

Westwood Council on Aging/Senior Center Transportation Policies and Programs

The Westwood Council on Aging seeks to provide safe, efficient transportation to eligible Westwood residents. The COA has two eight-passenger vans that are equipped with wheelchair lifts. This program is coordinated by the Center's Assistant Director and full time Van Driver.

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

Eligibility: Transportation is available for Westwood adult residents, 60 years of age and over and disabled residents, regardless of age. A companion or aide may accompany a senior or disabled resident to a medical appointment. Service is curb to curb, riders must be able to get in and out of the van without COA staff assistance, unless in a wheelchair.

Hours and Area of Operation: Transportation service is in operation Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for appointments within a ten-mile radius. A limit of 12 rides per consumer will be available per month.

Scheduling: 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.

Reservations must be made a minimum of two days in advance. We are unable to accommodate same-day requests.

Call the COA/Senior Center at 781-329-8799 to schedule an appointment.

The following information is ***required*** to schedule transportation:

- Name, address and phone numbers (home and cell) of passenger;
- *Every passenger must have COA swipe card* - a consent and release form must be filled out before riding the van;
- Date and time of medical appointment or other destination and approximate return time;
- Address and phone number of medical provider or other destination;
- 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.

Please note that there is a 15 minute window for pick up times. We do our best to accommodate everyone in a timely manner, however sometimes things happen which are beyond our control.

Suggested Donation: \$2.00 round trip for local medical appointments (Westwood, Norwood, and Dedham); \$3.00 for errands and grocery shopping and \$5 for Canton, Medfield, Newton-Wellesley and Faulkner Hospitals.

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Medical transportation takes priority and is available Monday through Thursday 8:30-2:30 and Friday 8:30-1. Every responsible attempt to accommodate transportation requests will be honored; however, rides are NOT guaranteed.

2. We reserve the right to cancel any senior who we feel cannot ride safely in the van.

The transportation program is *not* to be used for medical emergencies. In these situations, contact Emergency Medical personnel by dialing 9-1-1. We also cannot transport individuals to or from medical procedures. We do not transport from assisted living, memory care or nursing homes. No transportation for dialysis.

NON-MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Shopping Trips: Shopping trips to local department stores are scheduled every other Wednesday. (Please see our bi-monthly newsletter for specific dates and destinations.)

Errands: Errands within a five mile radius are scheduled on Mondays and Wednesdays and alternating with the shopping trips. (Please see our bimonthly newsletter for specific dates.)

Food Shopping: Food shopping is scheduled for every Friday morning. Participants are restricted to four shopping bags per person. (Please see our bimonthly COA/Senior Center newsletter for specific destinations.)

Programs at the Center: When possible, the van will be available for transportation to COA/Senior Center programs. However, medical appointments take priority.

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

Safety: The use of seat belts will be strictly enforced. Drivers are not allowed to transport individuals who are not belted into the vehicle. Individuals with medical reasons for not wearing seat belts will be exempt from this rule if they provide a note from their physician addressed to the COA office.

Seniors with portable oxygen tanks and wheelchairs are welcome, but must alert the office when making the reservation so time will be allowed to secure the tank or using the lift. The driver must secure the tank and/or wheelchair.

Seniors who have and/or are struggling with memory loss are encouraged to have a caregiver accompany them. If traveling with a caregiver, the caregiver should alert the Center that there will be two individuals taking the van.

The Center's Director reserves the right to cancel, deny or restrict any ride or any passenger if there is a concern for the safety of any passenger; that the passenger may get lost, soiled or injured due to cognitive impairment, personal hygiene, or if a rider is rude or aggressive to other seniors or the driver.

Reinstatement can occur after a three month waiting period. Reinstatement may only occur after discussion and approval with the Senior Center Director.

Cancellations and restrictions will be given to the rider in writing and will be reevaluated every 3 months. All concerns and questions should be directed to the Center's Director

Canes, walkers and other such devices must be secured with the exception of a blind person's cane. *Only registered service dogs are permitted.*

Smoking, eating and/or drinking in the van is not allowed.

We strongly encourage that riders carry a "File of Life" which contains their medical information. Blank forms are available at no charge from the COA.

All passengers must follow the drivers' instructions. Violation of these policies may result in temporary or total loss of privileges.

Inclement Weather: Van appointments will be cancelled whenever unsafe road conditions exist. When school is cancelled, the COA/Senior Center will be closed and transportation service will be cancelled. Please listen to local radio or TV stations for information as to whether the van will be in operation.

OTHER Transportation Opportunities

"Westfare" Taxi Vouchers are available to low income eligible senior and disabled residents *who no longer own a car*. A client may purchase a maximum of four books of six coupons each month (24 coupons worth \$2.00 each for a purchase price of \$12.00). For details, contact the COA/Senior Center's Outreach Counselor.

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 Senior Center's Outreach Counselor.

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

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