



# Athens Community Council on Aging Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

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# SCSEP Host Agency Handbook Signature

Instructions: At the end of the orientation, please complete and return this page to the SCSEP Subproject Director or staff member.

Our agency, \_\_\_\_\_, has received the SCSEP Host Agency Handbook and the SCSEP program has provided an overview of this document.

This signature page verifies that we understand all the enclosed information and agree to abide by the SCSEP Host Agency Handbook.

Host Agency Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Employer Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Senior Community Service Employment Program Overview

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## **Senior Community Service Employment Program**

**Description** - The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provides paid work experience at non-profit and governmental agencies to low-income individuals age 55 plus. Participating agencies benefit from the supplemental work force provided by the program, while the trainees gain practical experience and training to enhance their marketability for private sector, unsubsidized employment.

**Geographic area served** – The SCSEP operates in twelve (12) counties within the Northeast Georgia Area. The counties are Clarke, Monroe, Oconee, Jackson, Barrow, Elbert, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oglethorpe and Walton. We have 37 training slots in the eight counties.

**Funding Sources** - The SCSEP Program is funded by the Older Americans' Act under Title V. The actual funds flow through the Department of Labor to states and national grantees.

## **The SCSEP Mission**

SCSEP is committed to improving the quality of life for low-income, financially eligible seniors by assigning them to temporary subsidized training and assisting them in their search for unsubsidized jobs within their community. This local SCSEP program is the steward of federal funds appropriated to recruit train and place eligible persons in subsidized employment training. 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 to the program is the partnerships we form with public and non-profit host agencies that provide a short-term training environment for each of our participants. In return, host agencies receive a temporary supplement to their existing staff at no cost to them. This partnership provides communities with millions of service hours annually that would not be otherwise available.

## **The Host Agency**

A qualifying SCSEP host agency is a public or non-profit organization which is not affiliated with any political party. A host agency is defined as “*a public agency or a private nonprofit organization exempt from taxation under the provisions of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, other than a political party, which provides a work site and supervision for one or more participants. A host agency may be a religious organization as long as the projects do not involve the construction, operation, or maintenance of any facility used or to be used as a place for religious instruction or worship.*” (Federal Register §641.140) An agency is not considered a host agency until it is certified by the subproject director.

The qualifying non-profit agency must provide evidence of their non-profit organizational status, **prior** to serving as a host agency. A current copy of the 501(c)(3) IRS letter, and a signed Host Agency Agreement must be on file prior to any SCSEP participant beginning his/her training at the site. **Note:** The Federal Regulations which govern the SCSEP state 501(c)(3) is the only acceptable proof of non-profit status. Any other organizations with IRS non-profit status, such as 501(c)(4), 501(c)(6), etc. are not permissible to be SCSEP host agencies.

It is important to understand the participant’s primary experience in SCSEP takes place at the host agency training site. A goal of SCSEP is to “promote useful part-time opportunities in community service activities” (Federal Register §641.120).

## **Benefits of Being a Host Agency**

SCSEP can provide your organization with the no-cost 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 enrollees train at their agency.

Upon enrollment, the SCSEP staff will assess the skills and abilities of each enrollee and determine the best training opportunity. This allows the staff to make the most appropriate assignment that will allow the enrollee to focus on those skills that will support his or her employment goals. It also 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 an enrollee assigned to your agency even though you have a signed agreement with the program for the program year.**

The SCSEP staff will monitor the enrollee's progress in the assignment and will assist you with evaluating the enrollee's performance. Because we are eager to have enrollees gain as much experience as possible during their short enrollment with the program, all enrollees 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 enrollees, already well versed in the mission of the agency, rather than starting over with untrained or unfamiliar job applicants.

### **What are the Responsibilities of a Host Agency?**

The responsibilities of a host agency are to:

- Provide orientation, supervision, instruction, and on-the-job training enabling each participant to achieve the IEP goals and timelines;
- Make a commitment to give consideration (consistent with other hiring requirements) to hiring the participant, if funds become available for a position with duties which are the same as, or similar to, those being performed by the participant.
- Support the goals of SCSEP to contribute to the general welfare of the community;
- Attend the SCSEP meetings, facilitated and conducted by the local SCSEP office staff, to ensure they have received all the SCSEP updates and to obtain information and to provide suggestions for program improvements or other program information;
- Work with the SCSEP director and participant, to create an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and establish a training schedule for the participant;
- Maintain open communication with the SCSEP director regarding the participant's training activities; and
- Help provide job leads to the participant, when available.

**Important Note:** The host agency **may not** fire, terminate, dismiss, and/or let-go of the SCSEP participant. If removal of the participant is desired, the host agency must submit a written request to the SCSEP staff stating the reason for the removal of the participant.

### **Annual Host Agency Agreement and Evaluation**

In order to ensure that the agency continues to provide viable training opportunities for SCSEP participants, the host agency's participation will be evaluated each program year. At that time the host agency representative will be asked to sign a new Host Agency Agreement indicating the continued support 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 unsubsidized employment, SCSEP may discontinue its agreement with the agency and participants will be re-assigned.

### **Maintenance of Effort**

SCSEP regulations state that the Work-Training Assignments provided by Host Agencies are to "*Create new and/or expand existing community services,*" only. These Community Service Assignments:

- must only be in addition to budgeted employment which would otherwise be funded by the host agency without assistance under Title V;
- should result in an increase in employment opportunities in addition to those which would otherwise be available;
- must not result in displacement of currently employed workers, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours on non-overtime work, wages, or employment benefits
- must not impair existing contracts for service or result in the substitution of these federal funds for
- other funds in connection with work that would otherwise be performed;
- shall not substitute work-training assignments for existing federally-assisted jobs;
- shall not assign or continue to assign a Participant to perform duties which are the same or substantially the same as that performed by any other person who is on layoff.

Should any Host Agency, due to funding changes, lay-off paid staff, all SCSEP Participants assigned to said Host Agency must be transferred to another Work-Training Assignment. SCSEP Participants may not be assigned to that Agency for

two years after lay-off have occurred. Any such use of the SCSEP funds is considered Maintenance of Effort.

### **U.S. Department of Labor Surveys**

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) conducts an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey of randomly selected SCSEP host agencies and participants. If your agency is selected, it is appreciated if the survey is completed promptly. Once completed by the host agency, the survey is returned to a third party contractor (via a postage-paid envelope provided) that will compile the survey results for the DOL.

The responses will be shared with the Georgia Department of Human Resources Division of Aging Services' Senior Community Service Employment Program and the local SCSEP office for review and input in addressing program improvements and identifying best practices.

### **Monitoring the Host Agency**

SCSEP staff will monitor the host agencies on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, depending on the need. Monitoring on a regular basis assures:

- Compliance with the SCSEP policy and procedures,
- Compliance with the Host Agency Handbook,
- The host agency is adhering to the agreement,
- There are no safety issues,
- The participant and supervisor are abiding by the IEP,
- Everyone involved are satisfied with the program, and
- There is an open dialogue to resolve issues that might arise.

The monitoring observations and/or findings will be documented and included in the host agency file and the participant file, if applicable.

The monitoring visit consists of, but is not limited to:

Checking for safety condition such as, but not limited to:

- No wires and/or electrical cords on the floor,
- No file cabinets drawers open in a walking area,
- No ladders, water buckets, mops, brooms, etc. in work area (unless designated),

Interviewing the host agency supervisor to:

- Discuss possibility of hiring the participant;
- Discuss how they are helping the participant find a job (time off for interviews, etc.);
- Determine whether the supervisor has suggestions for changes and/or enhancements, including the possibility of placing the participant in a more responsible training assignment or providing additional training;
- Assure compliance with Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements, non-discrimination requirements, and safe and healthful training conditions requirements; and
- Determine whether the host agency supervisor is satisfied with the work being performed by the participant.

Interviewing the participant to:

- Assure that the participant is knowledgeable of his/her training assignment as set forth in his/her IEP;
- Assess the participant's satisfaction with his/her job assignment;
- Determine whether the participant is training extra hours or volunteering at the host site;
- Discuss any problems or complaints the participant may have;
- Discuss suggestions for change or program improvements, including possibility of other training;

- Assure that the participant understands the time limit of the assignment (if applicable), and the payroll procedures; and
- Review the efforts of the participant to obtain unsubsidized employment.

Review the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and Community Service Assignment (CSA) to:

- Verify that their duties and tasks are the same as those described in the current written IEP;
- Confirm that the scheduled hours of training, as set forth on the CSA and approved by the SCSEP, are being adhere to; and
- Assure that the participant is not volunteering at the host agency.

### **The Participant's Host Agency Supervisor**

You have been identified as the host agency representative that will be directly supervising the participant(s) assigned to the agency. The local SCSEP staff will seek your input in determining what training opportunities might be available at your agency, and will work with you to develop a training plan for the position(s). This training plan is called an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and is referred to as the IEP. The IEP is a form we use to list the tasks the participant is to be trained in at your site. This document is developed and agreed upon by the participant, the SCSEP staff, and you, the host agency supervisor.

**Note: *The participant can only perform those tasks listed on the IEP. Should you need to add to, or take away from, the IEP please contact SCSEP staff.***

SCSEP asks the supervisor to sign the *Community Service Assignment* form which states the host agency's information, as well as the participant's training schedule. Furthermore, it is important you ensure the accuracy of the participant's timesheet by signing each timesheet and submitting in a timely basis.

The role of the supervisor is to:

- Provide Task orientation,
- Provide on-the-job training,

- Provide skill and personal development assistance based on the participant's IEP,
- Provide encouragement for job search,
- Provide job leads,
- Evaluate the participant's progress,
- Supervise the participant's training activities,
- Participate with the SCSEP staff in upgrading the tasks of the participant, and
- Attend the SCSEP Host Agency meetings

The host agency supervisor is a partner with the local SCSEP staff in monitoring the participant's progress. Communication with the SCSEP staff is essential in helping the participant reach his/her goals. Any problems, challenges, praise, suggestions, and/or ideas for improving both the program, as well as the participant's road to successful unsubsidized employment should be communicated to the SCSEP staff.

### **Participants are NOT the Host Agency's Employee**

It is important to remember this is a training program for the participant to obtain, or enhance, his/her workforce skills with the goal of obtaining unsubsidized employment. This is by no means an employment exchange program. Should there be an issue where the removal of the participant is required; the supervisor must contact the SCSEP staff to make the arrangements. The host agency may not fire, terminate, dismiss, and/or let-go of the participant.

It is recommended to keep the lines of communication open at all times. Even if you may think the "incident" is minor, it is recommended to call or email the SCSEP staff. It is always best to deal with the SCSEP staff regarding the participant.

Here are some examples of incidents where you should contact the SCSEP staff:

- When the participant calls-in unable to report to training;

- When it appears the participant is having problems arriving on time;
- When there is an insubordinate situation;
- When a change to the participant's schedule, and/or tasks, is needed;
- When there is a breach of confidence;
- When the participant gets hurt;
- When the participant is going through hardships that are affecting his/her performance; and/or
- When the participant has learned all the tasks listed on the IEP.

### **Hiring the Participant**

Many host agency supervisors have found that as permanent jobs become available at the agency, they may be able to fill the positions with the trained SCSEP participant who is already well versed in the mission of the agency, rather than starting with untrained job applicants.

### **Participants May NOT Volunteer**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) prohibits individuals, under certain circumstances, from volunteering for extra hours of service with a public agency if they are employed at the same agency. Section Three of the FLSA does not permit an individual to perform volunteer service for a public agency when such service involves the similar, or identical, service that the individual is employed to perform for the same public agency.

### **Host Agency "Paying" the Participant**

The host agency **may not** pay participants for "training" extra hours at their community service assignment. This includes the act of an employee of the host agency staff "giving" money to the participant out of his/her personal funds. This is **NOT ALLOWED**. Host agencies are encouraged to hire participants and not supplement their SCSEP wages. If this is happening, and the host agency will not hire the participant, the participant will be rotated and the organization will be reconsidered as a host agency.

If the host agency would like to show its appreciation to the participant for his/her efforts in training, the host agency may do so, but may not give him/her money (cash or otherwise). This practice is unacceptable to DOL.

### **Meetings and Workshops**

SCSEP will hold periodic (or monthly) meetings/workshops to provide training or information on job search, employment trends and opportunities or information relevant to older workers.

Participant's attendance at the scheduled meetings/workshops is mandatory. On these days, the participant(s) will not be reporting to the host agency but rather to the location of the meeting/workshop. The participants are paid as if they had reported to their host agency.

### **Rotation of Participant**

The length of time at a host agency assignment is based on the participant's IEP. **SCSEP is a participant centered program, thus host agencies do not "own slots" or have "openings" to be filled by participants. Shorter times at host agencies can result in more hires.**

The SCSEP allows for rotation of community service assignments based on the IEP. It is recommended that the participant be rotated every 6 - 12 months when possible and/or when it enhances the participant's IEP goals. Rotation of a participant's assignments allows for greater opportunities in obtaining his/her employment goals. If the participant has completed the training and is not being considered for hire by the host agency, the participant is a candidate for rotation. The rotation process encourages unsubsidized employment in two (2) ways; first, it encourages host agencies to hire qualified participants; and second, it motivates participants, who have become too comfortable in their position and neglect their job search responsibilities, to seek unsubsidized employment.

It is most important to understand, and to instill in the participant, that the training they are receiving at the host agency site is a training to become employed. This employment may be with the host agency, or outside the agency.

Notice of reassignment will be provided to the Participant and will include changes to the IEP. As such, the Participant should fully participate in the IEP changes and be fully aware of impacts to work-training assignments. Notification of pending changes will be provided to both the work-training site and the Participant 30-days in advance whenever possible. Changes in program funding or the status of a work training site may require immediate reassignment.

## **Host Agency Orientation**

The Host Agency Supervisor will provide an orientation for all Participants upon their first day of Work-Training. This orientation will include, but not limited to:

- information on the Agency background and purpose,
- the services it provides to the community,
- the location(s) and use of fire extinguishers and alarms,
- the posted designated route(s) of escape in the event of a fire,
- a review of all other severe weather and disaster action plans.

## **The Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**

The SCSEP staff, along with the host agency supervisor, and the participant, will develop a training plan that documents the tasks of the participant. This plan also includes the signed commitment of the participant and of the host agency; plus the signed approval of SCSEP staff.

**Note: The participant may not be asked to perform any duties, or assignments, not indicated on his/her IEP. Furthermore, the IEP may not contain “and all other duties as assigned” or any similar phrases. Only those duties that will offer the participant an opportunity to master the skills needed for a permanent unsubsidized employment may be listed on the IEP.**

The IEP documents the tasks for each participant’s training assignment, and is made part of their permanent file. The following information is needed for each Individual Employment Plan (IEP):

- The training assignment title – needs to reflect the duties and responsibilities involved;
- The name of the host agency site;
- The name and title of the supervisor;
- The start date of the participant with the host agency;
- A list of duties (tasks) the participant is expected to perform (similar to a job description);

- The signed commitments from the participant and the host agency; and
- The signed approval of the SCSEP office.

The following signatures are required on the IEP form indicating everyone agrees with the duties and responsibilities of the host agency and the participant:

- The participant;
- The participant's host agency supervisor; and
- The local SCSEP Director or designee.

Each time the duties change, the IEP must be revised, signed, and dated.

### **Limitations on Training Sites**

Participants may not participate in a community service assignment where training involves:

1. The construction, operation, or maintenance of any facility used or to be used as a place of sectarian religious instruction or worship;
2. Training which primarily benefits private, profit-making organizations; and/or
3. Training which benefits directly, or indirectly any private, or personal undertaking of any executive, or member of the staff of the sub-grantee, or of any host agency;
4. Training at the participant's place of residence (such as, home, shelter, dorm, etc);
5. Participant's cannot open and close host agency facilities, without the physical presence of the host agency supervisor, or other host agency employee;
6. Training at the participant's place of worship/study/club, etc.

### **Participant Evaluations**

The host agency supervisor will be asked to assist in the evaluation of the participant's work performance, and provide comments on areas in which he/she is performing well, and guidance in areas for improvement. This will enhance the participant's performance, as this feedback will permit the participant, and the SCSEP staff to note the skills that need further development and are necessary to obtain and keep a permanent job. When it is time for the evaluation to be completed, the host agency supervisor will be contacted via phone, email, or personal visit. The Participant Evaluation is conducted every six (6) months.

### **Safety and Accident Information**

SCSEP holds the safety, welfare, and health of its staff and the SCSEP participants in the highest regard. No task is so urgent that it cannot be done safely. At the host agency the participant should be provided with a safety orientation, which should include all the proper information and tools needed in the training environment to safely perform his/her assigned tasks. The host agency is responsible for providing a safe environment for the participant(s). By participating as a host agency, the organization is agreeing to exercise maximum care and good judgment in preventing accidents.

### **Workers' Compensation**

Participants are covered under the SCSEP workers' compensation insurance policy during training hours while performing the assigned tasks identified in their IEP. To ensure continued coverage, it is very important that any changes to the duties or scheduled hours of the participant be reported to the SCSEP staff immediately. If a participant begins to receive workers' compensation, he/she may be put on a No Pay status, however, will not be terminated from the program.

Worker's comp claims are directly related to the workplace environment and safety procedures /practices. SCSEP expects the host agency to maintain high safety standards and to closely monitor the participant's activities that may cause them to be injured. Repeated accidents that are related to inadequate host agency safety practices and supervision could result in the removal of participants from the site and termination of the agreement.

### **Injury Reporting**

#### **Participant Injury Policy & Procedures**

All participants' injuries arising out of, or in the course of training, no matter how small, must be reported to the host agency supervisor immediately. If the injury requires immediate medical attention, the host agency supervisor must assist the

participant in obtaining emergency medical treatment. If the injury is not considered an emergency, the participant should seek medical attention from an approved ACCA Workers Compensation physician or local medical clinic.

The host agency must notify the SCSEP staff the same day the injury occurs. The host agency supervisor will then complete a participant incident/injury form and fax it to the SCSEP office.

The SCSEP staff will complete and submit the required claim forms to the workers' compensation insurance carrier.

With injuries resulting in lost time, participants must not return to their assignment without a physician's written release.

### **Timesheets**

All participants are paid for training time at their host agencies or other training assignments scheduled by the SCSEP staff. The host agency supervisor is responsible for accurately recording hours of training each day of the participant's training assignment.

SCSEP staff will provide the host agency supervisors with a participant timesheets. Timesheets are due to the SCSEP office the second Monday of the pay period no later than 12:00 p.m.

If an error is made in recording training hours on a participant's time sheet, corrections should be made by drawing a single line through the error and indicate the correct information. The host agency supervisor and the participant should initial and date each change made to the timesheet. **Correction fluid should not be used to correct timesheets.**

The participant will be assigned to train at the host agency for an agreed number of hours per week, which is usually five (5) days per week. These hours may fluctuate throughout the program year due to many variables that govern the budget of SCSEP.

SCSEP staff approves all training hours before the participant starts training.

The participant may not train for less than the agreed number of hours per week without the approval of SCSEP staff.

Any SCSEP meetings/workshops will take the place of the host agency training hours.

If the participant trains eight (8) hours in one day the participant is required to take a 30 minute to 1 hour unpaid meal break. Time spent on meal breaks are not to be included in the total training hours for the day.

The participant may not be asked to train additional hours, or to perform other duties not listed in his/her IEP, without approval from the SCSEP staff.

SCSEP does not authorize payment for overtime, or comp time.

The participant may not volunteer time at the host agency. If this happens, the host agency will be in strict violation of the SCSEP policy and the participant will be removed from the host agency and may be terminated from the program.

### **Holidays**

Enrollees will not receive holiday or sick leave pay. Holiday hours may be made up as long as they are made up in the same pay period.

### **Additional Program Information and Policies**

Each participant has an IEP with goals and action steps to determine the path to unsubsidized employment. The IEP is the participant's plan towards unsubsidized employment. The participants are required to contribute fully in formation, and actively strive to meet all time frames and goals established in the plan.

SCSEP has an IEP-Related Exit Policy. The policy ensures conformity to the participant's IEP. Failure to comply with the IEP process may be cause for corrective action and, as a last resort, the participant's exit from the SCSEP. Repeated refusal by the participant to perform specific actions as agreed to in the IEP may result in his/her exit from the program.

The participant must comply with the contents of his/her IEP. If the participant is unwilling to comply with his/her IEP he/she will be issued a corrective action notice to comply with the IEP within 30 days. If after the 30 day timeframe the participant does not comply, he/she will be exited from the program.

Some types of behavior that might obstruct the fulfillment of the IEP include unwillingness or refusal to:

- Report to a job interview
- Register with the Department of Labor
- Participate in job search activities
- Comply with IEP
- Accept a job offer
- Accept a new host agency assignment

It is imperative that all SCSEP participants take the IEP seriously and participate fully in development and attainment of the employment goals.

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

If a disciplinary problem arises with a participant, the host agency supervisor should contact the SCSEP staff immediately. Host agency personnel can request the removal of a participant but cannot fire, terminate, or dismiss the participant from the program. The SCSEP director has **sole authorization** for enrolling and exiting a SCSEP participant.

The SCSEP staff will attempt to resolve any conflicts.

If a resolution cannot be reached, the SCSEP staff may arrange for transfer of the participant to another host agency.

The SCSEP staff will request a letter citing reason(s) why a transfer is being requested from the host agency supervisor.

### **The Grievance Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedures**

The Grievance Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedures exist to provide participants mediation for problems encountered at host agencies or with SCSEP. A copy of the Grievance Policy and Complaint Resolution Procedures is provided in the SCSEP Participant Handbook.

### **Political Activity**

Participants may not participate in partisan or non-partisan political activities during hours for pay by SCSEP.

### **Questions, Issues, and Concerns**

All information contained in this handbook is subject to change without notice, as a result of legislation or changes from the U.S. Department of Labor, or SCSEP

policies and procedures. SCSEP staff will make every attempt to keep participant and host agencies informed of policy changes.

If you have any questions, issues, and/or concerns about SCSEP contact the SCSEP office. We strive to make your time and involvement with SCSEP a productive and beneficial one with the outcome of placing seniors in unsubsidized employment.

### **One-Stop Registration**

Participants in SCSEP are required to register at the Local County One-Stop office for employment services immediately upon enrollment in SCSEP and as stated in the IEP. In addition, Participants are required to update their enrollment a minimum of every 120 days to remain active in the Job Matching System while in the SCSEP and/or until unsubsidized employment is secured.

### **Obligation to Find Employment**

*SCSEP Participants are required to seek employment as a condition of participation in SCSEP, and each IEP specifies the agreed upon steps to be taken in this pursuit.*

Failure to meet the obligation to seek and find employment will result in exit from the SCSEP Program. The following activities are required:

- Attendance at meetings and trainings as agreed;
- Rotational assignments (work-training sites) as applicable to meet the goals of the IEP;
- Commitment to employment – applying for jobs, using available resources to identify opportunities, participating in job

### **Referral of SCSEP Candidates**

Host Agencies are encouraged to refer candidates that appear to meet the requirements of SCSEP to the local Project Director. However, the enrollment, assignment of Participants to Work-Training Sites, transfers and exits are the sole responsibility of the Project Director in concert with the Participant's IEP.

### **Supervision at the Work-Training Assignment**

The Host Agency must provide adequate supervision for Participants. If the assigned Supervisor is not on hand, there must always be a back up staff person present. *No Participant should be the only representative on the premises at any Host Agency.*