



VOLUNTEERING WITH SHIBA HELPLINE
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About SHIBA HelpLine Volunteers

Mission Statement

The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) HelpLine provides free, unbiased information about health care coverage and access to help improve the lives of all Washington state residents. We cultivate community commitment through partnership, service, and volunteering.

Who we are

- A free and unbiased health care access and information resource
- An information and counseling service for evaluating, planning, and using health insurance and public health programs.

SHIBA History

- In operation since 1979
- Started by a volunteer in Skagit County
- The first program of its kind in the nation
- Recognized nationally as a model for health insurance consumer counseling
- Inspired federal funding to create State Health Insurance Programs (SHIPs) in all states
- Approximately 400 volunteers statewide
- Twenty-two local sponsoring agencies representing all 39 Washington counties

SHIBA Helpline provides information via volunteers who are not professionals but are trained by the Washington State Insurance Commissioner's Office and are acting in good faith, without selling, recommending or endorsing any specific insurance product, agent or company.

The SHIBA HelpLine offers volunteers many rewarding ways to contribute to the community and assist folks with all kinds of health insurance problems. You learn a lot, make a big difference, and get recognized for it!

Benefits of Volunteering

- Contribute to making Washington healthier
- Enroll in volunteer training programs, special events, and skill building workshops as offered
- Gain skills, improve knowledge of Medicare, health insurance, prescription drugs and other resources for you, your family and your community
- Socialize with other people who care

Volunteer Screening and Selection Process

SHIBA Helpline staff and sponsors seek volunteers whose skills, abilities, and personal goals are compatible with the goals and mission of our program. Minors (under age 18) may volunteer parental consent. They will be assigned appropriate duties and supervision in light of their individual maturity levels.

All individuals applying to become volunteers must complete the following:

- Volunteer application
- Washington State Patrol background check (starting July 2007)
- Screening and selection process that includes an interview with the sponsor
- Three references of former or current supervisors of employment, volunteer activities or other credible sources.
- Training appropriate to their chosen role
- Current and future reporting and other requirements

At any time during this process, the potential volunteer, sponsor, and/or OIC staff have the right to decide if the SHIBA HelpLine is the right fit for the volunteer applicant.

To volunteer for SHIBA HelpLine call **1 (800) 562-6900** for your nearest SHIBA HelpLine location.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

Depending on your skills, interests, talents, and experience, you may choose the most suitable and enjoyable role.

ADMINISTRATIVE, CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

This type of volunteer assists the local sponsor with on-site management. Work may include:

- Data entry / recordkeeping / tabulating reports
- Reporting
- Planning
- Scheduling meetings, trainings, community events
- Preparing mailings
- Distributing materials
- Providing computer expertise

Computer-literate volunteers may assist and train other volunteers, and help clients take advantage of on-line resources. Many SHIBA HelpLine materials and information are available on the Web or by e-mail.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION/PUBLIC SPEAKING

A volunteer in this capacity uses public speaking abilities and educator skills to present specific health insurance topics to community associations, clubs, agencies, and other groups. If desired, a volunteer can train to be a speaker on a specific topic.

OUTREACH

Outreach volunteers participate in activities to present basic information about SHIBA HelpLine to the community and raise awareness of SHIBA services.

A volunteer in this capacity:

- Represents SHIBA HelpLine at public events
- Distributes brochures
- Helps recruit other volunteers

COUNSELOR

Volunteers serving in this role counsel people one-on-one (either in person, by phone or by e-mail). They are trained to deal with a wide range of basic issues related to individual and group health insurance, government health benefits, health care access, and prescriptions.

Counselors may help:

- Assess coverage needs
- Compare policies and programs
- Discuss pros and cons of available options
- Analyze costs

SPECIAL PROJECTS

These volunteers help out where needed.