

For more information you can visit the websites below.

Attitude

http://www.beverlyfoundation.org/stories_from_the_road/index.html

Boundaries

<http://www.healthministries.info/module7/7intro.html>

Communication

http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl_tsc_resources

Driving Skills

http://www.aarp.org/families/driver_safety/driver_safety_online_course.html

Emergencies

<http://www.redcross.org/>

Friendliness

<http://www.beverlyfoundation.org/resourcestore/pdf/snapshots/>

Gatekeeping

http://www.n4a.orgpublications_and_resources.cfm

Helping

<http://www.fiavolunteers.org/funding/blocks3.cfm>

Insurance

<http://www.cimaworld.com/>

Job Description

<http://www.livingpartnership.org/Transportation.htm>

Kindness

<http://www.aoa.gov/prof/aoaprof/caregiver/caregiver.asp>

Listening

<http://www.nasua.org/hcbs.cfm>

Mobility

http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/is_senior.asp

Navigation

<http://www.aaafoundation.org/home/>

Options

<http://www.seniordrivers.org/STPs/providers.cfm?button=concept>

Passengers

<http://www.livingpartnership.org/Transportation.htm>

Quality

<http://www.asaging.org/drivewell/>

Recording

<http://www.beverlyfoundation.org/resourcestore/pdf/snapshots/>

Safety

<http://www.nsc.org/train/ntc.cfm>

Traffic Laws

http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/ser-shs_millennium.htm

Understanding

<http://www.alz.org/Resources/Resources/rtrlcaregde.asp>

Vehicle

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit/vdg/default.htm#section_8

Weather

<http://www.aaafoundation.org/products/>

Xtra Mile

<http://www.shepherdcenters.org/>

Yes

<http://www.nicoa.org/message.html>

Zoning

http://www.unitedweride.gov/1_959_ENG_HTML.htm

The A B Cs of Being an Effective Volunteer Driver



This Volunteer Driver Tip Book is a partnership project of



*Beverly Foundation
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*Transportation Reimbursement Information Project
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The A B Cs of Being A Better Volunteer Driver

Welcome!

Being a volunteer driver is quite possibly unlike any experience you have ever enjoyed before. You are now part of a team of dedicated people who really care and who are making a huge difference in their communities, and all across the United States.

Think of what it would be like if you could no longer drive. And then add to that other complications of aging or mobility. As you know, transportation means *independence* and *freedom*, and that is what you are going to be giving to your riders – independence and freedom.

Volunteer driving programs across the country recognize the need for driver training, and utilize different systems depending on their needs. This tip book is designed to be a friendly reminder for volunteer drivers to use when transporting their passengers. It is written from the combined experience of several organizations committed to excellence in senior transportation services.



Y_{es}

- You Are Helping
- You Are Volunteering
- You Have Limits

As a volunteer driver, you may be used to saying “yes.” This positive spirit might have been a part of your decision to become a volunteer driver in the first place. The word “yes” is also an important part of good driver-passenger communication. As you listen to your passenger, be ready to accept the elevated care they may require.

Z_{eal}

- Enjoy
- The
- Ride!

Remember that being a great volunteer driver is an honor and privilege that will be appreciated beyond measure by your riders. Stay connected with the excitement and passion that moved you to volunteer in the first place. You are contributing to a worthy cause, and your enthusiasm and energy will keep you and your rider happy and healthy. Let your heart drive your experience. Be safe, stay alert, and enjoy the ride.



For more information about volunteer driver programs
visit the Beverly Foundation's website at
www.beverlyfoundation.org



<h1>V</h1> ehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check Ups ● Check Lists ● Check Points
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As a volunteer driver, know that your vehicle is vital to the successful experience of both you and your passenger. Your program has a checklist of points to keep in mind. Here are some of the basics to remember:

1. Make sure your vehicle is safe to drive (tires, brakes, lights).
2. Check that all your seat belts are working properly.
3. Keep your windshield and windows clean and free from debris.

You can call the Auto Club for a complete vehicle maintenance checklist.

<h1>W</h1> eather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forecast ● Conditions ● Gear
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Knowing the local weather conditions prior to providing a volunteer ride is important. You can stay current with the local conditions through a variety of traditional sources, as well as through the internet. Whatever the local conditions in your area, there is always the possibility of a sudden storm. Keep a rain coat or umbrella in your vehicle just in case. Also, because summers are hot and some travel is over long distances, drivers should keep a water bottle in their vehicle in case of a road emergency.

<h1>X</h1> tra Mile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distance ● Support ● Friendship
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When delivering rides, you may be called upon to go the extra mile. This mile can take many forms, from offering an arm for support, to listening to a personal story, to helping passengers through the door of their destination. The extra mile shows that volunteer driving often goes beyond distance. As you and your passenger travel together, the extra mile can also be a road to friendship. So keep on the lookout for chances to go an extra mile.

<h1>A</h1> ttitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commitment ● Patience ● Values
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Perhaps you have already experienced it: the positive attitude associated with volunteering to drive. This attitude is expressed again and again in the book *Stories From The Road*, which recounts a wide range of volunteer driver experiences from around the country. Keep in mind the critical importance of your volunteer work. It will increase the level of fun and satisfaction that you receive from your efforts.



<h1>B</h1> oundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Passengers ● Drivers ● Balance
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You will encounter different types of boundaries when providing rides to your passengers. First, your passengers will each have their own individual sense of personal boundaries. Be aware of each passenger's personal definition of comfort when you provide physical assistance. Secondly, you have your own boundaries and limits. Try to adjust the support you offer to your passenger based on your own observations. Keep it simple, and find the appropriate balance between you and your individual passengers.

<h1>C</h1> ommunication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comprehension ● Comfort ● Clarity
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Communication between you and your passengers is one of the keys to good volunteering. You will most likely be transporting passengers with special requirements, or other physical or mental limitations that make effective communication more important. Speaking clearly, listening carefully, and maintaining clarity will make both you and your passenger more comfortable. Beyond the basics, good communication can also be enjoyable for you and your passenger, as you can share news and stories during the ride.

D

Driving Skills

- Check Skills
- Drive Defensively
- Stay Alert

Being responsible for an additional passenger places more importance on your driving ability. If you want to brush up on your skills, AARP has a driving skills course, often offered through senior centers. Local Auto Clubs also offer courses for both improving and reviewing driving skills. Take some time to review the basics, and when on the road, always stay alert and drive defensively.

E

Emergencies

- Prevention
- Procedures
- Passengers

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. So go through your safety checklists before your volunteer driving. If an accident or emergency occurs, the first thing to do is call 911 and get professional assistance. If you have an accident, follow the guidelines established by your insurance company and notify them as required. Keep your passengers' safety and well-being as your top priority.

F

riendliness

- Sensitivity
- Support
- Seniors

Have you heard of the *5A's of Senior Friendly Transportation*? They are: acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, affordability, and availability. Make sure your vehicle is acceptable and accessible for your rider. Can it be adapted to help? The ride is certainly affordable. Be available to help your rider-friend.



S

afety

- For your passenger
- On the road
- In the vehicle

Safety is priority one when driving for your volunteer driver program. Know your limits and drive only when you are feeling well and capable. Do not drive in bad weather or in any conditions where you are not comfortable. Always obey traffic laws (see below). If you are traveling to an unknown destination, or in areas that you are not familiar with, plan your trip in advance. Sometimes using surface streets at off-peak hours can be safer than using a busy freeway.

T

raffic Laws

- DMV
- Laws
- Safety

Traffic laws are designed for your safety. Be careful not to exceed posted speed limits. However, driving so slowly that you are a danger on the road may be a violation of your state's speed laws. If you or your rider do not wear seat belts, you are taking unnecessary risks and may get an expensive ticket. Driving while under the influence of alcohol or even medications is a violation of traffic law. Always check the safety of your vehicle before using it and make sure that it receives regular scheduled maintenance.

U

nderstanding

- Riders
- Need
- Attention

As a volunteer driver, you need to maintain a high level of understanding when transporting your passengers to their destinations. Some riders have a wider range of needs, and with combinations of decreased physical and mental capacities, they may need more time getting in and out of the vehicle. Understanding your passenger's needs is also a key to a successful ride.



P

assengers

- People
- Priorities
- Possibilities

As a volunteer driver, your passengers are your number one priority. Getting them to their destination safely, and in a friendly manner, is all part of the picture. While remaining attentive to the details required for the safe delivery of your riders, also keep open to the possibilities afforded by your volunteering. Perhaps a friendship may develop between you and your rider. Sometimes this makes the journey all the more valuable.

Q

uality of Life

- Riders
- Drivers
- Destinations

As a volunteer driver, you enjoy the unique privilege of being able to add to the quality of life of your riders. By driving your rider friends, you are helping them get to life-sustaining and life-enriching activities that they might not otherwise be able to attend. Refer to the eligibility letter that was sent to your rider for the purposes of travel allowed. When you help your riders get to these places, you can also enjoy the meaningful experience of giving something back to your community.

R

ecording

- Record Keeping
- Reimbursements
- Reporting

Your volunteer driver program may reimburse drivers who use their own vehicle to provide assisted transportation for program riders. Mileage reimbursement payments are non-taxable, so long as they are less than the maximum allowed by the I.R.S. Your mileage to and from your home to where you volunteer is a deductible expense on your income taxes. Mileage reimbursement are not classified as income, and they do not affect your eligibility for other entitlement payments. Keep accurate records of where and when you drive your passengers.

G

atekeeping

- Know Services
- Pay Attention
- Report Observations

Many volunteer driver programs offer a range of supportive assistance for their riders. This additional help may include arm-to arm, or hand-to hand support. In the course of delivering supplemental support, you may become aware of a passenger's declining capabilities. Confer with them, and find out if they have considered further attention. Helping in this way may get them to an important additional medical or social service.

H

elping

- Awareness
- Motivations
- Caring

A desire to help typically played a part in your initial motivation in joining your volunteer driver program. You will often be your riders' eyes and ears and you may help your passengers at times according to the program's guidelines. For example, your riders may rely on you for support and steadiness when walking. You can also help them reach groceries on high shelves and perhaps help them put away supplies in their home where they can be easily retrieved.

I

nsurance

- Minimums
- Liability
- Penalties

If you are using your own vehicle, find out what the minimum automobile insurance coverage is for your state. In addition to the volunteer driver's own policy, your program provides a policy to cover excess liability.



J

ob Description

- Approval
- Performance
- Evaluation

A volunteer driver job description may be included in your driver package. As stated in the job description, your state driver's license must be up to date. Your riders may evaluate you each time you drive for them, based on the job description. Keep a copy with you when driving: it can prove to be a helpful reference.



K

indness

- Thoughtfulness
- Consideration
- Attentiveness

As many volunteer drivers note, driving is often more than getting passengers to their destination. The kindness you extend to your passengers during the ride is an integral part of the social experience of driving. Many drivers and passengers refer to this exchange as an equally important part of the volunteer experience. Your personal kindness probably played a role in your choosing to become a volunteer driver. This same spirit of kindness can also keep you going through the different stages of your journey.

L

istening

- Stories
- Socializing
- Sharing

Everybody has a story. Seniors may have more than most. The book *Stories From The Road* shows that one of the benefits experienced by both volunteer drivers and their passengers is the chance to share personal stories. As the driver, make it a point to listen to senior passengers. Ask your passengers if they have a story they want to share. Listening can make the trip fun. This point of social contact can prove valuable to both you and your passenger, as you travel from point A to point B.

M

obility

- Definitions
- Limitations
- Solutions

Mobility here refers to people's ability to move around on their own. You may find that your passengers experience limitations in their own mobility. This may be one of the reasons they require the extra level of care that the your program delivers. Be attentive to the full range of assistance that your riders require. But do not assume that your riders are helpless. Ask if they would like you to help them get out of the car, or if you should take their arm.

N

avigation

- Maps
- Checklists
- Plans

If you are not familiar with your destination, make sure to plan your travel in advance. Knowing the local streets and roads is the best way to ensure a safe and comfortable ride for your passenger. Have a good map of your area; you can obtain one from the Auto Club. If you have internet access, you can get driving directions through a map service. For the truly high tech, you may have a vehicle equipped with a GPS system. Whatever method you use, knowing where you are going will help get your passenger there safely and on time.

O

ptions

- Alternatives
- Choices
- Possibilities

As a volunteer driver, the transportation you are offering your riders an option to continue to travel in their local area and stay healthy and remain connected to their community. The service you are providing may be one of several options available to your rider. Knowledge of your local area's services may prove useful—both your rider, and to your program. You can find a local resource that maintains a collection of contact information for transportation options in your community.