Senior Outreach Services

Your weekly visit could mean the world to a frail elder living alone.

Senior Outreach Services (SOS) volunteers phone or visit in person with their senior friend. They provide:

- Friendly visits, phone calls
- A ride to shop or pick up a prescription
- Emotional support, advocacy
- Card/board games, reading
- Sharing a skill or craft
- Lunch outings or community events

NEVER: Housekeeping, laundry, bathing, medications, toileting, managing finances

As a Senior Outreach Services (SOS) volunteer, you can:

- Make a difference in someone else's life
- Build meaningful relationships
- Live out your faith tradition
- Access continuing education opportunities
- Enjoy recognition events
- Receive accident and supplemental liability insurance
- Collect mileage reimbursement, if needed

SOS volunteers are enrolled with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), must own a vehicle and will receive a free background check.

This program is funded by the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division, the Jean Sanford Endowment and by grants and donations. Mileage reimbursement for volunteers is funded by a special grant from the Regional Transportation Commission.

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**Senior Outreach Services (SOS) Background**

**Our Vision:** Connecting and strengthening the Washoe County community for our elders through Impact Volunteerism.

**Our Mission:** To assist frail elderly senior citizens living alone in the community to stay healthy and continue living in their homes independently as long as possible, while at the same time providing opportunities for socialization, escorted transportation, and support.

**Our Core Values:** Respect, Integrity, Leadership, Commitment and Service to Others, Excellence, Teamwork and Communication.

**Overview:** SOS is a community outreach program of the Sanford Center for Aging at the University of Nevada, Reno. We assist and support frail, home bound, low income seniors 60 years and older in Washoe County, Nevada who are in need of essential services. These older adults tend to be without family or other social support and are often the most vulnerable, underserved members of our community. Many are at imminent risk of placement in long-term care, which can be very costly to the elder and to the taxpayers.

Once these elders are registered with SOS, they become SOS clients. The aim of the program is to keep these clients living independently in their own homes for as long as possible. SOS supervises and supports a specially-trained corps of volunteers who provide essential services to these clients.

The program has been continuously funded by the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) and the Jean Sanford Endowment since 2002.

**Program Staff:** The SOS staff consists of one full-time director who is responsible for all facets of the program including marketing and outreach activities, fundraising, building community partnerships, volunteer recruitment and retention, client assessments and surveys, budget oversight and grants management. A part-time program coordinator supports the director and is primarily tasked with data and reporting responsibilities. In addition, one 20-hour/week student worker assists with administrative tasks and data entry/reporting. The SOS staff conducts fundraising activities to support volunteer mileage reimbursement and an annual Remembrance Luncheon held during Older American’s Month.

The Sanford Center for Aging supports SOS through organizational leadership, mentoring, administrative support and volunteer mileage reimbursement.