



Best Practices for Volunteering with ANV

July 2026

Thank you for serving as an ANV volunteer. If you've just joined us, please review this guidance, and the Welcome message from the ANV Office, before your first assignment. We appreciate your service!

Assignment to a Service

- When you receive the emailed list of open Service Requests from ANV Office, determine which services you have the time, interest and ability to provide. Note that if the Description field states that the Day and/or Time are 'flexible', then you and the member would schedule the service at your mutual convenience.
- To request assignment to a service, reply to the email with a statement such as "I can do #12345" and include your full name.
- ANV Office will send a reply to let you know whether you've been assigned to the request(s).
- If you are assigned to the request, ANV Office will also send you a separate "service confirmation" email with the member's name/address, preferred contact method (phone or email) and other details about the assignment, and a calendar "invitation" which you may want to save to your computer/phone. (See below for a cautionary note about the calendar feature.)
- ANV Office will give the member your name and assure the member that you will contact him/her to confirm the service.
- Contact the member within 24 hours of being assigned to the service; discuss and confirm the details (pickup time and location, parking (member responsible for cost if the volunteer is asked to remain onsite), building access, mobility or other assistance needed, etc). If the service is several days off, call the member again the day before (and possibly even the day of). This reassurance is important.
- For transportation services, familiarize yourself in advance with the member's address and the route to be taken, to ensure on-time arrival at the member's home and a stress-free trip to the destination.

Providing the Service

- Once you are assigned to a service, the member is counting on you to provide it. If you are unable to provide the service for any reason, notify ANV Office immediately. If it is time sensitive and ANV Office is closed, notify the ANV staff listed on the service request confirmation email.
- When providing a ride, arrive five minutes early - especially for medical appointments. This reduces member anxiety.
- If the service is 'flexible' and will take more than one visit to complete, please schedule future visits directly with the member. Keep a record of the visit dates and share these with ANV Office when submitting your time/miles report. Multiple visit dates will be logged under the one service request number.
- Assess and respond constructively to the member's skill/comfort with using a cell phone. Don't presume that a member can retrieve your voicemail, find your number in his/her phone, or locate you in his/her Contacts. When you call the member to confirm a service, suggest writing down your name and phone number – perhaps on a calendar. When dropping a member off at an appointment or for an errand, write your phone number on a piece of paper, hand it to the member, and suggest they put it in their wallet or with their phone so it's handy when they're ready for the return trip. These are good opportunities to encourage the member to make a separate request for ANV tech support.
- Members are responsible for paying any expenses associated with their service request, like parking (if the member has asked you to remain onsite).
- Engage the member in a conversation about their interests, and suggest ANV activities and events that might be a good fit; encourage the member to tap into a broad range of ANV services. To excel in this liaison function,

become familiar with our activities through our website and Community Updates bulletin, which goes out by email on the 1st and 15th of each month.

Keep in Mind

- All new requests go through ANV Office. If in the course of providing an assigned service, a member asks you for an additional service, gently mention that new requests must go through ANV Office. (If the request is small, such as a brief visit after picking up groceries, feel free to do so if you have the time and desire.)
- Some requests (like Friendly Visitor, Walking Partner, Phone Visitor, and AFAC pickups) are usually recurring on a weekly basis. Take the initiative to keep these services on track by calling the member once a week to check-in and confirm (or schedule) the next interaction.
- If you think a member is unwell or very frail, may not be safe in their home, or if you are worried about them for any reason, please call or [email the office](#) and ask to speak with Caitlin or Mary Ellis, and they can look into the situation further.
- The automated Outlook calendar feature that is embedded in the Service Request confirmation email may be different from what you and the member ultimately agree to. If you use the calendar feature, be sure to make any needed edits to reflect the schedule that you and the member have decided on.

Reporting Time and Miles

- Time and Miles reports are required for all Service categories (not just Transportation).
- Please report your time and miles to the [ANV Office](#) when the request is complete. If your service takes multiple visits, please report either after each visit or for the month. For a service that comprises one date, it's best to report by replying to the service request confirmation email. If you send a new email to provide time/miles, it's helpful for the Subject line to read 'Time/Miles for #12345' and to include your full name in the body of the message.
- Here's a good format for your time/mileage reporting:
 - Service request #
 - Date service provided
 - Total time (portal to portal – meaning from when you leave your home to start the request until you return home afterwards)
 - Total miles (portal to portal)
 - Anything you think the office needs to know, such as concerns about member well-being, a service that turned out to be different than expected, etc.
- If you walk, bike or use public transit, please report your miles as 0 with the clarification 'I used bike/public transit' or similar. We only track the miles driven by volunteers in their personal vehicles since that is what may be tax-deductible for the volunteer.
- For recurring services under a single request number, it is acceptable to report on a monthly basis and to provide the number of installments in lieu of specific dates; for example: "#12345, in February I made 5 visits, for a total of 6 hours and 50 miles."

Contacts

- ANV Office: 703-509-8057 (phones are staffed weekdays between 10am and 3pm) or office@ANVarlington.org
- Executive Director, Wendy Zenker: wendyzenker@ANVarlington.org
- For any volunteer-related issues, ideas, questions, or general feedback, email Volunteer Coordinator, Cindy Salavantis at cindysalavantis@ANVarlington.org