



SHIBA program operations manual

Operational policies and procedures for SHIBA
volunteer coordinators, sponsors and OIC staff

Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)

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This manual may be found on [My SHIBA](#).

Submit comments to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.

A [resource list](#) for SHIBA policies and procedures is located at the back of this manual.

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"If I had an hour to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and five minutes about solutions."

— **Albert Einstein**

"Everyone has an invisible sign around their neck saying, "Make me feel important." Never forget this message when working with people."

— **Mary Kay Ash**

"Plans are nothing. Planning is everything."

— **Dwight Eisenhower**

"Successful teams adapt their workflow, while weak teams gripe about how difficult the process is."

— **Unknown**

"Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

— **Will Rogers**

"The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn but to unlearn."

— **Gloria Steinem**

Introduction

Program overview

Program operations manual

The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) Program Operations Manual provides standardized processes and procedures to support the SHIBA mission and Office of the Insurance Commissioner's policies and procedures. The intended audiences are SHIBA volunteer coordinators, sponsors, staff and partners.

SHIBA's mission

SHIBA 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.

SHIBA's scope

SHIBA expects all volunteer coordinators to act within the parameters of the SHIBA [program operations manual](#), [volunteer handbook](#), [path to certification](#) and [VRPM policies](#).

SHIBA provides unbiased and confidential services. It's important that SHIBA volunteers, volunteer coordinators (VCs), sponsors and staff provide the same level of service across the state to ALL clients and to work within the SHIBA program's service scope. As a SHIBA VC, you need to know when a topic or question is outside of your expertise, when to ask for help for questions you cannot answer and when to refer a client to a colleague or another agency.

SHIBA:

- Helps people **navigate** Medicare and understand their coverage options.
- Sends people with problems to the right place to get help.
- Helps people be their own best advocate.
- Screens and refers people to apply for programs such as:
 - Medicaid

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- Medicare Savings Program (MSP)
- Extra Help

Unless specifically stated, volunteer policies apply to all volunteers in all SHIBA programs and projects. This includes volunteer involvement that's organized and managed by sponsor organizations. (VRPM policy 1.2)

See the SHIBA volunteer handbook on [My SHIBA](#) for more information on SHIBA's scope and duties within and outside a volunteer's scope. VCs need to be familiar with SHIBA's scope and volunteer responsibilities.

Senior Medicare Patrol's (SMP's) mission

The SHIBA program is the state's Senior Medicare Patrol funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging. As the Washington state SMP, SHIBA empowers and assists Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, errors and abuse. While not all SHIBA sponsors are specifically funded to do SMP outreach, all SHIBA volunteers are engaged in the work of educating people about detecting and reporting Medicare fraud. The work is in three main areas:

1. **Conduct outreach and education.** SMPs give presentations to groups, exhibit at events and work one-on-one with Medicare beneficiaries.
2. **Engage volunteers.** Protecting older persons' health, finances and medical identities while saving precious Medicare dollars is a cause that attracts civic-minded Americans.
3. **Receive beneficiary complaints.** When Medicare beneficiaries, caregivers and family members bring their complaints to the SMP, the SMP makes a determination about whether or not fraud, errors or abuse is suspected. When fraud or abuse is suspected, they make referrals to the appropriate state and federal agencies for further investigation.

Introduction

Volunteer Risk Program Management (VRPM) policies and working with the Administration for Community Living (ACL)

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) rely on volunteers to serve Medicare beneficiaries within their states and territories. Without sound volunteer policies, there are inherent risks to the SMPs and SHIPs in recruiting and working with these volunteers. With that in mind, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has developed a set of Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) policies, which are described in this document.

These volunteer policies are designed to establish and organize the structure and operation of volunteer programs within the SMP/SHIP. They describe the governing principles and values that shape and guide volunteer involvement, set expectations regarding the management of volunteer programs, delineate core expectations of SHIBA volunteers and broadly describe what volunteers may expect from the SHIBA.

The purpose of these volunteer policies is to enhance the quality, effectiveness and safety of SHIBA services through the provision of guidance and direction to SHIBA management. They do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement.

The volunteer policies are consistent with, and support the missions of, the SMP and SHIP programs, fostering the ethical, productive and rewarding engagement of volunteers in SHIBA services.

ACL reserves the exclusive right to change any aspect of these volunteer policies at any time and so expects the SHIBA program, and its volunteers and partners who serve at SHIBA sponsor locations, to follow the policies.

The SHIBA program manager must request—in writing in advance—any changes or exceptions to the national SMP/SHIP volunteer policies, which only the ACL can grant. (VRPM policy 1.5)

It's the SHIBA staff and volunteer's responsibility to seek clarification about policies, as needed. Not understanding a policy is not an acceptable reason for failing to comply. (VRPM policy 3.87)

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You can find complete policy language on [My SHIBA](#). We will post any occasional policy language updates there. For questions, please ask a SHIBA staff person.

The complete text of all VRPM policies is available for review in the [VRPM policy manual](#) located on [My SHIBA](#).

Section 1 – Volunteer coordinator (VC) role

Job overview

Volunteer coordination is a skilled and complex job that requires general management and human resource management skills. The volunteer coordinator (VC) also needs to be someone with strong interpersonal skills, motivational techniques, and the ability to oversee a wide range of activities and roles. Every three years, the VC, along with other SHIBA staff, conducts a risk assessment on the roles, work and activities of SHIBA volunteers. Terms of this assessment are under development. (VRPM policy 2.1)

Also assessed regularly in connection with risk are:

- Training and qualification procedures.
- Volunteer performance management.
- Volunteer program management processes and activities.
- Volunteer worksite(s).

Risk management strategies are implemented as needed, including local-level procedures that identify, prevent and reduce the incidence and impact of risk.

SHIBA has at least one staff person with designated responsibility for coordinating and managing the involvement of volunteers. As required by program or budgetary limitations, this role may be shared among staff. (VRPM policy 3.7)

The SHIBA program will create an annual budget for volunteer management with input from the VCs. (VRPM policy 3.8)

VC job description

Sample description:

Reports to:	Sponsor program manager or executive director.
Position located:	At assigned sponsor site.
Number of hours worked:	Determined by sponsor (should align with SHIBA sponsor contract).

Job summary

SHIBA is a program of the Washington state Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) that provides information on health insurance to Washington state consumers. This position coordinates service delivery through a multi-site network of trained volunteers who provide one-on-one counseling to consumers in person, by phone, online meetings, email and through public presentations. This position coordinates the activities of its local community volunteers and is responsible for building community partnerships.

Primary duties/responsibilities

SHIBA provides an orientation to working with volunteers to all VCs. (VRPM policy 3.120) VCs are responsible for oversight of the SHIBA volunteer program. Duties include:

- Volunteer recruitment (to efficiently meet counseling needs in contracted areas)
- Volunteer screening
- Volunteer orientation
- Volunteer coaching and mentoring (per the path to SHIBA certification)
- Volunteer placement
- Volunteer recognition
- Volunteer supervision
- Volunteer performance evaluation
- Supporting and growing the network of satellite locations for volunteer counseling (partnership development)
- Acting as a liaison between OIC, community partners and volunteers.
- Partnership development

Section 1: VC role – Job overview

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- Tracking and reporting program data into STARS (SHIP Tracking and Reporting System)
- Program evaluation – both qualitative and quantitative
- Develop and implement an outreach plan
- Timely report generation and submittal to OIC

Desired qualities/skills

- Computer literacy
- Ability to coordinate and facilitate webinars
- Ability to work flexible hours (some evening and weekend work required)
- Ability to multi-task
- Ability to communicate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds
- Ability to communicate effective both verbally and in writing
- Professional presence
- Team management experience and/or volunteer management experience
- Outreach and public relations experience
- Delegation skills
- Tact and diplomacy

Position requirements

- Identify program priorities and establish a work plan.
- Keep appropriate volunteer records and track volunteer activities.
- Identify resources that increase effective volunteer programs.
- Attend all appropriate trainings and meetings.

Desired education

- Bachelor's degree with two years professional experience.
- Previous volunteer management experience (can substitute year for year of education).
- Knowledge of health insurance and health care marketplace helpful but not required.

Salary

Determined by sponsor.

Lines of communication

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate memos, materials and meetings relevant to their work assignments. To ensure volunteers receive this information, VCs should include volunteers on all distribution schedules and assign volunteers a site or mailbox so they can retrieve information distributed in their absence. VCs have the primary responsibility to ensure volunteers receive such information.

Lines of communication should operate in both directions and should exist both formally and informally. When possible, VCs should consult with volunteers about decisions that would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

Requests from paid staff for volunteer assistance are communicated to the VCs by interested staff. The VC recruits and places volunteers only in settings where staff are clearly supportive of volunteer involvement and are willing to work together to provide support for volunteer participation. (VRPM policy 3.17)

Supervision and performance management

Each SHIBA volunteer must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct volunteer management. This supervisor is responsible for day-to-day management and guiding the volunteer's work, and is available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance when necessary.

The VC may act as the supervisor, but may also delegate that duty to another volunteer or staff person. The VC, however, is solely responsible for the effective management and deployment of the volunteer program overall that promotes the SHIBA mission in a positive manner.

Performance documentation should be kept in the volunteer's personnel file which is viewable by request of the volunteer.

VCs should be familiar with the [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), SMP [performance management resources](#) and the following [VRPM](#) policies:

- Volunteers assignments (VRPM policies 3.5, 3.16, 3.59, 3.72)
- Supervision and support (VRPM policies 3.67, 3.68, 3.69)

- Performance management in day-to-day work (VRPM policies 3.15, 3.64, 3.65, 3.66, 3.68, 3.76) and SMP [performance management resources](#)
- Identified supervisor (VRPM policy 3.70)
- Periodic evaluations (VRPM policy 3.73, 3.74)
- Communicating with SHIBA management (VRPM policy 3.75)
- Corrective action protocol (VRPM policies 3.76, 3.77, 3.78, 3.81)
- Departing from SHIBA (VRPM policies 3.79, 3.80)
- Relationships with clients (VRPM policies 3.104, 3.105)

Grievances and complaints

Volunteers with complaints or grievances with staff, other volunteers, clients or partner organizations must communicate these to their supervisor. If the complaint involves the volunteer's own supervisor, the volunteer conveys the complaint to the next person in the chain of command at SHIBA, typically the VC. All complaints will be treated as confidential. (VRPM policy 3.82)

SHIBA investigates and resolves complaints from clients and other outside parties against volunteers. (VRPM policy 3.83)

Use your agency's form, or contact SHIBA for guidance on how to proceed (or search [My SHIBA](#) for "grievance" or "complaint").

Basic and continuing education trainings attendance

The role of the VC is to encourage and facilitate volunteer attendance in monthly SHIBA continuing education trainings.

The VC is an active partner with their SHIBA regional training consultant (RTC) at all continuing education trainings and basic trainings. You must be present at all these events. VCs are responsible for:

- Obtaining and setting up the training room.
- Making sure appropriate meals or snacks are available for volunteers.
- Adding local informational updates to training materials and sessions.
- Coordinating with local volunteer teams to ensure timely and accurate information is delivered.

Confidentiality

SHIBA volunteers and staff are responsible for protecting private information. You must not disclose to unauthorized people any confidential information you acquire through official duties. You must not use such information for personal gain or benefit, or for the gain or benefit of others.

Feel free to ask for help before you release any personal information. It's always better to ask for help beforehand than to make a mistake.

If you accidentally release confidential material to an unauthorized person or entity, you must promptly attempt to correct the situation. If you think you may have released something inappropriately, ***immediately inform your supervisor***. Your supervisor may contact, or ask you to contact, the receiving person or organization. You or your supervisor must request the receiving person or organization to return the released material and agree not to use or re-release the information. Most likely, the receiving person or organization will promptly agree.

SHIBA staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Maintaining the confidentiality of all sensitive, confidential, proprietary or privileged information.
- Taking all the necessary steps to safeguard the confidentiality of all SHIBA- and client-related information, and to prevent personal client information from falling into the possession of unauthorized people.
- Ensuring they do not disclose any information you collect or obtain through their SHIBA work other than when it's clearly approved by an authorized SHIBA representative. There is zero tolerance for breaching confidentiality in connection with any SHIBA work. (VRPM policy 3.94)
- Immediately notifying their supervisor if you misplace, lose or if someone stole information, files or data so SHIBA can appropriately notify the affected clients and authorities, and can institute the appropriate future safeguards. (VRPM Policies 3.94, 4.3)

Confidentiality training

Volunteers are required to complete annual confidentiality training and an annual re-attestation of the confidentiality agreement regarding Unique IDs.

Community outreach

The VC is responsible for ensuring volunteers successfully implement a community outreach plan. The plan should include the activities that the local volunteer team will undertake to raise awareness that the SHIBA program exists both as a community resource for health insurance and health care access questions and also as a rewarding place to volunteer. See [Section 2: Outreach](#) for more information.

Partnership development

Sponsor success depends upon positive working relationships with a wide range of partners in the communities they serve. Partners vital for SHIBA success include health clinics, faith communities, pharmacies, libraries, language-specific groups, aging services, media outlets, disabilities organizations, Rotary and Lions clubs, senior services agencies, home health agencies, community colleges, recreational, arts organizations and caregiver programs, etc. *All sites SHIBA uses must be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.*

The VC, in consultation with the RTC, creates a local partnership development plan. Gaps in services to people in specific locations, people groups, hobbies, retiree groups, income, languages, etc., should inform the development of strategic partnerships. The plan describes which partnerships could be developed, for what purpose and who will take the lead on contacting the organization, building a trusting relationship and negotiating an agreement.

SHIBA's developed a template Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is used to document the purpose, specific roles and contact information for partnerships. Two original signed copies of the MOU are signed by all parties and sent to the SHIBA program manager. Once all originals are signed, SHIBA will send a copy to each signing partner and a copy to the local SHIBA RTC. If you're working on a formal partnership that requires an MOU, contact the SHIBA contracts coordinator.

You must use an MOU for partnerships that involve:

- Data sharing.
- The OIC committing time, resources or additional support.
- The partner providing something on a consistent basis (such as use of a confidential workstation each week).
- Any in-kind agency that promises to do STARS data entry.

Positive partnerships are essential in leveraging collaborative efforts and resources that promote one-on-one SHIBA counseling, volunteer recruitment and group and media outreach. Partnerships often evolve from a person-to-person meeting and develop into a mutually beneficial collaboration.

SHIBA networking meetings and annual conference

VC group (phone, video or online) meetings are held quarterly. Topics covered include program updates, new program initiatives, grants, policies and procedures with time for questions and feedback. Key issues are addressed, so it's critical that either the VC, sponsor staff or their designee participate in each call.

SHIBA may host an annual statewide conference for staff, sponsors and appropriate volunteers contingent on the availability of funding. The conference is a required meeting for VCs and an opportunity to network, learn about other programs and receive professional training. The OIC/SHIBA pays the costs of travel, meals and accommodations for eligible participants via reimbursement in accordance with state per diem, OIC policies/regulations and project determinations.

As a best practice, regional sponsor groups may meet on a regular basis to coordinate basic training schedules, share best practices and give input. The SHIBA RTC can provide information about meeting dates, times and sites.

Reference:

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 2 – Building effective volunteer involvement

Volunteer recruitment

The sponsor recruits volunteers and other team members, on a proactive basis, with the intent to broaden and expand volunteer involvement in the community. The sponsor recruits volunteers without regard to gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, race or any other basis protected by agency policy or by federal, state or local laws, unless such distinction is required by law.

See the [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#) for information about recruiting new volunteers (search the [shiptacenter.org](#) Resource Library).

Unless specifically stated, VRPM policies apply to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken by or on behalf of SHIBA. This includes any volunteer involvement organized and managed by sponsor organizations. The pivotal variable in the application of these volunteer policies is volunteers' performance of SHIBA work. Volunteers clearly performing what could reasonably be called "SHIBA work" under the direction and control of SHIBA, those volunteers—including paid partners and in-kind staff—and their coordination, are subject to the provisions of these volunteer policies. (VRPM policy 1.2)

SHIBA makes volunteers aware of all volunteer policies. Not knowing a policy is not acceptable if SHIBA communicated the policy to the volunteer and the volunteer should've known. SHIBA volunteers are expected to conduct their work with a larger view of what is in the best interests of the majority of SHIBA clients, the integrity of SHIBA programming and the long-term reputation and sustainability of SHIBA itself. (VRPM policy 1.3)

SHIBA expects volunteers to comply with all SHIBA policies. If volunteers fail to comply with policies, they will need to meet with their VC or supervisor who will assist them with functioning inside the rules. If reasonable efforts on the part of SHIBA are unsuccessful, further disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including dismissal.

Be familiar with the [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), SMP [performance management resources](#) and the following [VRPM policy manual](#) policies:

- Accepting volunteer applicants (VRPM policies 3.27, 3.28, 3.29, 3.30, 3.33, 3.34, 3.43)
- Prospective volunteers (VRPM policy 3.31)
- Volunteer policy provisions (VRPM policy 3.45)
- Volunteer involvement (VRPM policies 1.1, 1.4)
- Publicizing volunteer opportunities (VRPM policy 3.24)
- Responding to volunteer interest (VRPM policy 3.25)
- Volunteer recruitment (VRPM policies 3.14, 3.21)

Login to <https://www.smpresource.org/> and search for SMP role descriptions and refer to [VRPM](#) (search [My SHIBA](#) for “VRPM”) policy 3.15 Standards of performance, which must be connected with the job description. Search My SHIBA for “role” or job description” for more details on volunteer roles and job descriptions.

Recruiting minors

SHIBA is a great place for teenagers to learn about a volunteer work environment while making a contribution to their community. Volunteers under age 18 are welcome, but must have the written consent of a parent or guardian prior to volunteering. This consent is included as part of the volunteer application. Volunteer tasks assigned to a minor should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws, have clearly prescribed responsibilities and should be appropriate to their maturity level. Adequate supervision and support must be provided. (VRPM policy 3.23)

Reference:

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 4 – Recruiting new volunteers

Volunteer application process

Once a prospective volunteer indicates an interest in the SHIBA program, they must follow the volunteer application process, which is referred to as the **Path to SHIBA certification**.

VCs must follow this application process to ensure the proper screening and placement of the prospective volunteer. The Path to SHIBA certification ensures the applicant is the right fit for the program and will not pose any risk to clients, staff or other volunteers. *A word of caution: Don't make prospective volunteers wait for long periods of time before you interview and place them, or they may decide to go elsewhere.* See the Path to SHIBA certification for timing guidance.

SHIBA policies that guide volunteer program management apply equally to all SHIBA volunteers, and compliance with these policies is a condition of continued volunteer involvement with SHIBA. (VRPM policy 3.1)

SHIBA strives to develop a volunteer population that mirrors the diversity of the community in which it operates. (VRPM policy 3.2)

Becoming a volunteer

Becoming a certified SHIBA volunteer involves a multi-step process before someone can start working with clients. To ensure the volunteer's success, every step of the certification process provides unlimited support and assistance from SHIBA staff and other volunteers.

The next sections outline and explain the steps a new volunteer must successfully complete to become a certified SHIBA volunteer.

The OIC will communicate with the VC on the certification status of each prospective volunteer.

For questions about processes and timing in the Path to SHIBA certification, contact admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.

Path to SHIBA certification

Becoming a certified SHIBA volunteer involves a multi-step process before someone can start working with clients. The steps will vary depending on the volunteer's role. To ensure the volunteer's success, every step of the certification process provides unlimited support and assistance from SHIBA staff and other volunteers.

★ Visit My SHIBA at <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba> to see the Path to certification checklist and the volunteer Path to certification tracking sheet to help guide you in the process. Search for the word “path.”

Path to certification checklist: For volunteer coordinators working with SHIBA volunteers in the role of Medicare Counselor.

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/media/1644>

Path to Certification tracking sheet: For SHIBA volunteers in the role of Medicare counselor.

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/media/6542>

Staff abbreviation key for Path steps on the following pages:

GC	Grants coordinator
NV	New volunteer
PM	Program Manager
RTC	Regional training consultant
AA	Administrative assistant
TC	Training Coordinator
VC	Volunteer coordinator

Path step 1 – Application

Actions:

- NV completes the [new volunteer application](#) and submits it to the VC.
- VC forwards application to AA for processing and completion of the background check.

Timing: Process application and background check within 1 week of receipt.

Volunteer application packet

A complete volunteer application packet includes:

- SHIBA volunteer application: A standardized application form is completed by all prospective SHIBA volunteers (VRPM policy 3.32).
- SHIBA volunteer agreement.
- Background check: Request for criminal history information.
- [Unique ID](#) confidentiality agreement.

The current version of the volunteer application packet should be used at all times. The current version of the **new volunteer application packet** is on [My SHIBA](#).

Falsifying information, including material omission or misrepresentation, at any point during screening is grounds for immediate disqualification from the application process, or even immediate dismissal if the falsehood is discovered after the volunteer gets accepted. (VRPM policy 3.44)

Reference:

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 4 – Recruiting new volunteers

Background, reference and insurance checks

Volunteers are asked to submit three character references on the volunteer application form. References may be current or past employers, friends, volunteer supervisors or other reliable sources. VCs should contact each character reference listed. Be sure to place the results of the reference check documents in the volunteer's file. Tell volunteers in advance about your intent to make reference

checks. If they refuse permission and cannot provide an acceptable reason, they cannot become a SHIBA volunteer.

Reference checks have proven to be a reliable screening mechanism. Their effectiveness, however, depends largely on the reference checker's commitment to the reference check process. It's important the reference checker take the role seriously to protect clients and clients' identities.

Background checks

SHIBA requires background checks for all volunteers. This is part of the Path to SHIBA certification. The SHIBA Tumwater office will oversee the background checks.

National-level background checks

For information, search [My SHIBA](#) for the ***National-level background checks*** document. This document has more detail on the background check process on the following pages:

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Sponsor-provided background checks

Background checks completed by SHIBA sponsor organizations cannot be accepted at this time.

Page 1

Exceptions:

In-kind advisors with MIPPA-only organizations are exempt from this requirement because they are quasi-state. In addition, their own federal grant criteria likely requires national-level criminal background checks on personnel.

VCs should submit copies of the completed sponsor background checks to the SHIBA program office with the **new** volunteer **application packet**, which is located on [My SHIBA](#). VCs or sponsors may send either of the following to the SHIBA administrative assistant:

- 1) A copy of the background check.

2) A signed and dated document attesting they've completed the check and have it on file.

Background check results provided by the sponsor can be accepted if they comply with the Child/Adult Abuse Information Act (RCW 43.43.830 through 43.43.845).

The national-level criminal background check process starts when the new SHIBA volunteer application packet is posted to My SHIBA. You will find the new volunteer application on [My SHIBA](#). Application packets submitted or mailed prior to the new volunteer's start date will be accepted.

The SHIBA program office will notify the VC when background check results are unsatisfactory. It's the VC's responsibility to inform the prospective volunteer the results of their background check. The OIC SHIBA program manager will make the final decision on how to proceed if a background checks raises a concern.

Be familiar with the [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), SMP [performance management resources](#) and the following [VRPM policy manual](#) policies:

- Criminal record check (VRPM policies 3.38, 3.46)
- Screening, protocols and transferring roles (VRPM policies 3.47, 3.49)
- Re-acceptance (VRPM policy 3.48)
- Volunteer placement (VRPM policy 3.50)
- Driver's license and insurance verification (VRPM policy 3.39)

Email admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov if you have questions.

Path step 2: Interview

Actions:

- VC schedules interview with NV and presents volunteer handbook.
- During interview, VC discusses potential roles.

Timing: VC schedules.

VCs should interview all prospective volunteers to find out their suitability for, and interest in, various SHIBA roles (search [My SHIBA](#) for “role”). (VRPM policy 3.33)

In cases where the interview does not uncover a suitable placement for a prospective volunteer, or where SHIBA cannot meet the applicant’s interests, needs or availability, the VC will recommend the volunteer applicant find a different organization to serve as a volunteer. (VRPM policy 3.34)

Path step 3 – Foundational online SHIP TA training

Actions:

- VC contacts AA to request login access for NV.
- VC reviews results after NV has completed Chapters 1-3.

Timing: Recommend 2 weeks to complete.

Chapters 1-3 of the online SHIP counselor training covers Medicare basics, Medicare coverage rules, appeals and penalties. All volunteers who will work with Medicare clients must complete this training and successfully pass the online certification modules. SHIPTA courses are available under “training and certification” or by searching for “courses” at www.shiptacenter.org.

SHIBA provides extensive training to all volunteers. We ask volunteers to:

- Strive to become and remain proficient in the performance of their SHIBA role.
- Examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to SHIBA.
- Participate in continuing education relevant to your volunteer role.
- Provide services only within the boundaries of their training, SHIBA scope and experience.
- Have a knowledge base of clients’ cultures and be sensitive to clients’ cultural beliefs.
- Ask the advice and counsel of colleagues and RTCs whenever it’s in the best interest of clients.
- Refer clients to others when specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when additional service is required.
- Attend monthly SHIBA training and other training sessions as requested.

There are four components of SHIBA volunteer training:

1. [Basic training](#)
2. [Certification exam](#)
3. Mentoring
4. Monthly continuing education [training](#)

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Note: For details on SHIBA's available training modules, go [My SHIBA](#) and find the section on "Volunteer training" to get details about [basic training](#) and [monthly volunteer continuing education training](#).

Path step 4 – Basic training

Actions:

- VC arranges for the NV to complete basic training either in-person or online. This may be done online *only* in consultation with VC and/or RTC.

Timing: Varies, in-person is 1-2 days.

If NV will perform administrative duties only and NOT provide counseling or answer questions, we don't require full certification, but NV may choose to do so.

NV may start the basic training course as soon as they've completed the required paperwork.

NV may start at their own pace if using the online training slides. This training course is available on [My SHIBA](#) and the information is updated as needed to reflect new information and changes. Please see [Path to SHIBA certification](#) in this manual or on [My SHIBA](#) for reference. **For SHIBA Basic Training: To take the training online, the VC and RTC must first give approval to the volunteer.**

Basic training classes consist of the following topics:

- Welcome to SHIBA
- Health Insurance 101
- Medicare Part A
- Medicare Part B
- Medicare Part D
- Medicare Supplemental (Medigaps)
- Medicare Part C

Development

SHIBA ensures an infrastructure is in place to support volunteer involvement and volunteer program management to create effective, productive, safe and rewarding volunteer involvement. (VRPM policy 3.6)

Be familiar with the [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), SMP [performance management resources](#) and the following [VRPM policy manual](#) policies:

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- Meaningful assignments (VRPM policy 3.5)
- Volunteer roles and decision-making (VRPM policy 3.12)
- Standards of performance (VRPM policy 3.15)
- Minimum initial and ongoing training requirements (VRPM policy 3.56)
- Access to materials and equipment to fulfil duties (VRPM policy 3.103)

It is the volunteer's responsibility to seek clarification about policies, as needed. Not understanding a policy is not an acceptable reason for failing to comply. (VRPM policy 3.87)

Path step 5 – Certification exam**Actions:**

- After the NV completes basic training, the VC contacts the AA to request exam access for the NV.

Note: If the NV has not passed the exam after 2 attempts, the AA sends an email to the VC and RTC to suggest further study before attempting the test the third and final time.

Timing: Varies.

Following training, SHIBA tests volunteers on their knowledge and abilities for certain SHIBA roles and they must demonstrate minimum levels of comprehension and skill. For such roles, VCs do not assign volunteers duties until their qualification for the role is certified, using the criteria and process required by SHIBA. (VRPM policy 3.58)

All new volunteers, who join SHIBA and will serve as a client counselor and answer client questions, must take and pass a certification exam before they can work with consumers.

VC submits request to AA for certification exam and provides the following:

A. How to request a SHIBA volunteer certification exam	
<p>VC submits request to AA for certification exam and provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NV advisor name. • Date basic training was completed. • Basic training completed in-person <i>or</i> online. • NV email address. <p>NOTE to AA: This is opportunity to ensure NV email address matches STARS team member record and SHIP National Performance Reporting (NPR) profile and to resolve any discrepancies.</p>	<p>VC and AA</p>

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B. Certification exam issued	
C. After the exam is complete	
1. Send email to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov when exam is complete and submitted.	VC or NV
5. VC and NV review next steps for the path to SHIBA certification.	VC and NV

Path step 6 – Mentoring

Actions:

- The VC meets with the NV and assigns a mentor for site-specific training.

Timing: Minimum of 10 hours.

Mentoring training

After completing the basic training, the NV will take mentoring training that provides skills and techniques to serve as a counselor.

Volunteers receive specific on-the-job training, which provides the information and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training are appropriate to the complexity and demands of the role and the capabilities of the volunteer. (VRPM policy 3.59)

Please reference [My SHIBA](#) for additional training materials or references, such as:

- Medicare.gov and Medicare Plan Finder
- STARS
- Department of Enterprise Services, Fulfillment Center
- SHIP TA Center
- CMS National Training Program
- SMP

Acceptance, appointment and orientation

As soon as the Administrative Assistant (AA) processes the application, they'll send an email to the VC and the RTC stating the NV application is processed, and the NV should receive the STARS info. Then the VC notifies their NV. Volunteer service doesn't start with SHIBA until the VC sends an official, written notice of acceptance or appointment to the NV. Please contact your RTC or the AA for assistance including receipt of STARS information for the NV.

No offer of acceptance is issued on a conditional basis pending. Service as a volunteer with SHIBA only starts with an official, written notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer role (search [My SHIBA](#) for "role"). Volunteers do not start any work until SHIBA formally accepts them into service. (VRPM policy 3.52)

Volunteers who are at any time re-assigned to a new role receive all appropriate orientation, training and up-screening (if applicable) before they start work. (VRPM policy 3.54)

All volunteers receive orientation on topics that include, but are not limited to (VRPM policy 3.55):

- The purpose and values of SHIBA.
- The nature and operation of the program or activity for which they are recruited.
- The purpose, duties and requirements of the role that they are accepting.

Volunteers must fulfill all mandatory orientation requirements before any work is assigned to them.

Path step 7 – Certificate and badge**Actions:**

- If not already provided, the VC provides the AA with a photo of the NV.
- The AA prepares the volunteer certificate and badge, and mails them to the VC to present to the NV.

Note: A volunteer performing administrative duties only will receive a badge with the title “Administrative Volunteer.”

Timing: After completing mentoring.

A. Criteria for badge issuance	
<p>1. The VC may request volunteer badges for certified volunteers.</p> <p>NVs are provided identification that establishes their affiliation with SHIBA. NVs carry with them their SHIBA identification while engaged in the business of the SHIBA. NVs use the identification only when undertaking official and authorized SHIBA duties. (VRPM policy 3.92)</p> <p>NOTE: VCs are encouraged to coordinate badge requests with AA to arrive for issuance with volunteer certificate.</p>	VC
<p>2. Email badge pictures to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.</p> <p>a. Provide any special instructions for how name is to appear on badge.</p> <p>Example: “wants middle initial, Patty M. Smithers”</p> <p>NOTE: Badges may be made with just first name. Use of the first letter of the last name is encouraged. For example, Patty R., Andre E., etc.</p>	VC
B. Badge issuance	
<p>3. VC will issue badges to NV.</p>	VC
C. Badge return	

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1. NV will return badge to VC upon resignation.	NV
2. VC will return the badge to the AA.	VC

Path step 8 – Certified volunteer starts working with clients

Privacy and location of counseling

Face-to-face work with individual clients primarily takes place at a sponsor location or on the phone. When clients can't travel to the SHIBA or sponsor's office, volunteers discuss alternate meeting arrangements with their supervisor that will still maintain client privacy.

Volunteers cannot perform off-site counseling work without prior approval. When one-to-one information is requested by an audience member at a public presentation, SHIBA volunteers provide only general information and do not gather personal, financial or other confidential information from the client. Inquiries that involve the collection of such personal, financial or other confidential information are referred for a more formal counseling session in an appropriately private location. (VRPM policy 2.6)

Note: In each instance, both counseling interactions described above count as a Beneficiary Contact (BC) for program reporting purposes.

SHIBA volunteers are not allowed to make home visits. When a request comes in to the sponsoring organization for a home visit, your VC or the person who received the request will decide the best alternative plan of action for the client. They will base their decision upon resources available in the community, such as paid senior information and assistance staff, a Department of Social and Health Services case manager, paid Aging and Long Term Care staff, etc. (VRPM policy 2.7)

Medicare Unique IDs

Volunteers are not required to have a Medicare Unique ID. However, before a Medicare Unique ID will be issued, volunteers need to complete the Path to SHIBA Certification.

What is a Medicare Unique ID?

A Medicare Unique ID allows SHIBA volunteer counselors to get more detailed information from Medicare to help beneficiaries:

- Get through to Medicare right away.
- Provide elevated assistance for beneficiaries when volunteer has the facts about the client's coverage.
- Call Medicare even if the beneficiary is not on the phone with the volunteer.

To be eligible for Medicare Unique ID

1. Process completed volunteer application.
2. Complete review of background check.
3. Volunteer has STARS team member profile.
4. Volunteer completes Path to certification.
5. Volunteer complete confidentiality training.
6. VC or RTC will support issuance of Unique ID to advisors.

Initiating a request for a Medicare Unique ID

1. VC emails request to attention of SHIBA administrative assistant at admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov. Requests received directly from volunteer advisors will be routed back through VC.
2. Volunteer must have a confidentiality agreement on file, which is a part of the application packet. The SHIBA Administrative Assistant will verify it..

Next steps

The volunteer will then receive two emails with the following information:

- One email will contain the volunteer's Medicare Unique ID.

- In the second email, the SHIBA administrative assistant will include important guidelines.

To retain a Medicare Unique ID

1. Volunteer completes annual confidentiality training.
2. Volunteer submits a re-attestation of confidentiality agreement annually.

Using the Unique ID

Volunteers can find information about how to use the Medicare Unique ID on [My SHIBA](#).

For all questions related to obtaining a Medicare Unique ID, contact the SHIBA administrative assistant at admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov or (360) 725-7097.

References:

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/medicare-unique-ids>

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 4 – Recruiting new volunteers

Path step 9 – Certified volunteers are required to attend a minimum of eight out of nine monthly continuing education trainings

Monthly continuing education training

After a volunteer completes basic training, they're expected to attend monthly continuing education training classes at their sponsor's site. These training classes consist of a three-hour classroom session with instruction and discussion. VCs also have time on the agenda to share local information. Here are some training details:

- Attendance at eight of the nine monthly training classes is required for certified volunteers to remain active.
- No monthly volunteer training is scheduled in August, November or December to accommodate volunteers' vacation schedules.
- Training materials are posted on the password-protected [My SHIBA](#) website.
- If volunteers are unable to attend a training, they should review the training materials and consult with their VC or RTC to clarify any questions and to make sure they get credit for the class.

Monthly training includes a variety of content from informed sources, which is available as a training packet in electronic format (paper packets may be available upon request to the VC). Content may incorporate basic, national and local information including:

- Changes and new information related to Medicare.
- Sponsors' focus in their primary area(s) of business.
- Washington state-specific information will be priority.
- County specific content and procedures.

At the discretion of SHIBA, continuing education training and/or recertification training is required for some volunteer roles. SHIBA will remove volunteers from their respective roles if they cannot meet the required continuing education requirements. (VRPM policy 3.62)

Online makeup training may be arranged for one or two missed monthly continuing education sessions.

Reference:

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 6 – Training volunteers for success

Staff abbreviation key for Path steps on previous pages:

GC	Grants coordinator
NV	New volunteer
PM	Program Manager
RTC	Regional training consultant
AA	Administrative assistant
TC	Training Coordinator
VC	Volunteer coordinator

Senior Medicare Patrol training

Volunteers who are interested in more training on Medicare fraud through the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) may work with their volunteer coordinator for direction on locating materials and achieving SMP endorsement.

For more information, see the **Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) volunteers** topic later in this section.

Volunteers

Volunteer recognition

SHIBA has a system for recognizing and rewarding the work done by volunteers, both individually and collectively. (VRPM policy 3.109)

It's expected that staff and volunteer coordinators will recognize volunteers on a regular basis. (VRPM policy 3.110)

Whenever possible, volunteers are provided with feedback on the results of their work, including data on all volunteer contributions that allow SHIBA to meet its service goals. (VRPM policy 3.112) Volunteer coordinators are responsible for providing regular feedback.

Recognition is an integral part of the management process so volunteers feel valued. An annual SHIBA volunteer recognition event should highlight and reward the contribution of volunteers to the program. VCs should consult and involve volunteers to develop an appropriate format for the event.

In addition, an effective, targeted recognition program can support an organization in many ways. A well-managed recognition program will motivate volunteers by satisfying their individual needs and supporting program goals. A recognition program may contribute to:

Productivity: Volunteers who are given meaningful tasks will feel rewarded by their own accomplishments.

Retention: By identifying and addressing the specific needs of individuals and providing recognition that satisfied these needs, volunteers are more likely to stay with your organization.

Morale: As concern is demonstrated for your volunteers through appropriate task assignment and performance recognition, volunteers' personal satisfaction and willingness to participate will increase.

Recognition programs that typically work are those which:

- Base rewards on an appreciation of the individual volunteer as a unique person with individual needs.
- Are based on individual jobs or tasks.
- Have consistent reward policies, resulting in a sense of trust that effort will receive the proper reward.
- Recognize longevity and special contributions frequently.
- Offer rewards, which teams of volunteers can share.

Volunteer certification

Providing volunteer certificates to new (or existing experienced) volunteers is one way the VC and RTC can offer recognition. For instance, you can issue certificates and badges (if available) during the monthly SHIBA training meeting. New volunteers who've completed Basic training and the Path to SHIBA certification will receive a certificate and their volunteer badge. For more information, refer to the [Volunteer handbook](#).

Volunteer awards and incentives

Depending on budget availability, the SHIBA program office will coordinate formal volunteer recognition activities during a regularly scheduled monthly training meeting or through dedicated recognition meetings. SHIBA will buy and provide service pins and other incentives, with pre-approval by the SHIBA program manager.

The SHIBA program office does not impose any limitations on volunteer recognition incentives provided by SHIBA sponsors. Each SHIBA sponsor may determine their own methods to recognize their SHIBA volunteers. The [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#) provides numerous methods to regularly recognize volunteers that are free and provide thoughtful follow up with volunteers by letting them know they're providing an important service in their community.

Reference:

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 8 – Retaining and recognizing volunteers

Volunteer status

SHIBA expects volunteers to be reliable and punctual. When a volunteer expects to be absent from a scheduled duty, they should inform their supervisor as far in advance as possible so the supervisor can make alternate arrangements to cover the volunteer's shift. It's not the volunteer's responsibility or right to find or assign an alternate person to perform their work. (VRPM policy 3.97)

There are two levels of status for a volunteer in STARS:

- Active
- Inactive

Only SHIBA program staff are authorized to activate volunteers in STARS. If a volunteer decides to take a break from volunteering, we can change them to inactive. We can then later change the volunteer back to active when they return to service. Only designated OIC SHIBA staff can make volunteer status entries in STARS.

Volunteer resources do not displace paid staff. The availability of volunteer resources is never a factor when considering sponsor staff layoffs, terminations or loss through attrition. Volunteers supplement, they do not supplant the work of paid sponsor staff. (VRPM policy 3.13)

Probationary period

SHIBA places all new volunteers on probation for a period of three months after they complete their initial training and they are placed into a role.

VCs make adjustments wherever appropriate, including the possibility of placing the volunteer into a different volunteer role that better suits them.

If during the probation period, either the VC or the volunteer determines the volunteer's work at SHIBA isn't appropriate, either party can decide to immediately terminate without prior notice or reason. Probationary status also applies to volunteers reassigned to new roles with SHIBA.

Length of service

All volunteer roles have a set term of service. Volunteer assignments end at the conclusion of the set term, without expectation or requirement of re-assigning that role to the incumbent. (VRPM policy 3.19)

Leave of absence

At the VC's discretion, and consulting with the volunteer's immediate supervisor where appropriate, leaves of absence are granted to volunteers. (VRPM policy 3.20)

Volunteer resignation and termination

Be familiar with the [SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), SMP [performance management resources](#) and the following [VRPM policy manual](#) policies:

- Accepting service of volunteers (VRPM policy 3.4).
- Unacceptable behaviors (VRPM policy 3.78).
- Resignation from volunteer service (VRPM policy 3.84).
- Exit interviews (VRPM policy 3.86).

Email the SHIBA program office:

The VC emails admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov to alert the AA in a timely manner when a volunteer resigns or is terminated. Only SHIBA program staff can activate or inactivate a volunteer.

Send the physical volunteer file to SHIBA program office:

- When a volunteer resigns or is terminated from SHIBA, the VC sends the hard-copy volunteer file to the SHIBA administrative assistant (AA). The AA integrates this information to the central volunteer file.
- If at any time in the future a volunteer returns to service, or transfers to another volunteer team, the VC may request a copy of the existing volunteer file from the AA.

Reference:

[SHIP volunteer program management manual](#), Chapter 5 – Matching prospective volunteers to roles

Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) volunteers

Washington's SHIBA program is also the SMP for the state. All SHIBA volunteer advisors learn to empower clients and the community to protect, detect and report Medicare fraud and abuse in the course of becoming a SHIBA volunteer.

Volunteers help the SMP with interpreting materials

SMPs that involve volunteers who represent a cross section of their communities are better able to form relationships and help out many populations that are often overlooked. SMP volunteers can provide help with interpreting the SMP message into other languages and in maintaining credibility with audiences that are often skeptical of government messages.

Volunteers can also bring a range of skills that paid staff may not have and can help the SMP build support from the community by acting as informal ambassadors who carry the SMP message to their friends and neighbors.

Volunteers allow the SMP to serve a wider and more diverse population

In these days of increasing budgetary restrictions, volunteers can help spread the SMP message to serve a wider audience, reaching out across their communities to those who might not otherwise get served. The hours of service given by volunteers represent an invaluable resource to the SMP. SMP volunteers have served well over a million hours since the SMP program's inception in 1997. Each year, an average of 5,000 people across the nation serve their communities as SMP volunteers.

Not all SHIBA sponsors are funded specifically to do SMP fraud outreach and education, however, all sponsors and volunteers are encouraged to take SMP training and share information with all clients about how to avoid becoming a Medicare fraud victim.

Volunteers can speak directly and effectively to their community about SMP

We encourage SHIBA volunteers who want to receive additional training focused on Medicare fraud to take the four web-based courses and assessments. They will then receive an endorsement as an SMP volunteer. This aligns with the training requirements of the national SMP program:

- SMP Foundations training

- SMP Counselor training
- SMP Group Education training
- SMP Complex Interactions training

Note: The SMP Complex Interactions training refers the trainee to SIRS (the data system used by SMP programs). SHIBA volunteers will *not* have access to SIRS. SHIBA advisors will enter data into STARS and click “send to SMP” and then email the suspected fraud case to the SHIBA complaints coordinator for follow up.

SMP volunteer training

All SMP training is available through the SMP website at <https://www.smpresource.org>.

All SHIBA sponsors are encouraged to promote the use of these training resources. If a volunteer completes all four courses and assessments, they’ll receive a certificate and badge showing an endorsement in SMP whether their sponsor is an SMP or not. SHIBA encourages volunteer advisors to seek an SMP endorsement.

SMP Foundations training

- The training provides a foundation of knowledge in three main content areas:
 1. The SMP program
 2. Medicare basics
 3. Medicare fraud and abuse
- All SHIBA SMP volunteers in “positions of trust” performing duties such as staffing exhibits, making group presentations and/or counseling, must take this course and pass the assessment at 80%.

SMP group education training

- This training provides the necessary skills and resources to present SMP group education sessions consistently to groups of Medicare beneficiaries, caregivers and other applicable groups.
- SHIBA volunteers who present group education and outreach sessions and successfully completed the SMP Foundations training, should also take and pass this course.

SMP counselor training

- This training provides the necessary skills and resources to answer basic SMP questions and consistently provide individual SMP education.
- Volunteers who handle one-on-one counseling sessions and completed the SMP Foundations training, should take and pass this course.

SMP Complex Interactions training

This training provides the necessary skills and resources to manage complex interactions and, when necessary, conduct referrals and recommendations to the SHIBA complaints coordinator who may conduct further analysis of the case and refer it to authorities for further investigation.

All volunteers can access the materials posted on [My SHIBA](#) and engage community groups with presentations about fraud, whether they are SMP funded, or not. **“Are You Smarter than a Scam artist”** is an **activity** that any volunteer can facilitate at any sponsor site. It is posted on [My SHIBA](#) (search for “are you smarter than a scam artist”) and has an activity handout for participants and instructions for the SHIBA volunteer.

Notes

Section 2 – Outreach

Outreach event goals

The primary goal of an outreach event is to educate new and existing consumers on Medicare options. Outreach events encourage consumers to schedule a counseling session with SHIBA volunteers to address their individual needs. When deciding on where to facilitate an event, OIC SHIBA and sponsors should review sponsor performance, Medicare population trends, areas with high concentrations of limited- English and/or low-income consumers as well as the interest and engagement of our community partners.

The following are general goals that frame the operational practice of SHIBA outreach efforts:

- Educate consumers on Medicare and other health care coverage programs.
- Increase public awareness of SHIBA services, local sponsors and volunteer opportunities.
- Provide outreach to low-income, rural or limited-English proficient consumers.
- Provide a venue to promote partnerships with other state agencies and community-based organizations.
- Distribute and collect surveys from attendees to evaluate event success.
- Promote volunteer recruitment.

Expected outcomes

Each event requires a detailed recording on the STARS Group outreach and education or the Media outreach and education form. Any individual counseling that staff or volunteers complete requires documenting it on a STARS Beneficiary contact form (BCF).

If OIC/SHIBA sub-contracted the event with a community sponsor, the community sponsor submits a narrative report to the SHIBA grants and contracts coordinator that includes the number of people served and the outcomes. The narrative report requirements are specified in the contract with the community sponsor. The SHIBA program supervisor ensures the outreach events are entered into STARS.

Evaluating for success

The SHIBA leadership team will regularly review the outreach results and reports, as well as the beneficiary contact totals to decide if outreach efforts increased client contacts in the areas that held outreach events. SHIBA will notify sponsors about the results after it evaluates an event's success.

Planning for community outreach

Although the VC is ultimately responsible for ensuring outreach occurs, volunteers can take the lead to develop the plan and implement many of the outreach activities. A complete plan will include the following information:

- Sites and dates for community presentations.
- What involvement is needed from the SHIBA RTC or other staff.
- Strategy to target diverse and hard-to-reach populations.
- Methods for promoting events and activities, including advertising, to ensure successful attendance volumes.
- List of sites to distribute SHIBA literature and a schedule for replenishing stock.
- A timeline for all activities with tasks assigned to specific volunteers and staff.
- Adding the event to the SHIBA online events calendar at <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba-events-calendar>.
- Other events, such as health fairs, etc. where SHIBA will participate.
- Events must be held at facilities that are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible.

Outreach event types

Some outreach events types follow, but are not limited to:

- [Welcome to Medicare](#) – For consumers turning age 65.
- [Community health fairs](#) – Limited-English, senior housing, shred events, etc.
- [Community Colleges](#) - Continuing education for current and soon-to-be Medicare eligible.
- [Senior Medicare Patrol \(SMP\)](#) - Fraud prevention and awareness.

There are many more types of events. If you are interested in sponsoring any type of event, please contact your RTC. Sponsors are encouraged to coordinate with their RTC to seek out creative outreach opportunities to benefit Medicare beneficiaries in their contracted area. See [Partnership development](#).

Welcome to Medicare

OIC has a formal data-sharing agreement with the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL). OIC/SHIBA receives a quarterly list of Washington state residents turning age 65. SHIBA uses the DOL list for outreach event invites and direct mailers such as fliers, postcards or brochures. Per the data sharing agreement, OIC/SHIBA cannot share the DOL list with sponsors or anyone else outside of the SHIBA program office.

If interested in having mailers or invitations sent out on your agency's behalf, please contact the SHIBA grants and budget coordinator.

The communications consultant will then work with the Dept. of Enterprise Services Print Services to print and directly mail the event invites using the agreed upon DOL mailing list. Most event planning and associated costs are covered directly by SHIBA/OIC, or with a sub-contract with a community sponsor or in combination.

Sponsors may submit a proposal to SHIBA to facilitate a Welcome to Medicare event. Sponsors should submit the proposal to the SHIBA program supervisor and the grants and budget coordinator. SHIBA will consider the proposal within its available resources. The proposal should include:

- That it's a Welcome to Medicare event.
- SHIBA support needs, such as direct mailings, RSVP acceptance/tracking assistance, facility/venue approval process, publications, etc.

Welcome to Medicare events can require months of advanced planning. Plan for a minimum of four months to work through the process. If you need help with planning, contact your SHIBA RTC. The events require significant resources including, but not limited to:

- Budget consideration
- Presentation development and approval
- Facility/venue selection
- Staff resources to accept and track RSVPs
- Signage
- Direct-mailing design and coordination
- Speaker coordination
- Publications
- Agenda development
- Event setup and clean up

Community health fairs

Community health fairs are a good way to attract consumers. They often include flu shots, blood pressure checks, cholesterol screening, shredding confidential documents, over-the-counter drug disposal and other services.

SHIBA may elect to sponsor a community health fair by contracting with a local agency or sponsor. These events typically reach consumers in targeted populations, such as those with limited-English, low-income, disabilities or who are in a rural area. SHIBA/OIC contracts with local agencies to facilitate the entire event. The SHIBA Medicare presentation is required for all SHIBA-related events. After the event, the community sponsor submits a report to the SHIBA program manager with the number of attendees and program outcomes.

Sponsors who facilitate community health fairs enter an outreach activity in STARS and may be asked to submit a narrative on the event for future event planning reference or for grant reporting.

Community college continuing education classes

Many local community colleges are seeking to expand classes of interest to the community. VC's are encouraged to work with their RTCs and the grants and budget coordinator to develop a contract to hold Medicare classes at their local community college using the SHIBA Medicare presentations. Classes can also be a good place to recruit new volunteers to help address the increase in demand created by your outreach and education efforts.

Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

Sponsors with an SMP contract have a primary responsibility, per contract language, to provide Medicare fraud outreach presentations in their community. The outreach section on [My SHIBA](#) offers 10, 20 and 30 minute SMP PowerPoints for outreach presentations. The national [SMP Resource Center](#) also offers a wide range of other materials for use.

Event planning timeline

Example: Medicare birthday events

A significant amount of resources are required for a Welcome to Medicare birthday event and direct-mailing campaign, therefore, scheduling an event is dictated by the availability of resources and budget. SHIBA staff are available to help including:

PM	Program manager
PS	Program operations supervisor
CC	Communications consultant
FS	Field supervisor
GC	Grants and budget coordinator
RTC	Regional training consultant
VC	Volunteer coordinator
AA	Administrative assistant

Based on the identified priority target areas, the planning will include:

- Discuss outreach methods, such as direct mailing, radio, newspaper ads or social media.
- Determine which sponsors to request to take the lead coordinating outreach events. VCs typically take the lead coordinating outreach events when a sponsor is assigned an event. SHIBA may issue contract amendments for additional funding when a sponsor agrees to terms of event planning.
- Identify potential partners to contract events and/or distribute publications, such as senior centers and senior housing communities.
- Review SHIBA staff availability to speak at events.
- Develop a list of which publications to use and how many. Provide the list to the SHIBA communications consultant and the administrative assistant to ensure publications are available and can be delivered in time for event(s).
- Develop a preliminary budget including, but not limited to:
 - Contracting with community partners

Section 2: Outreach

[TOC](#)

- Sponsor contract amendments for sponsor facilitated events
- Light refreshments
- Travel costs for speakers
- Publications and materials
- Media advertising. Direct-mailing design and printing (postcards, flyers)
- Postage

Advertise SHIBA events on the online calendar

VCs can advertise SHIBA outreach events by completing and submitting an [event calendar request](#) form at least 15 calendar days prior to the event. The link is on [My SHIBA](#) in the Outreach section. The administrative assistant posts the outreach event requests to the [SHIBA events calendar](#) that is located on the OIC's website.

NOTE: Sponsors should submit event calendar requests for the Annual Medicare Open Enrollment (Oct. – Dec.) at least four to six weeks ahead of time, if possible, to allow time to post the significantly higher volume of event calendar requests. Direct all questions or follow-up on event calendar requests to the administrative assistant (AA) at 360-725-7097 or admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.

Presentations

Approved [presentations](#) are posted on [My SHIBA](#) under the Outreach section:

- Decide who will give the presentation (VC or volunteer).
- Based on the topic, use the appropriate SHIBA office-approved slide show (located on [My SHIBA](#) by searching for “public presentations”).
- Remember, you may hide existing slides to meet the time allotted for the presentation and your audience's needs. **You may not create new slides, change existing content or create a whole new slide show presentation.**

Speaker requests

The SHIBA office receives speaker requests from groups, such as community organizations, senior housing and other local and state agencies. The SHIBA [Speaker request form](#) located on the public SHIBA webpages at <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba> (the OIC's website).

SHIBA program staff receive and evaluate speaker requests and then usually assign them to the SHIBA sponsor to coordinate in the county where the speaking request was requested. Speaking engagements are considered a group outreach and education event ([outreach and education form](#)), which is a performance measure set in the sponsor's contract with SHIBA. Speaking engagements often

result in BCs in STARS, which also contributes to the sponsor's measurable performance set in their contract.

Outreach planning resources

SHIBA has many resources and examples to assist you with your planning. Contact your regional training consultant or SHIBA administrative staff for assistance.

Examples include:

- Sponsor-facilitated outreach event planning timeline
- Preliminary budget by event
- Supplies and publications list for event
- Justification for using a non-state facility form
- Barrier-free Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access checklist
- Agency certification
- Event agenda
- Event sign-in sheet

Be sure to plan for ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) considerations and to plan your event with enough time for the OIC fiscal office to review and to appropriately plan all parts of your event.

Notes

Section 3 – Contract management

Performance measures

Sponsor performance measures define the goals and expectations of our sponsors in supporting the SHIBA mission. These performance measures are formatted to:

- Gauge the availability and accessibility of assistance to consumers.
- Show how we used resources.
- Determine if we have sufficient resources available to our sponsors to reach their goals.
- Indicate where we need to focus to enhance overall program performance.

All of the outlined performance measures align with the mission statements of SHIBA and the OIC.

What SHIBA cares about

- We believe in equity. We are committed to providing equal access to all citizens of Washington state.
- Cost effectiveness matters. We want to be good stewards of public funds.
- The quality of service is important. Timely, accurate and actionable information is key.
- We invest in sustainability. Volunteer capacity needs to grow along with the increase in demand for our services.

Monitoring visits

SHIBA program office staff may periodically perform site visits or informal audits at the sponsor's place of business to ensure contract compliance. We will send advance notification along with a set of questions or an administrative checklist to the sponsor at least one month prior to the visit.

Ethics

Due to the OIC's role as a regulatory agency and OIC's relationship with SHIBA sponsors and others as current or potential vendors, it's important that no appearance of impropriety exists. OIC and SHIBA staff are not allowed to accept meals paid for by sponsors or others as it is a conflict of interest. Also, OIC or SHIBA staff must not buy meals, snacks, etc., for vendors, including sponsors, partners, etc.

Volunteers and SHIBA staff must not use their affiliation with SHIBA in connection with partisan politics, religious matters, business dealings or community issues. (VRPM policy 3.93) Volunteers must not promote any personal or business interests while undertaking their SHIBA assignment. (VRPM policy 3.35)

SHIBA operates a work environment that is free from alcohol and drug use/abuse. (VRPM policy 3.99). Volunteers and staff must not use, possess, transfer, distribute, manufacture or sell alcohol or any illegal drug while on SHIBA property, while on duty, while operating a vehicle on duty or while driving to or from a SHIBA worksite. If you have questions regarding exceptions for alcohol use at events, please consult with an OIC staff person (or email admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov) who must follow OIC Policy #3: Workplace safety and standards.

SHIBA volunteers must not accept gifts from clients and their families, caregivers or other representatives. Any such offerings must be respectfully and tactfully declined, citing, as needed, this policy as the basis for their action. (VRPM policy 3.100)

SHIBA volunteers must respectfully and tactfully decline any honoraria they are offered. (OIC [Ethics Policy](#) 1.2.D.1.B takes precedence over VRPM policy 3.101)

STARS

The SHIP Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) is SHIBA’s web-based data system. It’s used to track all of our interactions with clients, families and caregivers, and it’s where we report on all outreach events and media advertising. STARS is central to everything we do because it allows us to enter data on all our interactions, make notes on the counseling session and to describe where, when and what type of outreach was done.

Our grant funder, the Administration for Community Living (ACL), requires reported data elements as criteria for current and future funding considerations. STARS is designed to collect the necessary data for SHIBA staff to complete reports to our funders.

Sponsors are paid for performance as reflected in STARS, so beneficiary contacts, outreach and media advertising count and help the sponsor receive funding for work completed. We evaluate performance of our program based on data retrieved from STARS.

We provide additional funding to our sponsors when possible. To do this, we need accurate and complete data entered into STARS.

STARS definitions

Beneficiary Contact (BC)

BCs include all client interactions made for the purpose of relaying Medicare and SHIP-related information between a properly trained and state-certified SHIBA advisor and a Medicare client or someone working on their behalf. BCs may be conducted over the phone, in person (on site), via postal mail, email, fax, or web-based one-on-one sessions (where technology permits).

When should a Beneficiary Contact Form (BCF) be completed?

Complete a BCF for each contact between a properly trained, screened and state certified SHIBA advisor and a client or their representative when Medicare or SHIP program information is exchanged. Update the form to include additional time spent and topics discussed when there are multiple contacts during the same day.

Note: The BCF should document contacts with properly trained, screened and state certified SHIBA advisors only.

For more information on BCs and BCFs, see the STARS manual at: portal.shiptacenter.org.

Group Outreach and Education (GOE)

A Group Outreach and Education (GOE) activity includes any of the following:

- **Interactive presentations to the public either in-person or via electronic means:** Includes in-person presentations, forums, speaking engagements or seminars where you visually and orally share with attendees about Medicare and/or the SHIBA program. Interactive means there's an opportunity for attendees to ask the presenter questions at the event. This does *not* include SHIBA counselor trainings, booths, exhibits, satellite broadcasts or video.
- **Booth/exhibit at a fair, conference or other public event:** Includes events where general or program-specific information, and/or printed publications are shared with or distributed to the public. The purpose of SHIBA program participation at such events is to inform the public about the availability of SHIBA services in their area. For example, some SHIBA sponsors attend health or senior fairs or set up information booths in shopping centers to increase that community's awareness of their services and individual counseling.
- **Enrollment event:** This includes any type of program that enrollment is the key objective and SHIBA volunteers are on hand to help attendees submit an application online or by paper. An enrollment event may be either solely sponsored by a SHIBA sponsor or in partnership with another organization, such as Social Security Administration (SSA) office.

For more information on STARS, review the STARS manual at: portal.shiptacenter.org.

Media Outreach and Education (MOE)

A Media Outreach and Education (MOE) activity is one where general program or Medicare information is shared through the following types of media. If you use any of these options, you will select them in the MOE:

- **Billboard.** Both paper and electronic billboard ads.
- **Email.** This is an email blast or listserv message to a larger group. (Do not include email communications with individual clients.)
- **Magazine.** This is a magazine ad, feature or story highlighting Medicare or SHIBA.
- **Newsletter.** This is a newsletter ad, feature or story highlighting SHIBA services and/or Medicare.
- **Newspaper.** This is a newspaper ad, feature or story highlighting Medicare or SHIBA.
- **Radio.** This is a public service announcement or a live or taped radio appearance about Medicare or SHIBA information and may include public transit ads.
- **Social Media.** This is for the use of any social media to share Medicare or SHIBA information.
- **Television.** This is a public service announcement or a live or taped TV appearance to share Medicare or SHIBA information and may include public transit ads.
- **Website.** This is to share content/messaging through the state, regional, or local sponsor SHIBA website about Medicare or SHIBA information.
- **Other.** Use this for other media not listed above. Common examples may include direct mail, distributing flyers or brochures to partner locations like libraries of local provider offices.

For more information on Group Outreach and Education and Media Outreach and Education definitions, see the STARS manual at portal.shiptacenter.org

How can a SHIBA sponsor benefit from STARS?

- Helps the sponsor efficiently and effectively respond to client needs.
- Influences program development by zip code, race, county or other searchable element.
- Informs appropriate resource allocation.
- Provides information on volunteer recruitment, management and retention.
- Indicates gaps in partnership development.
- Provides data for fund development from a variety of resources, including federal, state and local entities and foundations.

What information does the STARS database provide?

- We can find out if all Washington state residents have access to the services SHIBA offers statewide.
- Tells us if there is access to SHIBA services at the local level.
- We can find out if hard-to-reach populations have access to SHIBA services.
- Reveals if we're providing enough one-on-one counseling to clients.
- Tells us if we have a well-trained volunteer base by VC and staff monitoring of notes on counseling.
- We can find out if we're providing accurate and timely information to clients.

Reporting and billing

Reporting and deliverable requirements

The sponsor must submit a Narrative Summary Report to the SHIBA grants and contracts coordinator on or before the 15th business day of the month following the end of each quarter.

Narrative due dates

- | | |
|---|---|
| •15 th business day of October | •15 th business day of April |
| •15 th business day of January | •15 th business day of July |

Invoice distribution

Following receipt of the Narrative Summary Report, the SHIBA grants and contracts coordinator will release the quarterly payment worksheet and A-19 invoice to the sponsor.

Once the sponsor signs the A-19, they should return it by U.S. mail or send it by email (completed and signed) to the SHIBA Contracts and Grants Coordinator:

Email: admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov

U.S. Mail:

Office of the Insurance Commissioner

ATTN: SHIBA Contracts and Grants Coordinator

Post Office Box 40255

Olympia, WA 98504-0255

Please contact the SHIBA Contracts and Grants Coordinator at admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov if you have any questions about delivery dates or deadlines.

Work plan narrative template**Name of person completing the narrative****SHIBA activities****Key partnership activities**

- In the narrative section, identify work you did with partners, including initial exploratory meetings, development of partnership agreements (MOU's) and service provision (i.e., counseling, presentations, outreach, referrals, resource sharing, etc.). Offer specific details on key partnership activities, such as:
 - Names of the significant partnership organization
 - Purpose and description of the activity
 - Target population served

Activities, lessons learned, significant events

- Describe activities, lessons learned (including challenges and problems you encountered), significant events or developments and best practices. Organize this section by using the following headings:
 - Outreach (including strategies for under-served populations)
 - Staff and volunteer training (including the number of new volunteers you added since last reporting period)
 - Best practices

Case studies, extraordinary savings to clients

- Summarize all occurrences in which clients realized a monetary savings associated with discussing a particular topic with a counselor. This summary should include:
 - Summary of the question or problem the client described to the counselor
 - What action the counselor took
 - Outcome or resolution to the problem
 - Status of the client contact
 - SHIP case number

Note: Savings to clients could include situations that meet one of the following criteria:

- A client received reimbursement for, or was relieved from paying for a health care service or product for which they were not responsible due to fraud, waste or abuse.
- The reimbursement or savings are due to the efforts of the sponsor in educating clients to detect fraud, waste and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- Referring billing discrepancies, potential fraud, or service quality complaints to appropriate OIC or other staff.

Analysis of STARS data

- Note trends, opportunities and wins.

Special grant or project activities (i.e. ACL/SMP)

- Discuss progress towards work plan or outcomes listed in grant application, i.e. SMP, MIPPA, other.

Support needed and input

- Discuss any additional resources you need and/or issues that may affect future performance.

List all SHIBA outreach counseling sites

- Include:
 - Hours of operation
 - Site address
 - Phone number
 - List of active volunteers/paid staff that staff these sites

Meeting representation

Sponsors must provide representation by a decision maker at one in-person meeting and one conference call per quarter per the sponsor contract with SHIBA. Sponsor representation can be the sponsor's executive director, program manager or VC as long as the representative has authority to make final decisions for the sponsor organization.

Sponsor equipment

Dependent on available funding, OIC/SHIBA may provide sponsors with grant funding to buy equipment, software and other supplies. These items are the permanent property of the sponsor organization and won't be maintained, repaired or replaced by the OIC. Therefore, if items are lost, stolen, damaged, suffer from software incompatibility or otherwise no longer operate, the OIC will not repair, be liable, pay for or be required to replace or provide technical support for the equipment, software or supplies.

Safety in the workplace

A safe and appropriate worksite is established for every volunteer including protection from potentially hazardous situations, injuries and harassment. (VRPM policy 3.18)

Hazards

Sponsors must inform volunteers of foreseeable hazardous aspects, materials, equipment or processes they may encounter while performing volunteer work. Sponsors are also required to train and equip volunteers with methods to deal with all identified risks. Training for volunteers includes discussion of safe work practices and methods for responding to potentially hazardous situations.

Volunteers should exercise caution in all work activities. Volunteers who violate safety standards, cause hazardous or dangerous situations or fail to report such situations, are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. (VRPM policy 2.4)

Harassment and abuse

- Volunteers who witness physical, psychological, financial or verbal abuse of clients while performing their assigned duties should report the incidents to their supervisor so appropriate follow-up action may occur. (VRPM policy 2.5)
- SHIBA is committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all personnel and clients. No one has to put up with harassment for any reason, at any time. No one has the right to harass anyone else, at the SHIBA workplace or in any situation related to SHIBA programs and services. (VRPM policy 3.98)
- SHIBA treats all complaints about harassment seriously, whether they're made informally or formally. SHIBA takes action on all complaints to ensure they're resolved quickly, confidentially and fairly. SHIBA will take corrective action with anyone who harasses an individual or group of people. All SHIBA supervisors have a responsibility to stop harassment. Everything should be done to stop it as soon as it's detected, whether or not a complaint's been made. Appropriate corrective action and disciplinary measures are taken when harassment occurs. Volunteers should immediately report to their staff supervisor if someone makes them feel

uncomfortable on the job – through any behaviors or comments from clients, staff or other volunteers.

Home visits

SHIBA volunteers are not allowed to visit client homes. (VRPM policy 2.7)

Injuries and accidents

- Any accident or injury to or by a volunteer must be reported immediately to the supervisor. An incident reporting form and protocol exists. Volunteers complete required accident and injury reports promptly following any incident. (VRPM policy 2.8)
- In response to a reported incident involving SHIBA volunteers, the VC ensures/oversees the notification of relevant authorities (e.g., SHIBA management, police, public health, insurance, ACL, etc.) as appropriate and undertakes subsequent steps necessary to respond to and resolve the incident. (VRPM policy 2.9)
- SHIBA and sponsor locations have emergency contact information on all of its volunteers – even short-term volunteers – and a procedure that enables volunteers to communicate with SHIBA or the sponsor’s supervisory personnel at any time volunteers are on duty. Response to emergency communications must take place without delay. (VRPM policy 2.10)

Any changes to emergency contacts should be shared with SHIBA by sending an email to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.

Disasters

Serving clients during emergencies or disasters

- If parts of the state are impacted by power, phone and/or Internet disruptions, SHIBA will ask non-impacted SHIBA sponsors to respond to consumer referrals outside of their existing service area. The SHIBA program manager, grants and contracts coordinator and/or communications consultant will notify impacted sponsors through the OIC’s Continuity of Operations Plan (plan for how the agency will operate during/after a disaster with as little interruption as possible).

- SHIBA and sponsor locations have emergency contact information for all of its volunteers – even short-term volunteers – and a procedure that enables volunteers to communicate with SHIBA or the sponsor location’s supervisory personnel at any time volunteers are on duty. Response to emergency communications takes place without delay. (VRPM policy 2.10)
- If parts or all of the state are impacted by an epidemic, pandemic or other crisis that prevents face-to-face appointments, the decision for when volunteers can resume face-to-face appointments will be a local sponsor decision to make. For example, in the case of COVID-19, the decision should take into account the local number of COVID 19 cases, guidance from community health departments and the physical set up of each counseling location.

Insurance

Sponsor organizations may provide liability and accident insurance or other comparable forms of insurance and protection for all volunteers engaged in the SHIBA's business. (VRPM policy 2.2)

Volunteers are advised to notify their personal auto insurance company about their SHIBA driving activities to ensure coverage is in place and provides them with adequate protection. SHIBA requires volunteers who drive their own vehicle for SHIBA work purposes to carry liability coverage on any vehicle they use. The volunteer is responsible for the cost of this insurance. (VRPM policy 2.3)

The volunteer's supervisor must verify each volunteer's auto insurance coverage at least annually. The volunteer must sign-off on their coverage which is then retained in the volunteer's personnel file. If the volunteer's auto insurance coverage lapses, they must immediately notify their supervisor.

Corrective action

Sponsors must perform certain tasks associated with the delivery of the SHIBA program. These requirements are outlined in the Scope of Work, or Statement of Work section of the sponsor contracts. Baseline performance figures are specific to the geographic location the sponsor serves and are included in each sponsor contract. We monitor these specific measures monthly, quarterly and ad hoc, if necessary.

SHIBA suggests corrective action when deficiencies are identified.

Deficiencies include:

- Consistent late performance, i.e. submission of monthly and quarterly billing paperwork or other reports.
- Failure to perform all or parts of the contract.
- Consistent inadequate or low-performance measures results.
- Failure to ensure client and volunteer health or safety.
- Other significant audit or monitoring findings.
- Failure to attend required meetings.

Contract termination procedures

OIC may terminate a sponsor contract based on convenience or default. Contract termination language and timelines are listed in each sponsor contract.

Termination of convenience

Even though termination of convenience is the OIC's right and is initiated by the OIC, it's primarily used when both parties mutually agree to end the contract.

Termination of convenience may also be used when there are no funds available to continue with the contracted services.

Termination of convenience might occur when the sponsor knows they can no longer fulfill the contractual obligations and does not want an opportunity to correct the issue(s). Instead of going through the default process, the sponsor notifies SHIBA/OIC it cannot fulfill its obligations and would like to end the contract on good terms. The decision is a mutual one based on what is best for all involved, including the community being served.

Termination by default

Termination by default occurs when the sponsor does not fulfill its contract obligations even after SHIBA/OIC provided the sponsor an opportunity to correct its actions, but the sponsor failed to do so.

Records management

Volunteer records

The state has detailed records retention requirements and the SHIBA administrative assistant has administrative oversight. SHIBA's record retention process specifies:

- What type of document is created
- How long to retain it
- When to destroy it (VRPM policy 3.42)

The SHIBA program office maintains confidential hard copy or scanned electronic personnel records of each volunteer. Volunteers are asked to notify their VC of any changes in their contact information (i.e., emergency contact information, home address, telephone number, email address, etc.). Once the volunteer notifies the VC of changes, it's the VC's responsibility to notify the SHIBA administrative assistant (admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov) of the change.

Volunteer records maintenance

SHIBA staff maintain records on each SHIBA volunteer activated in STARS as a resource.

A system of records is maintained on each volunteer, including, but not necessarily limited to (VRPM policy 3.9):

- Application and related information gathered in the screening process
- Dates of service
- Positions held
- Training and orientation received
- Duties performed and achievements attained
- Performance records including appropriate documentation of any performance issues
- Record of exit
- Current contact information

Volunteer files include:

- Volunteer application, including background authorization
- Volunteer agreement
- SHIBA volunteer certificate
- Any corrective action plans or other correspondence

The VC conducts regular evaluations of both volunteer involvement and the infrastructure in place to support volunteer involvement in SHIBA (VRPM policy 3.11). VCs are encouraged to evaluate volunteers at least annually. Documents should be placed in the volunteer's personnel file. Suggestions for processes are in the [SHIP Volunteer program management manual](#) (see page 62 for guidance).

VCs are responsible for submitting applications, mentoring paperwork and corrective action plans to the SHIBA program office in a timely manner. Other items the VC can submit for volunteer files include: evaluations, commendations and awards from the sponsor organization or the public.

Volunteer coordinators are encouraged to use evaluation tools at least annually – either those approved by their own agency or by using guidance from the [SHIP Volunteer Program Management Manual](#). Add volunteer documents should be documented and stored in the volunteer's personnel file.

With reasonable notice, volunteers may examine the contents of their own personnel file located in Tumwater. (VRPM policy 3.10)

Public disclosure requests

From time to time, OIC and SHIBA receive formal public disclosure requests (PDRs) from individuals and entities. State law requires these requests be made in writing. When a request comes in, the OIC information and governance manager then notifies the SHIBA program manager about the request. Extreme care is taken to release only the minimum information necessary by law and only to satisfy the purpose of the request. In some cases, we may redact information from the requested information. If this occurs, the OIC must provide a legal justification to the requester as to why we omitted the information. Requests for information for commercial purpose are against the law and the OIC will deny those requests.

Volunteer contact and other information is considered the same as paid staff information, so it's exempt from public disclosure in most cases. Volunteer names, however, may be shared. In cases of legal subpoenas, SHIBA must operate within the law and must provide whatever information is required. See [Protecting client information](#).

Travel

Travel that requires pre-approval

Pre-approval is required for:

- Overnight travel (even if staying with friends or family)
- Rental cars
- Airfare
- Reoccurring same-day travel, such as dispersing publications in rural areas

VCs are required to seek out pre-approval for same-day travel (not overnight) for volunteers when it's *reoccurring* travel. Some examples of reoccurring travel may include: distributing publications to outlying areas, counseling at remote sites, or attending training outside of the assigned sponsor's area. This requirement is to ensure adequate funding is available prior to the volunteer incurring travel expenses. Submit approval requests to the SHIBA administrative assistance via email.

When the OIC pays for SHIBA sponsors, VCs and volunteers to travel

To qualify for OIC travel reimbursement, your travel must meet all of the following:

- Volunteers must first complete the Path to SHIBA certification (SHIBA's application process).
- For travel that requires pre-approval, you must get approval BEFORE you incur travel expenses.
- You must travel at least 50 miles one way for overnight travel approval consideration.
- Your travel must be for SHIBA-related business, such as special training, assisting at an outreach event or attending a volunteer conference.
- You must first pay for the travel and then turn in your Travel Expense Voucher form (located on [My SHIBA](#)) to the OIC for reimbursement.

- Your travel costs must be less than or equal to the per diem rate (verify you are using the most current rates). Travel information and a link to the per diem chart may be found on My SHIBA.

How to get pre-approval for travel

Take the following steps at least 10 working days before you incur travel expenses:

1. Complete the Agency Travel Request form (located on My SHIBA).
 - a. Estimate subsistence (food) and lodging costs using the current **per diem rate** for the area you will travel to. Check [My SHIBA](#) for current rates and information.
 - b. Estimate mileage using a web-based mileage locator (i.e., MapQuest, Bing Maps, etc.) or global positioning system (GPS).
 - c. If you plan to carpool or share a room with a volunteer or other paid staff, include that information and the person's name in the "Explanation for Exception" box.
2. If you have questions, contact the SHIBA program administrative assistant at admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov or (360) 725-7097.
3. Keep a copy of your form for your own records.
4. Send the completed Agency Travel Request Form to the attention of the SHIBA program administrative assistant via:

FAX: 360-586-4103

Email admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov in advance that you're faxing the travel request.

Email: admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov

U.S. Mail:

Office of the Insurance Commissioner
SHIBA Administrative Assistant
PO BOX 40255
Olympia WA 98504-0255

We will notify you when we've approved your travel request. After you've completed your travel, you'll need to submit your completed Travel Expense Voucher which may be found on [My SHIBA](#).

Note: In very limited cases, the SHIBA program manager will grant pre-approval to large groups of VCs and/or volunteers, and in these cases, you would not fill out an individual Agency Travel Request form, such as if SHIBA hosts a statewide volunteer conference. Assume individual pre-approval is required unless otherwise notified by the SHIBA program office.

If you're unsure you need pre-approval for travel, email admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.

Travel costs the OIC will reimburse

If your travel costs meet the OIC's requirements above, then we may reimburse you for:

Transportation: We ask you to use the least costly option. If it's something other than driving, we'll need a cost comparison. We ask you and your volunteers to consolidate trips and carpool when possible, especially if you're from the same local group traveling to the same location.

Note: For carpools, the OIC will reimburse only one SHIBA person for mileage.

The OIC will reimburse fares for bus, train and ferries, and will reimburse toll fees. Be sure to keep your receipts.

Lodging: Your lodging costs cannot exceed the per diem rate, unless the OIC grants an exception during the travel request approval process.

Note: It's the traveler's responsibility to ensure they're being charged the government lodging rate.

Parking: Use the least costly option and be sure to keep any parking receipts. Parking does not include tips, valet service, or extra in and out expenses.

Meals: The OIC reimburses meals only when an overnight stay is needed and you have received pre-approval. Meals are paid at the per diem rate. The OIC does not require receipts for meals.

What to do during the trip

To ensure your reimbursement goes smoothly, take these steps during your trip:

- If you're driving, keep track of mileage. Use your odometer, mapping website or global positioning system (GPS).
- You may include small detours for personal comfort breaks (i.e., food, restrooms, stretching, etc.), but the OIC will not reimburse for long detours.
- If you have lodging costs, get an original receipt.
- If you pay for parking, ferries, tolls, etc., keep track of your costs. Submit receipts if you received receipts for these type of expenditures.

What to do after the trip to get reimbursed

1. Complete the SHIBA Volunteer **Travel Expense Voucher** form located on [My SHIBA](#).
2. Complete the **Statewide Payee Registration** and **W-9** forms located on [My SHIBA](#). These forms are required with the first submittal for travel reimbursement. The forms need to be re-submitted if the individual has moved or if there is missing or conflicting information on the forms.

Note: VCs and volunteers check the *Volunteer* box in Section 3 of the W-9 form.

3. Keep a copy of your forms and receipts for your records.
4. Send your original SHIBA Volunteer Travel Expense Voucher, Statewide Payee Registration and W-9 forms, and your original lodging receipts to:

Office of the Insurance Commissioner
SHIBA Administrative Assistant
PO BOX 40255
Olympia WA 98504-0255

When to expect the reimbursement

You should receive your reimbursement in approximately 20 working days after we receive your completed and correct paperwork at the SHIBA program office. Missing or incomplete information or use of outdated forms will delay reimbursement. Email admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov if you do not receive your reimbursement 25 working days after submitting it to the SHIBA program office.

Notes

Section 4 – Communications

My SHIBA

[My SHIBA](#) is a webpage for:

- OIC/SHIBA program staff
- Sponsors
- VCs
- Volunteers

If you lost the password to access [My SHIBA](#), email admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov. You can provide the password to new volunteers to access the online training library while they're waiting to attend basic training in person or for access to complete it online.

VCs and volunteers can also access [My SHIBA](#) to help perform SHIBA-related activities.

Here are some examples of information you can find on [My SHIBA](#):

- STARS practice site and supporting documentation including Beneficiary contact forms
- SHIBA training library
- Publications
- Medicare Open Enrollment tools
- Outreach procedures, forms and guidance
- Counseling-related resources
- News and events
- Contact information
- SHIBA staff directory
- SHIBA sponsor directory

Section 4: Communications

[TOC](#)

- RTC area map
- Forms
- Complaint forms
- Travel instructions and forms
- Volunteer application packet

The SHIBA program communications consultant maintains the [My SHIBA](#) website. Email issues or suggestions to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov to the attention of the communications consultant.

Language assistance

Service to limited English-speaking clients

We make every effort to help people from all walks of life regardless of their primary language. To provide the best service to limited English-speaking clients:

- Use a bilingual volunteer either from your team or another SHIBA team, if they're willing and available.
- Use the [LanguageLink](#) service (see the next page) to interpret and to also set appointments.
- Get the help of other groups that have language resources or native speakers.

Ask a family member or friend of the client to help *only as a last resort*. SHIBA may discuss personal issues and the interpreter will generally have no experience with Medicare or insurance terms.

Another resources to help limited English-speaking clients is:

The National Alliance for Hispanic Health
1-866-783-2645 (English and Spanish)

LanguageLink [services](#)

Language Link is a service all SHIBA volunteers can use to talk to clients who speak languages other than English.

How to use it

Step 1: Call 888-338-7394

Step 2: Enter account number 19097, followed by the # sign

Step 3:

- Select 1 to connect directly to your Spanish interpreter, or:
- Select 2 to connect to a Russian interpreter
- Select 3 to connect to a Vietnamese interpreter
- Select 4 to connect to a Somali interpreter
- Select 9 for all other languages

Step 4: Enter division code 303

Note: If you require a third-party call, press 9 to reach a customer service representative.

Other resources

[Tips for working with an interpreter over the phone](#)

[Interpretation language list \(language.link.com\)](https://www.language.link.com)

Reference: <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/language-link-services>

Tips for working with an interpreter over the phone

Your role

Phone interpreters may receive several calls a day – each one requiring special attention in a specific field. When working with an interpreter over the phone, there are a few things you should keep in mind to ensure your calls are handled quickly and successfully:

- Always speak in first person, just as you would in a normal conversation. For example, say, “Do you have a Medicare card?” instead of, “Ask her if she has a Medicare card, please.”
- Immediately introduce yourself to the limited-English proficient (LEP) client and explain your reason for calling.
- After you speak one to two sentences or finish a thought, pause to give the interpreter enough time to interpret. Note: You’ll experience pauses when the interpreter repeats each statement in the respective language.
- Be prepared to explain some things in more detail for the phone interpreter. Some terminology and concepts may not have an equivalent in the target language.
- Control the conversation. The phone interpreter is only there to interpret. You’re responsible for making sure the LEP client receives the same service as an English-speaking client.
- Ask the interpreter and the LEP client questions to ensure they understand what you want to communicate.
- Avoid asking the interpreter for his/her opinion about the situation being interpreted.

Note: Language Link can accommodate three-way phone interpretation calls. Tell the Language Link call center agent, at the start of the call, the name and phone number of the third party, and they’ll arrange the call for you. The interpreter cannot facilitate this for you.

Your phone interpreter’s role

- Make sure your interpreter introduces him or herself using a first name.
- Your interpreter should not have a side conversation with you or the client. He or she must relay everything that is said back to you or your client. This includes any advice the client may ask the interpreter.

- Your interpreter should not discuss anything unrelated to the phone interpretation assignment.

Reference: <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/tips-working-interpreter-over-phone>

American Sign Language (ASL)

Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS)

TRS is also known as Washington Relay. It is a free service provided by the Department of Social and Health Services' (DSHS) Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) to ensure equal communication access to telephone service for people who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing and speech disabled.

This service allows hearing callers to communicate with deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech disabled relay users and vice versa through specially trained relay operators.

Calls can be made to anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with no restrictions on the number, length or type of calls. All calls are confidential; no recordings are kept. (Source: [DSHS ODHH](#))

Instructions to access TRS are available at:

www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/odhh/telecommunication-relay-services

Coordinate ASL interpreter for SHIBA outreach event

To request an ASL interpreter, send an email to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov *at least 15 business days prior to the outreach event date* and include the following information:

For SHIBA-sponsored events, the SHIBA program office will coordinate the procurement of the ASL interpreter services for the event. If it is an outreach event generated by the sponsoring agency, that agency will be responsible for paying for ASL services.

Coordinate ASL interpreter for one-on-one counseling with ASL client

To request an ASL interpreter, send an email to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov *at least 15 business days prior to the one-on-one counseling date* and include the following information:

- Event name (if applicable)
- Event coordinator name and contact information
- Date
- Time

- Location (street address, room number, etc.)
- Number of deaf attendees for the event (if applicable)
- Number of deaf and blind attendees for the event (if applicable)
- Number of hearing attendees for the event (if applicable)
- Name(s) of ASL client(s) (if possible)

ASL clients are generally familiar with interpreters in their communities and have a preference. If possible, also provide the names of the deaf attendee(s) in the email. The interpreter service will try to match up preferred interpreters.

If you have any questions, contact the SHIBA administrative assistant at 360-725-7097.

Complex case handling

The goal of this section is to provide you with the necessary skills and resources to manage complex counseling cases as they arise. This section provides guidance to:

- Assist limited English-speaking clients.
- Assist deaf or hard of hearing and/or clients that are both deaf and blind.
- Document or refer complaints of suspected fraud, errors and abuse.
- Seek guidance from a subject matter expert (SME).
- Refer a complaint to OIC SHIBA staff.

Assist limited English-speaking clients

We make every effort to help people from all walks of life regardless of their primary language. To provide the best service, please follow these steps:

- Use a bilingual volunteer either from your team or another SHIBA team, if they are willing and available.
- Get the help of other groups that have language resources or native speakers.
- Ask a family member or friend of the client to help *only as a last resort*.

SHIBA may discuss personal issues and the interpreter will generally have no experience with Medicare or insurance terms.

SHIBA advisors may elect to use the LanguageLink to interpret when none of the best practices listed above are available. LanguageLink is a service all SHIBA volunteers can use to talk to clients who speak languages other than English. The LanguageLink service can also be used to set appointments.

See Section 4 for instructions to access LanguageLink.

Assist deaf, hard of hearing, and/or blind clients

Refer to Section 4 for instructions to access:

- Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS).
- Procure American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for outreach.
- Procure ASL interpreter for one-on-one counseling.

Medicare fraud, errors or abuse

What to do if you suspect fraud, errors or abuse:

1. Rule out an error:
 - Recommend the client review any documents they have such as a Medicare Summary Notice (MSN), an Explanation of Benefits (EOB), bills from providers, etc. It's appropriate for you to assist if the client needs help.
 - Explain to the client they may need to contact their provider/supplier to review, get details and facts or ask questions about their concerns. It's appropriate for you to assist if the client needs help.
2. If the issue is not related to an error, or you and the client have not been successful in resolving it:
 - If the problem is with billing, coverage or appeals that can't be resolved after taking the steps above, submit a complaint to the SHIBA Resolution Coordinator using the SHIBA Advisor Complaint Process (see below).
 - If the problem is suspected fraud or abuse, AND you have documentation such as MSNs, EOBs or bills, submit a complaint to the SHIBA resolution coordinator using the SHIBA Advisor Complaint Process (see below).

Subject matter expertise

Some SHIBA clients will need assistance with topics that require special subject matter expertise. Topics such as long-term care, public employee health coverage, Medicaid, railroad retirement, etc.

SHIBA advisor complaint process

Clients should now use the Office of the Insurance Commissioner's (OIC) [online complaint form](#) at <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/file-complaint-or-check-your-complaint-status> or they can file by U.S. mail.

The benefits of using the online version is that it supports uploading additional documents and clients can track the status of their complaint. If clients decide to use the paper form, they can attach any additional documents when they mail the form. They just won't be able to track the status. The SHIBA resolution coordinator will work on these complaints.

Referral for elevated complex cases

Some complex cases may be too complex for volunteers or volunteer advisors to handle. Difficult cases that involve fraud or errors should be referred to a regional training consultant or other SHIBA staff familiar with handling elevated complex cases.

The online complaint form should be filled out. Many elevated complex cases are handled by the SHIBA complaints coordinator.

Publications and media

Publications

For quality-control purposes and statewide consistency, you may only distribute SHIBA-related publications to the public that the OIC/SHIBA program office produced and approved. The OIC's SHIBA communications consultant is responsible for all SHIBA publications, including content, format, style and quality and effectiveness of publications. The overall goal is to increase the visibility and recognition of the OIC/SHIBA program and to manage production costs and potential agency liabilities.

The SHIBA communications consultant writes and edits all SHIBA publications in partnership with a team of OIC Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The SMEs are responsible for providing the communications consultant with accurate technical content for publications. SHIBA encourages all sponsors and volunteers to provide input on existing publications or propose new publications to the SHIBA communications consultant or their RTC.

SHIBA advertising request form

Media

Before publicly communicating SHIBA program information or advertising to the media or press, sponsors and/or VCs must contact the SHIBA communications consultant.

If you plan to create your own SHIBA-related news releases, public service announcements, advertisements or news articles, you must submit them to the SHIBA communications consultant for review and approval at least 10 business days in advance of the date you will need them.

For newspaper or radio ads, you'll need to thoroughly fill out the [online SHIBA advertising request form](#) at least 10 business days in advance. The online form is available on the [My SHIBA](#) website.

Outreach materials

SHIBA offers sponsors a variety of outreach materials that the OIC/SHIBA program office has produced and approved, such as posters, cards, cube pads, bags, etc., for use in outreach activities. These items are available for free by ordering through Fulfillment at the Dept. of Enterprise Services.

If you create your own SHIBA-related outreach materials, you must seek review and approval at least 20 business days in advance from the SHIBA communications consultant.

For more information, see [Section 2: Outreach](#), or search My SHIBA for “outreach” or “publications.”

Order publications and outreach materials

You can:

- Find instructions to order SHIBA publications on [My SHIBA](#).
- Order SHIBA publications through the Department of Enterprise Services, Fulfillment Center.
- Find a listing of available SHIBA publications on [My SHIBA](#).

Please do not order and store large quantities of publications. We want to ensure you don’t distribute outdated publications and deplete our stock, which prevents other sponsors from ordering materials.

News Flash

[News Flash](#) is an electronic newsletter that provides information about changes in current law or updates pertinent to helping counsel consumers.

News Flash is maintained by SHIBA staff. Volunteers and sponsors are encouraged to contribute items. This news is also of interest to local agencies and other community partners. To subscribe to receive News Flash, go to the “News and Events” section on MY SHIBA at <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba>.

SHIBA Medicare News

SHIBA Medicare News is an email distribution list that includes all current SHIBA volunteers and staff. SHIBA will use it on occasion, as needed, to send information about training, job aid updates and other important training and counseling content updates and information.

Section 5 – Information technology

Protecting client information

VCs and volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a staff member, a volunteer, a client or others, or involves the overall business of SHIBA. (VRPM policy 3.94)

All volunteers are required to take recurrent confidentiality training as a part of continuing education. For more information, see “confidentiality training” under Section 1 of this manual.

VCs and volunteers should take all steps necessary to safeguard the confidentiality of all SHIBA and client-related information and to prevent personal client information from falling into the possession unauthorized people. VCs and volunteers should only use information collected or obtained in the course of their SHIBA work to assist the client or otherwise fulfill VC and volunteer role responsibilities.

VCs and volunteers must send emails containing personally identifiable client information securely or as encrypted. See the next section for more information on encryption.

Anyone who collects and obtains information while doing SHIBA work must not disclose that information unless clearly approved by an authorized SHIBA representative. There is zero tolerance for breaches of confidentiality in connection with work at SHIBA.

Encrypted emails

When must I use encrypted email to send information?

Email must be encrypted when it includes:

- Personally identifiable information, including the individual's name, date of birth, Medicare or Social Security Number, address, income information, etc.
- Attachments that contain personally identifiable information, for example the Authorization for release of information, the OIC Complaint form, medical bills, MSNs, EOBs or a volunteer application packet.

Note: You can still send a regular email containing the STARS Beneficiary Contact (BC) number and NO personally identifiable information to someone within the SHIBA network. All personal information should be included in the password-protected Beneficiary Contact in STARS.

You must use encrypted emails with:

- Clients
- SHIBA sponsor offices
- Any SHIBA OIC staff person (except if your email system is INSIDE the state system, such as sending an email from OIC to DSHS)
- SHIBA volunteers or potential volunteers
- Anyone else you are sending an email to in your official SHIBA capacity if the email contains personally identifiable information

How do I access and send encrypted emails?

- To get access to the system, your volunteer coordinator or a SHIBA staff person needs to send you a secure email from the state of Washington system.
- You can then set up an account with a password. After that, you can send and receive encrypted emails.
- Instructions can be sent to you upon your request. If you have questions, send an email to: admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov.

Information procedures

Use of information technology

VCs and volunteers must comply with SHIBA sponsor agency information technology policies if they use OIC-owned, agency-owned or personal-owned computers to conduct SHIBA business. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Maintaining and protecting sensitive and confidential data to which they have access and/or responsibility.
- Securing sensitive and confidential data including but not limited to social security numbers, Medicare ID numbers, medical history, addresses, phone numbers, dates of birth, etc.
- Prohibiting saving confidential data to removable media unless authorized by the sponsor VC. Removable media includes, but is not limited to USB drives, CD/DVD media and external hard drives.

SHIBA expects all sponsor staff, VCs and volunteers to communicate in a professional and appropriate manner. You must not use electronic communication to solicit funds, send political messages, harassing messages, or for personal use.

You must not save sensitive client information on personally-owned computers. The U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living and the State of Washington consider it to be property and, as a public record, it may be disclosable under state law.

Volunteers must immediately report lost or stolen equipment or confidential client data to their VC.

When entering client, outreach or media data to STARS or other SHIBA data systems, whether using sponsor or personal computers, SHIBA requires volunteers or VCs to be trained and certified in the appropriate data system and to comply with the required policies for use and access. This includes taking training on appropriate security and safeguarding data.

Disposing confidential information

Volunteers and VCs are responsible for ensuring all client information and data is turned over to the sponsor for proper disposal. Any paper copies received by a volunteer are to be turned in to the sponsor as soon as possible. Sponsors must shred and properly dispose of any paper documents once client and related information is entered in the data systems. This includes permanently deleting any electronic notes or data collected after entering the data into STARS or other SHIBA data systems.

Counseling and confidential information

Discussing counseling scenarios

Due to the sensitive nature of the health and financial information clients share with us, it's critical we protect our clients' personal information. This means not only safeguarding written and electronic documents, but also not divulging names and individual identifying characteristics about our clients during conversations with our peers, family, friends or the public.

Everyone who is part of the SHIBA network is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information. This includes information involving a single staff member, volunteer, client or other person involving overall OIC/SHIBA business. Only the SHIBA program manager has the authority to share personal client information with the public under the guidance of OIC's information and governance manager.

Client counseling approach regarding confidential personal information

SHIBA staff and volunteers must not share individual information about a current or past client with anyone, unless it's directly related to the client's service needs and with verbal consent of the client.

When a volunteer works with a client, an unspoken understanding exists between the volunteer and the client that other organizations may be contacted to assist in the client's counseling process. In cases where volunteers must share information with other entities to provide service, the counseling volunteer should make the client aware when their information will be used and with which organization(s). If the client does not want their name shared (i.e. in connection with a referral), write it up in the notes section of the BCF in STARS.

When discussing particular cases with RTCs, volunteers, or other staff, be careful not to reveal the client name or any other identifying information. Even the fact that SHIBA has or has not provided service to a client should not be disclosed. When client information is shared with another entity that may assume some responsibility for resolving the case, the name of the volunteer assisting the client

is also kept confidential and used only by the investigator or staff within the OIC to gather additional clarifying information.

Consent to disclose

In general, SHIBA volunteers and staff are not required by law to use signed release forms to disclose information. However, there are exceptions to this rule. When disclosing the following information, state and/or federal law requires the written consent of the client:

- Drug and alcohol abuse treatment information
- Sexually transmitted disease information (including HIV/AIDS)
- Mental health information

Consent must specifically mention the above information. A general authorization to release information is not sufficient. This consent can be revoked by the client at any time. Furthermore, written consent is required from a minor (age 13 through 17) to disclose information about drug and alcohol use, abuse, and treatment; sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS); mental health conditions; and pregnancy termination. Also if another entity requests a signed consent form, volunteers can request one and ask the client to sign it.

Data capture and case notes

At times, highly sensitive personal information such as Medicare numbers, plan numbers, medical conditions, medication lists or client income are captured in the case notes in STARS. Include this information only if it's directly relevant to the case at hand and it's needed to resolve the case fully. If this information is not required to resolve a case, do not include it.

Safeguarding volunteer and client data

Help SHIBA staff maintain up-to-date team member records in **STARS**. Please take the following steps to reduce the possibility of identity theft:

- Report deactivated volunteers promptly to admin4shiba@oic.wa.gov. Deactivated volunteers no longer have access to STARS.
- Do not share STARS passwords.

- Do not use the “remember me” function to automatically enter passwords.
- Keep passwords in a safe place.
- The volunteer must turn over all case notes and other client information to the sponsor organization as soon as the case is entered into STARS and closes. The sponsor organization is responsible for shredding and a strict protocol must be in place to ensure client information is destroyed.
- Find more information on STARS on [My SHIBA](#) under the STARS section.

SHIBA email addresses

Some volunteers will use an agency-specific email provided by their SHIBA sponsor for SHIBA business. If not, be aware if they use their personal email address, it may be subject to public disclosure requests, which may mean releasing unwanted personal information.

If the sponsor doesn't provide the volunteer with an email address, we ask that the volunteer create a SHIBA email account specifically for SHIBA business use. SHIBA suggests the following format:

- Jane Marie Smith appears as: janesshiba@gmail.com or yahoo.com; etc.
- If you receive a message "This name is already in use," please add your middle initial: janemsshiba@gmail.com

Please note: If a volunteer changes their email address at a later date, they'll need to let their volunteer coordinator know as soon as possible. This will prevent any loss of communication or inability to access SHIBA applications.

Using social media

Social media should be used responsibly by SHIBA volunteers. (VRPM policy 4.5)

The OIC monitors all social media platforms it owns and operates. The OIC reserves the right to remove any comments posted on its social media accounts that contain any disallowed content including:

- Vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, or personal attacks.
- Political statements, such as comments that endorse or oppose political candidates or ballot propositions.
- Promotion or advertising of commercial services, entities or products.
- Confidential, proprietary or legally sensitive information about OIC business and/or employees, insurers and consumers.
- Personal information that can identify the person who posted it.
- Comments or information that suggests or encourages illegal activity.
- Multiple off-topic posts that are repetitive or are copied and pasted.

Source: OIC Policy No. 34, Social Media

Information about volunteer's personal social media accounts:

- Volunteers have the right to establish and maintain personal social media accounts outside of volunteer work hours using personal, non-state-owned equipment and resources. Activities on these personal social media accounts will not be grounds for disciplinary action unless the activities are a conflict of interest as set forth in RCW 42.52 (<https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/>) or are detrimental to the volunteers work performance or the program of the agency.
- Volunteers who choose to list their SHIBA affiliation on a personal social media site must not represent opinions on behalf of the agency.

STARS access and setup

You can find documentation for the SHIP Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) on My SHIBA. Information includes user basics, information about the beneficiary contact form (BFC) and various desk aids. Go to the STARS Landing Page. Click on “STARS manual, job aids, and support resources: SHIP TA Center.”

- STARS Entellitrak.com login page at: <https://smpship.acl.gov/etk-hhs-acl-prod/login.request.do>
- STARS Entellitrak.com landing page at: <https://stars.acl.gov/etk-hhs-acl-prod/page.request.do?page=page.starshome>
- SHIBA STARS [Beneficiary Contact Form](#) (BCF) at: <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/shiba-stars-bc-form.pdf>
- SHIBA STARS [Group Outreach & Education Form](#) at: <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stars-group-outreach-education-form.pdf>
- SHIBA STARS [Media Outreach & Education Form](#) at: <https://www.insurance.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stars-media-outreach-education-form.pdf>

Email addresses

The SHIBA Online Resource Record form requires email addresses be unique for each resource (sponsor staff, VC, volunteers). STARS uses emails to reset forgotten or lost passwords. It’s also important that email addresses for resources are unique, legible and accurate on the SHIBA new volunteer application form.

Lost or forgotten STARS password or user ID

Contact:

Booz Allen Hamilton
STARS help desk
boozallenhelpdesk@bah.com
(703) 377-4424

Volunteer timesheets

Volunteers should accurately complete and submit required information about their volunteer activity on a timely basis. This may include timesheets, client or media contacts and other reports. (VRPM policy 3.96)

SHIBA tracks volunteer time in the STARS database. We use this data to create a resource report that is required by ACL.

Activity	Where it is tracked	Comments
Time spent advising SHIBA clients	STARS Beneficiary Contact Form	Enter all of the time spent helping the client during this contact, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All time spent meeting with client or representative • Any time spent researching, preparing materials, completing paperwork/form and traveling to meet with the client
Time spent on outreach and presentations	STARS Group Outreach & Education Form or STARS Media Outreach & Education Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of form depends on type of outreach you do • You can add time for additional team members.
Time spent on any other SHIBA activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending trainings, including Basic & continuing education • Administrative support • Studying • Any other time not counted in the Beneficiary Contact or outreach forms 	STARS SHIP Team Member Activity Form Data elements required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer name • Month and year • Activity • Total minutes spent by activity 	Volunteers submit a paper form monthly to their VC with the required data elements, which is then entered by the sponsor into STARS. SHIBA offers examples of paper forms to use, but each sponsor may design their own form if needed to collect additional data they might require.

Reports

Links to reports and training materials are available from:

- STARS Entellitrak.com at: <https://smpship.acl.gov/etk-hhs-acl-prod/login.request.do>
- STARS landing page at: <https://stars.acl.gov/etk-hhs-acl-prod/page.request.do?page=page.starshome>.

Find more information on STARS in Section 3 of this manual.

Notes

Abbreviations and acronyms

AA	SHIBA Administrative Assistant
ACL	The Administration for Community Living (ACL), an operating division within the federal Department of Health and Human Services with headquarters in Washington, DC and regional offices in 10 cities. www.acl.gov
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ASL	American Sign Language
BC	Beneficiary Contact
BCF	Beneficiary Contact Form
CC	SHIBA Communications Consultant
CD	Compact Disk
CMS	The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) administers the Medicare program and oversees state administration of the Medicaid programs. The Center for Program Integrity (CPI) is a bureau within CMS that works with various contractors to identify potential fraud, waste and abuse in the original, fee-for-service Medicare program. The Center for Medicare is responsible for overseeing the Medicare Advantage (Part C) and Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) programs. An Administrator appointed by the Secretary of HHS heads CMS.
DES	Department of Enterprise Services
DOL	Department of Licensing
DSHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DVD	Digital Video Disk
EOB	Explanation of Benefits

FS	SHIBA Field Supervisor
GC	SHIBA Grants and Budget Coordinator
GOE	Group Outreach and Education
GPS	Global Positioning System
HHS	The Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) is one of two departments within the executive branch of the federal government responsible for administering the Health Care Fraud & Abuse Control (HCFAC) program of which the Medicare Integrity Program (MIP) is a part. The Administration for Community Living (ACL), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) are units within HHS. The Secretary of HHS holds a cabinet-level position.
ID	Identification
GC	SHIBA Grants coordinator
IT	Information technology
MA	Medicare Advantage
MIPPA	Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers ACT acl.gov Search for MIPPA.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSN	Medicare Summary Notice
MSP	Medicare Savings Program
NPR	National Performance Reporting https://portal.shiptacenter.org/Portal/Content/STARS.aspx Login required. Or www.shiptacenter.org Login and search for National Performance Reporting. You may get a web pages search result. Select web pages and then search STARS results.
NV	SHIBA New Volunteer
OIC	Office of the Insurance Commissioner
OIG	The HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigates Medicare and Medicaid fraud, and refers criminal cases for prosecution to the U.S. Attorney offices. The OIG has authority to issue civil monetary

penalties and exclude providers from the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

MOE	Media Outreach and Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
ODHH	Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing
PM	SHIBA Program Manager
POM	Program Operations Manual
PS	SHIBA Program Operations Supervisor
PRT	Department of Printing
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RTC	SHIBA Regional Training Consultant
SHIBA	Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors
SHIP	The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) provides counseling services to Medicare beneficiaries and helps them to apply for assistance programs, comparing and choosing health and drug plans, and appealing claims denials.
SHIP TA	State Health Insurance Assistance Programs Technical Assistance (SHIP TA) Center Resource Library www.shiptacenter.org
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SMP	The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) empowers and assists Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, errors and abuse through outreach, counseling and education.
SSA	Social Security Administration www.ssa.gov
STARS	SHIP Tracking and Reporting System https://stars.acl.gov/etk-hhs-acl-prod/page.request.do?page=page.starshome
TC	SHIBA Training Coordinator
TRS	Telecommunication Relay Services
USB	Universal Serial Bus is also known as a thumb drive or a jump drive and is used for portable data storage.

VC	SHIBA Volunteer Coordinator
VRPM	Volunteer Risk Program Management. A list of policies provided by ACL and adapted by SHIBA.
W-9	Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification form

VRPM policies

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- 1.2 Scope of the volunteer policies
- 1.3 Compliance
- 1.4 Volunteer role classifications
- 1.5 Policy revision

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- 2.5 Reporting of abuse
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- 3.6 Volunteer program management system
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- 3.27 Selection policy
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* As of July 2020 these policies are not in use by SHIBA. This status can change without notice. The full text of these policies is located on [My SHIBA](#).

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Resources

SHIP

SHIP Volunteer Program Management Manual

(search the shiptacenter.org Resource Library)

portal.shiptacenter.org/Handler.ashx?ItemType=File&ItemGuld=a0d44297-9ebd-41c2-8b0d-122875a5b28d

SHIBA

SHIBA Group Outreach & Education Form

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stars-group-outreach-education-form.pdf>

SHIBA Media Outreach & Education Form

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stars-media-outreach-education-form.pdf>

SHIBA Volunteer application packet

https://www.insurance.wa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/vol-application-packet_10.pdf

SHIBA Volunteer Handbook

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/media/1548>

SHIBA VRPM Policy Manual

<https://www.insurance.wa.gov/media/6745>

SMP and SHIPTA Center Resources

Search SMP at <https://www.smpresource.org/> for the following resources and many other topics. Note that some of the same resources, and many others, may also be found at www.shiptacenter.org.

SMP Performance management resources

SMP Resource library

SMP Role descriptions

SMP Volunteer Program Management Manual

SMP Volunteer Risk and Program Management: Vision Guide

Notes



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

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