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Volunteering in Retirement

Tips for contributing your time and talents to a worthy cause

Those of a certain age will recall the Jefferson Airplane lyrics “*This generation got no destination to hold... We are volunteers of America...*” as a call to action, though for a different period and place. Even with the passage of time and through a lifetime of changes, the desire of baby boomers to make an impact on the world has not diminished.

Retirement is no longer about the hammock or unending hours of golf. It’s a period of rejuvenation, second chances, and renewed growth. For many, this new phase includes contributing their time and talents to an organization in need.

Before You Start

An important first step is to engage in honest self-assessment. Inventory your skill set and interests. This will help identify what sort of volunteering opportunities are the best match for you.

Determine the commitment you are willing to make. Is this something that you want to devote 5-10 hours a week to, or are you willing to commit to more time? Is this something you want to do locally, around the nation, or even across the globe? Will this volunteering be done individually, as a couple, or as a group?

Survey the Waters

There are plenty of resources for assessing volunteer opportunities.

Start by asking friends, family, and colleagues.

Use one or more of the many tools created to help identify volunteering ideas that may deserve your consideration. For instance, the [AmeriCorps website](#) run by the federal government, or the [VolunteerMatch website](#).

Another approach may be to pick charities that you support and research what assistance they need. Don’t be afraid to call them, as some opportunities may not be advertised.

If you do choose to volunteer during retirement, you may find that you will receive as much as you give.

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