

# CAN HANDBOOK for Members and Volunteers



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# CAN Handbook for Members and Volunteers

Revised 2-16-23

## Who we are:

This handbook is intended to be used by members of Creative Aging in Nyack and by our medical and non-medical volunteers. Volunteering is the heart and core of our organization. This handbook was written based on research into the handbooks of well-established non-profit organizations with similar mission statements, and the brainstorming of several members, Care Specialists, and the Chair of the Care Team.

## Goals:

- To support CAN's mission statement of providing services to members of the organization so that they can age in a place of their choice.
- To ensure that the volunteer/member interactions are a safe, pleasant and rewarding experience.
- To provide opportunities for more meaningful friendships to develop as we share experiences and mutual interests.

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All volunteers and members are expected to follow our Boundaries of Responsibility.

## Volunteer Boundaries of Responsibility

### 1. Confidentiality

**A primary responsibility of each volunteer and member is to respect the privacy of every member.** Confidentiality means not sharing the member's personal information, medical history, or personal story, including their name and other data.

Confidentiality as defined above, does **not** apply to the information needed for CAN's record of the volunteer experience. Enter the facts only. Name of member, task, date.

## **2. Respect**

Both the member and the volunteer must show a respect for boundaries. Upon arrival, the volunteer needs to **clearly explain** what help they are there to give. A volunteer cannot do anything that necessitates a professional: no skilled nursing, no therapy, and no housecleaning.

All volunteers and members are expected to show respect and appreciation for our diverse backgrounds and cultures in our interrelating.

## **3. Safety**

Volunteers cannot engage in any activity that might endanger either member or volunteer. Such activities include climbing ladders, carrying heavy items, lifting, etc.

## **4. Listening (Communication)**

Listening is an invaluable skill, a gift. Listening comes from an open mind and a caring heart. To listen fully, with rapt attention, the volunteer must take him/herself out of the equation. Don't be tempted to listen with half an ear while being distracted by trying to solve the problem, or come up with some wise advice. After fully listening ask, "Is this what you just said?", or some facsimile. This simple question avoids assumption and miscommunication. Listening also involves the awareness of body language that shows you are paying attention.

## **5. Observational Skills**

Note any dangerous conditions. Be aware if the environment contains any hazards, rugs to slip on, loose steps, broken sidewalk.

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## **Who Are CAN Volunteers?**

We have three kinds of volunteers who lend a hand to CAN members. Care Specialists help members in medical situations such as an injury after a fall or post-hospitalization. CAN Certified Drivers drive members to medical appointments. CAN Do volunteers help members with tasks around the house or in social contexts. See below for more information.

## **Volunteer Care Specialists Help in Medical Situations**

**Care Specialists** are CAN members who have volunteered to assist our members with health related situations following an injury, or while recuperating from an illness or post hospitalization. Care Specialists assess members' needs and arrange for volunteers to meet those needs. Care Specialists can only attend to those needs that can be addressed by services that the organization has determined it is able to provide. At times, the Care Specialists will coordinate with certified drivers and other volunteers to arrange getting the member to and from medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other needs.

The Care Specialists are led by two Care Coordinators who train all Specialists. The Chair of Volunteers and Services is a Board member, and participates in the Care Specialist team. In addition to this handbook, Care Specialists will have a handbook that contains the forms they need in order to best serve the member with a medical need.

### **Numbers for Immediate Contact in a Medical Situation**

If a member has a medical need due to illness or injury they will call Dorothy Whitton 845-323-5171 or Marie Thorpe 845-367-1328, the present Care Coordinators, who will assign a *Care Specialist* to assess the member's needs, and to call volunteers to meet those needs.

### **CAN Certified Drivers**

**Certified** drivers are used for medical appointments. They are required to provide a copy of their driver's license, their driver's insurance card (the paper you keep in your glove compartment), and allow CAN to do a routine DMV background check. This is the basic requirement for volunteer drivers in most non-profit organizations to ensure the safety of the member, driver, and the organization. It is required by our liability insurance coverage.

- We ask that people needing rides contact the driver at least two days ahead, if possible.
- The rider needs to be able to get to and into the vehicle without assistance
- The volunteer cannot be responsible to lift a wheelchair in or out of the trunk.
- Any specific travel needs must be told to the volunteer in advance.

- Drivers are not to accept pay or tipping. If there are tolls, the rider is expected to pay those tolls.
- A volunteer may accompany the member to the doctor's office but not go into the actual appointment.

The Care Team is made up of the Care Coordinators, the Care Specialists, and the Certified Drivers.

### **During the time of Covid 19 or any other pandemic**

- During the time of Covid 19, we request that both the driver and the rider sign the Covid 19 Statement of Understanding.
- Both the driver and rider are encouraged to wear masks and stay socially distanced
- We recommend that drivers keep the windows open for sufficient ventilation.

Certified Drivers, please email Donna Nye at [d.nye@verizon.net](mailto:d.nye@verizon.net) after you have driven a member to a medical appointment. Donna is our Tracker for how these rides go. This is very important for our records.

The Tracker needs the following information:

- The date
- The name of the driver
- The name of the person being driven
- How much time was taken for the trip
- How satisfied were the driver and the rider

### **CAN DO Volunteers Lend a Hand**

CAN has compiled a list of members who have volunteered to help in the areas below. If you would like help in any of the volunteering categories listed, you may contact the volunteer directly. The members' names and contact information are on our website in the private pages accessed through your account login. If you

have difficulty accessing that information, or if you would like to be a volunteer yourself please contact Mary Mathews @ [marymathews42@gmail.com](mailto:marymathews42@gmail.com).

- **Computer Help/Technologies**
- **CAN Do Cooks** – Provide meals for those home-bound by illness
- **Dog Walking/Plant & Pet Sitting**
- **Friendly Home Visit; Cup o’ Tea!**
- **Help With Gardening/Plant Care**
- **Help With Home Organization**
- **Help With Minor Household Chores/Repairs.**
- **Local Errands/grocery shopping**
- **Receive or make phone calls – social call or “Check-in”**
- **Grocery Shopping** (Volunteer can go for a member)

### **To all our volunteers**

On behalf of Creative Aging in Nyack, our deepest gratitude for the commitment, time, and caring you bring to the members of our organization.

### **To all our members**

Don’t hesitate to call upon the CAN volunteers when you need a hand. Remember to **A.S.K.** – **Allow Someone’s Kindness.**