



## What is TRAIL of Johnson County?

TRAIL (Tools and Resources for Active Independent Living) is a nonprofit, membership-based organization founded in 2017 by Iowa City-area residents at or near retirement age who plan to remain in the places they call home as they age. TRAIL is modeled on the [Village-to-Village Network](#), a national grassroots movement whose goal is to coordinate access to affordable aging-in-place services for older adults.

TRAIL has more than 255 members, most of whom live in the greater Iowa City-Coralville area, although we have both members and volunteers living in North Liberty, Solon, Tiffin, and elsewhere in Johnson County. Most of our members are retired, some are still working, and member ages range from the 50s to the 80s. (There is no maximum or minimum age requirement for membership.)

TRAIL offers valuable volunteer services such as daily check-in calls, simple chores and errands, small repairs, and transportation. We also provide access to social and educational opportunities as well as a members-only vendor request and referral forum.

TRAIL volunteers are essential to our success and to our members' wellbeing. Volunteers assist TRAIL members in a variety of important ways, all of which are helping older adults in Johnson County age more securely in the places they call home. Volunteers also play a leadership role in TRAIL by serving on one of our board committees and/or on our Board of Directors. Experience in fields such as finance, fundraising, marketing, events, and volunteer coordination is especially useful. Join us and help guide, support, and grow TRAIL!

## What are the options for membership?

TRAIL currently has two membership types: Affiliate Membership and Full Membership.

*Note: Membership fees will increase slightly on July 1, 2024. Contact the TRAIL office for more information, 319-800-9003.*

### Affiliate Membership

Fees: \$130/year for single individuals and \$195/year for households of two or more individuals

Benefits and services:

- Once-yearly access to a TRAIL volunteer service of your choice (the TRAIL "birthday benefit")
- Participation in TRAIL-sponsored social and educational events, such as special interest presentations, book clubs, and group outings
- Access to TRAIL's members-only Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum for locating trusted local professionals, from home repairs to personal care
- *TRAIL Guide* newsletter and other member communications

### Full Membership

Fees: \$600/year (\$50/month) for single individuals, or \$780/year (\$65/month) for households with two or more members

Benefits and services:

- Volunteer assistance to meet needs, such as daily check-in calls, transportation, light handyman assistance, medical advocacy, and house checks when you are away
- Access to TRAIL's Life Transitions Service, staffed by specially trained volunteers to assist members dealing with changes in life circumstances, such as sudden illness
- Participation in the TRAIL-sponsored social and educational events described above
- Access to TRAIL's members-only Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum
- *TRAIL Guide* newsletter and other member communications

Supported memberships are also available based on income level, availability, and approval by the TRAIL Executive Director. These subsidized Full memberships are offered on a sliding scale and may be free to some members.

### **What types of social and educational events does TRAIL offer to its members?**

TRAIL hosts numerous events each month for our members to engage socially and educationally with other TRAIL members, and to stay involved in our community. Both in-person and online events are offered, such as group lunches and dinners at local restaurants, tours of local attraction, outdoor activities like hikes and kayaking, virtual seminars, book clubs and yarning circles, and more. Members are notified about these events through a weekly email and our monthly *TRAIL Guide* newsletter, and are available for viewing and registration on the Calendar page of the TRAIL member website. Registration can be completed online or by calling the TRAIL office.

### **What types of volunteer services are available to TRAIL members?**

TRAIL offers a variety of volunteer services in the categories below for our Full members to utilize and for volunteers to participate in. (Affiliate members may also take advantage of an annual "birthday benefit" volunteer service.) Many of our volunteers are also TRAIL members and vice versa. (Want to become a TRAIL volunteer? Learn more at [trailofjohnsoncounty.org/get-involved/volunteer](https://trailofjohnsoncounty.org/get-involved/volunteer).)

#### Transportation

Volunteer drivers provide door-to-door transportation for regularly scheduled and periodic trips, such as medical or personal care appointments, grocery shopping, or other minor errands. When appropriate, the volunteer driver will assist the member to and from/through the front door of his or her home and help carry packages. At the member's request, our volunteers will follow all CDC-recommended COVID safety protocols.

#### Home and garden tasks

The assistance provided by TRAIL volunteers in and around the home is as varied as the members we serve. Volunteers can assist with tasks such as helping with paperwork, minor household chores and simple repairs, meal preparation, mailing packages, shopping for groceries, running errands,

watching your home while you are away, changing smoke detector batteries, or going for a walk with a member. Volunteers can help with outdoor tasks, such as light trimming of bushes, garden clean up and weeding, sweeping, and watering plants.

Note: TRAIL volunteers do not provide personal care services, such as bathing, dressing, grooming, or administering medications.

TRAIL volunteers can handle the following tasks and more. Occasionally, it may be necessary for the volunteer to assess the project before determining who can best provide the service and how much time it will require.

Hang pictures or mirrors	Replace heater/refrigerator filters
Change batteries	Reset a breaker box
Fix or replace a hinge or door knob	Install shower head
Set up TV, cable, or garage door remotes	Move and clean porch/patio furniture
Flip bed mattresses	Paint mailbox
Attach garden hoses	Pot or move plants
Carry boxes and bags (25 lb. max.)	Install or put away holiday decor
One-time mowing or watering lawn	Replace door screen
Take down or put up a curtain rod	Replace toilet seat
Replace light bulbs (12 ft. max. ht.)	Replace/repair doorbells

Please note: the member is responsible for supplying the necessary materials and tools (if applicable) to complete the project.

In order to avoid liability issues, TRAIL does not perform services best handled by a professional or services that may endanger our volunteers, nor do we provide repetitive tasks that require regular services. TRAIL volunteers do not provide the following services:

Replace electrical wiring or breakers	Paint anything other than small objects
Fix garage door springs or bent guides	Provide plumbing that opens a seal/fitting
Hang TV/heavy objects on the wall	Clean roof gutters above 12 feet
Move heavy furniture	Install grab bars or ramps
Replace faucet or toilet	Provide new construction
Crawl inside attics or crawl spaces	Climb ladders above 12 feet
Fix serious leaks	Conduct a task requiring a license or permit

### Technology help

Volunteers can provide assistance to members with technical equipment that may include computers, DVD players, phones, or social media support.

### Medical Advocacy

TRAIL's Medical Advocacy Program pairs a specially trained volunteer and a TRAIL member to form a supportive relationship to provide transportation to, from, and during medical appointments. TRAIL's Medical Advocates offer a second set of ears for questions and note-taking, and gentle guidance about follow-up tasks.

### Life Transition Service

As we age, we face life transitions that may require a safety net of community assistance. TRAIL's Life Transition Service is available to Full members who face a hospitalization, a family or personal crisis, a decline in health or wellness, or who wish to plan for future caretaking needs. The Life Transition Service is grounded by the maxim, "Hope for the best, plan for the worst." TRAIL's specially trained Life Transition volunteers assist Full members to identify and investigate options for care, housing, and services, and they will follow up and advocate with service providers as needed. Life Transition volunteers respect member choices and confidentiality and receive professional guidance from TRAIL's social work consultant. The same Life Transition volunteer is paired with a member throughout the transition process. The service is provided at no additional cost to the member

### Rise and Shine Program

Rise and Shine is for members who want to connect with TRAIL on a daily basis to ensure their safety and enjoy the social interaction TRAIL provides. Participating members are paired with a TRAIL volunteer and the two become Rise and Shine partners, agreeing on a time and method of communication, whether by phone call, email, or text.

### Friendly Visits and Phone Buddies

These services are variations on an important TRAIL value: connection matters. Friendly visits are arranged by Full members to have volunteers visit with them in their home for an hour or so, just to have a conversation. Phone buddies are essentially the same, except the visits are by phone. Both volunteers and members find these relational connections of value.

### More about TRAIL's volunteer services

TRAIL employs a volunteer-first policy. This means we will make every effort to assign a volunteer to meet member requests, but the availability of volunteer assistance to TRAIL members varies. It may depend on the amount of notice given (we ask for at least one full week), the needs of other members during the same period, the weather, and other factors.

TRAIL is not able to provide frequent volunteer services over extended periods of time. We will try to meet member requests, but members seeking multiple requests per week may be given lesser priority in order to serve our entire membership. Occasionally, it may be necessary for a member to change or cancel an appointment. TRAIL requests that members communicate this to TRAIL as early as possible. If no volunteers are available or the service requires a professional, TRAIL will refer members to our online Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum.

## **Tell me more about TRAIL's Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum.**

TRAIL's mission is to help older adults live safely and comfortably in the places they call home. TRAIL volunteers play an important role in enabling our members age in place, but at some point, most of our members need assistance that's beyond the capability of volunteers, whether for home repairs or personal care.

That's where TRAIL's online Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum comes in. This easy-to-use online tool is part of the Message Board feature on the TRAIL member website, allowing members to pose questions ("Do you know a trustworthy plumber?") or referrals ("I just discovered a great new dentist") to the TRAIL community.

Just as important, this feature is private. Unlike other online review sites, such as Yelp or Google, TRAIL's Message Board and its Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum are open to TRAIL members only. No one outside of TRAIL can access the member website, so it's secure from spammers, "bots," and other external threats that plague social media.

## **How do I join TRAIL?**

There are a variety of ways you can join TRAIL! TRAIL membership applications are available on our website at [trailofjohnsoncounty.org/membership/how-to-join](http://trailofjohnsoncounty.org/membership/how-to-join).

If you are interested in Affiliate membership (individual or household) you have the option to either sign up online via the TRAIL website at the link above, or you can download the application and return it our office via email or U.S. mail using the addresses listed below

If you are interested in our Full Membership (individual or household), simply download the application from our website, print and complete, and return to our office:

- Completed and scanned applications can be emailed to [membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org](mailto:membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org).
- Printed applications can be returned via U.S. mail to  
TRAIL of Johnson County  
28 S. Linn Street  
Room 301  
Iowa City, IA 52240

Or if you prefer, call the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003 and Jessica Hahn, our Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator, will be happy to assist you with the application process.

## **What if I have additional questions?**

If you would like to learn more about TRAIL, just visit our website ([trailofjohnsoncounty.org/](http://trailofjohnsoncounty.org/)) or call our office at (319) 800-9003.

*Thank you for your interest in TRAIL!*