Eras
SENIOR NETWORK

Empowering Seniors &
Engaging Generations

Friendly Phone Call Program Instructions

Isolation and loneliness are big concerns – especially for the older adult population. To minimize these concerns Eras Senior Network offers a Friendly Phone Call Program for all of our clients who would like to have a volunteer call them once a week.

In Milwaukee County, all our clients are 60 years or older. In Waukesha County our clients are adults (18 and older) with disabilities and seniors 60 years and older.

Our goals with the Friendly Phone Call Program are to:

- Decrease social isolation and loneliness
- Determine any urgent needs and connect them directly with trained staff, as needed.

How to document the phone calls:

We offer three ways of documenting your phone calls. This is a very important step in order for Eras to keep track of everyone getting the requested phone calls.

1. Preferred:
    a. Online "survey" through our volunteer portal: https://eras.org/volunteer-login/
    b. You can find instruction videos on how to get logged on to the portal and how to document the calls here: https://eras.org/volunteer/friendly-phone-calls/
2. Reporting on the form on our website
    a. https://eras.org/volunteer/report-my-hours/
3. Email erasvolunteer@eras.org with the date of the calls, the duration of the calls and any concerns the client or you may have
4. Call and leave a message with the date of the calls, the duration of the calls and any concerns the client or you may have: 414-488-6931

When you call, please do the following:

1. Please check in with them to see how they are doing. Listen to their concerns. Share a story if appropriate. Good topics are: Gardening, pets, family, activities they enjoy, TV Shows, the seasons, crafts etc.
2. Ask if they have any needs that Eras might be able to assist with and refer them to call Eras main phone numbers.
3. Establish a good time to connect weekly or biweekly depending on your availability and their preference. If you are open to calling more often, that is ok as long as the client agrees to this. Please inform Eras if they do not want to receive any more calls. Sometimes seniors do not want

to be a burden and will decline help. In that case, our staff will connect with them to determine their needs.

4. Some clients have hearing deficits, so please speak clearly without much background noise.
5. If you have difficulty connecting with a client, please reach out to Eras for assistance.
6. As for all our volunteer services – please refrain from conversations about politics and religion.

Discontinuation of phone calls

If you are no longer able to make phone calls to some or all the clients assigned to you, please let us know two weeks in advance so we have time to reassign these clients to another volunteer. Please let the client know during your last phone call to them that you are no longer able to call but Eras will be assigning a different volunteer to call them.

<u>In addition</u> to the Friendly Phone Calls Eras provides the following services:

- **Transportation:** Transportation to medical appointments and other health-related appointments, banks, tax preparation, etc. We need 7 days' notice if possible.
- **Groceries:** Our volunteers will shop for our clients or take them to the grocery store. We need 7 days' notice but please contact us if a client is out of food and we can assist.
- **Yard clean up:** We offer yard clean up in the fall and spring.

At times we also have volunteers to assist with lawn mowing, snow removal and other services.

If a client reports any of the following:

- For medical emergencies please have the client call 911, or their health care provider. Please do not provide any medical advice.
- Scams: If they report they have become a victim of a scam, please ask them to contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) (Milwaukee: 414-289-6874 or Waukesha: 262-548-7848) or contact Eras staff and we will contact the ADRC on their behalf.
- Groceries, medication, yard clean up, transportation or other needs: Please have them call Eras to request a volunteer.

Additional conversation starters:

1. Reminisce about the current season with sample questions below:
   - What was this season like when you were a kid?
   - What was the weather like during the current season?
   - What was this season's activities like?
   - How did this season make you feel?
   - Did you participate in any sports?
2. Information about events that occurred on this particular day in history: www.onthisday.com
3. Topics like a designated National Day to celebrate (Spinach Day or Cheesecake Day) then fun facts about the particular day: www.NationalToday.com and www.timeanddate.com
4. Bet you didn't know (fun facts) and trivia: www.Triviaboss.com and https://www.suddenlysenior.com/impossible-quiz-for-seniors/
5. Beautiful questions: Inspire someone to think a little differently, with no right or wrong answers. These questions do not rely on memory for someone to answer: https://timeslips.org/resources/creativity-center/ask-a-beautiful-question

Thank you so much for taking the time to reach out to our clients! Please reach out to Eras staff if you have any questions or concerns. **We can be reached by phone: 414-488-6500 (Milwaukee) and 262-549-3348 (Waukesha) or by email info@eras.org.**