

Retirement Guide to Volunteering



Congratulations on your retirement!

This can be one of the most wonderful times of your life, but deciding what to do during retirement can be difficult. Many retirees choose to start a new hobby or take the time to help their loved ones.

Others give back to the community through volunteerism. In fact, more than 25 million Americans ages 50 to 70 are eager to share their skills, passions and expertise by volunteering to address social needs.

Benefits of Volunteering

You may be wondering, “Why should I volunteer?” Along with giving back to the community, volunteering in retirement can offer a wealth of other benefits.

Get out of the house

Volunteering can be the perfect excuse to leave the confines of your home and establish a new routine or explore new environments.

Improved mental health

After leaving the workforce, many retirees may experience feelings of loneliness or lack of motivation, which can contribute to depression. Studies indicate that seniors who volunteer experience reduced risks of depression and improved cognitive function.

Increased physical activity

Engaging in an active lifestyle and meaningful social activities like volunteering can help enhance longevity and quality of life. Many volunteer opportunities allow retirees to stay physically active by encouraging movement, which helps promote cardiovascular health and mobility.

Reignite old passions

Remember those hobbies and interests you loved but didn’t have the time for? Now is the ideal time to rediscover them through volunteering.



Lifelong learning

Many volunteer roles offer opportunities to acquire new skills, polish existing ones, and share your knowledge with others. This continuous learning keeps your mind sharp and engaged while contributing to your cognitive well-being.

New friendships

Volunteering provides an avenue to connect with others and build new relationships, combating social isolation and introducing you to like-minded individuals who share your interests and values.

Bridge building

Participating in volunteerism can help bring people of all ages and backgrounds together. This exchange can be mutually beneficial, allowing for the sharing of knowledge and fostering respect while building meaningful connections.

Give back to the community

Your years of experience and wisdom are invaluable assets. Volunteering enables retirees stay connected to their community and make a positive impact.

Sense of belonging

Being part of a volunteer team fosters a strong sense of belonging and camaraderie. This feeling of being needed and appreciated can significantly boost your self-esteem and overall happiness.

Leave a legacy

Contributing to causes that matter to both you and others can create a lasting impact. Your actions may inspire children, grandchildren, friends, and others in your community to get involved as well. In addition, your efforts can make a real difference in improving the lives of those in need.

Strengthen relationships

Volunteering with friends and family can strengthen relationships, build bonds and form memories.

Greater happiness

Retirement can feel aimless without structure or purpose. Volunteering reintroduces meaning – you're needed, your contributions matter, and your time is making someone else's life better. That kind of purpose is linked to higher happiness and even longer life expectancy.

How to Find the Right Volunteer Opportunity

Before embarking on the next chapter, it's important to first consider a few tips to help make the transition to volunteering in retirement as seamless as possible. If possible, start volunteering now with several organizations you have your sights set on as well as others to determine if it's a good fit.

Identify your interests

Find opportunities that match your skills and interests to make the experience more rewarding. Ask yourself: What causes matter to me? What do I enjoy doing? How can I incorporate those things into volunteering?

Assess your availability

How much time do I want to commit weekly/monthly? Do I prefer short-term projects, ongoing roles, or one-time events? Remember to balance volunteering with rest and leisure activities.

Choose the right type of role

Choose activities that align with your physical capabilities and maintain your well-being. Do you prefer hands-on, teaching or mentoring? Do you want to volunteer remotely or in person?

Be open to learning new skills and meeting different people. You may find you have a passion or skill for something you've never done before.



Resources

Boldin Report: Volunteering in Retirement: 6 Tips for Making an Impact:
<https://www.boldin.com/retirement/volunteering-after-retirement/>

Sinceris Senior Living: 9 Benefits of Volunteering in Retirement:
<https://sinceriseniorliving.com/9-benefits-of-volunteering-in-retirement/>

National Institute on Aging – Participate in activities you enjoy as you age.
[volunteering-after-retirement-made-easy-a-guide-to-giving-back](#)

National Library of Medicine: Volunteering and Subsequent Health in Older Adults
[The right path: The-joy-of-volunteering-after-retirement](#)