

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

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I. Statement of Philosophy and Purpose

Transportation Services are intended to assist older adults who cannot provide or arrange their own transportation with maintaining or regaining the ability to live and function as independently as possible by providing transportation to locations which enable older adults to access services an/or carry-out essential daily living tasks.

II. Legal Base

Older Americans Act of 1965 as Amended: 42 U.S.C. 3001; {Public Law 100-175, Section 306 (a) (2) (A) }

G.S. 143B-181.1 (c)

G.S. 143B-181.1 (a) (11)

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: 42 U.S.C. 12101, et Seq.

III. Definition of Service

A service which provides travel to and/or from community resources such as medical care facilities, nutrition sites, or other locations for the purpose of accessing needed services or carrying our activities accessory for daily living.

IV. Target Population

The target population consists of eligible older adults in need of transportation assistance to access needed services and/or to carry-out activities necessary for daily living.

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V. Client Eligibility

Transportation Services are limited to individuals 60 years of age and older who are in need of the service.

The Americans with Disabilities Act allows personal care attendants to accompany eligible clients in need of Transportation Services. Personal care attendants must have the same origin and destination as the client receiving Transportation Services. Agencies may not request reimbursement for required personal care attendants. (See Appendix B.)

VI. Priority for Service

Transportation Services shall be provided in accordance with the Priority for Receipt of Block Grant Services as specified in the Division of Aging Home and Community Care Block Grant Procedures Manual for Community Service Providers. The priority for receipt of Block Grant Services is as follows:

1. Older adults for whom the need for Adult Protective Services has been substantiated by the local department of social services and the service is needed as part of the adult protective service plan.
2. Older adults who are at risk of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation.
3. Older adults with extensive impairments in activities of daily living (ADL's), or instrumental activities of daily living (IADL's), who are at risk of placement or substitute care.

“ADL's” include: eating, dressing, bathing, toileting, bowel and bladder control, transfers, ambulation and communication (ability to express needs to others e.g. speech, written word, signing, gestures, communication devices).

“IADL's” include: meal preparation, medication intake, cleaning, money management, phone use, laundering, reading, writing, shopping and going to necessary activities.

4. Older adults with extensive ADL or IADL impairments.

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5. Older adults with less extensive (1-2) ADL or IADL impairments.
6. Well Older Adults

VII. Categories of Transportation Services

There are two categories of Transportation Services: 1. *General*; and 2. *Medical*. Agencies may provide either General or Medical transportation or both. A separate service code has been assigned for each of the two categories of Transportation Service. Agencies shall report the delivery of Transportation Services by the appropriate service code for the category of services provided.

The two categories of Transportation Services are defined as follows:

1. *General Transportation*: includes transporting eligible older adults to local community resources or other locations necessary for accessing services and/or accomplishing activities necessary for daily living. Destinations may include, but are not limited to, nutrition sites, senior centers, shopping centers, pharmacies, and recreation facilities. (General transportation does not include transporting eligible older adults to medical care facilities.)
2. *Medical Transportation*: includes transporting eligible older adults to medical care facilities. Destinations may include, but are not limited to, doctor's offices, hospitals, and health clinics. Medical transportation services may be provided in vehicles appropriate to meet the particular transportation needs of the older adult, including the use of specially equipped vehicles (e.g. vehicles with lifts, ambulances). Medical transportation may also include the use of specialized staff (e.g. nurses) necessary to safely transport an older adult to a medical care facility.

Medical Transportation Via Ambulance

Transporting a client to a medical care facility via ambulance is only allowable when a client can not be transported by another type of vehicle due to the client's medical condition. Ambulance transportation is also an allowable services under Medicare and Medicaid in accordance with certain criteria. The criteria are as follows:

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a. Medicare

Medicare Part B covers transportation in an ambulance in accordance with the criteria outlines below.

- 1) Part B covers ambulance service in an approved vehicle when transportation in another vehicle would endanger the client's health.
- 2) Medicare will pay for transportation from home to the nearest hospital or skilled nursing facility, or from the hospital or skilled nursing facility to home.
- 3) Medicare will not pay for ambulance use as routine transportation.

b. Medicaid

Medicaid covers transportation in an ambulance for Medicaid eligible recipients when the ambulance provider is enrolled in the Title XIX Medicaid program and when medically necessary. Medical necessity is indicated when the patient's condition is such that any other means of transportation would endanger the patient's health.

VIII. Service Provision

Agencies must have written policies and procedures regarding priority for ridership; priority for destination and purpose of trips; geographic area covered (including out of the county trips); routes; and schedules.

A. Coordinated Transportation Services

Agencies providing Transportation Services must demonstrate that Transportation Services are being coordinated through one of the following two ways:

1. In counties that have an approved and implemented Transportation Services Plan (TDP), the agency providing Transportation Services must be identified in the plan as an agency participating in the coordinated system.

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If an agency begins providing Transportation Services during the four (4) years that the Transportation Development Plan is in effect, the new transportation provider must contact the lead transportation agency regarding their transportation status in the county. If the new transportation provider indicates that vehicle expansion will be needed in the following year, then the local transportation committee must address the additional capital needs and update the Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS) section of the Transportation Development Plan. The revised CIS must be approved by the board of county commissioners and forwarded to the Department of Transportation, Public Transportation and Rail Division. The new transportation provider must be listed as a coordinating agency in the county's amended Transportation Development Plan.

2. In counties where there is not a current, locally approved and implemented TDP, then the agency providing Transportation Services must have written documentation that transportation services are coordinated with at least one other human service transportation agency and/or public/private transit operators for the purpose of transporting clients. Coordination of Transportation Services must include, at a minimum, the sharing of either vehicles, drivers, or operating costs.

Each agency providing Transportation Services must complete a Transportation Addenda. The completed addenda must be submitted to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). If the agency providing Transportation Services submits the completed addenda directly to the North Carolina Department of Transportation, then a copy of the completed addenda must be submitted to the AAA. The AAA will forward a completed addenda for each Transportation Service provider within the region to the Division of Aging by May 15 of each year. The Division of Aging will forward the completed addenda to the Department of Transportation and Rail Division by June 15 of each year for review.

B. Staffing

1. Coordinator

Agencies providing Transportation Services must have a transportation coordinator to oversee the administration of Transportation Services. At a minimum, the transportation coordinator must have a high school diploma or GED certificate.

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The transportation coordinator shall have a current job description outlining duties and responsibilities such as review of trip records or deadhead miles to ensure efficiency.

2. Drivers of Agency/Coordinated Vehicles (Both Paid and Volunteer)

a. At a minimum, each driver must:

- 1) be 18 years of age or older;
- 2) hold a current, valid North Carolina drivers license for the class of vehicle they are to operate; and
- 3) have two years driving experience

Agencies must maintain documentation that drivers meet the above criteria.

C. *Training for Drivers of Agency/Coordinated Vehicles (Both Paid and Volunteer)*

1. Defensive Driving Training

It is recommended that drivers of agency/coordinated vehicles take a defensive driving course within one year of employment and every three years (3) thereafter. The employing agency should maintain documentation regarding defensive driving courses completed by drivers.

Agencies may obtain information regarding the availability of defensive driving courses by writing to:

Department of Transportation
Division of Motor Vehicles
School Buss and Traffic Safety Section
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27697-0001

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2. Passenger Assistance Techniques Training

It is recommended that each driver be trained in passenger assistance techniques. Information regarding the availability of passenger assistance techniques training may be obtained by writing to:

Department of Transportation
Public Transportation and Rail Division
Post Office Box 25201
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27611-5201

3. Universal Precautions/Communicable Disease Training

It is recommended that agencies provide universal precautions/communicable disease training for all drivers transporting clients. Information regarding available training material may be obtained by contacting the North Carolina Division of Aging.

D. Vehicles

1. Vehicle Log

Agencies must keep an information log for all vehicles operated by the agency to transport clients. The log must include the following.

- a. documentation that the vehicle has a current registration from the State of North;
- b. documentation that the vehicle has a current inspection sticker for the State of North Carolina. If the city/county in which the vehicle is registered requires additional inspection, the vehicle has a current inspection sticker for the city/county; and
- c. documentation that the minimum liability insurance as required by the State of North Carolina is maintained on the vehicle. (An unexpired liability insurance policy shall be the means of determining that the minimum liability insurance is maintained on the vehicle.)

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Agencies shall keep all vehicles operated for the purpose of transporting clients clean. Passenger seating areas must not pose a hazard to clients either due to debris or broken equipment. Windows and mirrors must be free of obstruction and operate properly.

2. Vehicle Accidents

Agencies must establish written policies and procedures regarding accidents involving vehicles owned by the agency that are used for transporting clients.

If the agency uses shared vehicle owned by another agency to transport clients, then the agency must assure that the agency that owns the vehicle has written policies and procedures regarding accidents.

E. Moving Violations

Agencies must establish written policies and procedures regarding how violations by drivers of agency vehicles, both paid and volunteer, will be reported and handled (including DWI). The policies and procedures shall include information regarding moving violations committed while on and off duty.

IX. Utilizing Volunteers to Transport Clients in Personal Vehicles

A. Drivers

1. At a minimum, each volunteer driver must:
 - a. be 18 years of age or older;
 - b. hold a current, valid North Carolina drivers license for the class vehicle they are to operate; and
 - c. have two years driving experience.

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Agencies must maintain documentation that drivers meet the above criteria.

B. *Vehicles Owned by Volunteers*

If an agency uses volunteers to transport clients in the volunteer's personal vehicle, then the agency must document that the volunteer maintains the minimum liability insurance coverage as required by the State of North Carolina on the vehicle. (An unexpired automobile liability insurance policy for the vehicle used to transport clients shall be the means of determining that the minimum liability insurance is maintained on the vehicle.)

Agencies may obtain additional liability insurance coverage for volunteer staff. Information regarding insurance companies that underwrite coverage for volunteers may be obtained by writing to:

Department of Insurance
Marketing Assistance Program
430 North Salisbury St
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27603-5908

C. *Moving Violations*

Agencies must establish written policies and procedures regarding how moving violations by volunteer drivers transporting clients in personal vehicles will be reported and handled. The policies and procedures shall include information regarding moving violations committed while on and off volunteer duty.

D. *Accidents*

Agencies providing an/or purchasing Transportation Services must establish written policies and procedures regarding reporting of accidents occurring while volunteers are transporting clients.

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X. Emergencies

Agencies providing and/or purchasing Transportation Services must establish written policies and procedures regarding how drivers both paid and volunteer are to handle and report emergencies (e.g. injured passenger). Emergencies are defined as any situation in which immediate action is required by the driver.

XI. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Agencies must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which required transportation services to be accessible to, and usable by, people with disabilities. Agencies shall determine, depending upon the type of transportation services provided and the vehicle utilized, at what date during the phase-in period they must comply with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A brief listing of the Americans with Disabilities Act for transportation is included as Appendix B.

XII. Service Cost-Sharing

Agencies providing Transportation Services must comply with the Division of Aging's Service Cost-Sharing Policy as specified in Section 5 of the Division of Aging Home and Community Care Block Grant Procedures Manual for Community Service Providers.

XIII. Purchase of Vehicles

Agencies providing Transportation Services may not use Home and Community Care Block Grant funding to purchase vehicles. If an agency is considering purchasing a vehicle, they must refer to the local Transportation Development Plan regarding the purchase of additional vehicles for use in the county.

XIV. Client Records

Agencies shall maintain a completed intake form which includes, at a minimum, the client's name, address, telephone number, and date of birth for all clients receiving Transportation Services. Agencies should also maintain information regarding

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emergency contacts and any other pertinent data (e.g. medical conditions, name or doctor). A completed Client Registration Form meets this requirement.

XV. Confidentiality

Agencies which provide Transportation Services shall ensure that all client information collected is maintained in accordance with the Division of Aging's Confidentiality Policies and Procedures as specified in Section 6 of the Division of Aging Home and Community Care Block Grant Procedures Manual for Community Service Providers.

XVI. Reporting and Reimbursement

A. Reporting

Providers shall ensure that clients receiving Transportation Services are registered on the Division of Aging's Management Information System (MIS). If a client is not registered on the MIS, then the provider shall register the client through either the MIS or the Division of Social Services' Services Information System (SIS). Service providers, except local departments of social services, shall submit a Management Information System (MIS) Client Registration Form (DoA-101) for clients receiving Transportation Services. The completed form (DoA-101) shall be entered into the MIS by the provider agency or forwarded to the Area Agency on Aging for entry into the MIS. If a local department of social services is administering the program, clients shall be registered via the DSS-2515 form and the information entered into the SIS unless the department of social services has received approval from the Division of Aging to register clients directly through the MIS.

In order to maintain accurate client data, agencies must conduct an update of client registration information every twelve (12) months. Depending upon the type of agency providing the service, information, as appropriate, will be updated on either form DoA-101 or form DSS-2515 and entered into the appropriate information system. Agencies may update information by telephone or in person. Only the signature of the agency staff person completing the update is required. Updated information must be documented for each client receiving Transportation Services.

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B. Reimbursement

Transportation Services, either General or Medical, shall be reimbursed in accordance with the number or units of service provided. A unit of service equals “a one way trip provided to an eligible client.”

Agencies may only request reimbursement for those trips which are initiated with a predetermined destination point. Therefore, if any agency picks-up and transports clients for destination to a nutrition site and a grocery store which is on the nutrition site route, the agency may stop at the grocery store for client convenience; however, reimbursement for the stop at the grocery store cannot be given. If an agency designates the grocery store as a stop on the nutrition route, then the agency may request reimbursement only for those clients benefiting from the stop.

Specific procedures for reporting client data and service reimbursement information are outlined in Section 4 of the Division of Aging Home and Community Care Block Grant Procedures Manual for Community Service Providers.