



Hello IVC Volunteers,

JANUARY 2024

Did you know **1 in 4 Idahoans is a family caregiver?**

Caregiving is a fact of life for people of all ages and backgrounds. In Idaho alone, 25% of our population provides 171 million hours of unpaid support annually to those in need. This means that caregiving is affecting families across the state; numbers that will continue to grow as our population ages. However, keep in mind that caregiving is not limited to taking care of the elderly.

What's your definition of a caregiver?

Many people wonder what qualifies as a caregiver and the truth is - caregiving is a spectrum that depends on the care recipient's age, ability, capacity, and other support systems that are in use. According to Cambridge Dictionary a definition of caregiver is someone who takes care of a person who is young, old, sick, or disabled (=having an illness, injury, or condition that makes it difficult for them to do some things that other people do), either as a family member or friend, as a job or as a **IVC** transportation volunteer.

Some examples of caregivers include but are not limited to:

- ☐ The young adult child who looks after their siblings because of a parent's mental illness
- ☐ The adult child who manages their parent's medical needs
- ☐ The parent who supports their adult child with a mental health condition
- ☒ The spouse who supports their partner with chronic health conditions
- ☒ Handling your parent's finances
- ☒ Providing company and emotional support
- ☒ Taking your neighbor, friend, or client to medical appointments
- ☐ Someone who regularly assists an elderly individual or couple in your community

Then YOU are serving in a Caregiver role!

A caregiver gives care to someone who needs help taking care of themselves. For the purposes of **IVC's** programs, we consider each volunteer's dedication as a form of caregiving for each client they serve. Millions of Americans are taking on caregiving duties in one way or another. Research shows that by supporting caregivers, we also improve the quality of lives of the people they care for.

Caregiver trivia

Unless you have been a caregiver or a close family member or friend to someone with Alzheimer's, it's hard to really understand what it's like.

The caregivers are the ones that worry about the future & worry about the past & worry about the present. - From Los Angeles Times

The family members and caregivers should be treated as patients. - From Los Angeles Times

And that includes families and caregivers and teachers and resource officers. - From NPR

These are the things that caregivers do for loved ones every day, often putting their own physical well-being at risk. - From Huffington Post

There's no question, family caregivers prop up our health & long-term care systems. - *From Huffington Post*

What are the benefits of volunteering?

Dr. Robert Waldinger's study on lifelong happiness followed thousands of humans for 80 years. He found those who have warm connections with others live the longest. Good relationships were the strongest predictor of who was going to be happy and healthy as they age. (*Robert Waldinger (2023)* <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey>). Here are some additional benefits listed below other than the one mentioned by Dr. Waldinger.

Additional benefits of volunteering

Helping people in need and a worthwhile cause

Protecting your physical and mental health

Meeting new people with similar interests

Building social skills and forming relationships

Increased creativity and motivation

Connecting with others & widening your social circle

Learning new skills

Increased self-esteem

Decreased blood pressure

Creating a sense of community

Fun and fulfillment

Interesting Census Data

According to the US Census Bureau, in 2023 Twin Falls Idaho has a population of 56,121 in the city and 93,792 in the county, per the census growth rate of 1.38%, in the past year. 38,135 (62%) are adults and 7,819 **(21%) are 60 years of age or older**. This indicates a significant increase in number of individuals who may require IVC's services. Without more volunteers, IVC's impact for the needs of the Magic Valley's growing population will be limited.

Prior client reviews have clearly stated why IVC is so important including phrases like it "saved my life or I don't know what I would do without IVC." Truly this is why IVC volunteers are so vital to the clients and the success of IVC's mission. Thank you for your dedication! Please encourage others to start volunteering.

Volunteer highlight

This year, U.S. Senator for Idaho Mike Crapo honored 16 Idahoans with the **2023 Spirit of Freedom: Idaho Veterans Service Award**. Senator Crapo created the award in 2002 to recognize Idaho veterans and volunteers for their outstanding service to our country and its veterans. The following is Robert (Bob) Isabelle's biography for highlighting his significant contributions to our country and its veterans. **We all greatly appreciate your service and dedication to help others!**

Robert Isabelle, Buhl: Veteran Robert Isabelle served in the U.S. Navy from 1955 to 1959 aboard the USS Los Angeles and the USS Hamul. He was nominated by the Buhl VFW Post 3604. After his military service, Isabelle studied French and worked part-time for a lab delivering reports and picking up specimens. He has been a life member of the VFW since 1995. Isabelle was the Post Quarter Master from 1999 – 2023. Isabelle has driven for Interlink Caregiver/Volunteers since 2018. Isabelle says he is a devout follower of Jesus Christ.

Important IVC updates

The insurmountable increase in mileage over the past two years is unprecedented (Jan. – Dec 2023 – 124,408 miles total miles compared to Jan. – Dec. 2022 – 102,246). Beginning with January 2024 mileage reimbursements payable in **February 2024** will increase to **.67 cents per mile. Hooray!!!**

We provide 4,271 scheduled client interactions (transports & home modifications), with 124,408 reimbursable volunteer miles and 7,357 volunteer hours (valued @ \$192,098) for 2023. **NOTE: Over 247 different individuals used IVC in 2023 including 121 new clients.**

Thank you for your dedicated work in making 2023 a rewarding year! We can't do it without you!