

CARTS

Get a Ride!

Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
A Community Solution for Public Transportation
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VOLUNTEER DRIVER GUIDE

Introduction:

Welcome to Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.'s Volunteer Transportation Program. This is a transportation program designed to transport and escort clients to medical appointments and for other purposes in the volunteers' personal vehicles.

Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. transportation serves the Central Kenai Peninsula, and first started transporting clients the summer of 2000. We transport people in taxis, accessible vans, with volunteer drivers, and we are developing a system for public transportation.

In our continuing effort to provide outstanding transportation services, we have developed a program to provide volunteer transportation services. The clients you will transport need more than just a ride; they often need someone to escort them to and from their homes and to help them into the facility.

Your clients will place a great deal of confidence in your driving and escort skills. Personal qualifications you bring to the Volunteer Transportation Program include:

1. Positive, open mindedness.
2. Dependability, self-reliance.
3. Initiative, leadership.
4. Free from adverse effects of medications, alcohol and/or drugs.
5. The ability to work with people of all ages and races.
6. The ability to drive in adverse weather and road conditions.
7. Good understanding of the geography of the geographic area we serve.

With your skills and abilities, you will provide a vital service that is guaranteed to make a difference in the lives of the people you transport.

Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.'s success is dependent upon your success. To help enhance the positive experiences you will have as a volunteer driver, we have put together this volunteer driver guide. Please read it thoroughly and be sure to ask any questions you might have about CARTS Transportation, or the volunteer position, the clients, or anything else you think of. We want to give you all the tools and knowledge necessary to perform your volunteer duties safely and professionally.

Community Relations:

Community relations is the opinion and image people have of CARTS as a part of our community. The way each volunteer driver performs their duty will contribute either favorably or unfavorably to CARTS' public image. The careful, helpful and courteous volunteer driver creates a good impression of our program.

The reality of providing public transportation services is that public observers expect proficient driving, take good performance for granted and are quick to complain of poor performance. Our goal is to provide safe, reliable and caring volunteer transportation services.

Client Relations & Assistance:

Clients will rely on the volunteer driver to get them to their destinations on time in a safe and caring manner. They will also look to the volunteer driver for some conversation and interest in their well being.

Communicate openly with your clients about your responsibilities as a volunteer driver and how you can best serve them. Their assistance needs will vary greatly. Some might need little to no assistance while others might need a lot. Do not try to guess what kind of assistance your clients will need. Just ask.

Do not assume that your clients need assistance because they have a disability. While many disabilities are visibly evident, many more are hidden.

It is not important whether clients have a disability or not. What is important is if they need any personal assistance. When assisting a client always ask before taking any direct action. Ask, "May I assist you?" or, "What is the best way I can assist you?" Some might need directions on how to access a medical facility or doctor's office. Some might need help getting in and out of your vehicle or up and down stairs. Some just might need someone to laugh with. No matter what the client's situation, smile and treat them with the utmost respect and let them know that you are there to help. If a client has an attendant with them, it is not necessary to assist the client, as that is the job of the attendant. An attendant should always be a person who is physically able to assist the client.

Your clients may be friendly and anxious to meet you, or they may be shy and withdrawn. In either case, how you act may be interpreted by your clients in ways that you may not have intended. A personal relationship that you might offer can be misinterpreted. Be aware that this can happen.

To maintain a professional level of transportation that is required of a volunteer driver, remember the following:

- Call clients by their names, not by "pet" names. Ignore sexual overtures.
- Avoid conversations about religion, politics, sex, or morals.
- Do not offer advice unless related to the safe transport of the client. Do not give out your personal telephone number.
- Do not offer or give any financial assistance, or pay for client's meals.
- Report instances of inappropriate passenger behavior to the CARTS office.
- If a client has unmet personal needs, tell the office, and we will contact the appropriate Social Service Agency.

Transporting & Escorting Clients:

Transporting and escorting clients may be challenging at times. Although most volunteer drivers find that once they perform a few trips, they develop a routine and become more confident with their skills.

We have listed some pointers and some likely situations that you might find yourself faced with and how to handle them. Even though this is a fairly comprehensive list, you will find yourself faced with other client situations that you might be unsure about. Do not worry. Use your best judgment, give the client the benefit of the doubt, and use your common sense.

1. When you arrive at a client's home, walk up to the door, knock or ring the doorbell and introduce yourself. Do not sit in your car and honk the horn. You need to be at their door, should they need any assistance to your vehicle. Often times the client will see you first and come right out. Out of courtesy, it is still best to offer assistance into your vehicle. If they need help buckling their seat belt, ask them if it is OK for you to help and proceed as expected. Again, if they have an attendant with them, it is not necessary to assist with a seat belt.
2. Do not enter a client's home, even if they invite you in. It is the best policy to not cross the threshold of their doorway. You have to use your own best judgment.
3. If you arrive at a client's home and they are not ready, give them ample time to prepare themselves. If they are going to be a couple of minutes, let them know that you will wait patiently for them in your vehicle. If they do not recognize your time spent as important and do not make a concerted effort to get ready in a timely manner, report this to the office.
4. Upon reaching the client's destination, offer any assistance necessary for the safety and guidance of the client. Waiting for the client during their appointment is not a requirement but strongly recommended. If the wait time is an extended one, and you wish to go to your vehicle or a quiet place and rest, or do other errands in the meantime, determine the length of the appointment and clearly communicate to the client exactly what time you will return and where you will pick them up.
5. Many of our clients are frail or ill. As a result, they sometimes cancel appointments at the last minute. Most of the time they call us and tell us; sometimes they do not. We have no way of planning for cancellations. We appreciate your patience and understanding when cancellations occur.
6. You might encounter an "Incident" with a client. Unlike an "Accident", an incident is when a client is injured or has other personal problems not related to an accident. A client might slip and fall or have a situation that is beyond the Volunteer's control. If the client is ill or injured, call 911 if necessary. In the event that you do encounter a client incident, please fill out an Incident Report on the form provided and turn it in to the office as soon as possible.
7. Always let the office know if any of the following occur:
 - You take a client to a different destination than was previously scheduled.
 - Client advises you that they do not need a return ride home.
 - Client is not home when you arrive. This is called a "No-Show" and needs to be tracked by the office. Also, leave a No-Show notice on their door.

- Client "cancels" at their door. They might have called too late for the Volunteer driver to be notified or they might not have called at all. In either case, CARTS office needs to keep track of cancellations.
- You cannot find the home of the client.
- You cannot find your client for the return home.
- Extra passengers go with the scheduled client that were not previously scheduled.
- The client requests that you transport them to another destination after their scheduled appointment. For Medicaid trips, clients are not to be transported to destinations other than their scheduled medical appointments. It is OK to transport a client to the pharmacy after the appointment, if it is in route to their home.
- The client requires heavy lifting or physical assistance that may cause you physical distress.
- You have an "accident" or a client "incident".
- Any unusual or out of the ordinary problems occur.

A volunteer driver can have a very rewarding experience, as long as the parameters of assisting their clients are understood and the driver becomes comfortable with assisting them when appropriate and necessary.

Vehicle Safety & Safe Driving:

The following safety tips and procedures are suggested as part of a comprehensive list for professional driving standards. We expect that Volunteer drivers will use extreme caution when transporting CARTS clients.

Your attention to detail in this section will assist you in providing a professional level of transportation that will allow you to protect yourself, your clients, and the general public.

1. Checklist for Safe Drivers:

- Our motto is: **SAFETY FIRST!** We prefer you arrive late to an appointment than risk having an accident.
- Always pick up and drop off clients on the right side of the street or pull into a driveway or parking lot.
- Always use your flashers when picking up or dropping off clients in congested areas.
- Always drive with headlights on for safety.
- Seat belts must be used at all times by both driver and clients.
- When poor driving conditions exist, start your trip early and keep in mind that it is more important to get the client safely to the destination than on time. Always observe the laws of the road and never speed. Driving under emotional stress or illness is unsafe and should be avoided. Smoking and pets are not allowed in the volunteer's vehicle during transport of CARTS clients. A client may bring an animal as long as it is a service animal trained to aid them with a disability.

2. Suggested Vehicle Inspection And Care:

It is strongly suggested that the volunteer driver inspect the vehicle before providing the trip. The following are some of the more important inspection items:

- Head lights, brake lights, turn signals
- Oil, brake, radiator fluids

- Windshields, wipers, washer fluid
- Tires, wheels
- Brakes
- Seat belts
- Mirrors
- Horn
- Heater and defroster
- Operating instruments

If any of the above mentioned inspection items do not pass an inspection, the volunteer driver must repair the item before the transport.

- a. It is strongly suggested that the volunteer driver service the vehicle according to the preventive maintenance schedule provided by the manufacturer of the vehicle.
- b. The volunteer's vehicle should be kept clean inside and out, and the interior removed of all clutter when transporting CARTS clients.

3. What To Do In Case Of An Accident:

- Stop at once and investigate.
- Obtain first aid if anyone is injured.
- Report accident to local authorities or call 911.
- Get names and addresses of all witnesses.
- Do not argue, accuse anyone of wrongdoing, or admit wrongdoing.
- Obtain license number of other vehicle and driver.
- Get vehicle insurance information from the other driver and share yours.
- Do not sign any statements or reports except official police reports.
- If there is a client in your vehicle, look after their well being and do not leave them unattended.
- If your vehicle is disabled, contact the CARTS office so that any clients in your vehicle, or any clients waiting for your arrival can be rescheduled.
- After the necessary steps have been taken and any clients returned safely home, provide a written accident report to the office as soon as possible.

4. Required Vehicle Safety Equipment:

- Spare tire
- Tire jack and lug wrench
- Flashlight
- Incident Reports (provided by CARTS)
- First Aid Kit
- Winter tires in season
- Fire Extinguisher
- Reflective Warning Devices

5.Suggested Vehicle Safety Equipment:

- Jumper cables
- Blanket
- Shovel
- Sand

Billing Forms:

Billing forms are important, as they are the source of your reimbursement. On the billing forms you will need to have the name of the client, date of service, pickup time, arrival time, appointment time, total hours volunteered, total miles for trip, destination facility name and address, and receipts if appropriate. Volunteers are reimbursed \$.325 per mile. Billing forms must be submitted by the 5th day of the following month, and for bimonthly billing by the 17th of each month. It will take approximately 3-4 weeks to receive your check after your billing is submitted.

Volunteer Driver Training:

CARTS may offer First Aid, Defensive Driving and other courses at different times. These scheduled events will be available for drivers to participate. CARTS tries to encourage our drivers to take the classes, which are offered and paid for by the company. The Volunteer will need to donate their time to take the class. CARTS also offers Child Seat Safety courses. CARTS believes that any training a driver receives is beneficial to the performance of the volunteer driver position.

Confidentiality:

Discussion or provision of any recipient information, except for normal service purposes, is strictly prohibited by Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. Transportation service providers, employees, and volunteers. For the safety of staff, it is not acceptable to give out personal information about any employee.

Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.
VOLUNTEER DRIVER/CLIENT/PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY
CERTIFICATE OF UNDERSTANDING

This is to certify that Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.'s policy on confidentiality as to its relationship between me and the client or participant I serve and other persons or agencies is as follows:

1. All participant information is to be treated as confidential at all times.
2. I will not disclose any information concerning the client/participant to individuals or agencies without the individual's permission in writing, including other employees of Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc., unless there is a need to know basis.
3. I will not borrow money, accept gifts or sell products to participants, except through regular advertising channels.
4. Solicit medication from clients.
5. Use or abuse alcohol, narcotics or drugs while on duty, unless prescribed and the driver can still perform duties in a safe manner.
7. Wear any type of headphones while volunteer driving. All cellphones will be used with extreme caution.
8. I will not work for any participant for remuneration without specific approval, in writing from CARTS.
9. A "no hands on" policy involving clients is enforced unless it is to temporarily restrain a violent client. This "no hands on" policy is enforced regardless of what outside agencies, caregiver, or family members may advise as to what type of disciplinary action involving touching, patting etc. CARTS should be notified immediately, verbally and in writing, when a Volunteer is given directions or orders on handling clients which are contradictory to company policy.
10. Drivers will not make sexually explicit comments, or solicit sexual favors from clients.
11. In compliance with applicable state and federal laws, Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. ensures that all clients will receive equal treatment and no eligible clients will be denied any service that CARTS offers based on race, color, religion, age, sex, sec orientation, national origin or ancestry, marital status, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.
12. Volunteer drivers and passengers must always wear safety belts. If a passenger refuses to wear a safety belt, report it to the office.
13. Children who are transported shall be properly restrained in a child safety seat as required by current guidelines. The child seat is to be provided by the parent or guardian of the child

or you may check one out at the CARTS office. Appropriate training will be offered frequently, as well as upon request.

Ready ... Set ... Go!!!

You now have the basics needed to be a successful and professional volunteer driver.

We realize you will encounter situations and issues that are not addressed in this guide. With all the different combinations of volunteers, passengers, and destinations, there is no realistic way that we can foresee all of the situations you will experience.

Volunteer driving is an exceptional volunteer opportunity. However, we find it is not for everyone, which sometimes is not clear until it has been tried. Once you have taken a few trips, let us know how it is going and if it is working for you. This will give you a chance to establish a routine and determine if transporting and escorting passengers is the right kind of volunteer experience for you. Do not be afraid to say it is not for you, we would completely understand.

We would also like to hear your suggestions on how to do it better, so that we can incorporate necessary changes. We sincerely want all of our volunteer drivers and passengers to feel safe and confident on the road. We randomly survey clients about how the ride was, and if they have any compliments or complaints.

Thank you for volunteering your time, resources, and energy to the volunteer transportation program at Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NO. _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

MAILING ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT: _____

CELLPHONE NUMBER: _____ WILLING TO USE IT? _____

DRIVER'S LICENSE #: _____ EXPIRATION DATE: _____

AUTO INSURANCE COMPANY NAME: _____

INSURANCE ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ AGENT: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION

Vehicle #1 YEAR: _____ LICENSE # _____

MAKE: _____ MODEL: _____ COLOR: _____

AVAILABLE FOR LONG DISTANCE TRIPS _____ YES _____ NO

Vehicle #2 YEAR: _____ LICENSE # _____

MAKE: _____ MODEL: _____ COLOR: _____

AVAILABLE FOR LONG DISTANCE TRIPS _____ YES _____ NO

YOUR AVAILABILITY (days of week or specific times):

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