



## Caseworker Information and Responsibilities

(Please read before submitting projects to the Helping Feels Good program)

The following are a few tips and suggestions, which we have found to be beneficial to agencies and caseworkers submitting projects for the Helping Feels Good program. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us at (305) 597-4404 between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, or e-mail [hfg@neighbors4neighbors.org](mailto:hfg@neighbors4neighbors.org).

### **TIPS FOR SUBMITTING CLIENTS TO THE HELPING FEELS GOOD WEBSITE:**

- Your clients must agree to participate in this program, and must know that their names and information are being submitted to volunteers once cleared by your agency's standards.
  - Remember that your agency is responsible for this volunteer as well as your client. Always make sure your request falls within your agency's volunteer guidelines, and your client is comfortable with the experience.
- The submission link provided is for your use only. The client project submission to the Helping Feels Good website **must be filled out by the caseworker ONLY — NOT the client or anyone else**.
- Please complete all fields on the electronic forms when inputting a project to the Helping Feels Good website.
- Use the caseworker's phone number on the project registration form, in case a volunteer reaches out to you first. Volunteers should not be able to call the client without you speaking with them first.
- When completing the project profile, please write a compelling narrative describing the project and the client's circumstances and needs. You may also want to include special interests, hobbies, honors, goals and achievements of the client.
- Once a project has been matched to a volunteer, the system will send you an email verifying the project submitted and the volunteer's contact information. **Caseworkers must contact volunteers to discuss the scope of the project and the client's situation and needs within 24 business hours.**
- Once you have connected with the volunteer, it is your responsibility to contact the client and make them aware that their project has been matched to a volunteer. Explain to them that they may receive a phone call from their volunteer soon and to be kind to them. This would be the perfect time to remind them of our policy:
  - Clients should not ask volunteers for money or goods.
  - Clients should only agree to meet with volunteers on terms they feel comfortable with.
  - Clients should always be gracious and thank volunteers (whether it is done by phone or by mail). Thank you cards or letters are especially liked by volunteers. You would be surprised how wonderful these individuals feel when they receive a thank you card or letter signed by clients.
  - Clients should be reminded that many of our volunteers are average people looking to help people in need and therefore all of their requests or needs may not be met. They should not



request expensive or luxurious items/services that exceed the scope of the project submitted to the site by their caseworker.

- Clients should be considerate of the volunteer's time schedule.
- Please return calls from Neighbors 4 Neighbors and volunteers within 24 business hours. We understand how busy you are and how many people you help daily – but this ensures the success of our program and benefits your clients.

**You should be aware that Neighbors 4 Neighbors does NOT do any background checks on volunteers. As an agency participant in the Helping Feels Good program you are assuming all responsibility for any volunteer matched with a submitted project. The need for background checks and/or proof of license/bonding/insurance should be clearly stated in the project profile and is the sole responsibility of the agency.**

#### **ADDITIONAL TIPS TO HELP INCREASE THE CHANCES OF YOUR CLIENT BEING SERVED:**

- Make your project request touching and always include small and large accomplishments by the family members. Go for the heartstrings, and make them likable.
- If you need a professional service, such as a dentist, home or auto repair, financial counseling or legal advice, explain the situation and how their donation of service will help your client move forward.
- Don't be afraid to ask for the big things – but don't forget to ask for the small things that would improve quality of life for your client, too:
  - For example, someone to read to them, a hairdresser who would come once a month to beautify a homebound woman, language lessons, exercise instructor for a family in need of a health mentor, a life coach for a returning veteran, an entertainer for a group home.
  - Some ideas of simple skills you might consider asking for: Lawn care and gardening, pet walking and grooming, teach an instrument or language, a daily phone call to bring some company to a homebound person, grocery shopping.