



Station/Site Manual



UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program

Connecting Generations.

Dear School Personnel,

Thank you for your interest in and support of the UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program! I am pleased to be sharing information with you about the program and presenting this site manual for your use.

The UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program works to place Foster Grandparents in the following Utah counties: Carbon, Emery, Grand, Rich, San Juan, Summit, Tooele and Wasatch. Foster Grandparents in these counties will support children with tutoring and mentoring, based on the needs of your school and students.

Some solutions are ageless, like the listening ear an older adult can provide to a child or adolescent. We know that children who receive help through a reading tutor are seven times more likely to reach their benchmark in the year than those who do not have a tutor. We also know that children who have a mentor are more likely to want to go to college.

Foster Grandparents also benefit from serving. Research on the impact of the Foster Grandparent program on the volunteer has shown that the program improves physical health and mental health for volunteers themselves.

We are excited to partner with you as you support students on a daily basis. Please be in touch if you have any questions that are not answered in this site manual. We value the opportunity to work with you.

Laura Huefner

AmeriCorps Seniors Program Manager

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OVERVIEW

Foster Grandparent Program

Since 1965, the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) has provided one-on-one mentoring, nurturing, and support to children who are in circumstances that limit their academic, social, or emotional development. AmeriCorps Senior volunteers in FGP serve a minimum of 260 hours annually and receive hourly stipends. Volunteers must be age 55 or older and meet established income eligibility guidelines. In addition to the stipend, they receive accident, personal liability, and excess automobile liability insurance; assistance with the cost of transportation; recognition; and, as feasible, meals during their assignments.

AmeriCorps

In 1993, AmeriCorps was established by Congress to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to give back to their communities and their nation. Today AmeriCorps serves more than 5 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds to help meet local needs through a wide array of service opportunities. These include projects in six priority areas: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and veterans and military families through AmeriCorps's core programs: AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors. AmeriCorps is part of our nation's history of commitment to building a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility. The Foster Grandparent Program is one of the AmeriCorps Seniors programs and focuses on the priority area of education.

UServeUtah

UServeUtah, the Utah Commission on Service and Volunteerism, was created by state statute in 1994 and is comprised of 20 members representing local government, community-based organizations, and statewide networks as well as 15 staff. Since its inception, UServeUtah has worked to inspire, equip, and mobilize individuals and organizations to take action to transform their communities. The UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program started in 2021 as a way to bring Foster Grandparents to underserved communities that have not had the program for many years.

Program Station Requirements

Stations where Foster Grandparents serve must be youth-oriented agencies that accept the responsibility for assignment and supervision of Foster Grandparents. The UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program will focus on placing Foster Grandparents at schools, early childhood learning centers, and afterschool programs. Stations must be a nonprofit, government organization, public school or healthcare facility. All stations must be licensed or otherwise certified, when required by appropriate state and local government.

Each station/school must designate a coordinator to act as the liaison between the station/school and the Foster Grandparent Program office. This person will be responsible for:

- Supervising all Foster Grandparents at that station/school,
- Providing additional training,
- Completion of Volunteer Assignment plan sheets,
- Making sure the Foster Grandparents are in appropriate placements,
- Signing monthly time sheets, and
- Returning scanned monthly timesheets by email.

Federal law requires that volunteer stations not discriminate against Foster Grandparents or in the operation of its program on the basis of race; color; national origin, including individuals with limited English proficiency; sex; age; political affiliation; religion; or on the basis of disability, if the participant or member is a qualified individual with a disability. Persons with disabilities shall be provided reasonable accommodation to participate in the program or activity.

How the Program Works

Service Activity

Foster Grandparents in the UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program serve between 8 and 40 hours each week at their assigned station/school. The primary role of a Foster Grandparent is to serve as a tutor or a mentor in a one-on-one setting to help children who are below grade level or in need of emotional or social support. Foster Grandparents who serve as tutors can help students who are struggling with reading and math get back on track. Foster Grandparents who serve as mentors can help students who may need extra support to be successful in school have an additional caring adult in their lives.

Students served by Foster Grandparents will be on the Volunteer's Assignment Plan. The station/school supervisor completes the Assignment Plan to determine what students will be served individually by the Foster Grandparent during the school year or summer program. This plan also determines what kind of intervention the Foster Grandparent will deliver during his or her tutoring or mentoring sessions with the assigned children. Examples of appropriate and inappropriate activities for a Foster Grandparent are included later in this site handbook.

Background Checks

The Foster Grandparent Program is required by the Serve America Act law to perform the following checks on Foster Grandparents serving in the program: NSOPR (National Sex Offender Public Registry check), FBI fingerprint, Utah State Repository Name Check. All of these checks must be completed prior to the placement of a Foster Grandparent in the school. Foster Grandparents cannot serve before the results of these screenings have been received and cleared.

Meals

Because Foster Grandparents are serving three or more hours a day and are of limited means, we ask each station/school to provide a free meal each day. This meal is considered as an in-kind donation to the program. All Foster Grandparents are allowed a 20-30 minute paid meal break during their scheduled volunteer hours. Foster Grandparents are not required to

eat with the children. As permitted by the volunteer station, volunteers can eat their lunch with the station staff, in a breakroom or wherever permitted.

Training

A Foster Grandparent receives 20-hours of Pre-Service Training from UServeUtah in preparation for serving at the school or afterschool program. Part of this training entails initial days at the service site while the Foster Grandparent is learning what his or her assignment will require. Training provided by UServeUtah covers the program guidelines, child development stages, activities and behaviors for different age groups and tutoring in today's schools. We also discuss appropriate activities and behaviors of a Foster Grandparent.

Foster Grandparents also receive additional training through the program at in-service meetings, which are held approximately once per month. Foster Grandparents will need to be excused from their typical schedule on days that in-service meetings are held.

If a Foster Grandparent is in need of specific training or additional training, it is the responsibility of the site where they serve to provide this training. This can be done individually or in a group setting. Most individuals serving in the Foster Grandparent Program can benefit from additional tutoring training as it has been many years since some of these Foster Grandparents have been in a school setting.

Tracking Children's Progress

The Foster Grandparent Program will use data to ensure that students are benefitting from the support of Foster Grandparents and for reporting purposes. Service sites will need to participate in providing this data to the program. Depending on the type of support provided by the Foster Grandparent, it may be reasonable to use one of the following measurement tools*:

- Acadience scores for Foster Grandparents supporting reading,
- RISE scores for Foster Grandparents supporting math, and
- Retrospective teacher survey for Foster Grandparents in mentoring roles.

**If the school has different measurement tools to track student performance and engagement, use of those can be discussed with the program manager.*

At the end of the program year, teachers will be provided with an End-of-Year Student Outcome Form that includes the names listed on the Foster Grandparent's Volunteer Assignment Plan. They will then help to provide the data necessary to demonstrate whether or not the student had improved academic performance or increased academic engagement.

Prohibited Activities

The Foster Grandparent Program is a federally funded program and as such has established prohibited activities. These include:

- Political activities: Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in partisan or nonpartisan activities during stipend service hours (i.e. electoral duties, voter registration, voter transportation to polls, lobbying, efforts to influence legislation);
- Religious activities: Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any form of proselyting, religious instruction or worship during stipend service hours;
- Non-displacement of employed workers: Volunteers may not perform any service or duty or engage in activity that would otherwise be performed by an employed worker or which would supplant the hiring or result in the displacement of employed workers.
- Fee-for-Service: Volunteers cannot receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, members of their family, or friends.

Program Station Forms

For Foster Grandparents to serve in a school or afterschool program, the following forms must be completed.

Memorandum of Understanding

This is a contract between UServeUtah's Foster Grandparent Program and each station or school district. This document outlines the responsibility of the station and the Foster Grandparent Program. Included in the document are any in-kind donations from the station and any performance measurements that will be tracked during the grant cycle. This form is signed by the appropriate individual responsible for contract signatures. It is negotiated every three years.

Volunteer Assignment Plan

Due upon placement of Foster Grandparent and annually (October) thereafter.

This form is to clarify the needs of the assigned children that will have their progress tracked, the activities assigned to the Foster Grandparent, and what will be accomplished throughout the year. The assignment plan must be approved and signed by the project staff on behalf of the sponsor, station representative, and the volunteer.

End-of-Year Student Outcome Form

In May there will be an end of year tracking form which will report on the progress made by students in terms of increased academic performance or academic engagement.

Volunteer Evaluation Form

This form is completed to assess each Foster Grandparent on their performance and is due annually in May. Station supervisors should fill out and return it to Foster Grandparent staff. The Foster Grandparent Program staff will meet with each volunteer who is not meeting expectations in June or July of each year and determine appropriate action to be taken.

Foster Grandparent Monthly Timesheets

Each Foster Grandparent receives a monthly timesheet to keep track of their hours and travel. All timesheets must be signed by the station supervisor or designee, attesting to the accuracy of the timesheet, and the Foster Grandparent before being submitted. The volunteer may round their service hours to the nearest quarter hour as necessary. Mileage and or meals at the station are also marked in the appropriate columns.

The Monthly Timesheet should be scanned and returned by email to the UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program by the 3rd of the following month.

Foster Grandparent Service

Appropriate Foster Grandparent Activities

Foster Grandparents must serve children who are struggling and have significant needs. Foster Grandparents serving in tutoring roles will support children who do not meet math or reading benchmarks at the beginning of the year. Foster Grandparents serving in mentoring roles will serve at-risk students who may be chronically absent, have behavior issues, or face other challenging circumstances.

Please ensure that the Foster Grandparent can spend time working one-on-one with the children on their Assignment Plan. It is necessary that the Foster Grandparent provides individual support in order for the volunteer to make an impact in the life of the child.

Appropriate activities for a Foster Grandparent may include:

- Tutoring children with literacy or English language learning needs;
- Tutoring children with math learning needs;
- Providing children with emotional support and assistance in developing basic learning skills;

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- Supporting students who may be chronically absent or tardy to school to develop the capacity needed to be present at school;
 - Helping abused or neglected children regain stability through contact with older adults and providing these children with emotional support and empathy;
 - Playing educational and skill building games;
 - Giving praise and positive reinforcement.

Inappropriate Foster Grandparent Activities

Some examples of inappropriate Foster Grandparent activities include:

- Classroom paperwork, such as making copies, grading, and other paperwork not associated with tutoring or mentoring;
- Substitute for or replace staff in routine duties;
- Being left unsupervised with children;
- Serving as staff aides or playground monitors;
- Sitting with a child to reduce behaviors or other special needs that are required to be provided by the school district due to the child's special needs or an IEP plan;
- Serving as a babysitter or being used to fulfill a student to teacher ratio;
- Disciplining or punishing the children in any way;
- Toileting of children;
- Giving religious instruction;
- Supervising other Foster Grandparents and tutors;
- Acting as substitute teachers, teacher's aides, group leaders or other similar positions that would detract from the person-to-person relationship;
- Foster Grandparents are not allowed to lobby, be involved in political or religious events while serving.

Expectations of the Foster Grandparent

- **Work under supervision:** Foster Grandparents must always serve under the supervision of a staff member at their volunteer station. They should never be solely in charge of the children. The intention is for Foster Grandparent to be the extra person, the one who has time to do things on a one-on-one basis, like reading stories aloud or getting to know a child individually.
- **Follow station/school rules:** Each volunteer station has its own policies about food handling, health practices, discipline, etc. It is the responsibility of each station to train the Foster Grandparents on site-specific policies.
- **Keep information about children and their families confidential:** Foster Grandparents should not discuss confidential information outside of the site or classroom to maintain privacy for the families. Foster Grandparents should never discuss a child's problems with other Foster Grandparents or staff members not directly responsible for that child and never in front of the child or other children.
- **Report any abuse:** Utah is a mandatory reporting state, and as such, any child abuse observed by Foster Grandparents must be reported to the appropriate authorities, site staff and the Foster Grandparent Program. Foster Grandparents should also report any evidence of possible abuse that they notice (e.g. a burn mark or a bruise on a child).

Accidents/Injury

All Foster Grandparents are covered with supplemental accident insurance through the UServeUtah Foster Grandparent Program. If you become aware that a Foster Grandparent is injured at your site during their work hours, please report the incident to UServeUtah AmeriCorps Seniors Office immediately. We will fill out an accident report and guide the Foster Grandparent through the process. If the Foster Grandparent needs to seek medical attention they need to go where their primary insurance is accepted. Our insurance will pick up any additional expenses not covered by Medicare or their private insurance carrier. Foster Grandparents should never go to a Work Med or a Workman's Comp healthcare facility.

Contacting Our Office

Central Office

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| Laura Huefner | Program Manager | lrhuefner@utah.gov |
| Hannah Cragun | Program Specialist | hannahcragun@gmail.com |

Carbon/Emery County

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Rich

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Summit/Wasatch

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| Wendy Carrigan | Program Coordinator | wcarrigan@utah.gov |
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Tooele

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| Amber Einerson | Program Coordinator | aeinerson@utah.gov |
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Appendices

- A. Volunteer Assignment Plan
- B. Volunteer Timesheet
- C. End of Year Student Outcome Form
- D. Volunteer Evaluation