

Westwood Council on Aging/Senior Center Transportation Policies and Programs

The Westwood Council on Aging seeks to provide safe, efficient transportation for Westwood residents 60 years of age and over, and disabled residents, regardless of age. The COA vans are equipped with wheelchair lifts.

Transportation service is curbside and all riders must be able to get in and out of the van, and transfer to a seat without COA staff assistance. A companion or aide may accompany any rider who may need assistance.

Those using a wheelchair should be able to transfer to a seat independently, without assistance from the driver, or have an aide who can accompany and assist.

Riders struggling with memory loss must have a caregiver accompany them.

While this document outlines policies pertaining to the Center's usual services and activities, the guidelines here pertain to any transportation provided by the Westwood Council on Aging for any reason.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following information is required to take advantage of the Center's transportation services:

- Name, address and phone numbers (home and cell) for each passenger;
- *Every passenger must have COA swipe card.* A consent and release form must be filled out before riding the van.
- We request that all passengers carry a "FILE OF LIFE" card which contains emergency contact and medical information. Forms are available for free at the Center.
- The use of seat belts and face masks, per CDC and State guidelines, will be strictly enforced. Drivers will not transport individuals who do not comply with these requirements. Individuals with medical reasons for not wearing seat belts and/or face masks will be exempt from this rule if they provide a letter from their physician addressed to the COA office prior to making their reservation.
- No smoking, eating or drinking is allowed on the van.
- Canes, walkers and other support devices must be secured, with the exception of a blind person's cane. *Only registered service dogs are permitted.*
- Oxygen tanks and wheelchairs must be secured by the driver.
- The Center's Director reserves the right to cancel, deny or restrict the ride of a passenger if there is concern for the safety of any passenger. Examples of safety concerns may include: the passenger may get lost, soiled or injured due to cognitive impairment; poor personal hygiene, or low vision.
- If the driver or Center staff deems any individual at high risk of falling or injury, the individual may be asked to have an aide accompany them or use other forms of transportation. Some individuals may have the option of getting transportation from The RIDE. See Other Transportation Opportunities.
- All passengers must follow the driver's instructions. Failure to do so may result in temporary or permanent loss of transportation services.
- If a rider is rude or aggressive towards other seniors or the driver, the Director may cancel, deny or restrict that rider's use of transportation services. All service cancellations or restrictions will be provided in writing

and may include a suspension for up to 3 months. Return of service will be reevaluated every 3 months. All questions or concerns should be addressed with the Center Director.

- Service may be cancelled whenever the driver or Director deems road conditions are unsafe. In addition, service will generally be suspended when Westwood school is cancelled due to inclement weather. Please listen to local radio or TV stations for information.

SCHEDULING AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The following policies have been developed to insure the most equitable and efficient use of this service.

Hours and Area of Operation of Center Van: Transportation service is generally available Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for appointments. There is a limit of 12 rides per individual per month.

Scheduling the Center Van: Scheduling is coordinated by the Center's Operation Manager and full time Van Driver.

- Call the COA/Senior Center at 781-329-8799 to schedule an appointment.
- Reservations must be made a minimum of two days in advance. We are unable to accommodate same-day requests.
- Riders using wheelchairs or oxygen tanks should notify the scheduler to allow for extra time.
- Please notify the scheduler if an aide or caregiver will be traveling with a rider.
- Medical appointments are given priority scheduling over non-medical appointments.
- Reservations are made on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Appointments can be scheduled up to one month in advance and clients are encouraged to reserve the van as soon as they schedule their appointments.
- Please note that while there is a 15-minute window for pick up times, this may change due to traffic or other unforeseen circumstances.

Cancellations: Please call the COA/Senior Center as soon as possible if you must cancel and/or reschedule your reservation for transportation.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENT TRANSPORTATION

The transportation program is *not* to be used for medical emergencies. In these situations, contact Emergency Medical Services by dialing 9-1-1.

Please note we cannot transport individuals to or from medical *procedures*.

Medical transportation is given scheduling priority and is generally available Monday through Thursday 8:30-2:30 and Friday 8:30-12:30. While every reasonable attempt to accommodate transportation requests will be honored, please note that rides are *not* guaranteed. Appointments in Medfield or at the Faulkner and Newton Wellesley Hospitals, while outside the typical *10-mile service radius*, are generally accommodated on Mondays when possible.

In addition to the above General Guidelines, the following information is required to schedule transportation for medical appointments:

- Date and time of medical appointment and approximate return time
- Address and phone number of medical provider
- Whether or not a wheelchair or other assistance (including oxygen tank securement) **will** be required
- An emergency contact, if we do not already have one on file

Suggested Donation:

\$3.00 round trip medical appointment

\$5.00 to Medfield, Faulkner and Newton Wellesley Hospitals

NON-MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

The Center provides regularly scheduled transportation services, as outlined in the COA newsletter.

- Shopping trips to local department stores are generally scheduled monthly.
- Errands within a *five-mile service radius* are generally scheduled on Mondays and Fridays.
- Food shopping is generally scheduled on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Participants are restricted to four shopping bags per person. All passengers must be able to carry their own bags; drivers cannot assist in handling groceries or goods.
- When possible, the van will be available for transportation to COA/Senior Center programs. However, medical appointments take scheduling priority.

The Center provides transportation to other destinations within a 5-mile radius of the Center when scheduling permits. In addition to the above General Guidelines, the following information is required to schedule transportation to other destinations:

- Address and phone number of other destination, including personal contact information if applicable.
- Whether or not a wheelchair or other assistance (including oxygen tank securement) **will** be required;
- An emergency contact, if we do not already have one on file.

Suggested Donation:

\$5.00 round trip to Faulkner, Newton Wellesley and Medfield

\$3.00 round trip for regularly scheduled shopping trips and errands, or other destinations

\$2.00 round trip to the Senior Center

SENIOR CENTER SPONSORED DAY TRIPS:

Anyone traveling on a Center sponsored day trip must be able to participate in transportation and all aspects of the activity either independently or with an aide or caregiver who can assist them. In certain instances, a day trip may have participation requirements above and beyond the scope of this policy.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES

The MBTA RIDE is available for mobility-impaired Westwood Residents. Residents must have an eligibility interview with the MBTA and rides are coordinated with the MBTA. For details contact The RIDE at 617-337-2727.

On a very limited basis, HESSCO Elder Services offers rides outside of the Center's 10-mile radius service area. Rides must be scheduled one week in advance and a \$25 round trip donation may be requested. To arrange a ride, call the Operations Director of the Senior Center.

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