



Portage Senior Center Membership Manual

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Portage Senior Center

Membership Manual

Revised: December, 2013

Connect with PSC

320 Library Lane
Portage, MI 49002
(269) 329-4555



– Hours of Operation –

Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

This manual provides a helpful glimpse into the mission, management, programs, services, activities, and people who make up the Portage Senior Center (PSC).

It is designed primarily to *inform* members on all matters related to membership and to *invite* potential members to consider joining. The manual will help members and guests understand what the PSC is, and how it adds joy and meaning to the lives of hundreds of seniors in West Michigan.

We invite you to join Michigan's *first nationally accredited senior center*.

Website: www.portagemi.gov/Departments/SeniorCitizenServices.aspx

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I. *Welcome to the Portage Senior Center!*

Mission

The mission of the Portage Senior Center is to provide, with the help of its members, information and a range of services, activities, and volunteer opportunities which promote personal growth, friendship, health, and independence for adults aged 50 and over.

History

The Portage Senior Center opened its doors in June 1979. The PSC is operated under the umbrella of the Parks, Recreation & Public Services department, and is run by a small number of paid staff. The Center is able to offer a broad spectrum of programs because many members volunteer their talents and time to benefit others.

Reasons to Join Portage Senior Center

You can be proud of your membership in Michigan's first nationally accredited Senior Center. The PSC is an *activity* center, and members enjoy many opportunities for social interaction, meeting new people with diverse backgrounds and shared interests, volunteering, recreation, exercise, health programs, dining out, group travel, and much more. As a member, you are encouraged to become fully engaged in the programs and activities available.

II. Membership and Participation

Membership in the PSC is open to everyone over the age of 50 and City of Portage residency is not required. No one is turned away for inability to pay the membership fee, which can be waived in the case of hardship.

Anyone who needs assistance to participate must be accompanied by someone who can help them. Participants should meet the following criteria:

- a) be able to use restroom facilities
- b) be able to feed himself or herself
- c) be oriented to their current surroundings
- d) act in a non-disruptive manner

III. Information Security

Contact information given by members is not shared outside of PSC or with other members, except with your permission for each occasion. Other personal data is stored in a secure environment and only accessed by authorized personnel. No personal information is made available outside of PSC.

Important!

Please keep your records current by informing the receptionist of changes to your home or email address, phone number, emergency contact, or medical information.

IV. Staff

Manager: Works under the general supervision of the Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Services. She administers, coordinates, and oversees the various components of Senior Citizen Services. This person also serves as a staff liaison to the Senior Citizens Advisory Board and to the Friends of the Portage Senior Center. This position requires extensive background in planning and program development, evaluation of programs and services, resource development, fiscal management and budgeting, training and management of staff, board development, volunteer management, grant writing and reviewing, and reporting to governing structures and others regarding program, operation, and facility, equipment and emergency arrangements.

Administrative Assistant: Works for the Senior Citizen Services Manager, supports the Program Coordinator, Travel Coordinator, Advisory Board, and Friends of the PSC Board. This person reports all financial income and outflow with required documentation, oversees record retention, purchasing and room rentals, assists in the grant writing process and provides general secretarial services.

Program and Volunteer Coordinator: Works Monday through Friday from 9AM to 1PM. This person manages the PSC MySeniorCenter™ database which confidentially stores data regarding membership, classes, programs, and activities. From the database, she produces monthly reports for the City Manager and Portage Senior Center Advisory Board, and supplies information in support of grant applications as needed. This position also holds the responsibility of working with a pool of nearly 200 volunteers who make it possible for the organization to thrive.

Travel Coordinator: Works part-time, with a varied schedule to maximize management of the travel department. This person researches and plans one-day and extended trips, works with venue personnel, Travel Committee volunteers, and travel vendors as well as processing payments, determining trip prices, and reporting travel office income. Also included in this position are developing marketing strategies and evaluation of the travel program's effectiveness.

Receptionist: This position is the initial point of contact for members at the Center, guests, and telephone inquiries. The reception desk is where members sign up for classes and activities, and renew memberships. The receptionist assists with questions and facilitates communication with other staff as needed. PSC has both a morning and afternoon staff receptionist.

V. Senior Citizens Advisory Board

The Senior Citizens Advisory Board advises the Portage City Council and the Senior Center management on the establishment and provision of services to persons aged 50 and over. The Board's role is to encourage, promote, and safeguard the rights and abilities of older people to maintain maximum health, well being, and independence. The Board develops policies and procedures for approval by the City Council, provides input on issues important to senior citizens, and helps plan for the future of the Senior Center.

Senior Citizens Advisory Board members are appointed by the Portage City Council. Members must be at least 50 years of age and reside in Portage. The Board meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 2:30PM, at the Portage Senior Center. Agendas and minutes are posted on the City of Portage website. If you are interested in serving on this Board, please complete a City of Portage Citizen Participation Form, available at the office of the City Clerk, or online at <http://www.portagemi.gov/Boards-and-Commissions.aspx>.

VI. Funding

The Portage Senior Center is operated by the Department of Senior Citizen Services, City of Portage. The City provides a stipend towards the total expense required to operate the Center. The remaining funds are generated through the efforts of the Friends of the Portage Senior Center, grants, special fund-raising events, membership fees, the PSC travel department, participant fees, memorial gifts, and other sources. Contributions are welcome and appreciated.

The Friends of the PSC

The Friends of the PSC, commonly called "Friends," is a volunteer membership, nonprofit organization which sponsors fundraising events and activities to support the operations of the Portage Senior Center. This organization was formed to provide both short- and long-term funding for the PSC.

VII. Activities and Services

PSC offers a wide variety of ways to be involved, use your creativity, share your interests, enhance your life and have fun!! Many activities are recurring and others are special events.

To see what's new and obtain current schedules, refer to your PSC Newsletter.

Below is a sample list of some of the activities and services currently available:

- **Classes** – Art, computer, and writing classes (Note: fees may apply)
- **Computer use** – Wireless Internet is available throughout the building. Due to ever-changing technology, see the receptionist to inquire about other computer access.
- **Exercise** – Biking, billiards, social golf league, ping pong, chair volleyball, instructor-led exercise programs, walking club, Wii bowling, and yoga
- **Health initiatives** – Diabetes support group, health screenings, Matter of Balance classes, memory discussion group, Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) classes on coping with chronic illnesses and changes relating to aging
- **Information referral** – Brochures are located in the lobby, or see the receptionist
- **Interest groups** – Art, book club, crafts, and woodcarving
- **Intergenerational programs** – Partners and Pen Pals (in collaboration with Portage Public Schools)
- **Lunch at the Friendship Café** – Each weekday except Wednesday, Senior Services, Inc. transforms the PSC multipurpose room into the Friendship Café, featuring the Meals on Wheels regular and “lite” menus. For a minimal donation, guests can relax and enjoy meals such as chicken Kiev, vegetable lasagna, beef stroganoff and more. Lunch is served at 11:45AM. To reserve your place at the table, call (269) 382-0515 extension 300 one day in advance. Monthly menus are posted on the PSC bulletin board. The Café is open to PSC members and senior guests.
- **Outreach to the Community** – Band, choir, PSC Needlers, and Reader’s Theater
- **Recreation** – Bridge, Canasta, Cribbage, Dominoes, Euchre, Mah Jongg, movies, and Scrabble
- **Social groups** – Dining out, Red Hat Society, and Sisterhood
- **Transportation** – For information on transportation services please contact the Center. There is a handout available for you to take with you, or it can be mailed to your home upon request.

For more information on particular activities or services at PSC, please see the receptionist, who will direct you to the appropriate source for further details.

Have an idea for a new activity? With adequate space, volunteer leadership, and/or program support, new ideas can be implemented. See the PSC Program Coordinator.

VIII. Travel Program

The PSC Travel Office is the perfect place to get a head start on your next great travel experience! PSC offers an extensive group travel program, with trips ranging from one day to a week or more. Assisted by volunteers on the Trip Committee, the Travel Coordinator scans the global landscape to discover exciting destinations within Michigan, across the US, and abroad. Twice each year, PSC publishes a Travel Guide that describes new travel opportunities and invites members to attend a Trip Preview where they can meet other travelers and get firsthand information. Always on the lookout for new venues, the Travel Coordinator adds trips throughout the year. Upcoming trips are advertised on bulletin boards, in the lobby display rack and the newsletter, and on the PSC website. Whether the destination is South Haven or South America, grab your camera and maybe your passport. It's time to create some new memories!

The **Travel Office** is open for trip sign-ups on the following days:
Tuesdays and Fridays 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM (269) 324-9239

IX. Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are the lifeblood of daily PSC operations, and the PSC offers an almost endless array of volunteer opportunities. Volunteering is an area of service that works for almost everyone. You can be the quiet presence behind the scenes or the booming voice directing a stage production. Volunteering is a great way to make a difference! Some examples of PSC volunteer positions are:

- Daily Operations – On-call receptionist, greeter, coffee host/hostess, lunch assistant
- Special Events – Cookie bakers, event planners, ticket takers
- Trip Committee – Committee members assist by taking reservations in the Trip Office. Responsibilities may also include escorting trips, researching and planning trips, development of itineraries and promotional flyers, and other supportive clerical work.
- Volunteer Leaders – Do you have good organizational skills and like to facilitate activities? Do you take pride in helping others have an enjoyable experience? This may be a good opportunity for you!

See the PSC Program and Volunteer Coordinator if you are interested in being a volunteer for an existing or new activity.

X. Your Role as a PSC Member

It is the goal at the Senior Center for everyone to feel welcome and respected. Every person at the Center plays a role in providing this pleasant and positive atmosphere.

Thanks for doing your part!

Your Responsibilities

- Complete a liability waiver, which will remain on file at PSC.
- Sign in at the welcome kiosk each time you visit the Center.
- Act and speak in a manner which is respectful of other members, guests and staff.
- Turn off your cell phone while participating in classes or attending events. If you must take a call, please leave the room as quietly as possible so others may fully enjoy the activity.
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Senior Center.

XI. PSC Policies

The policies below help to maintain a safe and welcoming atmosphere:

- **Gambling**

In accordance with State of Michigan laws, as well as City of Portage Policies, Procedures and Administrative Orders, gambling is not permitted at the PSC.

- **Political Neutrality**

The Portage Senior Center shall remain neutral regarding political topics and candidates. However, it is permissible for elected officials to make presentations on subjects of particular interest to seniors. Political debates, with opposing views each represented, may be allowed at the Senior Center.

- **Solicitations**

Solicitation for personal gain by any individual, agency or company, is prohibited.

- **Complaint Resolution and Appeal Procedure**

The goal of the PSC is exceptional service. The staff values the comments and concerns expressed by members and guests utilizing services and programs at the Portage Senior Center. When something goes wrong, we ask that you tell us about it.

Submitting complaints – You may register a complaint about an ongoing issue or an instance that requires follow-up in any of the following ways:

- Submit a verbal complaint to any PSC staff member
- Speak with a Senior Citizens Advisory Board member
- Submit a letter to the chair of the Senior Citizens Advisory Board or the Manager of PSC
- Submit a written complaint to the City of Portage using one of the “How are we doing?” Customer Service Comment Cards, which are located on the left side of the entry doors as you exit the senior center. *Please note that these cards may also be used for compliments.*

Follow-up to complaints:

- A PSC staff member who receives a complaint shall investigate promptly to resolve the issue and take corrective action, if possible. The PSC Manager shall also be informed of the complaint.
- Complaints received by Senior Citizens Advisory Board members shall be promptly brought to the attention of the PSC Manager for resolution.
- All complaints received via City of Portage comment cards will be directed to the PSC Manager.
- The PSC Manager has responsibility to monitor the resolution of all complaints received. A response should be provided to the person making the complaint explaining the corrective action or a clear reason that corrective action is not possible or is not necessary. Responses may initially be verbal.
- Complaints received shall be brought to the attention of the Senior Citizens Advisory Board at its monthly meeting. The Manager and the chair of the Senior Citizens Advisory Board will prepare a written response to the person who made the complaint.
- Should the person making the complaint not be satisfied with the response, he or she may appeal to the Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Services or to the City Manager.

The Portage Senior Center offers activities and services to persons over the age of 50 without regard to race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, political belief, national origin, veteran status, height, weight or protected disability. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the State Office of Civil Rights or the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

The following behaviors are prohibited at PSC:

- Aggressive or disruptive behavior
- Verbal or physical assault
- Harassment, sexual or otherwise, of another person
- Display of pornographic images in any form
- Intoxication
- Smoking
- Theft of any kind
- Use of illicit drugs or substances.

The PSC reserves the right to revoke membership or deny participation in any PSC activity to any person who does not comply with PSC policies.

XII. Facilities

Lobby

Welcome is the message conveyed by the ambiance of the PSC lobby. In this busy space, members and guests may log in at the MySeniorCenter™ kiosk, purchase a greeting card, or pick up flyers for an upcoming event. A receptionist is available to answer questions and facilitate activity registration. Coffee is available and homemade treats are sometimes provided by a host or hostess. The colorful bulletin boards, display cases, and reference brochures provide up-to-date, useful information. The PSC lobby is the perfect spot to sip a cup of fresh coffee, chat with a friend, or just relax in a comfortable chair!

Room Scheduling

Rooms are scheduled by the Program Coordinator, who has final control over all activities within the PSC between the hours of 8AM and 5PM. Evening and weekend membership activities occur at the discretion of the Manager and require staffing, lighting, close-up procedures, and special arrangements for cleaning crews.

A. Determining Factors for Room Scheduling:

- Group size and legal capacity of the room
- Facility requirements for the intended use. Some examples include: food preparation or service, adequate lighting, tables, and sound equipment
- Privacy needs

B. Guidelines and Priorities for Room Assignment:

- Recurring activities - It is the intention for groups to regularly use the same room, but the PSC cannot guarantee the exclusive use of any room.
- Special events with date specific requirements may be given priority over routine activities. This includes use of PSC as a voting site, fundraisers, speakers or presentations.
- PSC activities are given scheduling priority over rentals when conflicts arise.

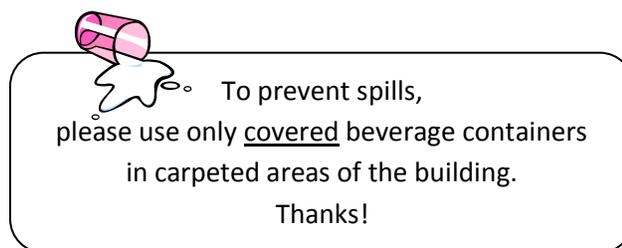
When rescheduling an activity becomes necessary, the PSC staff will make every effort to find an alternate time and location. The staff will also notify group leaders and post a notice in the lobby entrance area.

Room Setup and Use

There is no custodian on staff. Members are asked to help set up tables and chairs for the activities in which they participate. Upon completion of an activity, rooms should be restored to the same condition in which they were found.

Room use rules prohibit the following:

- Using tape on painted walls (including “painter’s tape”)
- Storing personal items
- Opening windows to adjust temperature to personal taste
- Blocking air vents or inhibiting air flow
- Crowding out or rushing the activity occurring prior
- Refusing to adhere to the closure times of the class or activity, and/or the facility
- Making rude comments or displaying disruptive behavior which detracts from the enjoyment of fellow participants. Disruptive behavior includes all actions that warrant the attention of staff.



Temperature Controls

The comfort of each member is of utmost importance. The building temperature is set between 71 and 74 degrees, in conformity with other facilities, such as City Hall. Please dress for your personal comfort, taking into account that, due to room size and location, temperatures may vary from one room to another.

Staff Offices and Equipment

To maintain the high production rate necessary for the PSC to function with limited staff, administrative areas are not open to the public. These areas house confidential records such as invoices, expense data, personal information, and contracts. Likewise, in an effort to make the best use of limited resources, office equipment such as the printer and copier are for use by staff and designated personnel only.

Note: Some equipment used for member activities has been purchased for specific purposes, and will be labeled for that use only. Other use is allowed only with staff permission.

Storage

PSC-owned supplies for exercise and wellness programs and some recreation activities are stored in the building. Members and guests may not store personal items at the PSC. Abuse of physical storage units or storage privileges will result in a written notice and a consultation with the Program Coordinator, who will make the final determination regarding permission for future privileges.

PSC Closings

Daily at 5PM

Participants are asked to vacate the premises by 4:45PM, allowing staff time for site security, room and window checks, and alarm programming. Evening activities held after 5PM do not alter daily activity end times.

Weather

PSC will be closed throughout the winter when Portage Public Schools are closed due to weather. School closings are listed on WWMT-TV Channel 3 and WKZO-590 AM radio.

Holidays

- New Year's Day, January 1
- Good Friday Noon-5PM
- Memorial Day Observed
- Independence Day, July 4
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day Holiday (Thursday and Friday)
- Christmas Day, December 25

Check the bi-monthly PSC newsletter
for any changes in this schedule

XIII. Frequently Asked Questions)

Topic	Question	Answer
1. Bulletin boards	May I post my organization's flyer on the PSC bulletin boards?	The PSC bulletin boards display a wide range of community-oriented information. Staff approval is needed before posting items on the board, however. Please see the receptionist for assistance.
2. Copier	Can PSC members use the copier?	The City of Portage provides the copier for administrative use. Staff and designated volunteers use the copier for conducting PSC business.
3. Donations	Does the PSC accept donations from private citizens?	Yes, the PSC welcomes and appreciates donations from private citizens.
4. Emergency contact	Why do I need to list an emergency contact on my membership application?	When an emergency arises at the PSC that could affect members directly or indirectly, the Manager (or designee) might need to contact you, or someone else on your behalf. Any number of scenarios could constitute an emergency, e.g., severe weather, fire, flooding, sudden illness, gas leak, or any incident that could jeopardize the safety of individuals at the PSC. Every member is asked to list an emergency contact person...just in case.
5. Facebook	Can we follow PSC on Facebook or Twitter?	The City of Portage does not yet employ Facebook or Twitter. However, you can access Senior Citizen Services through the City of Portage website: www.portagemi.gov/Departments/SeniorCitizenServices

Topic	Question	Answer
6. Guests	What is the definition of a <i>guest</i> at PSC?	Guests are welcome at PSC. A <i>guest</i> is a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is visiting the Center prior to making a decision about membership • is observing a class or activity prior to making a decision about enrolling • is accompanying a member for a temporary purpose, e.g., assisting with a wheelchair, or • is serving another specific, but temporary, purpose.
7. Idea for activity	To whom should I speak if I have an idea for a new activity?	Please speak with the Program Coordinator. The PSC is always open to ideas for new activities.
8. Key Card	How do I replace a lost key card?	The receptionist can assist you with a one-time, key card replacement at no cost. Here's a tip: you may log in by entering your first name and complete telephone number.
9. Lost and Found	Is there a Lost and Found at PSC?	Yes. Lost and found items may be retrieved at the reception desk. Items are retained for 30 days.
10. Lunch	Why is lunch <u>not</u> served on Wednesdays?	On Wednesdays, the Portage Rotary Club holds its weekly luncheon meeting in the Multi-Purpose Room.
11. Membership Manual	Is the Membership Manual available in electronic form?	Yes, you can download the Membership Manual, as well as the PSC Calendar and the PSC Newsletter, from the City of Portage website. Please visit www.portagemi.gov/Departments/SeniorCitizenServices
12. Parking	Where can we park when we are at PSC?	Free parking is available in the PSC parking lot and adjacent lot of the Portage District Library. Overflow parking is permitted on Currier Drive.
13. Residency	Is residence in Portage required for membership?	Residence in Portage is not required for membership. Most members reside in Portage, but others live elsewhere in Kalamazoo County, other counties in Michigan, or out-of-state.
14. Room rental	Are rooms at the PSC available for rent?	Yes. See the PSC administrative assistant for rental rates and availability.
15. Volunteering	How can I become a volunteer at the Senior Center?	Check the PSC Newsletter and bulletin boards for volunteer needs. You may also speak to the Program Coordinator about your interest in volunteering.