



How Hearts and Hands Works

What is Hearts and Hands?

Hearts and Hands is a “best efforts,” not-for-profit, neighbor-helping-neighbor organization which pairs volunteers with older and physically challenged adults for transportation to medical appointments, for routine errands and for social/recreational visits. Companion visits/caregiver respite, phone pals and minor home maintenance is offered as volunteer availability permits. We do not provide hands-on medical or care giving services (such as administering medications or bathing). The organization, founded in 2003, serves underserved areas in Western New York.

How does Hearts and Hands work?

A care receiver calls Hearts and Hands at least one week before a scheduled appointment or need, and a Hearts and Hands volunteer coordinator schedules the request with an available volunteer. The volunteer coordinator then calls the care receiver to confirm that their request is filled, and gives the care receiver their first name and a description of their vehicle. The volunteer re-confirms with the care receiver the night before their scheduled need.

Does Hearts and Hands guarantee every request?

Because we are working with volunteers and not paid caregivers, there are times when despite our “best efforts,” a request cannot be filled. In those cases, we inform the care receiver at least 24 hours before their scheduled need, so they have time to find a ride or change an appointment without incurring a fee from their health care providers.

What does Hearts and Hands cost?

There is no fee, although we welcome donations. Through the generous support of communities, coalition churches and grant makers, including the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, Erie County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging, the John R. Oishei Foundation, the Grigg Lewis Foundation and a federal grant managed through the NFTA, we are able to keep our services cost-free to our care receivers. We also have a committed group of business sponsors, which have included: Friedman and Ranzenhofer, Attorneys at Law; County Line Stone, Akron, NY; Bristol Village; Whiting Door; Cloisters and Meadows Apartments; Perry’s Ice Cream, Harris Beach, LLC; Ingram Micro, AAA of WNY, Clarence Rotary and I Squared R Elements, Inc. And of course, we have our wonderful volunteers!

Where does Hearts and Hands provide services?

Currently we serve over 25 municipalities in Western New York, including Newstead, Alden, Amherst, Boston (NY), Clarence, Holland, Lockport, Marilla, the Tonawanda Indian Reservation and Wales, and hope to expand throughout Western New York. Call to find out if we serve your area.

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How can I become a volunteer?

Contact Hearts and Hands at 716-406-8311 to sign up for a volunteer orientation, which takes about an hour. It will give you all the information that you need to become a Hearts and Hands volunteer.

Do I need any special qualifications?

No. We do not provide hands-on medical care. All you need is a little bit of time and a helpful heart! Our services are all about "neighbor helping neighbor."

How do I become a Care Receiver?

If you need the services of Hearts and Hands, call 716-406-8311 and sign up for an intake. During the intake, a volunteer coordinator will visit your home and talk with you about how we can meet your needs and how our program works. The coordinator will also collect necessary information about you, such as your usual doctors and your emergency contact numbers. You can begin receiving services one week after your intake is completed.