



SCSEP Participant & Host Agency Handbook

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE AARP?

AARP is the nation's leading organization for people age 50 and older. It serves their needs and interests through information, education, advocacy, and community services that are provided by a network of local chapters and experienced volunteers throughout the country. The organization also offers members a wide range of special benefits and services including "AARP The Magazine", and the monthly "AARP Bulletin", and a Spanish-language newspaper, "Segunda Juventud".

WHAT IS THE AARP FOUNDATION?

The AARP Foundation is an AARP affiliated, 501(c)(3) nonpartisan, charitable organization, established in 1960. It administers publicly and privately funded programs, such as AARP Tax Aide and AARP Senior Community Service Employment Program. The Foundation also carries out national litigation through AARP Foundation Litigation and the Washington D.C. based advocacy programs funded through Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Inc. These programs also receive support from AARP.

WHAT IS THE AARP FOUNDATION WORKSEARCH?

Through its *WorkSearch* programs, AARP Foundation supports older workers as they remain in or re-enter the workforce by facilitating their navigation of the public and private workforce system, providing access to training that will allow them to remain competitive in the job market, and by providing connections to companies who value their experience.

The AARP Foundation *WorkSearch* has two programs that provide direct services to individuals seeking employment:

- AARP Foundation *WorkSearch Assessment System* targeted at individuals over the age of 40.
- AARP Foundation *Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)* targeted at financially eligible individuals over the age of 55.

WorkSearch Assessment System

The *WorkSearch Assessment System* is a web-based assessment & skills development learning tool that provides community-level job and career information and services to individuals who are seeking to remain in, or re-enter the workforce. The *WorkSearch Assessment System* is privately funded by the AARP Foundation and there is no age or income-qualifications that must be met in order to provide the *WorkSearch Assessment system* to job seekers. The *WorkSearch Assessment System* provides a variety of services, including interest and ability inventories, skills assessments, information about the

community job market, and connections to local training and employment opportunities at no cost to the individuals.

The *WorkSearch* Assessment System enables self-rating and objective measurement of skill strengths and weaknesses for hundreds of job roles. Participants are analyzed based on strengths and areas for improvement relative to a particular job role. As participants proceed through training and post training assessment, this system updates dynamically to show improvement and to indicate when full job skill certification status has been achieved or surpassed. Participants engage in targeted training for the specific areas where they lack the skills required for a specific job role.

Features of the tool

- Customized system provides a seamless path from personal job interests through skills assessments, skill tests, and on line courses.
- Uses a selected system run by the National Business Services Alliance (NBSA), a growing consortium of eight universities with 120 employer consultants who have vetted over 1200 job-specific on line courses (Eighty are certified) that represent 75% of all job titles in the Bureau of Labor Statistics job bank.
- Registrants can access any of the features of the system as many times as they desire with no time limit and at no cost to them.
- At any point in the process, an individual can do a local job match based on the assessments completed to that point, and will be taken to any one of three job banks where all available jobs within 25 miles matching the assessed interests and skills will be downloaded and printed.
- The *WorkSearch* Assessment System is also available in Spanish.

Our goal is to provide all mature workers with an informed choice regarding their employment interests and options, to assist them with meeting their employment goals, and to help them gain increased financial security.

In order to begin using the *WorkSearch* Assessment System, job seekers must first visit a *WorkSearch* office to have an account created for them. Once an account has been completed, users can access the *WorkSearch* Assessment System from any high-speed internet connection 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The goal of the AARP Foundation SCSEP is to provide useful, but part-time temporary, community service to host agencies in the community and to assist participants with updating or developing the skills they need to obtain a permanent “unsubsidized” job in their community. Our success adds directly to the economic vitality of the communities in which we work by providing a source for dedicated, trained, mature workers. A corollary benefit is the partnerships we form with public and non-profit host agencies that provide a short-term training environment for each of our participants, and in return, receive a temporary supplement to their staff at no cost. This partnership provides our communities with millions of hours of service annually that would not otherwise be available.

All AARP Foundation SCSEP participants will also have full access to the WorkSearch Assessment System.

In addition to the WorkSearch Assessment System, SCSEP provides opportunities for eligible individuals age 55+ to obtain new job knowledge, enhance their skills and gain a competitive edge in today’s job market. To be eligible, applicants must be financially qualified, unemployed, and must be interested in bettering their current employment circumstances.

Note: Within SCSEP, the term “enrollee” and “participant” are used interchangeably. “Enrollee” and “participant” are SCSEP specific terms and are not used outside SCSEP.

SCSEP Program participants are placed in temporary assignments with nonprofit community organizations or with federal, state, county or city organizations, where they have an opportunity to sharpen and develop skills while searching for a permanent job. While working in their temporary training assignments, participants earn the prevailing minimum wage per hour of training they receive. Participants also benefit from SCSEP’s “OJE” opportunities which allows employers to try SCSEP participants in their vacant positions for 2 to 4 weeks at no cost to the employer.

Unlike the WorkSearch Assessment System, the AARP Foundation SCSEP is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor with support from AARP and the AARP Foundation.

During its sponsorship of the program, AARP Foundation’s SCSEP has served more than 400,000 people across the country. Historically, the AARP Foundation serves approximately 23,000 low-income older workers and has the highest job placement and service rate of any national sponsor in history. Participants in the AARP Foundation SCSEP contribute approximately 8,000,000



hours of service in local communities annually, valued at over \$135,000,000. 85% of our participants were still in their jobs six months after leaving our program—the highest rate of any state or national sponsor.

The AARP Foundation Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) manages 73 project sites in 22 states and Puerto Rico, with approximately 10,000 participants.

The success of the AARP Foundation SCSEP contributes unequivocally to the economic vitality of the communities. We assign our mature job seekers to subsidized training and aid them in their search for unsubsidized jobs within their community.

There are two primary personnel entities that participants interact with while enrolled in SCSEP:

- The Project Director
- Participant Staff

Each are dedicated to cultivating the quality of life for mature workers by promoting opportunities for their economic independence.

The Project Director is familiar with the local job market and the job skills that are in great demand within their community. The SCSEP Project Director works closely with employers' to understand the qualifications required, work environments and job opportunities created for mature workers.

Participants assigned to the Project Office are termed project office staff. Although the project office staff is not considered employees of the AARP Foundation, they fully comprehend both the mission of the program and the related responsibilities that share in the success of the program's project sites.

Two-way communication and cooperation with the Project Director and project office staff is critical to the success of every SCSEP participant.

Our Motto:

"Your Job Is To Get A Job, Our Job Is To Help You!"

IMPORTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

The following information will provide you with a better understanding of your responsibilities as a SCSEP partner and of our responsibilities to you as a program. Whether you are a job seeker looking for assistance or a community agency wishing to provide training to older workers, you must understand the true mission of the program. Only with this understanding and a commitment to follow policies and procedures can the program be successful for our partners. All participants in the program are asked to sign a *Program Requirements* form (see sample in Section Two below) that outlines our responsibility as a sponsor and their responsibility as a participant. It is important for both participants and host agency partners to understand the policies and responsibilities each agrees to upon enrolling in SCSEP.

Additional Information Regarding Funding

Given that the total funding provided for all sponsors and states under Title V of the Older Americans Act can reach less than 1% of the eligible population, the AARP Foundation SCSEP is committed to helping as many older individuals as possible gain the skills and confidence they need to find real employment and better their lives. In order to serve more individuals it is critical that we free up as many participant slots as possible. We do this by placing participants into unsubsidized employment so that we can bring new participants into the program to replace those who have left with jobs. It also means that those participants who fail to actively participate in their host agency training assignments and in the unsubsidized job search process as required by the grant could be separated to make room for new participants.

SECTION TWO: GETTING STARTED

AS A PARTICIPANT

Project office staff must first determine an applicant's eligibility for enrollment. Eligibility is based on age, residency, employment status, and income guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Labor and by our ability to provide the services you need. We may not be able to help everyone who is eligible. Once your application has been accepted, and your enrollment forms, which include Program Requirement form shown below, are completed your program services begin. These services will include:

- Assignment to a host agency
- An assessment of skills
- A formal program orientation
- The creation of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that will identify barriers to employment and recommended assignments, training and services to overcome these barriers.
- Assistance with setting employment goals
- Referrals to employment opportunities
- Follow-up meetings, evaluations and reviews to determine your progress and "next steps" in your enrollment
- Obtaining assistance from other programs (e.g., disability and aging programs and veterans groups)

The Participant's Responsibilities

As a participant on the program, it is important that you communicate your activities, concerns, progress and goals to the project office staff. It is only with this open communication that we can fully assist you with realizing your employment goals.

This communication should include, but is not limited to:

1. When you are unable to report to your host agency as scheduled, you will contact both the Project Office and your host agency supervisor in a timely manner.
2. You will notify the Project Office before making any changes to your scheduled work hours at your assignment.
3. You are only authorized to work your scheduled/approved hours.
4. You will tell your host agency supervisor of your employment goals and request his or her assistance with locating a permanent job. This includes applying for appropriate jobs available at the agency and requesting a written recommendation.
5. When you apply for a job or go on an interview, you will contact the Project Office so your job search efforts can be noted in your file.
6. You will register with the State Employment Service or One-Stop and will notify the Project Office when this has been completed.

7. You will notify the Project Office immediately if there are changes to your income or family size. Changes to personal information such as address, telephone number or marital status must also be communicated to the office in a timely manner.
8. If you encounter problems with your training assignment, duties, supervisors, co-workers or staff, you will report these issues to the Project Director in a timely manner so the issues can be resolved.
9. If you are injured or become ill while at your assignment, you will report these issues to the Project Director in a timely manner so the issues can be resolved.
10. Most importantly, when you accept permanent employment off the program, you will notify the Project Office immediately. This helps to support program goals and continued funding for others
11. Some agencies may require certain background checks and screening on participants. The results could effect a participant's assignment to a particular host agency.

Program Requirements Form (Sample)

SCSEP PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of the SCSEP is to provide part-time training while I actively work to find a job off of the program. This is not a permanent job. This program does not have the funding to serve everyone who is eligible, and this program does not have the ability to serve those with no reliable transportation or those who do not wish to find a job off the program. (Initial _____)

If I am determined eligible and enroll and/or when I get a job off the program, I understand that I may lose all or part of those public benefits I now receive.

These benefits may include: Public Housing, Food Stamps, SSI/SSD, Medicaid, and Unemployment.

(1) I acknowledge that if I am found eligible and enroll and/or when I find unsubsidized employment that I may lose all or part of the benefits noted above. (Initial _____)

(2) I agree—even if I may lose benefits—that if I am enrolled I will cooperate with the Project Director/staff by:

- accepting referrals and interviews for unsubsidized jobs (Initial _____)
- conducting an ongoing search for unsubsidized employment as specified in my IEP and as directed by the Project Director and/or project site staff (Initial____)
- accepting regular transfers of my host agency assignments as necessary to further my training and work experience (Initial_____)
- maintaining registration with the State Employment Service and/or One Stop Center (Initial _____)
- attending job search training, job clubs, participant meeting, etc., when required by the Project Office, and to engage in continuing unsubsidized job search activities. (Initial_____)

(3) SCSEP is a short-term, work-training program usually lasting months, not years, which helps to prepare participants for unsubsidized employment. SCSEP participants are considered to be in temporary, training status, preparing to accept unsubsidized employment off of the program. The program is not an entitlement, nor is it designed to provide income maintenance. I acknowledge that training with the host agency is NOT a job and if I am enrolled I am not an employee of either the AARP Foundation or the host agency to which I am assigned. (Initial____)

(4) The Project Director may change my enrollment status or terminate my work training host agency assignment at any time. Participants complete a skills assessment and an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) upon enrollment. Based on the needs identified in my (IEP) and the skills I possess, AND based on the needs of the AARP Foundation SCSEP, I could be transferred from one work-training assignment to another to broaden my experience and better prepare me

for an unsubsidized job off of this program or to make adjustments to the program as required by funding. The number of transfers, length of training assignments, and the location of my assignment are based on my place and progress in the program AND the needs of the program for ongoing support. I should not compare my progress, transfers, and tenure on the program with anyone else. (Initial_____)

(5) AARP Foundation reserves the right to set participant training hours based on the budget available and other program considerations in the county where the participant is assigned. This may result in cases where less than 20 hours per week is available. (Initial_____)

(6) Do you own a vehicle? If yes, my initials attest to having both a valid drivers license and valid auto insurance. (Initial_____)

(7) At the time of participation, I am not employed, i.e.:

- I do not do any work at all as a paid employee. (Initial_____)
- I do not do any work at all in my own business, profession, or farm. (Initial_____)
- I do not work 15 hours or more as an unpaid worker in an enterprise operated by a member of my family. (Initial_____)
- I do not have a job or business from which I was temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor-management dispute, or personal reasons. (Initial_____)

(8) I may not volunteer time at my Training Assignment, and I will not be paid for any time that was not authorized or that was performed outside of my work-training schedule. In addition, the Training Provider may request my removal anytime my behavior, attendance, attitude, or aptitude proves detrimental to the agency or SCSEP. (Initial_____)

(9) AARP Foundation SCSEP may change participant benefits and guidelines at any time, and reduce my hours if necessary due to budgetary constraints. (Initial_____)

(10) My enrollment in the SCSEP is based on a number of things, including my continuing eligibility, satisfactory performance of my work-training assignments; suitable transportation that allows me to accept training and an unsubsidized job at locations throughout my community; and my willingness to actively cooperate in the job search process as spelled out in my IEP and directed by the Project Director and/or project site staff. If information I provided to meet the program's eligibility is inaccurate I may be subject to immediate dismissal. (Initial_____)

(11) I understand that enrollment in the SCSEP is normally months, not years. Under most circumstances a participant will have taken advantage of all the



resources & services in this program after two or three training assignments and should be well on his or her way to finding unsubsidized employment off the program. Given AARP Foundation SCSEP’s limited funding and the number of eligible individuals who need our help, AARP Foundation SCSEP cannot keep individuals on the program who have exhausted all our resources. (Initial_____)

(12) While not a condition of enrollment, it is expected that participants will maintain a bank account and utilize the program’s direct deposit service. (Initial_____)

(13) I agree to provide SCSEP all my employment information, once I have secured an unsubsidized job, no matter how the job was obtained. (Initial _____)

(14) I agree to allow the release of information about my enrollment, assignments, employment status and wages while enrolled or for up to a year after leaving the program for reporting or program promotion purposes. (Initial____)

(15) I understand that as part of my enrollment I may be asked to complete a Customer Satisfaction Survey. I agree I will complete this survey and submit it in a timely manner if asked. (Initial _____)

(16) As part of my enrollment, I may be asked/directed to attend meetings, conduct job searches or come into the Project Office. Because of our limited resources, the Project Site is not responsible for payment for mileage or transportation to such meetings. (Initial_____)

(17) Your application/enrollment process is not complete until you have completed your first day of training at your new training assignment. You will **not** be paid for any part of the application or enrollment process unless and until you have completed this first day of training. You will then be paid for all time spent previously during the application/enrollment process. (Initial_____)

By signing this document, I acknowledge my understanding of the purposes of this program. If the program has vacancies, if I am found eligible, and if the program has the ability to meet my needs, I will be enrolled. If enrolled, I will receive the Participant & Host Agency Supervisor Handbook and orientation to the SCSEP. I will be provided with a copy of the Training Assignment Description for my training assignment. If enrolled, by signing I agree to comply with all policies and procedures of the SCSEP. I further understand that failure to comply with the terms of this agreement at any time during my time on the program could put my enrollment at risk and may result in my separation from the program.

Participant _____ Date _____
Project Director _____ Date _____

AS A HOST AGENCY SUPERVISOR

Project office staff will further explain SCSEP and its mission and determine if your agency qualifies to serve as a training site. Federal Regulations require that all SCSEP host agencies be either 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations or public agencies. Proof of nonprofit status (a 501(c)(3) letter or IRS 990) if applicable, and your Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) will need to be provided to the Project Site Office, and will be kept on file at the AARP Foundation SCSEP Project Office. Staff will seek your input on determining what training opportunities might be available at your agency and will work with you to develop a Training Assignment Description (TAD) for these training positions.

Once qualified, an official representative of your agency should be designated to sign the Host Agency Agreement (see sample below). This individual should also determine who would be directly supervising the participants assigned to the agency. These supervisors must also sign the Host Agency Agreement authorizing them to sign participants' Time & Attendance Reports. Participants should not be given a blank Time & Attendance Report or complete their own Time & Attendance reports. It is the Supervisor's responsibility to fill in the daily hours and the total number of hours worked. The participant should verify those hours and then sign and date the timesheet along with the supervisor. In order to become a host agency, the organization **must** have a fax machine in good working order in order to both receive and send participant Time & Attendance Reports from and to the Project Site office or designated fax number. All paperwork must be on file in the SCSEP office before a participant may begin training. In order to ensure that your agency continues to provide viable training opportunities for our participants, your participation as a host agency will be evaluated each year. At that time, you will be asked to sign a new Host Agency Agreement indicating that you continue to support the mission of the program. If, during this annual review, it is determined that the host agency is not fulfilling its obligation to adequately train, supervise and guide the participant toward securing permanent employment, the SCSEP may discontinue its agreement with the agency and participants will be re-assigned.

Additional Responsibilities of a Host Agency

Prior to committing your agency to become a training site for SCSEP participants, you should understand and agree to the following:

- The host agency will bear the cost for training materials, background/security/police checks and/or health screenings required by the agency.
- The host agency will provide a safety orientation to all assigned participants.
- The host agency will inform the Project Site office of any changes to a participant's work schedule or training responsibilities.

- The host agency will notify the Project Office if the participant's Supervisor is compensated with Federal Funds by checking the appropriate box on the Host Agency Agreement.
- The host agency agrees to consider qualified SCSEP participants for permanent positions within the Agency when and if they become available.
- AARP Foundation reserves the right to set participant training hours based on the budget available and other program considerations in the county where the participant is assigned.
- Host agencies will ensure that participants are not unsupervised or left alone. In the event that a participant must be unexpectedly left alone for a short period, then the host agency should immediately notify the Project Site Office.

Maintenance of Effort

Very Important, Please Note:

- It is illegal for SCSEP participants to substitute for agency staff positions either directly or indirectly. Federal funds may not be used as a substitute for local funds. SCSEP is intended to be a "job creation" program meaning host agencies must create jobs specifically for SCSEP participants, not fill existing positions with SCSEP participants.
- Participant training positions may not replace or fill vacant positions within the host agency. SCSEP participants must be assigned to "non-staff" status positions in the host agency and be considered temporary extra help. AARP Foundation SCSEP must not influence the displacement of currently employed workers, including partial displacement, such as reduction in hours of non-overtime work, wages or employment benefits. Participants may not be assigned to complete the same or substantially similar work performed by any other person who has been laid off from the host agency.
- The host agency must be able to operate independently of occurrences when one or more participant(s) is/are assigned to a training position. If there is an indication that this policy is being violated in any way, all participants currently assigned to the agency must be re-assigned and the host agency agreement terminated. Participants may not be paid a supplemental per hour wage by the host agency (in addition to SCSEP wages) for the purpose of increasing the participant's hourly wage.

Benefits of Being a Host Agency

SCSEP can provide your organization with the temporary additional manpower necessary to strengthen the programs and services you provide to the community. Many of our host agency supervisors have found that they are able to delegate work assignments and complete priority tasks more effectively by having one of our participants train at their agency.

Upon enrollment and to determine the best training opportunity, the project office staff assesses the skills and abilities of each participant. This allows the staff to make the most appropriate assignment that will allow the participant to focus on those skills that will support his or her employment goals and it allows your agency to work with an individual who has an aptitude for the tasks involved in the training assignment. This could mean that you may not always have a participant assigned to your agency even though you have a signed agreement with the program.

The project office staff will monitor the participant's progress in the assignment and will assist you with evaluating the participant's performance. Because we are eager to have participants gain as much experience as possible during their short enrollment with us, all participants should expect regular reassignments to another host agency to ensure they are given every opportunity to broaden skills and gain the breadth of work experience necessary to compete for quality unsubsidized employment in the community.

However, many of our host agency supervisors have also found that as permanent jobs become available at the agency, they are able to fill the positions with trained SCSEP participants, already well versed in the mission of the agency, rather than starting over with untrained or unfamiliar job applicants.



Host Agency Agreement (Sample)

Host Agency: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ FEIN #: _____
 Fax: _____

The above named agency/organization, as equal employment opportunity employer, requests the services of participants from the AARP Foundation Senior Community Service Employment Program.

This agency is:	Participant Supervisors are:
_____ A Non-Profit Organization <small>(Tax exempt under the IRS code 501 (c)(3))</small>	_____ Compensated with federal funds
_____ A Public Organization	_____ Not compensated with federal funds

To ensure our host agency partners understand their important role in the daily lives of our participants and their responsibilities in supporting each participant’s quest for an unsubsidized job, we ask that each host agency supervisor clearly understand and support the following requirements that are part of each participant’s agreement with our program.

1. The purpose of the SCSEP is for a participant to provide community service while they actively pursue unsubsidized employment off the program. When an individual enrolls and/or gets a job off the program they may lose their public benefits. These benefits may include, but are not limited to: Public Housing, Food Stamps, SSI/SSD, and Medicaid.

2. Participants are asked to cooperate with the Project Director and Employment Specialists by:
 Accepting referrals and interviews for employment outside the program; conducting an ongoing search for unsubsidized employment as specified in their IEP and as directed by the Project Director and/or project office staff; accepting regular transfers to other host agency assignments as necessary to further their training and work experience; maintaining registration with the State Employment Service and/or One Stop Center; attending job search training, job clubs, participant meetings, etc., when offered by the Project Office, and to engage in continuing unsubsidized job search activities. Note: these activities may cause the participant to miss some hours at their host agency assignment

3. The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a short-term work-training program to prepare participants for unsubsidized employment off of the program. The program is not an entitlement, nor is it designed to provide income maintenance. SCSEP participants are considered to be in training status,



preparing to accept unsubsidized employment. They, and you as the host agency supervisor, must understand and accept that training with the host agency is a short-term training opportunity, NOT a job, and that participants are NOT employees of either the AARP Foundation or the host agency to which they are temporarily assigned.

4. Host agencies must not use participants as substitutes for permanent employees in their agency. Federal regulations prohibit this violation of “maintenance of effort.” Host agencies must not substitute federal dollars for local dollars. Participants are additions to, not substitutes for, regular agency staff.

5. Host agencies agree to give serious consideration for any permanent job openings in the agency to qualified participants. This includes any outside referrals.

6. Host agencies understand that AARP Foundation’s SCSEP does not conduct background checks or drug screenings on participants.

This host agency agrees to provide supervision, training, and a safe work site for each assigned participant. The host agency also agrees to the provisions outlined in the Participant - Host Agency Handbook provided by the program as a condition of participation in the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

The Department of Labor (DOL) now requires a survey of randomly selected host agencies. This survey is generally done in January. If selected, please complete the survey as it influences continued DOL funding for this grant. In addition, be advised that the DOL will make three attempts to get a completed survey from you.

Workers Compensation costs for our participants continues to sky rocket as a result of post 9-11 insurance increases and escalating costs of health care. Our workers comp claims are directly related to the work place environment and attitudes toward work place safety in our host agencies. We expect you to maintain high standards and to closely monitor the activities of the participants assigned to ensure they do not engage in activities which could cause them to be injured. Repeated accidents that are the result of inadequate host agency safety awareness and supervision could be cause for us to remove all participants from your host agency.

Main Contact _____ Date _____

Supervisor _____ Date _____

Project Director _____ Date _____

SECTION THREE: PROGRAM SERVICES

The AARP Foundation SCSEP offers a number of program services to its participants to provide them with the tools, information and training they need to be successful in getting and keeping a permanent job. Upon enrollment, all participants are provided with a formal program orientation that provides them with information on topics such as: policy of no overtime or compensatory leave, pay periods and paydays, Time & Attendance Reports, project office staff, holidays, safety procedures and accident reporting, grievance procedures, participant meetings, limitations on political activities, evaluations, and policy of separation for inactivity.

Participant Meetings and Workshops

Periodically, the Project Director may hold meetings or workshops to provide participants with training or information on job searching, employment trends and opportunities or information relevant to older workers. Attendance at meetings or workshops is mandatory for participants as directed by the Project Director.

- Participants must notify the Project Director in advance if unable to attend the meeting. (Only emergency situations will be a valid reason for not attending.)
- Participants report to the meeting location instead of to their host agency for that day but are paid for hours attending the meetings.
- Host agencies must be fully supportive of the participant's absence to attend such meetings or workshops. The Project Office will make every effort to inform host agency supervisors of scheduled meetings and related participant absences.

The Trial Employment Program ("OJE")

The project office staff work hard to develop relationships with businesses and organizations in the community and be seen as a staffing resource to employers. In an effort to further our standing in this area, the program is able to offer employers, both private and non-profit, a short-term opportunity to work with/train a participant to determine if the participant's skills and experience match well with those required for an available position. Further information regarding this On the Job Experience (OJE) program can be obtained from the Project Director.

Intensive Services

As an added program benefit, a participant may be assigned to participate in the program's Intensive Services assignment. During this time, the participant will be assigned to work directly with the Project Director and project office staff to complete job development activities including, but not limited to, resume

preparation, interviewing for prospective jobs, attending job clubs, updating the Assessment and IEP, etc. Following the Intensive Services assignment, the Project Director will make recommendations on the most appropriate next step in the individual's enrollment which may be accepting an unsubsidized job, returning to the same assignment as the participant had prior to taking part in Intensive Services, transferring to a new assignment for additional training, entering a Specialized Training or OJE assignment, or separating from the SCSEP. Workers Compensation covers participants assigned to Intensive Services. If the participant will be driving as part of their Intensive Services, the participant must have liability insurance and a copy of this insurance in their file. AARP Foundation SCSEP does not reimburse participants in Intensive Services for mileage incurred.

Enrollment Reviews

In the rare instances that a participant remains on the program for one year or longer or if the Project Director believes that a participant's progress toward meeting his or her employment goals has stalled, the program is required to conduct a series of updates to the participant's personnel file to ensure eligibility for continued enrollment. These updates may include:

- A re-certification of the participant's income to determine that he or she is still income eligible to participate in the SCSEP.
- An update to the participant's *Individual Employment Plan* (IEP) to determine if previous goals set are still appropriate and to identify additional actions that need to be taken to support current goals.
- Following these updates, the Project Director may formally endorse the participant's continued participation in the program and will identify "next steps" in the individual's progress which may include:
 1. returning to his or her current assignment
 2. being reassigned to another agency for further training
 3. or taking part in the program's Specialized Training, OJE, or Intensive Services assignment.
- If the Project Director does not endorse the participant's continued participation in the program, alternative services will be discussed and the separation process will begin.

SECTION FOUR: HOST AGENCY ASSIGNMENTS

The information provided through assessing a participant's past experience, current interests, training needs, and employment goals assists the project office staff in determining the most appropriate host agency assignment for a participant.

Very Important Information About Assignments and Transfers

1. An assignment must not be confused with a permanent job. A permanent job, or "placement", occurs when participants are paid by an employer and no longer subsidized by the AARP Foundation SCSEP.
2. The length of any assignment is determined by many factors. A participant may be assigned to an agency until hired by that agency, hired by another employer, transferred to another host agency assignment, or otherwise separated from the program.
3. Participants may not be assigned to a host agency in which any member of his or her immediate family is employed in an administrative capacity and/or serves as a Supervisor to that participant.
4. AARP Foundation SCSEP does not conduct background checks or drug screenings on any participants. Host agencies are permitted to conduct background checks and drug screenings for participants assigned to their organization. AARP Foundation SCSEP is not financially responsible for any costs involved in any background checks or drug screening.
5. The host agency or the participant can request a transfer to a different host agency. In addition, the Project Director reserves the right to transfer the participants to another assignment at any time.
6. When the host agency requests a participant be transferred, the Project Director will request further documentation to better help the participant succeed with their next assignment.
7. When a participant separates from the program, it may not always be possible to give the agency prior notice and it may not be possible to replace the participant with another participant. The Project Office will make every effort to keep the host agency personnel informed of changes.

Training Assignment Descriptions

A Training Assignment Description (TAD) for each training assignment must be developed with input from the host agency supervisor and project office staff, signed by the participant and retained in the Project Office. By signing the TAD, the participant indicates they are willing and able to perform the duties listed. Please note the following:

1. Participants must only perform those duties listed on the job description (TAD).

2. Participants must notify the Project Director if asked to perform duties not listed on the Training Assignment Description (TAD).
3. Please note: The notation “and all other duties as assigned” or similar language must not appear on any participant’s Training Assignment Description.
4. Training Assignment Descriptions may be created listing duties that offer the opportunity for additional responsibility. Any activity a participant may be asked to perform must be indicated in the Training Assignment Description (TAD).
5. A participant may drive a vehicle belonging to the host agency if it is listed as a duty on the Training Assignment Description, has been approved by the Project Director, and is covered by the host agency insurance with a copy of the coverage on file in the AARP Foundation SCSEP office. However, participants may not transport passengers as part of their host agency assignment under any circumstances.
6. Participants may not drive their own vehicles during the course of performing their host agency assignments.

Very Important, Please Note

Continued or deliberate failure to comply with these responsibilities may result in disciplinary procedures up to and including separation from the program for the participant and/or discontinuing the partnership with the host agency.

Training Assignment Evaluations

Periodically, the host agency supervisor will be asked to give a verbal evaluation on the participant’s work performance and provide comments on areas in which the participant is performing well and guidance on areas in which the participant could improve. The resulting feedback and discussions the supervisor has with the participant is invaluable for the participant to develop those skills necessary to get and keep a permanent job.

SECTION FIVE: SAFETY & ACCIDENT INFORMATION _____

The AARP Foundation SCSEP holds the safety, welfare, and health of its project office staff and participants in the highest regard. No task is so urgent that it cannot be done safely. By agreeing to supervise participants, host agencies are also agreeing to provide a safety orientation and to provide the participant with the proper information, tools and working environment to safely perform their assigned tasks. By enrolling in the program, participants are agreeing to exercise maximum care and good judgment in preventing accidents.

Workers Compensation

All participants are covered under the AARP Foundation SCSEP Workers Compensation Insurance carrier during their assigned hours and while performing their assigned tasks as identified in their *Training Assignment Description*. To ensure continued coverage, it is very important that participants and/or supervisors communicate changes to job duties or scheduled hours to the project office staff immediately. Participants who volunteer and work over time are not covered under Workers Compensation. (Note: Participants are not permitted to volunteer to do the same work they perform during their normal work hours.)

The AARP Foundation SCSEP Safety Program

1. Project office staff must complete a safety review of the host agency work environment before the participant may begin the assignment. After the initial review, safety reviews of the agency will be completed on an annual basis.
2. Prior to starting their first assignment all participants must:
 - View the mandatory safety video
 - Receive & Review the *Participant Safety Review*
3. As part of their IEP reviews & updates, All participants must receive and review the *Participant Safety Review* in the unlikely event that they are at the same assignment for more than 1-year.
4. Participants should report any unsafe conditions, equipment, or practices to their host agency supervisor and the Project Director or project office staff.
5. Host agencies must agree to provide the protective equipment required for completing the tasks on the participant's job description safely.
6. AARP Foundation SCSEP encourages participant participation on host agency safety committees.

Accident Reporting

If a participant has an accident or suffers an occupational illness during his or her host agency assignment, the Project Office must be notified immediately.

1. If immediate medical attention is required, the host agency should assist the participant in obtaining emergency medical treatment and notify the Project Office immediately.
2. If medical attention is not considered an emergency, the project site staff will contact the medical providers used by AARP Foundation SCSEP's workers compensation insurance carrier and the participant will be contacted concerning his or her appointment date and time.
3. Following the accident or illness, the host agency supervisor will be interviewed by either the Project Director or a designated safety staff regarding the accident. The project office safety assistant or the Project Director will review this report with the host agency supervisor and the participant to make sure there is agreement on corrective actions so the incident will not recur.

SECTION SIX: PAYROLL & TIMESHEETS

Time & Attendance Report (Sample)

Senior Community Service Employment Program

File No: Participant:	Title Work Schedule:	Dates:
Supervisor: Phone: Fax:	Grant Status: Site Number: SCSEP Location:	SCSEP Phone: SCSEP Fax: SCSEP Email:

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
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The undersigned hereby certifies that the recorded information is correct for the payroll period indicated

Notes:	Date
Authorized Supervisors:	Supervisor Date
	SCSEP Project Director Date

Who Pays Participants?

Participants are paid for their time worked at their host agency or other training assignments by the AARP Foundation SCSEP, not by their host agency. Host agency supervisors are responsible for accurately recording the hours a participant works each day at his or her training assignment. Following are important payroll procedures all participants and supervisors should follow in documenting hours and transmitting this information to the Project Office.

Payroll Periods and Paychecks

A payroll period covers 14 calendar days beginning on a Sunday and ending the second Saturday. Time & Attendance Reports must be faxed to the Project Office via the designated fax # as soon as possible after the last day of the pay period so that the hours may be processed and there will be no delay in participants receiving their paychecks. In order to become a host agency, the organization **must** have a fax machine in good working order in order to both receive and send participant Time & Attendance Reports from and to the Project Site office or designated fax number. It is the policy of the AARP Foundation SCSEP that host agencies retain the original in their files. Payroll is processed at the Project Office the week after the end of

the payroll period. Checks are generated (in most cases, direct deposited) from our National Headquarters in Washington, DC the following week. For new participants, this payroll process could mean that there will be a delay of up to one month before they are paid from the program and they should plan accordingly.

The Host agency supervisor is responsible for completing the Time & Attendance Report and making sure that it gets faxed back to the Project Site office's designated fax number on time. However, the participant should also pay close attention to the payroll schedule in order to make sure the Time & Attendance Report is completed, signed and faxed in on time. Supervisors should keep the Time & Attendance Report and the fax confirmation in their files. Participants should not fill in their own hours on the timesheets. That is the supervisor's responsibility. Participants are responsible for verifying the hours and then signing and dating the document on the last day that the participant worked. Time & Attendance Reports are not to be pre-populated by either the participant or the supervisor with hours prior to the date that they were actually worked.

Direct Deposit

It is AARP Foundation SCSEP's expectation that participants will have their paychecks direct deposited at the bank of their choosing. This is the most efficient and safest way for an individual's paycheck to reach their bank and it is strongly encouraged that participants sign up for this service. Forms and instructions can be obtained from the Project Office.

Very Important, Please Note

Participants who do not have an established bank account and/or do not choose to use direct deposit may be assessed a charge of \$5 or more when cashing their payroll checks at a banking or check cashing institution. This charge must be paid by the participant and will not be paid by the program.

Time & Attendance Reports

Host agency supervisors will be provided a Time & Attendance Report by the Project Office at the beginning of each pay period for each participant assigned to their agency.

- Host agency supervisors are responsible for maintaining control of and accurately recording the hours a participant works each day. Note: Participants may not record their own hours on their Time & Attendance Report.
- Host agency supervisors should record the exact, actual hours a participant works just below the appropriate day on the time sheet in the row titled "Hours." Only the hours a participant was physically present at the host agency to the nearest half-hour should be recorded on the time sheet.
- Time & Attendance Reports must be completed in blue or black ink only and never in pencil.
- When a participant is absent from their assignment, a note should be entered in the section at the bottom of the Time & Attendance Report indicating the date and appropriate code:

- “O” Absence
- “AT” Approved Training

- AARP Foundation reserves the right to set participant training hours based on the budget available and other program considerations in the county where the participant is assigned.

- The host agency supervisors authorized to sign participant Time & Attendance Reports will be listed on the Time & Attendance Report. If there are changes to those authorized to sign the time sheets, the Project Office must be notified.

- The participant and host agency supervisor sign and date the Time & Attendance Report after all hours have been worked in the pay period and recorded on the Time & Attendance Report.

- Signatures indicate correctness of the Time & Attendance Report, which serves as a legal document. Participants must never sign a blank Time & Attendance Report.

- Once the Time & Attendance Report is completed on or after the last day the participant works in the pay period, the host agency supervisor **must fax** the Time & Attendance Report to the Project Site Office’s designated fax number. Time & Attendance Reports may not be hand delivered or mailed to the Project Site Office by either the host agency supervisor or the participant. The host agency must keep the original for their files.

- In California only, supervisors must also indicate the start and end times of the participant’s workday. This policy is in response to California labor laws. Also in California only, participants must initial that they have taken their mandated breaks during each workday as required by California labor laws.

Correcting Errors on Time Sheets

If an error is made in recording work hours on a participant's Time & Attendance Report prior to faxing into the Project Site Office, corrections should be made by the host agency supervisor by drawing a single line through the error and indicating the correct information. The host agency supervisor must also write a brief explanation for the change in the notes section at the bottom of the timesheet. At no time should correction fluid ("white-out") be used to correct time sheets.

Work Hours, Overtime and Compensatory Time

In most cases, a participant will be assigned to train at the agency 3 or 4 days per week, 4.5 to 5 hours per day. There may be variations to these hours depending on the training assignment, budgetary constraints or other economic conditions. But host agency supervisors should make every effort to create a schedule of 3 or 4 days per week instead of 5 days per week in order to reduce the burden of transportation costs on the participant. Contact your local Project Site Office for guidance on the number of hours and days per week that a participant is to work.

1. In no case may participants work more than 8 hours in one day or more than 40 hours in one week.
2. The host agency and the participant determine what preference they have for the assignment hours. Once determined, participant's proposed assignment hours must be discussed with the Project Director before being placed on file in the AARP Foundation SCSEP office. AARP Foundation SCSEP provides the workers compensation insurance for participants, thus making the participant's schedules important concerning coverage issues. Therefore, and any changes to participant assignment hours must be immediately reported to the Project Office.
3. If a participant does work 8 hours in one day, he or she is entitled to an unpaid meal break. Time spent on breaks and meals is not to be included in the total work hours for the day. Only actual time worked is recorded on the participants Time & Attendance Report. (Note: Individual state laws may vary. The Project Director will inform participants and agencies of specific requirements based on state law.)
4. Participants must not be asked to work additional hours or to volunteer their time.
5. SCSEP does not authorize pay for overtime or compensatory time.
6. Prior written authorization from the Project Director is required for: Saturday, Sunday and work hours outside project office hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
7. Participants who volunteer time performing the same responsibilities as their Training Assignment are in strict violation of SCSEP policy.
8. If a participant chooses to volunteer on their own time at the location of their host agency assignment, the Project Site office must be contacted immediately and the participant must volunteer in an area completely separate from the role of their AARP Foundation SCSEP Training Assignment.

Host Agency Closings

If a host agency is closed on a day other than an AARP Foundation SCSEP paid holiday, participants are allowed to make up their time missed during the same or next pay period. If a host agency is closed due to inclement weather or other emergency, and the participant is unable to work at the assignment, the participant will not be paid for regularly scheduled hours for that day but will have the opportunity to make up the time missed during the same or next pay period.

Policy Regarding Unpaid Absences

Participants who find it necessary to take time away from their assignment must do so with the understanding that:

- Their assignment may not be available upon their return and they may need to wait until sufficient resources are available to reassign them to a host agency.

- They may not be able to go back to their former work training assignment.
- They may be placed in a Hold designation for up to a maximum of 60 calendar days before being separated from the program.
- Participants who must take a leave of absence from the program must notify the Project Director in writing in advance.

SECTION SEVEN: ADDITIONAL PROGRAM INFORMATION & POLICIES

Policy Regarding Drugs in the Workplace

As a condition of continued enrollment in the SCSEP, participants may not lawfully use, be under the influence of, distribute, dispense, possess, or manufacture drugs or alcohol during paid working or meeting hours on AARP Foundation SCSEP or host agency property. Note: Any violation of this policy can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of enrollment.

- Any violation of this policy must be reported to the Project Site Office immediately.
- Legally prescribed medications are permitted as long as their use does not adversely affect ability to satisfactorily perform duties, participant safety, or the safety of others.
- Participants found “guilty” (or entered a plea of nolo contendere), or sentenced to serve time, or both, for a Federal, state, or local criminal drug statute violation that occurred during work assignment hours on host agency or SCSEP property, must notify the Project Director within five calendar days of the verdict or sentencing.
- Convictions must be reported to the Federal Government.

Policy Regarding Weapons in the Workplace

It is against the AARP Foundation SCSEP policy to carry or have in their possession any weapon at any time during work hours, whether in the Project Site Office or meeting location or at a host agency.

- **Note:** Any violation of this policy can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of enrollment.
- Weapon is defined but not limited to any firearm or any knife with a blade exceeding 2 1/2 inches.
- If any participant is observed carrying a weapon in the workplace, it should be reported immediately to the host agency supervisor, law enforcement authority, and the Project Director.

Policy Regarding Disciplinary Procedure

If a disciplinary problem arises with a participant, the host agency supervisor should contact the Project Director immediately. Host agency personnel can request the removal of a participant, but cannot discontinue their enrollment in the program. Note: The Project Director has sole authority for enrolling and separating an individual.

- The Project Director will attempt to resolve any conflicts.
- If a resolution cannot be reached, the Project Director may arrange for a transfer of the participant to another assignment.
- The Project Director will request a letter from the host agency supervisor citing the reason(s) why a transfer is being requested.

Grievance Procedure

Procedures exist to provide participants with mediation of problems encountered at host agencies or with the project office staff. The Grievance Procedure is available in the Project Site Office.

- Upon request, the Project Director will provide the participant with the proper procedures for filing complaints.
- The Project Director will also provide host agency supervisors with a copy of and information about the AARP Foundation SCSEP's Grievance Procedure upon request.

Other Participant Policies and Benefits

Paid Holidays

Nine paid holidays are authorized each calendar year. A list of these holidays is available and will be sent to participants and supervisors once published. Authorized holidays will also be pre-noted on the participant's *Time & Attendance Report*.

1. Participants may not report to their assignment at their host agency on AARP Foundation SCSEP holidays even if their host agency is open.
2. Participants are paid 4 hours for each AARP holiday. Participants normally working more hours on a scheduled paid holiday may make up any time lost within the same pay period if possible. Participants who normally do not work on the day the holiday occurs will still be paid for the holiday and adjustments must be made to their work schedule for the remainder of the payroll period so that hours do not exceed their normal total hours worked per pay period.
3. Host agency supervisors are encouraged to provide participants with a listing of the host agency holiday closings.
4. If host agency and AARP Foundation SCSEP holiday closings are not the same, participants are allowed to make up any time lost within the same pay period if possible.
5. New participants who begin their assignments the day after the holiday(s) are not paid for those day(s).

6. Participants who have been placed in unsubsidized employment are not paid for holidays occurring during this period. However, participants who begin an unsubsidized job the day after the holiday are paid for the holiday.
7. Participants who have not earned any hours during the 2-week pay period that a Holiday falls in are not paid for holidays.

Jury Duty

If a participant is called for jury duty, he or she must notify the Project Office and must provide the office with a "Notification to Serve" letter from the court. If called for jury duty, participants will be paid their regularly scheduled hours for the day(s) they are required to serve. Participants should inform the courts that they will be receiving regular pay, but may be entitled to and may accept reimbursement from the court for expenses.

Physical Examination

Upon enrollment, all participants are offered a physical exam paid for by the AARP Foundation SCSEP. The results of the physical are the property of the participant and will not be accepted by or retained in the Project Office. In the unlikely event that a participant is still on the program after one year, he or she will be offered an annual physical. Details regarding the amount reimbursed or to make arrangements to accept or decline the physical offer can be obtained from the Project Office.

AARP Membership

Participants receive a one time only complimentary membership in AARP for a period of one year upon enrollment. If already a member, the current membership period will be extended by one year. With this membership, participants will receive the AARP Bulletin and AARP the Magazine.

Political Activity

Participants may not participate in partisan or nonpartisan political activities during hours for which the AARP Foundation SCSEP pays them. This includes periods of jury duty and paid holidays. Participants may act in an administrative capacity at polling places.

Federal Regulations

Regulations governing the AARP Foundation Senior Community Service Employment Program are contained in the 20 Code of the Federal Regulations, Part 641, dated April 9, 2004. It is the responsibility of the Project Directors, Area Manager and other project office staff to ensure compliance with these regulations.

Very Important, Please Note

All information contained in this handbook is subject to change, without notice, as a result of legislation or changes in Department of Labor or AARP Foundation SCSEP policies. Project office staff will make every attempt to keep program host agencies and participants informed of policy changes. For questions regarding areas not covered in this handbook, please contact the Project Director.