



VISIT

Visit Isolated Seniors In Your Town

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FOR FLORIDA'S ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Overview

“VISIT” (Visit Isolated Seniors in Your Town) is a volunteer program developed by the Department of Elder Affairs, in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and Volunteer Florida. The program will identify ALF residents who receive few or no visitors and would benefit from social interaction. Many isolated residents are permanently separated from their families and friends and can experience forms of depression and loneliness. In a study of 1,600 seniors, published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* in June of 2012, doctors found that those reporting feelings of loneliness were more likely to suffer a decline in health over a six-year period than those who were content with their social lives.

Mission

The mission of VISIT is to enhance the health and quality of life for Florida's elderly population living in assisted living facilities through visits from volunteers, thereby also promoting greater community involvement and civic engagement. This program will coordinate and encourage businesses, students, social and civic clubs, and other community groups to volunteer in their local ALF communities.

Geographic Areas Served

Currently, the VISIT program is being implemented through a pilot program. With the success of the initial pilot sites, the Department hopes to roll the program out statewide. For now, the following areas have VISIT Program locations:

- Escambia County: Pensacola
- Pinellas County: St. Petersburg
- Hillsborough County: Tampa
- Miami-Dade County: Miami

Program Details

Volunteer organizations and the Assisted Living Facility agree to participate in the program for one year, with a minimum of twenty-four visits, and to host four seasonal activities, such as widely recognized holiday celebrations, birthdays, or other special events. Through VISIT, communities will be encouraged to take a more active role in addressing the social, emotional, and intellectual needs of Florida's elderly who are residing in ALF communities. The program will also clearly provide guidelines for facility administrators, staff, and volunteers who will interact with residents using the program model. All volunteers must complete and pass a required Level II Background Screening to participate, and all activities will be conducted on-site at the participating ALFs.

For more information, or if you would like to participate in the VISIT Program, please contact:

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