/senior-companions>