

Why Volunteer for SHIP?

SHIP Helps People in Our Community: The Medicare program has more than 43 million beneficiaries nationwide and includes people who are 65 and older and people who have a permanent disability. Many have difficulty navigating Medicare and the health care system on their own. Some do not get the care they need because they cannot pay and do not know about programs that give help. Others- the many caregivers who assist family members, friends, and neighbors- need answers and guidance. SHIP's volunteer counselors provide one-on-one help to them.

Medicare's Many Plan Options: SHIP needs more volunteer counselors, community educators, and support volunteers because seniors and people with disabilities in our community are hearing about Medicare's many health plan options, making enrollment decisions, and applying for the low-income assistance to help pay for their drug and other health care costs. SHIP's outreach volunteers help inform the public about Medicare's new benefits and the choices that people face.

SHIP has Many Volunteer Opportunities: Perhaps one is right for you! SHIP volunteers are:

- Counselors who provide one-on-one assistance to people, in person, by phone, and via computer.
- Outreach specialists, who give presentations to community groups, or help with program publicity and marketing.
- Administrative support volunteers, who help with program administration such as data entry, roster and mailing list updates, and mailings.

SHIP Volunteers are Part of a Team: SHIP volunteer programs exist in many communities in our state, and in all states in the country. Together with SHIP staff at the state and local levels, SHIP volunteers provide an important client-focused community service. SHIP volunteers receive training and support from local program sponsors including (your organization name), the state SHIP office, and others.

SHIP Work is Flexible: SHIP volunteers generally can schedule their work to accommodate other family, volunteer, or work responsibilities. We ask volunteers to commit to a certain number of hours per month.

SHIP Work is Rewarding: Medicare and our nation's health insurance system for seniors and people with disabilities is complex. It takes a special kind of volunteer to help people work their way through insurance plan comparisons and coverage or billing problems. It also takes a special kind of volunteer to go out into the community to talk about a program that many find confusing. SHIP offers its volunteers the opportunity to:

- Stay abreast of the latest information on a vital program that affects millions.
- Specialize in an area of interest.
- Grow with a dynamic program that meets real needs every day.
- Provide direct service, community education, and program support.