SHIBA volunteer handbook

Insurance Consumer Hotline: (800) 562-6900
Administrative Office: (360) 725-7073
PO Box 40255
Olympia, WA. 98504-0255
Email: shiba@oic.wa.gov
Web: www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba

Updated June 2018
Dear SHIBA Volunteer:

I believe we all have the opportunity to make a difference in the communities where we live. Volunteers with the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors know this well. Our volunteers help others gain access to the health care coverage they need and deserve. They see firsthand the ways they make a difference in the lives of others, and how much they are key to SHIBA’s success in communities around the state.

I am very happy you have decided to volunteer with SHIBA. Our staff will train you to provide information about health care coverage, insurance, public health programs, fighting fraud, and more. I believe your experience as a volunteer for SHIBA will be exciting and rewarding. Working together, we all can make a difference.

Thank you for this important commitment.

Sincerely,

Mike Kreidler
Insurance Commissioner
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Reporting – STARS

Why the information is important

How STARS benefits SHIBA

Using state resources

OIC travel reimbursement

SHIBA News Flash

What is SHIBA News Flash?

How can I sign up to get SHIBA News Flash?

How do I cancel getting SHIBA News Flash by email or text message?

I don’t use email or text messaging. How can I get copies of SHIBA News Flash?

Workplace safety

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Insurance

Domestic violence

Children

Elders and disabled

Animals

Getting started checklist for new SHIBA volunteers

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Office of the Insurance Commissioner

Overview
The Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) is a fairly small Washington state agency. It runs under the direction of the Insurance Commissioner, a statewide elected official. Unlike most state agencies, we don’t receive public tax dollars. Insurance companies pay an administrative fee to cover all of our costs. The OIC employs about 200 people who support the agency’s mission of consumer protection and insurance industry regulation from central offices located in Olympia, Tumwater and Seattle with a satellite office in Spokane. The OIC considers the over 400 SHIBA volunteers, 20 sponsoring organizations, and their staff as part of the OIC family.

Role
The OIC regulates insurance business in Washington state under authority from state insurance laws.

Consumer protection is the most important job of the Insurance Commissioner. During 2017, the OIC investigated and resolved more than 7,700 complaints, recovering almost $19 million for consumers. The Insurance Commissioner also coordinates many protective and assistance services for insurance consumers. Staff in the Consumer Protection Division, which is where SHIBA resides, responds to thousands of questions from consumers every year.

The Insurance Consumer Hotline is a toll-free line consumers can call for help with all issues related to insurance. Calls are triaged and sent to either our compliance analysts or SHIBA. Our compliance analysts help with insurance issues, plans and companies that the OIC regulates. When insurance issues are outside OIC’s control (such as issues regulated by federal law), staff refer consumers to appropriate resources. In 2017, the Insurance Consumer Hotline received calls from more than 64,000 consumers.

SHIBA assists consumers with all kinds of health insurance, but mainly Medicare-related plans such as prescription drug plans and Medigap plans and public programs and fraud and abuse.

We’re proud of the work we do at the OIC and we’re glad you’re part of our team.
Office of the Insurance Commissioner
Organization chart

Executive

Company Supervision

Special Investigation Unit

Rates and Forms

Consumer Protection

*SHIBA

Operations

Legal Affairs

Public Affairs

Policy and Legislative Affairs

Consumer Protection Division (SHIBA)

Deputy Commissioner

Administrative Assistant

SHIBA Program Manager

Communications Consultant

Field Operations Supervisor

Program Operations Supervisor

Contract/Grants Coordinator

Administrative Assistant

Regional Training Consultants (4)

Training & Curriculum Coordinator

Resolution Coordinator

Secretary Senior
About State Health Insurance Assistance Programs and SHIBA

**SHIPS**
The State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPS) provide free, in depth, one-on-one insurance counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, friends and caregivers. SHIBA is the SHIP program for Washington state. SHIPs operate in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and are grant-funded projects of the federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL). For more information visit [www.acl.gov](http://www.acl.gov) or [www.shiptacenter.org](http://www.shiptacenter.org).

**SHIBA mission statement**
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.

**Who we are**
- SHIBA is part of the Consumer Protection Division within the OIC.
- We’re a free health care access and information resource.
- We provide information and counseling services to help consumers evaluate, plan for their needs, and use health insurance – mainly Medicare - and public health programs.

*SHIBA is an education and referral system of:*
- Community volunteers
- Local sponsoring agencies
- OIC staff
- Other government agencies and community partners

**SHIBA history**
- In operation since 1979
- Started by a volunteer in Skagit County
- The first program of its kind in the nation
• Recognized nationally as a model for health insurance consumer counseling
• Inspired federal funding to create SHIPs in all states
• Twenty local sponsoring agencies represent all 39 Washington counties

**SHIBA staff and resources**

We’re here to help! Below is a list of the SHIBA staff positions and who to go to for what.

SHIBA Reception .......................................................... 360-725-7073
Consumer Hotline .......................................................... 800-562-6900
  Visit or call between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.
  Email: shiba@oic.wa.gov

  **Mailing address:**
  P.O. Box 40255
  Olympia, WA 98504-0255

  **Street address:**
  5000 Capitol Blvd. SE
  Tumwater, WA 98501

**SHIBA Tumwater staff**


**Program Manager**
• SHIBA program development and oversight
• Legislative coordination
• Budget

**Administrative Assistant**
• Administrative support to program manager
• Medicare Unique IDs
• Travel-related inquiries

**Communications Coordinator**
• News Flash editor
• Public SHIBA and Medicare webpages
• News media
• Volunteer and staff My SHIBA webpages
• Advertising and marketing
• Publications
Contract/Grants Coordinator
- Contract and grants management
- Grant writing
- Performance measurement
- Sponsor contract management tools
- Quarterly reports

Field Operations Supervisor
- Training team supervisor
- Outreach and speaker requests

Program Operations Supervisor
- Complaint process
- Volunteer management
- Curriculum development
- VRPM
- OIC hotline liaison for sponsor capacity during OEP and sponsor contract updates

Regional Training Consultants
- Volunteer training
- Partnership development
- Outreach

Resolution Coordinator
- Urgent calls, Medicare complaints

Training and Curriculum Coordinator
- Training curriculum development
- VRPM

Secretary Senior
- STARS questions
- Volunteer application process
- Background checks
- Publication ordering assistance
- Certification exam request
- Volunteer badges
Volunteer Risk Program Management (VRPM) Policies and working with the Administration for Community Living (ACL)

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program and SHIPs rely on volunteers to serve the Medicare beneficiaries within their states and territories. Without sound volunteer policies, there are inherent risks to the SMPs and SHIPs in recruiting and using these volunteers. With that in mind, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has developed a set of volunteer policies, which we describe in this handbook.

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

**NOTE:** We will reference VRPM policies throughout this handbook.

Complete text of all VRPM policies is available for review in the VRPM Policy Manual located on [My SHIBA](http://www.myshiba.org).

The purpose of the volunteer policies is to enhance the quality, effectiveness and safety of SHIBA services through the guidance and direction of 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 the volunteer policies at any time and 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 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)

**SHIBA services**

| Features and benefits | • FREE!  
|                       | • Impartial and objective (no affiliation with any insurance company or product)  
|                       | • Confidential  
|                       | • Accessible offices in nearly every county  
| Ways we can help | • Assess health care coverage needs  
|                   | • Screen for possible eligibility for programs  
|                   | • Evaluate and compare policies and programs  
|                   | • Identify and report possible fraud  
|                   | • Provide referrals to other agencies and programs  
| Methods and activities | • One-on-one counseling  
|                       | • Public presentations and workshops  
|                       | • Health fairs and special events  
|                       | • Publications and online resources  
|                       | • Referrals  
|                       | • Community partnership development  
|                       | • Recruiting and training volunteers  
|                       | • Continuing education  
| Who SHIBA serves | • People of all ages, all walks of life  
|                   | • People with disabilities  
|                   | • Seniors and pre-retirees  
|                   | • Ethnic populations  
|                   | • LEP (Limited English Proficiency) communities  
|                   | • Disease-specific groups  
|                   | • Uninsured people  
|                   | • Rural populations  
|                   | • People of all economic backgrounds  

Volunteer selection & certification process

**Recommended volunteer qualifications**

SHIBA staff and clients view volunteers as a valuable resource. Volunteers have the right to:

- Be given meaningful assignments
- Be treated as equal co-workers
- Effective supervision
- Be informed about significant matters affecting their roles
- Be recognized for work well done

In return, volunteers agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities, comply with these volunteer polices and other work-related direction and provisions, and remain loyal to the values, goals and procedures of SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.5)

**Desired volunteer qualifications:**

- Computer, email and Internet skills are highly recommended (or a willingness to learn)
- Willing to complete necessary paperwork and record keep in a timely manner
- Excellent organizational and problem-solving skills
- Ability to follow volunteer policies, scope and guidelines
- Above-average listening and communications skills
- Ability to show compassion and sensitivity while maintaining professionalism
- Ability to understand cultural differences and work with diverse groups of people
- Legible handwriting or typing skills
All volunteers must complete the following:

- Volunteer Application
- Volunteer Agreement
- Resource Record
- Background check
- Confidentiality Agreement

All volunteers must also:

- Participate in the screening and selection process that includes an interview with the sponsor.
- Provide at least two references of former or current supervisors of employment, volunteer activities or other credible sources. (VRPM Policy 3.36)
- Take the SHIBA Basic Training as soon as your background check is complete.
- Complete the SHIBA Volunteer Path to Certification.

NOTE: At any time during the selection and certification process, the sponsor, and/or OIC staff have the right to decide whether SHIBA is the right fit for the volunteer applicant.


**SHIBA volunteer rights and responsibilities**

SHIBA volunteers have certain rights and responsibilities that are good to keep in mind while volunteering.

The SHIBA program expects volunteers to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, in an objective, timely and conscientious manner. We ask volunteers to comply with the program’s volunteer policies, and to remain loyal to the program’s values, goals and procedures. Volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the SHIBA program, and agree that SHIBA may decide to end a volunteer’s relationship with the volunteer program or to change the nature of the volunteer’s assignment when appropriate.

At all times act in a knowledgeable manner, consistent with your training and the VRPM policies (VRPM Policy 3.88), which are available in the *VRPM Policy Manual* on My SHIBA, a password-protected website accessible only by SHIBA volunteers, sponsors and staff.

**Below is an overview of some of your volunteer rights and responsibilities:**

- Provide SHIBA services responsibly and objectively, without regard to the background or characteristics of clients or with favoritism to specific services, providers or products.
- Represent the SHIBA program only to the extent that your position description and role specifically authorize – don’t present yourself as a spokesperson for the SHIBA program.
- Accept meaningful work assignments suited to your interests, talents and skills.
- Receive and participate in appropriate orientation, training and evaluation.
- Learn about SHIBA policies, people and programs.
- Represent and promote SHIBA.
- Be a member of the team who is trusted, listens to consumers and other volunteers and shares ideas with SHIBA staff.
✓ Act in a professional manner that includes respecting confidences and communicating clearly.
✓ Be accountable to SHIBA when involved in SHIBA work.
✓ Work within the policies of the organization and carry out the assignments expected to the best of your ability.
✓ Use your affiliation only in the interests of the SHIBA program, and not to promote religious or political beliefs or personal business dealings.
✓ Inform your supervisor of any conflicts of interest that may arise after placement in your volunteer position.
✓ Report any abuse you witness to your supervisor involving the program’s clients.
✓ Report incidents such as accidents, injuries, errors, and the like to your supervisor.
✓ Report your volunteer activities in a timely manner.
✓ Protect the confidentiality of the program’s clients.
✓ Follow procedures to ensure the security of clients’ electronic and hard copy data.
✓ Report changes in your health status or medical treatment to your supervisor that might adversely affect your performance.
✓ Notify your supervisor of absences that’ll prevent you from performing an assigned task.
✓ Complete required training programs, including continuing education (CE) programs.
✓ Receive equal treatment.
✓ Work in a safe and respectful work environment free of harassment.
✓ Receive effective supervision.
✓ Receive constructive feedback on a regular basis.
✓ Receive informal and formal recognition.
✓ Receive clear information about the boundaries for the work you do and don’t do (see the position description for your volunteer role).
✓ Receive all the pertinent information you need to perform your work assignments.
✓ Refuse any tasks or work assignments when the assignment requires you to do something for which you have not been trained.
✓ Provide security and confidentiality for the records in your personnel file.
✓ Examine the contents of your personnel file.
✓ Make complaints and file grievances.
✓ Resign from your volunteer service at any time.

The list above shows many, but not all, of the rights and responsibilities for SHIBA program volunteers.

Opportunities to volunteer are publicized broadly and through a variety of methods to ensure that no one or any group is excluded due to limited distribution of information. (VRPM Policy 3.24)

**Volunteer roles and length of service**

We have various roles, which our volunteers may donate their time to:

- Administrative, clerical and technical support
- Community education/public speaking
- Outreach
- Counseling
- Training and mentoring
- Data entry
- Fraud specialist
- Special projects

SHIBA works with individual volunteers and other team members to match that volunteer’s skills and interests to the needs of the SHIBA program. As a result, SHIBA volunteers may serve Medicare clients, their families and caregivers in many creative ways. There are six types of activities most commonly conducted by SHIBA and SMP volunteers nationwide:
Assisting with administration: Help with work such as copying, filing, data entry and placing outbound phone calls in support of SHIBA activities.

Distributing information: Help with transporting and disseminating SHIBA information materials to sites and events; may include presenting prepared copy or performing scripted activities for small groups.

Staffing exhibits: Help by staffing information booths at events such as health fairs; also may provide general information about SHIBA to the public and answer simple questions.

Making group presentations: Help by giving presentations on SHIBA topics to small and large groups; may interact with the audience by answering questions and through discussion.

Counseling: Help by having direct conversations with clients about their individual situations; may include review of personal information such as Medicare Summary Notices, billing statements, and other related financial and health documents.

Handling complex interactions: Help with in-depth interactions with clients who are reporting specific instances of health care fraud, errors, and abuse; may act on behalf of a client to correct an error or refer suspected fraud and abuse to the appropriate authorities.

Other roles: SHIBA may create other roles not outlined above, or we may ask a volunteer to fill more than one of the SHIBA roles.

Depending on the volunteer’s interests, some volunteers may wear a variety of hats covering SHIBA, SMP and Areas Agency on Aging (AAA) activities.

SHIBA policies apply to all SHIBA volunteer roles, whether through direct service with SHIBA or involvement in SHIBA activities via a sponsor location. You may be qualified to serve in more than one role. (VRPM Policies 1.4 and 3.14) Role descriptions vary and include the following:

- Purpose of the role
- Role duties
• Designated supervisor
• Worksite location(s)
• Time frame for the performance of the work along with work schedule
• Qualifications
• Benefits of the role to volunteers

All volunteer roles conform to SHIBA’s primary goals. SHIBA recruits volunteers to broaden and extend its services to clients. Applying for a volunteer position does not automatically ensure someone becomes a volunteer. As a volunteer applicant, you must also fulfill all screening, orientation and training requirements before the program will accept you into service.

For more information about volunteer roles and length of service, be sure to consult your SHIBA volunteer coordinator. (VRPM Policies 3.5, 3.12 and 3.19)
Becoming a certified SHIBA volunteer

The Path to SHIBA certification (on the next page) outlines the application and applicant screening process. Screening processes are clear and comprehensive and SHIBA never waives standards, even for people the screener personally knows. SHIBA limits screening inquiries to only collecting information directly connected to the applicant’s ability to effectively perform SHIBA volunteer work.

SHIBA applies a formal selection process to all prospective volunteers. This process varies according to the nature and degree of responsibility of the volunteer role, access to money or other valuables, access to personal or confidential information and/or access to clients. Positions of trust are subject to more rigorous screening inquiries.

Only authorized people make the screening and acceptance decisions—typically the SHIBA volunteer coordinator or the SHIBA program manager. (VRPM Policy 3.28)
Path to SHIBA certification

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 chart below depicts the steps a new volunteer must successfully complete to become a certified SHIBA volunteer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps:</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Timing:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Application</td>
<td>• Complete the “New Volunteer Application” and submit it to the VC.</td>
<td>Process application and background check within 1 week of receipt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• VC forwards application to SHIBA Secretary Senior (SS) for processing and completion of the background check.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interview</td>
<td>• VC schedules interview with new volunteer (NV) and presents Volunteer Handbook.</td>
<td>VC schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• During interview, VC reviews the Mentoring Checklist* with the NV and discusses potential roles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Foundational Online SHIP TA Training</td>
<td>• VC contacts SS to request login access for NV.</td>
<td>Recommend 2 weeks to complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• VC reviews results after NV has completed Chapters 1-3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Basic Training</td>
<td>• VC arranges for the NV to complete Basic Training either in-person or online*.</td>
<td>Varies, in-person is 1-2 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• (*Online in consultation with VC and/or RTC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Certification Exam</td>
<td>• After the NV completes Basic Training, the VC contacts the SS to request exam access for the NV.</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The SS emails the link and instructions for the exam to the NV and copies the VC and RTC.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The SS sends a congratulatory email with the exam results to the NV and copies the VC and RTC.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: If the NV has not passed the exam after 2 attempts, the SS sends an email to the VC and RTC to suggest further study before attempting the test the third and final time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mentoring</td>
<td>• The VC meets with the NV and assigns a mentor for site specific training.</td>
<td>Minimum of 10 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 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.
### 7. Certificate and Badge

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The VC sends the completed Mentoring Checklist to the SS for the NV file, if indicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If not already provided, the VC provides the SS with a photo of the NV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The SS prepares the volunteer certificate and badge, and mails them to the VC to present to the NV.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

### 8. Certified volunteer starts working with clients.

### 9. Certified volunteers are required to attend a minimum of 8 out of 10 monthly continuing education trainings

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**Path Abbreviation Key**

| NV   | New Volunteer |
| RTC  | Regional Training Consultant |
| VC   | Volunteer Coordinator |
| SS   | Secretary Senior |

Path to SHIBA Certification Updated 3/5/2018


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**Step 1: Application, screening and record checks**

**Application**

All prospective SHIBA volunteers are required to fill out a standardized application form. Volunteer involvement is a key component of SHIBA. We accept and encourage volunteer involvement in a range of levels and within all appropriate projects and activities. SHIBA responds quickly to people who express an interest in volunteering. (VRPM Policies 1.1, 3.25 and 3.32)

**Screening**

SHIBA strives to maintain a safe and productive workplace with honest, trustworthy, reliable and qualified volunteers who do not present a risk of harming themselves, other people or SHIBA’s reputation.
SHIBA carefully considers all pertinent information gathered in the screening process and applies the following screening checks (VRPM Policies 3.27, 3.45, 3.29, 3.31, 3.47, 3.31, 3.49, 3.44):

- All SHIBA volunteers, regardless of length of tenure, are subject to the provisions of all volunteer policies, including new policies coming into effect during an existing volunteer's tenure.
- Existing volunteers must meet all new screening standards relevant to the role(s) they hold, with the exception of interviews and reference checks, which do not need to be initiated or repeated with existing SHIBA volunteers.
- While screening processes vary by role, we screen applicants for any given role the same way as all other applicants for that same role.
- All screening inquiries and decisions comply with relevant human rights requirements.
- SHIBA notifies prospective volunteers early in the application process about the range of screening inquiries the program uses for its various volunteer roles.
- SHIBA doesn’t start screening inquiries without an applicant’s prior knowledge and permission. Prospective volunteers agree to SHIBA’s right to conduct appropriate inquiries about their background and qualifications, and cooperate fully in the fulfillment of these checks.
- If a volunteer applies for a transfer to another volunteer role that requires a more intensive initial screening process than the current role the volunteer’s in, SHIBA will subject the volunteer to the additional screening inquiries for that different role. Failure to satisfactorily meet these additional screening requirements is grounds for denying the transfer.
- Prospective volunteers have the right to refuse permission for any line of screening inquiry, in which case, SHIBA reserves the right to terminate the application process and refuse accepting that person as a SHIBA volunteer.
- The SHIBA VC informs applicants of a projected time line for the screening process at the time of their initial interview. The VC will inform the applicant if screening takes longer than expected.
- The SHIBA VC informs prospective volunteers about the outcome of their application as quickly as possible.
Screening protocol is adjusted as roles change, and/or as standards of care and due diligence recommend.

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 SHIBA discovers the falsehood after acceptance.

Background checks

SHIBA runs a criminal record check on all prospective volunteer applicants. This is done to determine if there are any criminal violations that make an applicant unsuitable for SHIBA assignments. (VRPM Policies 3.38, 3.46)

Driver’s license checks

Volunteers whose SHIBA responsibilities include driving a motor vehicle must have a Washington state driver’s license and auto insurance. The volunteer coordinator is required to check for this documentation at the start of the volunteer term and at the three-year assessment period. This requirement might also mean the volunteer show proof if seeking OIC travel approval and reimbursement. (VRPM Policy 3.39)

Step 2: Interview

All prospective volunteers are interviewed to find out their suitability for and interest in, various SHIBA roles. (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 volunteer coordinator will recommends the volunteer applicant find a different organization to serve as a volunteer. (VRPM Policy 3.34)

Step 3: Foundational online SHIP Technical Assistance training

After a new volunteer’s applied and is ready for training, SHIBA can direct the volunteer to the SHIP National Technical Assistance Center (SHIP TA Center). SHIP TA provides online resources for foundational Medicare counselor training. This training helps new volunteers prepare for certification. New volunteers should
consult with volunteer coordinator for instructions, including website login for SHIP TA training. [www.shiptacenter.org/](http://www.shiptacenter.org/)

**Step 4: Basic Training, orientation and development**

**Basic Training**
There are four components of SHIBA volunteer training:

1. Basic Training
2. Certification exam
3. Volunteer Mentoring Training
4. Monthly trainings (continuing education)

New volunteers may start SHIBA Basic Training as soon as they’ve completed their required paperwork. You can attend in person at a nearby location when offered. Training materials are available on My SHIBA at [www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba](http://www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba). SHIBA updates the information as needed to reflect new information and changes. Please see *Path to Certification* on My SHIBA in the “Volunteer Training” section for reference.

Basic Training classes consist of the following topics:

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

*Note:* For details on SHIBA’s available training modules, go to the My SHIBA at [www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba](http://www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba) and find the section on “Volunteer Training” to get details about Basic Training and Monthly Volunteer Training.
Orientation
All volunteers receive orientation on topics that include, but are not limited to the (VRPM Policy 3.55):

- Purpose and values of SHIBA
- Nature and operation of the program or activity for which they are recruited
- Purpose, duties and requirements of the role they’re accepting

Volunteers must fulfill all mandatory orientation requirements before any work is assigned to them. (VRPM Policy 3.55)

Continued training development
We provide extensive training to all volunteers. We ask volunteers to:

✓ Strive to become and remain proficient in performing their SHIBA role.
✓ Examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to SHIBA and Medicare.
✓ Participate in continuing education relevant to your volunteer role.
✓ Provide services only within the boundaries of your 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 regional trainers 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 continuing education (CE) and other SHIBA training sessions as requested.

Step 5: Certification exam
Following Basic training, SHIBA will test volunteers on their knowledge and abilities for certain roles and must show minimum levels of comprehension and skill. For such roles, volunteer coordinators will not assign duties to volunteers
until SHIBA certifies their qualification for the role, using the required SHIBA criteria and process. (VRPM Policy 3.58)
All volunteers who will be counseling and answering client questions are required to take and pass a certification exam before they can work with consumers.

**Step 6: Volunteer Mentoring Training**
Volunteers receive specific on-the-job training, which provides the information and skills they need to perform their volunteer assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training are fitting to the complexity and demands of the role, and the volunteer’s capabilities. (VRPM Policy 3.59)

After completing Basic Training, the volunteer coordinator will set up mentoring training to provide skills and techniques for volunteers who’ve chosen to become a counselor. In addition, SHIBA also provides online tools and information (located on My SHIBA):

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

**Monthly continuing education trainings**
After successful completion of Basic Training, volunteers are expected to attend a minimum of eight out of ten monthly training classes at their sponsor’s site. For more information, see Step 9: Attend required monthly trainings.

SHIBA established minimum initial and ongoing volunteer training requirements. They involve the delivery of a volunteer training program tailored to specific volunteer roles. Volunteers must fulfill mandatory training requirements before any work is assigned. (VRPM Policy 3.56)
Step 7: Certificate and badge

Certification: Acceptance and appointment
Volunteers may start their work with SHIBA once the program’s formally accepted them into service. (VRPM Policies 3.52, 3.13, 3.30, 3.50)

- Service as a volunteer with SHIBA starts with the applicant receiving an official, written notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer role.

- SHIBA will not offer conditional certification to a potential volunteer. For example, volunteer coordinators will not offer an appointment to a volunteer now with the condition that the volunteer pass the certification exam within a month.

- SHIBA does not automatically accept everyone as a volunteer.

- SHIBA reserves the right to not accept applicants. This decision is based on an objective and equitable assessment of their fit as a SHIBA volunteer. The SHIBA program manager has final authority on this decision.

- When a volunteer coordinator places a volunteer in a role, they pay special attention to the volunteer’s interests and capabilities and the requirements of the volunteer role. They will not place someone unless they can meet the volunteer’s requirements and the role requirements.

- Volunteer coordinators will place volunteers in roles where they have access to paid staff for support.

Volunteers do not displace paid staff. The availability of volunteers is never a factor in the consideration of staff layoffs, terminations or loss through attrition. Volunteers supplement, but do not replace the work of paid staff.

Re-acceptance
Re-accepting someone who previously served as a SHIBA volunteer doesn’t automatically occur. The SHIBA program manager, or their designee, will take into consideration the person’s past volunteer performance and the results of any updated or additional screening inquiries that pertain to the role they are applying for and would like to serve in as a volunteer. (VRPM Policy 3.48)
Re-assignment
Volunteers who are at any time re-assigned to a new role receive all appropriate orientation, training and screening (if applicable) before they begin work. (VRPM Policy 3.54)

Badge
Once a volunteer’s successfully completed training and mentoring, SHIBA will issue a SHIBA name badge with the volunteer’s photo. Volunteers use the identification only when carrying out official and authorized SHIBA duties. (VRPM Policy 3.92)

If you decide to quit or retire, you must turn in your SHIBA ID badge to your volunteer coordinator.

Step 8: Start working with clients
The following client services guidelines will help you give the absolute best service when you’re counseling the public:

✓ Provide service in a responsible and objective fashion, without regard to the background or characteristics of clients.
✓ Provide current and accurate information and seek additional assistance or information when in doubt or when specialized knowledge or expertise is required.
✓ Give clients information so they can make their own decisions about their needs. It’s important that you do not rely on your preferences. You must
remain unbiased. Do not make plan choices or decisions for clients. (VRPM Policy 3.90)

✓ Do not recommend or endorse specific services, providers or products to clients.

✓ Use clear and basic language with clients. Give clients a chance to ask questions.

✓ Ask as many questions as needed to fully understand the clients’ circumstances. They may not always share information up-front, but let them know it’s important for you to have a complete picture to help them.

✓ Please maintain appropriate interpersonal boundaries. At no time should you engage in flirting, sexual activities or sexual contact with clients.

✓ When clients are not literate or have problems understanding your primary language, take steps to help them. This may include providing them with a detailed verbal explanation or having a qualified interpreter present. When possible, give written materials in the clients’ native languages.

✓ When a client displays cognitive impairment, or seems to have trouble understanding, make sure a family member or guardian helps him or her with the decision-making process.

✓ When in doubt about a client’s mental state, immediately inform your volunteer coordinator. The volunteer coordinator should address the issue with the client, the client’s next-of-kin or legal guardian, if there is one. Be sure to get permission from the client before talking to next-of-kin or a legal guardian.

✓ It will always be a delicate situation when you aren’t sure if the client understands what they’re doing. SHIBA volunteers may ask about the client’s desire for access to help or a caregiver and refer the client to an appropriate social services agency.

✓ Use accurate and respectful language in written or verbal communications to or about clients.

✓ When client questions are beyond your level of expertise or program scope, refer them to another SHIBA volunteer, SHIBA staff or outside agency with appropriate knowledge or scope.
SHIBA volunteer home visits
We take the safety and reputation of our volunteers very seriously. Our volunteers do not perform home visits or counsel clients in their own homes. (VRPM Policy 2.5) At no time should you ever go into the home of a client or have a client in your home, even if you’re accompanied by another volunteer or a paid staff member who is authorized to make the visit. As a volunteer, you are not protected by the OIC in this activity. We recommend you provide the service over the phone or in a public location to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone.

When a request comes in to the sponsoring organization for a home visit, your volunteer coordinator or the person who received the request will decide the best plan of action for the client. They’ll base their decision on available resources 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.

Face-to-face work with individual clients primarily takes place at your local SHIBA sponsor locations. When clients are unable to travel to your sponsor’s office, volunteers should discuss alternate meeting arrangements with their volunteer coordinator to maintain client privacy.

Volunteers cannot provide off-site counseling without prior approval. Where one-to-one information is requested by a participant 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 collecting personal, financial or other confidential information are referred for a more formal and private counseling session at the sponsor office. (VRPM Policy 2.6)

Services 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, please follow these steps:

- Use a bilingual volunteer, whether from your team or another SHIBA team, if they’re willing and available.
- For over-the-phone counseling, use the Language Link services for help with interpreting. You can also use Language Link to set appointments with clients. It can be used via speaker phone for people who are in a SHIBA office (face-to-
face). For More information go to: www.insurance.wa.gov/language-link-services

- Get the help of other groups that offer language resources or native speakers.
- Ask a family member or friend of the client to help.

Additional resources

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

Individuals can receive one-on-one counseling, help applying for low-income subsidy, and help finding a plan to meet their individual needs. The hotline is available Monday – Friday, 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Pacific Time).

1-800-MEDICARE (English and Spanish)

Contact 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for general Medicare information, ordering Medicare booklets and information about health plans. English-and Spanish-speaking customer service representatives at this number can answer questions about the Original Medicare plan and provide current information about the health plans available in your area.

1-800-MEDICARE Customer Service Reps (CSR) are also able to access over-the-phone interpretation services in most languages. The caller should say “Agent” and request the interpreter when the CSR answers. Hearing-impaired clients can call Medicare with the TTY number: 1-877-486-2048.

**Step 9: Attend required monthly continuing education**

After successfully completing Basic Training, SHIBA requires volunteers to attend monthly continuing education training classes at their sponsor’s site. These training sessions consist of three hours of monthly classroom instruction and discussion. Volunteer coordinators also have time on the agenda to share local information.

- All certified volunteers must attend eight of the ten monthly training classes to remain in “active” status.
• No monthly volunteer training is scheduled in August or December to accommodate volunteers’ vacation schedules.

• Volunteers who are not able to attend a training can make up training by viewing the training online. Volunteers must consult with their volunteer coordinator to ensure make-up sessions are properly tracked. Volunteers should not make it a habit to use make-up sessions in place of regular monthly training.

• SHIBA breaks the trainings down in to three components called “Monthly training packets.” The packets include:

1. **Core training** – Focus on any changes and new information related to Medicare

2. **Monthly training** – Broaden the sponsors’ and volunteers’ focus in their primary areas of business as a SHIBA sponsor.

3. **National training** – Incorporate national information in our packets when necessary. Any Washington state-specific information will be priority.

Volunteers who don’t meet the required continuing education requirements for their role are respectfully removed from service in that role. (VRPM Policy 3.62)

From time to time, SHIBA management may add or subtract the number of monthly training sessions based on resources, weather, or other limiting factors.

SHIBA’s goal is to promote and encourage volunteer participation in distant e-learning.
Supervision and performance management

SHIBA has both the right and the obligation to provide supervision and support to manage the work done by volunteers, and to determine the nature and extent of supervisory guidance provided to volunteers. (VRPM Policy 3.67)

- Volunteer coordinators advise volunteers about the volunteer performance management system during their initial orientation with SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.66)
- Volunteer coordinators provide volunteers with a periodic evaluation of their work. (VRPM Policy 3.73)
- SHIBA and volunteer coordinators provide volunteers with all the necessary information pertinent to their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers are included in and have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials, meetings and consumer records relevant to work assignments. (VRPM Policy 3.72)
- A constructive, positive and success-oriented performance management system is in place at SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.64)

Volunteers and paid staff partner to implement the SHIBA mission and its programs, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. Each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other. Paid staff do not make unreasonable demands on volunteers or request that volunteers exceed the boundaries of the role description or the limits of their individual capacity. (VRPM Policy 3.114)

**Volunteer responsibilities**

✓ After SHIBA accepts someone to serve as a volunteer, the volunteer agree to accept supervision and support from designated supervisory personnel. (VRPM Policy 3.69)

✓ Enter client contact, outreach and media events in the official SHIBA data systems.
✓ Each volunteer will be assigned to a volunteer coordinator who is responsible for direct supervision and support of that volunteer. (Policy 3.70)

✓ SHIBA expects volunteers to be reliable and punctual. If a volunteer will be absent from a scheduled duty, it’s up to that volunteer to inform their volunteer coordinator as far in advance as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made. It’s not the volunteer’s responsibility or right to find or assign an alternate volunteer to perform their work. (VRPM Policy 3.97)

✓ Volunteer coordinators clearly communicates role boundaries to volunteers. Volunteers must recognize and respect the limits of their skills and abilities, and the boundaries and limitations of their role. (VRPM Policy 3.89)

✓ Volunteers who do not adhere to SHIBA rules, policies or procedures or who repeatedly fail to satisfactorily perform a volunteer assignment despite supervisory support and other corrective action interventions are subject to dismissal by SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.77)

✓ SHIBA has a corrective action review and appeals procedure in place. Volunteer coordinators make volunteers aware of the appeals procedure when accepted into volunteer service. (VRPM Policy 3.81)

**Volunteer coordinator responsibilities**

Each SHIBA volunteer must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct volunteer management. This supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and is available to the volunteer for consultation and help when necessary. Volunteer coordinator responsibilities include:

✓ Coordinating and managing the involvement of volunteers. (VRPM Policy 3.7)

✓ Conducting risk assessments on SHIBA volunteer roles, work and activities. (VRPM Policy 2.1)

✓ Training and qualification procedures, volunteer performance management, volunteer program management processes and activities, and regularly assessing volunteer worksite(s). (VRPM Policy 2.1)
Following performance management policies and procedures in day-to-day work with volunteers. (VRPM Policy 3.65)

Supervising and supporting SHIBA volunteers to reflect the principle of positive, constructive and success-oriented guidance that supports the SHIBA volunteer performance management system. (VRPM Policy 3.68)

Documenting the volunteer performance evaluation and placing it in the volunteer’s personnel file. (VRPM Policy 3.74)

Maintaining regular communication with SHIBA management on the status of volunteers.

Timely submitting all necessary paperwork. (VRPM Policy 3.75)

Providing positive, constructive, and success-oriented corrective action, when necessary, to help volunteers whose performance and/or behavior is not meeting expectations. (VRPM Policy 3.76)

Formulating an annual budget for volunteer management. (VRPM Policy 3.8)

Placing volunteers only in settings where staff are clearly supportive of volunteer involvement and willing to work together with, and provide support for volunteer participation. (VRPM Policy 3.17)

**Probationary period**

SHIBA places all new volunteers on a three-month probation period after they complete their initial training and are working in a role. Adjustments are made wherever appropriate, including possible placement into a different volunteer role that better suits the person. (Policy 3.41)

If during the probation period either party decides that SHIBA volunteer work is not appropriate, they can immediately terminate without prior notice or reason. Probationary status also applies to volunteers who’ve been reassigned to new SHIBA roles. (VRPM Policy 3.41)

**Volunteer records maintenance**

SHIBA uses a screening documentation process that lays out what documentation is created, how long it’s retained, and when to destroy it. (VRPM Policy 3.42)

SHIBA staff maintain records on each SHIBA volunteer that has been activated in the SHIP Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) as a resource.
SHIBA staff maintains a system of records on each volunteer, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- 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
- Background check
- SHIBA Online Resource Record
- Volunteer Agreement
- Mentoring Checklist
- SHIBA volunteer certificate
- Any corrective action plans or other correspondence (VRPM Policy 3.9)

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

SHIBA carefully protects the confidentiality of information collected during volunteer screening. It may be shared with SHIBA staff as needed in deciding volunteer suitability. (VRPM Policy 3.43)

The volunteer coordinator documents volunteer performance evaluations and places them in the volunteer’s personnel file. (VRPM Policy 3.74)
✓ VCs are responsible for the timely submission of all necessary paperwork. (VRPM Policy 3.75)

✓ When a volunteer departs from SHIBA, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new role, the volunteer coordinator provides written notice to the necessary parties. (VRPM Policy 3.79)
The SHIBA scope

It’s important that SHIBA volunteers, sponsors and staff provide the same level of service across the state to ALL clients and to work within the program’s service scope. It’s also important to know when to ask for help for questions you cannot answer and when to refer a client to a colleague or another agency.

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)

Duties within a volunteer’s scope

- Screen clients’ eligibility for various health care coverage options including Medicare, Medigap, private health insurance, low-income programs and COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act).
- Provide clients and community members with unbiased information about Medicare and health insurance options.
- Advise clients about points to think about with regard to their Medicare and health insurance options.
- Educate the community about Medicare fraud identification and prevention.
- Counsel and/or enroll clients in Medicare programs and plans when eligible and appropriate.
- Assisting low-income clients research prescription and co-insurance options.

You can also help your clients by letting them know about the OIC’s statewide toll-free Insurance Consumer Hotline at: 1-800-562-6900.

A free service, clients can get help with all types of insurance, such as home, auto, health, life, disability coverage, long-term care and even annuities.

They can also get more information at: www.insurance.wa.gov
Refusing volunteer assignments

SHIBA expects volunteers to refuse work when assignments:

- Exceed the parameters of the volunteer role description.
- Require the volunteer to perform a function they haven’t yet been trained on or aren’t qualified.
- Exceed the limits of their individual capacity. (VRPM Policy 3.16)

SHIBA volunteers provide referrals

Volunteers give referrals to clients for other state agency partners, programs and services such as:

- Department of Social Health Services
- Health Care Authority
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- TRICARE
- Washington Healthplanfinder
- Social Security Administration
- Medicare
- Washington State Health Insurance Pool
- Medicaid (Apple Health)
Celebrating SHIBA volunteers

Self-care
As a SHIBA volunteer, you have a responsibility to your clients. You also have a responsibility to yourself! Always remember:

- You’re doing the best you can, even though you can’t solve all problems.
- Your work is not always easy.
- Process emotional or stressful interactions with your volunteer coordinator. Don’t bottle your feelings up!
- Know how important your work is to promote healthy communities.
- You don’t have to accept abuse from anyone while performing your duties.

Recognition

Our volunteers play an essential role in the mission of the SHIBA program. We depend on volunteers to help educate consumers, deliver information to the public and further SHIBA outreach in our communities.

We hope the gratitude of your clients, the sponsor staff and OIC staff will help you feel that your contributions and commitment to SHIBA are recognized and appreciated. The number of people who come to you for advice and guidance show that your knowledge and expertise are valued and needed.

We appreciate you every day! We know how much time and effort goes into being a SHIBA volunteer. Awards and recognition events are our way of thanking you and encouraging you to continue to serve with us. We recognize our volunteers locally on special occasions and in day-to-day activities.

Annually, SHIBA recognizes its volunteers during April – usually during your scheduled Volunteer Monthly Training meeting. (VRPM Policy 3.6)
SHIBA policies and procedures

Introduction
Volunteering with SHIBA can be an extremely rewarding experience. Our volunteers provide a valuable service that our communities know they can count on. As a team, we’re held to the same standards as other OIC employees. We all represent the OIC, whether we’re paid staff or unpaid volunteers.

Over the years, our network of volunteers, staff and community partners have built a reputation for sharing information that is accurate, complete and unbiased, and at no cost to our clients.

SHIBA policies guiding volunteer program management apply equally to all SHIBA volunteers, and complying with these policies is required to continue as a SHIBA volunteer. (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)

We welcome you to our community and hope you’ll support and abide by SHIBA policies to ensure we provide the best possible service to the public.

VRPM
SHIBA requires its volunteers to use and be familiar with the Volunteer Handbook and all other associated training tools. SHIBA provides training on the Volunteer Handbook and VRPM policies. These materials are available on My SHIBA.

*Not knowing a policy is not acceptable if SHIBA communicated the policy to the volunteer; it’s the volunteer’s responsibility to be aware of and follow policies.*

SHIBA expects volunteers to conduct their work with a view of the bigger picture of what’s best for the majority of SHIBA clients, the integrity of the SHIBA program and its long-term reputation and sustainability. (VRPM Policy 1.3)

Compliance with all SHIBA volunteer policies is expected of all SHIBA volunteers. Processes are in place to assist a volunteer if there is a failure to comply. Should
reasonable efforts on the part of SHIBA prove unsuccessful, further disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal. (VRPM Policy 1.3)

**Representing SHIBA**

As a volunteer, you’re an OIC representative when you perform your SHIBA duties. You are not a spokesperson for SHIBA in a formal sense (such as the SHIBA program manager serving in an official designated capacity) and should not represent yourself as such. (VRPM Policy 3.91) We ask you to conduct yourself in a professional manner, respect all clients, sponsors, partners, staff and other volunteers.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information clients share with us and the important decisions they must make based on the information we share with them, it’s vital you uphold all SHIBA policies and procedures.

SHIBA volunteers are honest. We never participate in, condone or associate with dishonesty, fraud or deception.

**Public appearance**

We ask all volunteers to use their best judgment in maintaining an appropriate appearance when meeting with the public. As a SHIBA representative, volunteers and like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to clients and to the community. Volunteers dress appropriately for the conditions and the nature of their volunteer duties, maintaining a high standard of personal appearance, hygiene and grooming at all times. (VRPM Policy 3.95)

Please wear your SHIBA name badge when you volunteer, so others can easily identify you. Your volunteer coordinator can help you get a SHIBA picture ID badge. Use the identification only when you’re officially volunteering for SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.92)

If you decide to quit or retire, you must turn in your SHIBA ID badge to your volunteer coordinator.

**Conflict of interest**

As a volunteer, you cannot have a conflict of interest in connection with your SHIBA work – whether personal, philosophical or financial. Volunteers may not
promote any personal or business interest while volunteering for SHIBA. An example of someone with an inherent conflict of interest: A SHIBA volunteer who receives compensation for enrolling beneficiaries in a specific insurance plan or plans. (VRPM Policy 3.35)

SHIBA is an information and referral service only. **We do not provide legal or health care advice, or endorse specific products or services.** We do not provide case management services or resolve provider-related issues. You may make client referrals to other agencies or private-sector entities. However, you may not endorse their services or products.

SHIBA does not promote, advertise or endorse public or private sector products and services in its materials or on its web pages. SHIBA does not control or endorse the content of websites or organizations with which it associates.

The following guidelines will help you understand and prevent any implied or unintentional endorsement of private-sector entities and include some things you need to know about conflict of interest.

1. Avoid situations that invite a conflict or the appearance of a conflict with your volunteer work.
2. Avoid situations that undermine the confidence of OIC-regulated industries.
3. You cannot have any interest (financial or otherwise), directly or indirectly, in an insurance company, other than as a policyholder.
4. You cannot engage in a business transaction or professional activity that conflicts with the business of SHIBA or the OIC.
5. You cannot have an active insurance license to sell insurance.
6. You must disclose actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
7. You must notify your volunteer coordinator or regional training consultant immediately of any new situations or changed circumstances involving an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.
8. You may not participate in any political, campaign or lobbying activities while representing SHIBA during volunteer hours. While on SHIBA duty, volunteers do not:
   - Publicly express their personal opinions about political issues
• Display or distribute political signs or materials either on themselves, such as a button or sticker, or at any work site
• Solicit or accept contributions for political purposes during volunteer hours. (VRPM Policy 3.106)

9. You must refrain from partnering with or referring to specific insurance agents, brokers or plans.

**Accepting compensation, gifts, gratuities and honoraria**
As a SHIBA volunteer, you cannot directly or indirectly ask for, give, receive or agree to receive any compensation, gift, reward or tip from any source except from the State of Washington or your sponsor agency for your volunteer service. You cannot ask for a fee or other compensation for providing services to clients. You also cannot use your status in the program for personal gain or private advantage.

✓ SHIBA volunteers do not accept gifts from clients, their families, caregivers, or other representatives. You must respectfully and tactfully decline any such offerings. If needed, you may cite this policy as the basis for declining. (VRPM Policy 3.100)

✓ SHIBA volunteers must respectfully and tactfully decline any honoraria they are offered or offered on behalf of SHIBA. If needed, you may cite this policy as the basis for declining. (VRPM Policy 3.101)

✓ SHIBA volunteers do not enter into financial transactions with beneficiaries/clients and their family members or caregivers - either lending or borrowing in either direction. (VRPM Policy 3.105)

**Confidentiality**
SHIBA volunteers are responsible for protecting private information obtained while volunteering. You cannot disclose to unauthorized people any confidential information you acquire through official duties. You also cannot 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 should 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 should 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.

**As a volunteer you 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 that you do not disclose any information you collect or obtain through your 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 your supervisor if you misplace, lose or 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)

**Reporting time**

SHIBA requires volunteers to complete all client/beneficiary reporting in an accurate, truthful and timely fashion. We’re held accountable for the work we do and for the grant funds we receive. Your data helps SHIBA demonstrate your valuable contributions. You should take reasonable steps to ensure that your documentation is accurate and reflects the services you provided. (VRPM Policy 3.96)

SHIBA requires all volunteers to track the time they spend on SHIBA activities each month. Track the time you spend counseling clients in STARS. You should
also track other volunteer activities, such as attending meetings, outreach events and travel. Verify the correct tracking procedures with your volunteer coordinator.

SHIBA uses all of the data it collects to report its activities to SHIBA funding sources, and to track and acknowledge our volunteers’ efforts and time statewide.

**Using SHIBA resources**

You can only use SHIBA resources (including the SHIBA name and your status as a volunteer) for official purposes to fulfill your volunteer duties. You **cannot** use SHIBA resources for:

- Any campaigns for people running for an elected office, or to promote or oppose a ballot proposition
- Any conduct that federal or state law, rule, or OIC policy prohibits
- Any efforts to lobby the state legislature, Congress, or the head of a state or federal agency
- Commercial uses, such as advertising or selling; or supporting, promoting the interest of, or soliciting for an outside organization or group, except what law, rule, or policy allows

SHIBA sponsors provide volunteers with training on how to operate any work-related equipment and are responsible just as paid staff are, for the safe use and maintenance of SHIBA equipment and materials. (VRPM Policy 3.103)

Any volunteer who suspects or knows about any improper use of SHIBA resources, should report it right away to a SHIBA volunteer coordinator or a regional training consultant.

**Using social media**

The OIC monitors all social media platforms it created and uses. The OIC reserves the right to remove any comments posted on its social media accounts that contain any prohibited content regarding OIC-related activities including SHIBA.

SHIBA volunteers should responsibly use social media. (VRPM Policy 4.5)
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 per RCW 42.52 or are detrimental to the volunteer’s work performance or to the OIC or SHIBA.

- Volunteers who choose to list their SHIBA affiliation on a personal social media site cannot represent opinions on behalf of the OIC or SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 4.5)

Information technology
Volunteers must comply with SHIBA sponsor information technology policies if they use sponsor-owned computers to conduct SHIBA business. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Maintaining and protecting sensitive and confidential data to which you have access and/or responsibility for;

- Securing sensitive and confidential data, such as Social Security numbers, Medicare I.D. numbers, medical history, addresses, phone numbers, date of birth, etc.; and

- Prohibiting and saving confidential data to removable media, such as USB drives, CD/DVD media external hard drives, etc., unless the sponsor’s volunteer coordinator authorizes you.

SHIBA expects volunteers to communicate in a professional and appropriate manner. You cannot use electronic communication to solicit funds, political messages, harassing messages or for personal use.

The U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living and/or the State of Washington may consider electronic data as its property and as public records (which are disclosable under Washington state law).

Volunteers must immediately report lost or stolen equipment, or confidential client data.
When entering client, outreach or media data to the SHIBA data systems, whether using sponsor or personal computers, SHIBA requires volunteers to get trained and certified in the appropriate data system and comply with the required policies for use and access. This includes taking training on appropriate security and safeguarding data.

Volunteers should shred any paper documents once the client and related information is entered in the data systems.

All volunteers who enter client, outreach and media data in SHIBA data systems, and/or maintain a Medicare Unique I.D. number, must establish a non-personal email for SHIBA business purposes.

**SHIBA email addresses**

As of June 1, 2018, SHIBA requires all volunteers to create a separate email account specifically for SHIBA volunteer business use only. If you already have an email address that you use exclusively for SHIBA business (no personal emails), then you’ve met this requirement. You don’t need to do anything. (OIC and agency emails already meet this requirement.)

SHIBA also requires all **new volunteers** to create a SHIBA business-use only email account as a part of the volunteer onboarding process. The purpose of this requirement is to **protect the volunteer’s personal email** and information from unwanted disclosure due to a public disclosure request, along with meeting Washington state law (RCW 42.56.250).

You’ll need this email address to receive and re-set your password in SHIBA’s client database system “STARS.” You might also want to use your SHIBA email to communicate with clients and/or send them information that’ll help them with their personal Medicare situation.

**Note:** No action is required for SHIBA volunteer coordinators, in-kind staff and State of Washington staff who already comply with this new requirement. For example, you would have an email similar to: yourname@cisc-seattle.org, BobSmithF@dshs.wa.gov or yourname@homage.org, etc.
How to set up your new SHIBA email account

1. Choose an email provider. There are several that are free, such as:
   a. Gmail (www.gmail.com): Click on the “Create account” link in blue near the bottom of the page
   b. Yahoo (www.yahoo.com): Sign up in the purple box in the upper right-hand corner
   c. Outlook (www.outlook.com): Click on the “Create free account” link

2. Format your name into your SHIBA email as follows:
   John Robert Doe becomes:
   johndshiba@gmail.com (or @Yahoo.com, @Outlook.com, etc.)
   If you receive a message that the email name you chose is already in use, add your middle initial:
   johnrdshiba@gmail.com
   If you do not have a middle initial, use the letter “n” instead:
   johnndshiba@gmail.com

3. Using your newly created email address, send an email to shiba@oic.wa.gov.
   a. Include your name, county and sponsor name in the email.
   b. If you already have an email address you use exclusively for SHIBA business (no personal emails), send an email to shiba@oic.wa.gov indicating that this is the case. (VRPM Policy 4.1)

SHIBA uses an information management protocol that outlines procedures for controlling access to and for using client information, and for safely operating computers used to collect and store program and client information. The protocol also lists the appropriate and inappropriate use of SHIBA computers by volunteers.

All SHIBA volunteers must:
• Maintain and protect all sensitive and confidential data you have access to and/or responsibility for.
• Complete the OIC Security Awareness training during volunteer training.
• Secure sensitive and confidential data including but not limited to: Social Security numbers, medical history, addresses, phone numbers, etc.
• Use encrypted email when sending sensitive and confidential data, unless otherwise authorized. For questions about encrypted email, consult your volunteer coordinator.

• Not save confidential data to removable media unless otherwise authorized by designated SHIBA staff. Removable media includes, but is not limited to: Removable USB drives, CD/DVD media, and external hard disks.

This email policy applies to all SHIBA volunteers. Electronic communication systems, including phones, e-mail, voicemail, faxes and Internet, are available to conduct SHIBA business in a timely and efficient manner. All volunteer communications should be professional and appropriate, and volunteers should not use electronic communications to solicit funds, political messages, harassing messages or personal use. In addition, all electronic data are the property of the OIC and may be considered as public records. (VRPM Policy 4.1)

**Working with friends and relatives**

We discourage SHIBA volunteers from working on relatives’ or friends’ insurance complaints or issues while performing SHIBA duties.

You should refer questions from professional colleagues, relatives or friends to your volunteer coordinator or another SHIBA volunteer for resolution.

• Volunteer relationships with clients have the same boundaries as those between paid staff and clients. It’s appropriate to be friendly, courteous and caring, but it’s not appropriate to become friends with clients, their family members or others connected to the delivery of service.

• Friendships with clients can lead to unclear boundaries, inappropriate expectations, the appearance of favoritism or exploitation, and conflicts of interest. (VRPM Policy 3.104)

• SHIBA volunteers should decline client invitations to spend personal time together or to engage in anything other than SHIBA business. You can decline respectfully, and if needed, cite this policy.

• Volunteers treat all clients with courtesy and respect. SHIBA expects you to respect the personal boundaries of clients and govern their physical behaviors accordingly. (VRPM Policy 3.104)
**Impartiality**

SHIBA volunteers should not engage in political activities, religious matters, business dealings or community issues during volunteer hours. This includes the display of political signs or materials on desks, in work spaces or at counseling sites. (VRPM Policy 3.93)

You may not solicit or accept contributions for a political purpose during volunteer hours. “Political purpose” means a candidate, political committee, ballot issue or cause.

You cannot sell, recommend or endorse any specific insurance or medical product, insurance agent or company, or promote religious or political beliefs, perspectives or practices. (VRPM Policy 3.93)

As a SHIBA volunteer, you cannot engage in lobbying, campaigning or attempts to influence legislation. You may not use your status as a SHIBA volunteer to publicly express personal opinions or endorse any product or service during your work hours as a SHIBA volunteer.

If approved by the OIC, you may provide information on prospective or current legislation in certain situations. You may also provide information or respond to questions or inquiries from the public or elected officials, if it’s part of your official SHIBA duties.

**Labor disputes**

When a worksite is affected by a labor dispute, the volunteer coordinator, in consultation with the SHIBA program manager, decides if it’s appropriate for volunteers to continue their duties at the SHIBA worksite and/or in alternate settings. (VRPM Policy 3.108)

When it’s decided where volunteers may continue their duties, no pressure or judgment is placed on volunteers who choose not to volunteer for the duration of the dispute. If you decide to stay involved during a labor dispute, you should only perform your regularly assigned duties. No one should ask you to perform any additional duties. (VRPM Policy 3.108)
**Non-discrimination and anti-harassment**

The OIC will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment or intimidation of any kind. SHIBA is committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all personnel and clients. SHIBA expects all volunteers to comply with these policies and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Through enforcement of these policies and educating volunteers, the OIC will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates these policies.

- No one has to put up with harassment for any reason, at any time. No one has the right to harass anyone else, in the SHIBA workplace or in any situation related to SHIBA programs and services.
- 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 someone or a group of people.
- All SHIBA volunteer coordinators have a responsibility to stop harassment. Everything is done to stop it as soon as it’s detected, whether or not someone made a complaint. (VRPM Policy 3.98)
- SHIBA trains volunteers in the norms of identified consumer groups/cultures. Because excellent communication is a key to success in most SHIBA volunteer roles, we place volunteers according to their ability to communicate effectively with clients from diverse populations. (VRPM Policy 3.107)
- Volunteer roles are open to community members of all ages, regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ancestry, mental or physical disability, medical condition, disability, political activity, marital status, or age. The sole qualification for volunteer assignment to a specific role is suitability to perform a task on behalf of SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.22)

**Minors**

SHIBA staff and sponsors want volunteers whose skills, abilities and personal goals are compatible with the goals and mission of our program. Minors, under age 18 may volunteer with the SHIBA program with parental consent. SHIBA will assign appropriate duties and supervision depending on their individual maturity level. Appropriate roles will have clearly prescribed responsibilities well suited to young
people, and will occur in a supervised and non-hazardous environment and comply with all child labor laws. (VRPM Policy 3.23)

**Associated definitions**

*Discrimination* – The act of favoritism or making a difference in the treatment of someone based on their race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender, identity/expression, familial status, marital status, physical or mental disability or veteran’s status.

*Gender expression/identity* – Having, or perceived by others as having, a gender identity, self-image, appearance, behavior, or expression different from that traditionally associated with the sex assigned to a person at birth.

*Harassment* – Verbal or physical conduct that degrades or shows hostility or aversion toward someone due to his or her race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, familial status, marital status, disability or any other characteristic protected by law, and that the purpose is to:

- Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment
- Unreasonably interfere with someone’s work performance
- Otherwise adversely affects someone’s employment opportunities

Normal, courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, non-coercive interactions between employees, sponsors or volunteers, which are acceptable to and welcomed by both parties, is not considered harassment or sexual harassment.

*Intimidation* – This is a form of harassment that, while not prohibited by anti-discrimination laws, involves verbal or physical conduct that demonstrates:

- Hostility or aversion toward someone
- Threats
- Offensive behavior
- Efforts to humiliate or insult someone
- Interfering with the work performance of another employee, sponsor or volunteer
• Any improper behavior that adversely impacts the mental or physical well-being of an employee, sponsor and/or volunteer

Sexual harassment – This involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

• This conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual’s volunteerism

• Submitting to or rejecting this conduct by an individual is used as a basis for volunteering decisions; or

• The purpose of this conduct is to interfere with someone’s work performance or to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual orientation – Heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and gender expression or identity.

Prohibited conduct
It’s a violation to create discriminatory work conditions, or to use discriminatory evaluative standards for volunteering based in whole or in part, on someone’s:

• Race
• Creed
• Color
• Religion
• Gender
• National origin
• Age
• Sexual orientation
• Gender identify or expression
• Familial status
• Physical or mental disability
• Veteran status

Intimidation constitutes prohibited conduct even if the activity does not constitute a violation of the anti-discrimination or harassment laws.
Appropriate corrective or disciplinary actions taken by a supervisor do not constitute intimidation.

Sexual harassment in any form is prohibited under this policy. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors, and may involve people of the same or different gender. Sexual harassment does not refer to behavior or occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is unwelcome, that is personally offensive, and that lowers morale and therefore, interferes with work effectiveness.

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is prohibited under this policy. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Epithets (nicknames)
- Slurs or negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating or hostile acts
- Degrading jokes and display, or circulation in the workplace of written or graphic material that denigrates (to put down or belittle) or shows hostility toward an individual or group

No one may impose a hardship, loss or benefit, and penalty on a volunteer as punishment for:

- Filing or responding to a bona-fide complaint of discrimination or harassment
- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a complaint
- Serving as an investigator

Retaliation or attempted retaliation is a violation of this policy. Anyone who does so will be subject to severe sanctions up to and including dismissal.

**Reporting incidents**

- SHIBA expects volunteers to report all perceived incidents of discrimination, intimidation or harassment in the workplace to their immediate supervisor or the SHIBA program manager. You’re not required to file your complaints with your immediate supervisor first before bringing it to the attention of the SHIBA program manager.

- If you experienced conduct you believe is contrary to this policy, you have a duty to use this reporting procedure. Failure to fulfill this reporting obligation could affect your right to pursue legal action.
• Volunteer coordinators who become aware of allegations of discrimination, intimidation, or any form of harassment should immediately notify the SHIBA program manager. This allows SHIBA to investigate the incident in a timely and confidential manner.

• If you believe you’ve been subjected to illegal forms of discrimination or harassment, you may file a complaint with the Washington State Human Rights Commission.

• If you believe you’re being harassed, this reporting procedure does not prevent you from promptly advising the harasser that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request they discontinue it.

• Registering a complaint will not be used against a volunteer, and it will not have an adverse impact on the individual’s volunteer status.

**Investigation**

• The OIC will investigate all reported allegations of discrimination, intimidation or harassment. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved, and where necessary, any witnesses who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

• The OIC will maintain confidentiality, including all parties and witnesses, throughout the investigation process, and will take appropriate corrective action.

• If you’re involved in or observe the investigation, you should maintain confidentiality and refrain from gossip or speculation about the involved parties, the investigation, or agency action on such matters.

• You must cooperate fully with the investigation process. This includes providing truthful information and maintaining confidentiality about all people involved in an investigation.

• If the OIC finds an individual has committed any form of harassment, intimidation, discrimination or retaliation against another party, their
organization, or vendor, they’ll be subject to corrective and/or disciplinary action.

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

**Volunteer liability**

- People who volunteer for a government entity are generally shielded from personal liability caused by their acts or omissions on behalf of the entity. Exceptions include deliberate misconduct, gross negligence or when the volunteer is clearly acting outside the scope of his or her duties when they cause harm.

- The OIC will not hold a volunteer personally liable for errors or omissions so long as they meet the following conditions:

  1. You were acting within the scope of your responsibilities for SHIBA at the time of the act or omission.
  2. If appropriate or required, you were properly certified or authorized by SHIBA for the activities or practice, which were within the scope of your responsibilities for SHIBA.
  3. You did not cause the harm due to willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual.

- If someone sues you for damages in your role as a SHIBA volunteer, you can request the Washington State Attorney General serve as your defense. If the Attorney General finds your actions were taken in good faith and were within the scope of your duties, they can provide you with a defense free of charge. If you are found liable for damages, the state pays the judgment and it cannot become a lien on your property.

  - Neither state nor federal law protect volunteers from claims of sexual harassment or claims against the agency for failure to adequately train and supervise volunteers.

Liability for a volunteer’s actions that exceed the scope of his or duties will potentially fall onto the OIC. The OIC must provide adequate and documented
training and supervision. If a volunteer’s actions are negligent and not deliberate, the OIC can be found liable. Your clear understanding of your role and limits as a volunteer is essential to avoid this kind of problem. To avoid liability, whenever you are in doubt, go to your volunteer coordinator for help.

**Evaluations or feedback from sponsors and trainers**

As a volunteer, you have an on-going opportunity to receive feedback with volunteer coordinator. You will also receive on-going feedback from your regional trainer.

- SHIBA establishes performance standards for each volunteer role. At the start of your volunteer assignment, your volunteer coordinator will provide you with a copy of the relevant performance standards. Volunteer coordinators should provide volunteer expectations at the start of your assignment. (VRPM Policy 3.15)
- The volunteer coordinator conducts regular evaluations of both volunteer involvement and the infrastructure in place to support volunteer involvement in SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.11)
- Whenever possible, volunteer coordinators provide volunteers with feedback on the results of their work, including data on volunteer contributions that allow SHIBA to meet its service goals. (VRPM Policy 3.112)

**Grievance procedures**

It’s important for you to quickly, reasonably and safely resolve any conflicts that arise with staff, other volunteers, clients or partner organizations. Don’t hesitate to raise any issue by following these steps:

**Step 1:** Go to the person you’re having the problem with and try to resolve the issue one-on-one.

**Step 2:** If you cannot resolve the issue in this way, talk to your volunteer coordinator to see if they can handle it at their level.

**Step 3:** If you need to and if it exists, follow your sponsor organization’s grievance procedure.

**Step 4:** If the grievance is not resolved at the sponsor’s level, talk to your regional training consultant.
Step 5: If necessary, the SHIBA program manager will assist in resolving the matter, and you should contact him or her if the steps above don’t lead to satisfactory resolution.

If a complaint involves your own supervisor, bring the complaint to the SHIBA Program Coordinator. All complaints will be treated as confidential. (Policy 3.82)

Appeals
SHIBA also has an appeals procedure through which a volunteer can request review of a formal corrective action decision, including dismissal. If you have a complaint or grievance, ask your supervisor for information on filing it.

Resignation, dismissal and leaves of absence
We know our volunteers won’t be with us forever. When a volunteer departs from SHIBA, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new role, the volunteer coordinator provides written notice to all necessary parties. (VRPM Policy 3.79)

- Volunteers agree that SHIBA may at any time decide to terminate the volunteer’s relationship with SHIBA or to make changes in the nature of their volunteer assignment.
- SHIBA has the right to decide the policies that guide volunteer service with SHIBA.
- A volunteer may at any time, for any reason, decide to end their volunteer tenure with SHIBA. (VRPM Policy 3.4, 3.84)

Resignation
To help us maintain continuity, when you resign from volunteering, if possible, please submit a two-week advanced notice with the reason(s) why you’re leaving by email or printed letter to your volunteer coordinator. In your notice, please say if you would like an exit interview by phone with the SHIBA office in Tumwater, and we will schedule one for you. Be sure to send a copy to the SHIBA program. If you send it by email, you can cc shiba@oic.wa.gov when you notify your volunteer coordinator. (VRPM Policy 3.84)
If you send it by U.S. mail, mail it to:

SHIBA
Attention: Todd Dixon
PO BOX 40255
Olympia, WA 98504-0255

In addition to notifying your volunteer coordinator and the SHIBA program, you should finish up any client cases or work with your volunteer coordinator to assign any unfinished cases to a different volunteer to handle. You should also notify the client that a different volunteer will be handling their case. (VRPM Policy 3.84)

Before you leave your volunteer position, be sure to turn in your SHIBA ID badge and all other SHIBA property or materials to your volunteer coordinator. (VRPM Policy 3.84)

- Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with SHIBA at any time and for any reason.
- Volunteers who intend to resign should provide as much advance notice of their departure as possible along with the reason for their decision.
- Clients working with the volunteer should be informed in writing of the assignment of a new volunteer to their case.
- At the time of resignation volunteers should turn in all identification and other property or materials belonging to SHIBA to their designated supervisor. (Policy 3.84)

Exit Interviews
SHIBA will conduct exit interviews, where possible, with volunteers who are leaving their roles. (Policy 3.86)

Volunteer dismissal
We don’t often ask volunteers to leave; however, it does happen on rare occasions. When we dismiss a volunteer, we inform them that their working relationship with the SHIBA program, its services, personnel, partners and clients is irrevocably severed and all connections should cease. (VRPM Policy 3.80)
SHIBA operates a work environment that is free of unacceptable behaviors. This is a zero tolerance policy. Non-compliance is detrimental to SHIBA’s reputation and proven instances of the following unacceptable behaviors are grounds for immediate dismissal. (Policy 3.99) Some behaviors are so unacceptable that they are simply not tolerated at SHIBA. (Policies 3.78, 3.80, 3.99)

- Sexual harassment
- Physical or verbal assault or abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Drug abuse
- Misuse of state resources
- Discrimination
- Conflict of interest
- Other inappropriate behavior may also lead to dismissal on a case-by-case basis. (Policy 3.78)

Volunteers do not use, possess, transfer, distribute, manufacture, or sell alcohol or any illegal drug while on SHIBA property, while on duty, or while operating a vehicle on duty or while driving to or from an SHIBA worksite. Volunteers taking legal medication, whether or not prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner, that affects or impairs judgment, coordination or perception so as to adversely affect ability to perform work in a safe and productive manner, notifies their supervisor prior to engaging in SHIBA work. (Policy 3.99)

**Leave of absence**

If a volunteer would like to take a leave of absence, they should make the request to their volunteer coordinator. Leaves of absence are granted to volunteers at the discretion of the volunteer coordinator or the volunteer’s supervisor.

When a volunteer departs from SHIBA (permanently or temporarily), whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new role, the volunteer coordinator will notify all necessary parties in writing. (Policy 3.79)
My SHIBA

**Volunteer and sponsors webpages**

The volunteer and sponsor section of the Office of the Insurance Commissioner’s (OIC) website is called My SHIBA. These webpages are password-protected. If you’re unable to access the Internet, please check with your volunteer coordinator. To log in, go to [www.insurance.wa.gov](http://www.insurance.wa.gov) and click on “SHIBA volunteers only” at the bottom of any OIC webpage. The password is: Document1234

My SHIBA offers the most current information on the following topics:

- STARS
- Outreach tools
- Publications
- How to order publications from the Dept. of Enterprise Services Fulfillment Center
- Training information
- Contact information
- Traveling information
- Medicare Unique IDs
- News Flashes
- And much more
Publications and materials

**SHIBA-approved materials**
For quality control purposes and statewide consistency, you may only distribute to the public SHIBA- and OIC-produced and approved materials.

SHIBA public communications should only include information and images that SHIBA has formally approved. Contact the SHIBA communications coordinator at the main office in Tumwater about the needs of your program.

**Publication standards**
The OIC SHIBA program has responsibility for ensuring that all SHIBA publications meet the OIC’s publication standards.

We have a SHIBA communications coordinator who writes, edits and designs all SHIBA publications. The communications coordinator consults with a team of OIC Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for accurate technical content in publications.

**Volunteer training materials**
Our curriculum developer writes and edits volunteer training materials. The curriculum developer also works with our SMEs to ensure the technical information in our training materials is accurate. SHIBA staff on occasion will pilot new training modules to SHIBA volunteer groups to ensure they’re understandable, valuable and enjoyable.
Reporting – STARS

The SHIP Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) is the data system we use to track all of our program activities and help us pull together grant reports and fundraising requests.

**Why the information is important**

It shows:
- The help we offer and provide to our clients
- How we use resources and if enough resources are available to perform goals and objectives
- Where we need to focus and enhance overall SHIBA performance
- Our community experiences to lawmakers and others in charge of policy decisions (both state and federal)

**How STARS benefits SHIBA**

- Helps us efficiently and effectively respond to client needs
- Influences program development
- Informs appropriate resource allocation
- Gives us 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
- Offers a great communication and feedback tool
Using state resources

**OIC travel reimbursement**

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

- The SHIBA program manager or designee must pre-approve it.
- You must travel at least 50 miles one way.
- Your travel must be for SHIBA-related business, such as mileage to a special training.
- You must first pay for the travel and then turn in a Travel Expense Voucher form to the OIC for reimbursement.
- Your travel costs must be less than or equal to the state’s per diem rate.

For detailed information about our travel reimbursement process, go to the My SHIBA website at: [www.insurance.wa.gov/travel-reimbursement](http://www.insurance.wa.gov/travel-reimbursement).
SHIBA News Flash

What is SHIBA News Flash?
It’s an electronic newsletter that SHIBA staff send out with late-breaking information that may affect volunteers, clients and our work.

How can I sign up to get SHIBA News Flash?
You can join or leave the SHIBA News Flash distribution list at any time. There are a couple of ways to join. Pick what works best for you!

Sign yourself up:

1. Go to the My SHIBA homepage at www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba and choose the “News Flash” link under the “News and events” section.

2. Sign up in the blue box on the right side of the “SHIBA News Flash” webpage. Choose how you want to receive SHIBA News Flash – using the drop-down menu – either through email or text message, or both.

3. Enter your email address and/or your mobile phone number.

4. Click on the “Submit” button. You are now signed up!

How do I cancel getting SHIBA News Flash by email or text message?
At the bottom of the SHIBA News Flash you receive by email or text is a link to unsubscribe. Click on that link and follow the directions.

I don’t use email or text messaging. How can I get copies of SHIBA News Flash?
If you request them, your volunteer coordinator can provide you with a paper copy, or you can go to the My SHIBA homepage and lookup the “News Flash” section to print off your own copy.
Workplace safety

Contacting law enforcement
Call 9-1-1 if there’s an emergency or if you have reasonable cause to believe a crime’s been committed.

Accidents and injuries
To provide a safe work environment, our SHIBA volunteers follow the safety standards established by the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA). [www.lni.wa.gov/Main/MostAskedQuestions/Safety/WISHAFaq.asp](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Main/MostAskedQuestions/Safety/WISHAFaq.asp)

SHIBA volunteers who witness physical, psychological, financial or verbal abuse of consumers while volunteering, should report it to their supervisor so appropriate follow-up action can occur.

For the safety of volunteers, SHIBA volunteers are not allowed to visit client homes under any circumstances. (VRPM Policy 2.5)

SHIBA sponsors establish a safe and appropriate worksite for every volunteer. (VRPM Policy 3.18) You’re responsible for performing all your volunteer duties in a safe and efficient manner. To maintain a safe and secure work environment, we require our volunteers to comply with all local, state and federal safety and health regulations.

You’re responsible for immediately reporting accidents, injuries or security incidents to your volunteer coordinator or regional training consultant. This should occur whether you’re a direct participant, a witness or involved in any way with an incident. Per incident protocols, promptly following any incident, volunteers must complete an accident and injury report form. (VRPM Policy 2.8)

In response to a reported incident involving SHIBA volunteers, the volunteer coordinator 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 takes place without any delay. (VRPM Policy 2.10, 2.4) For procedures on how to serve clients in the event of an emergency or natural disaster, consult with your sponsor site or volunteer coordinator.

**Insurance**

For all SHIBA volunteers, your sponsor may provide liability and accident insurance or other comparable forms of protection. (VRPM Policy 2.2)

Volunteers should notify their own auto insurance company about their SHIBA driving activities. Make sure you have coverage in place that provides you with adequate protection. If you drive your personal vehicle for SHIBA work purposes (or personal purposes), Washington state law (RCW 46.30) requires you to carry liability coverage on any vehicle you use. Volunteers are responsible for paying the cost their auto insurance. (VRPM Policy 2.3) If you have questions about whether your personal policy will cover you for certain activities, you should carefully read your auto policy to see what it does and doesn’t cover, and/or contact your insurance agent for advice.

Your volunteer coordinator will verify once a year that each volunteer has auto insurance, including liability coverage. All volunteers will sign off on it and it will go in their personnel file. If your auto insurance coverage lapses, you should immediately notify your supervisor. (VRPM Policy 2.3)

**Domestic violence**

If you suspect another volunteer, staff person or client is in a domestic violence, child-abuse or elder-abuse situation, please encourage that person to contact a local domestic violence crisis center for assistance and referral. If you witness violence in the workplace, you’re encouraged to call 9-1-1 immediately and report the incident to local law enforcement authorities.

**Children**

In most cases, SHIBA volunteers and staff are not required by law to report suspected child abuse. If you have reasonable cause to believe a child has
suffered abuse or neglect, you may report it to law enforcement or to the Department of Social and Health Services.

**Elders and disabled**

SHIBA volunteers are similarly not required to report suspected elder abuse. However, as a SHIBA volunteer you’re considered a “permissive reporter” because you volunteer in a program that provides services for vulnerable adults. This means you may file a report with law enforcement when you believe reasonable cause exists that a vulnerable adult is being or has been abandoned, abused, financially exploited or neglected.

**Animals**

Law enforcement agencies and animal care and control agencies have enforcement authority under Washington state’s law to prevent cruelty to animals. There is no mandatory reporting. However, you or anyone else who suspects animal abuse may contact the local humane society or animal control agency to file a report.
Getting started checklist for new SHIBA volunteers

I’ve learned the following:

- Procedures for checking in and out of my local sponsor site
- How to get a SHIBA badge
- Which folks at the sponsor office you’ll see and work with the most (if available, get a contact list)
- How to receive SHIBA/sponsor information (newsletters, training and referral information)
- Location of training materials, publications and supplies

Follow up items:

- After you complete your Basic Training, you’ll need to get trained on the following topics:
  - New volunteer orientation
  - Counseling
  - Data entry
- Start to attend Volunteer Monthly Training as soon as possible.
- Coordinate with the volunteer coordinator to mentor with a seasoned volunteer.
- Help out in the local SHIBA office.
- Browse all the public SHIBA webpages at: www.insurance.wa.gov/SHIBA.
- Browse the volunteer webpages at: www.insurance.wa.gov/my-shiba, including publications and tools.
- Browse the Medicare webpages at: www.insurance.wa.gov/medicare.
- Remember to record all client and outreach activities in STARS.
- Socialize with other volunteers and SHIBA staff, and have fun!
**Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**AAA**
Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is responsible for planning and delivery of services under the Older Americans Act for a geographic region within a state.

**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/](http://www.acl.gov/)

**AoA**
The Administration on Aging (AoA), an agency within the Administration for Community Living, administers all programs funded by the Older Americans Act, including SMP.

**CE**
Continuing Education

**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. CMS 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.

**DoJ**
The Department of Justice (DoJ) is the other federal department that administers the HCFAC program. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, an agency within the DoJ, works with the HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) to investigate health care fraud and apprehend alleged perpetrators. The DoJ’s U.S. Attorney offices throughout the country prosecute criminal health care fraud cases.

**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.
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information technology (IT)</td>
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<td>OHIC</td>
<td>The Office of Healthcare Information and Counseling (OHIC)</td>
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<td>OIC</td>
<td>Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OIG</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>RTC</td>
<td>Regional Training Consultant (RTC)</td>
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<td>SHIBA</td>
<td>Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>The State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP) provide counseling services to Medicare beneficiaries and assist them in applying for assistance programs, comparing and choosing health and drug plans, and appealing claims denials.</td>
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<td>SHIP TA</td>
<td>State Health Insurance Assistance Programs Technical Assistance Center (SHIP TA) Resource Library <a href="http://www.shiptacenter.org/resource-library/">www.shiptacenter.org/resource-library/</a></td>
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<td>SIRS</td>
<td>SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) Information and Reporting System</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Subject Matter Expert</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>Social Security Administration (SSA) <a href="http://www.ssa.gov/">www.ssa.gov/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>SSDI</td>
<td>Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)</td>
</tr>
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<td>VC</td>
<td>Volunteer coordinator (VC)</td>
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<td>VRPM</td>
<td>Volunteer Risk Program Management (VRPM). A list of policies provided by ACL and adapted by SHIBA.</td>
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VRPM policies

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* As of June 2018 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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