

*For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities*

## SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM



### WHO IS A SENIOR COMPANION?

Senior Companions aren't staff, or program aides, but people who are willing to offer support and friendship to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities supported by The Arc of Chemung.

Eligibility Requirements for being a Senior Companion Include:

- Fifty-five (55) years of age or older.
- Total annual income must not exceed the following:
  - \$23,540 for a family of one (1)
  - \$31,860 for a family of two (2)
  - \$40,180 for a family of three (3)
  - \$48,500 for a family of four (4)
- No longer a part of a regular workforce.
- Patience and understanding.
- Physically and emotionally able to meet the needs of the program.
- Capable of serving on a personal and regular basis.

### WHAT DOES A SENIOR COMPANION DO?

- \* A Senior Companion may choose to work from 4 to 8 hours each day, five (5) days per week and agree to work at least 15, but no more than 40, hours a week.
- \* Senior Companions don't need medical or technical skills, only a willingness to share their time and talents.
- \* A Senior Companion will act as a companion, confidant, teacher, advocate, and friend.
- \* Activities will be aimed at helping the individuals supported to develop their full potential.

Examples of activities include:

- Learning independent living skills, like doing laundry, and cooking.
- Learning to set goals and make a budget.
- Helping individuals write letters to family and friends.
- Building interpersonal relationship skills by talking, sharing experiences, even playing games.
- Helping individuals adjust to the world outside the home.
- Providing active and sensory stimulation to severe and profoundly disabled individuals.
- Providing recreational support with activities such as bowling and bocce.

The Senior Companion Program offers individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities:

- A helping hand when needed.
- Socialization opportunities.
- A chance to fine-tune their daily living skills.
- A valued friendship.

### **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING A SENIOR COMPANION?**

Along with the satisfaction of knowing you're making a difference, Senior Companions receive:

- A tax-free stipend of \$2.65 per hour for 15-40 hours per week.
- Paid vacation, sick leave and other benefits.
- A daily meal or meal allowance.
- Transportation assistance or mileage reimbursement.
- An annual physical examination.

*Senior Companions report that the most valuable benefit they receive from their volunteer work is the personal satisfaction they derive from helping others.*

### **ARE SENIOR COMPANIONS TRAINED AND SUPERVISED?**

- Pre-service and ongoing training is provided. Senior Companions earn a tax-free hourly stipend, plus travel and meal reimbursement, for all training that is attended.
- Senior Companions are supervised by the agency's staff members.

### **HOW DO PEOPLE BECOME SENIOR COMPANIONS?**

- Senior Companions must apply for the program, pass a physical exam, background check, and attend orientation before an assignment is given.
- They must provide two personal references from non-relatives and a medical clearance form signed by a doctor. (While on duty, you're covered by supplemental accident and liability insurance.)
- Applicants to the position of Senior Companion are not restricted from participating on the basis of formal education, experience, race, religion, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, gender, age, handicap, or political affiliation.

*When you volunteer, you're not just helping others—you're helping yourself. Volunteering leads to new discoveries and new friends. Plus, studies show that volunteering helps you live longer and promotes a positive outlook on life. So, get involved, and join Senior Companions today!*

***Achieve with us.®***

If you're interested in becoming a Senior Companion, or just want to learn more about this rewarding and important program, please contact: Molly Ostrum, Volunteer Coordinator at 607.734.6151 ext. 128 or email: [OstrumMM@arcofchemung.org](mailto:OstrumMM@arcofchemung.org).