

# Assisted Transportation Volunteer Driver Toolkit

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is assisted transportation?

- Assisted transportation is defined by providing door-through-door service for those who require enhanced service. Door through door means that the rider may need assistance to prepare for and return from a ride, as well as possibly needing assistance to enter the vehicle and the building at their destination.

### Who uses assisted transportation?

- Seniors and those who are disabled are the highest proportion of riders.

### Who are 'volunteer drivers'?

- Volunteer drivers vary greatly between organizations, the frequency of service, and experience.
- Volunteer drivers can range from individuals driving a neighbor to church to designated organizations and programs offering assisted transportation, such as Drive Happiness.
- Riders are entitled to good service and performance, even if the service comes at minimal or no cost. A volunteer driver not only requires driving skills, but well-developed interpersonal skills.

### How do I find the best candidates?

- While there are qualifications and skills all drivers must possess, the most important characteristics of volunteer drivers are their empathy, compassion, non-judgmental approach with elders, and patience with a pace different from one's own.
- Often in organizations, recruitment is most effective by word-of-mouth, as it is often about linking relationships. Informal approaches to volunteer recruitment such as through your organization's website, newsletters, or social media, can be cost effective and efficient.
- It is important for all potential volunteer drivers to undergo standard application, background checks, interviews, as well as proper training specific to your organization's program procedures.



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## What kind of training do I need to provide?

- Training volunteer drivers is an important element that contributes to the satisfaction of their experience, client satisfaction and organizational accountability. Training includes the essential elements for the role such as defensive driving and emergency response, as well as in-services and continuing education that enhance the role of the volunteer, and provide them with the skills to improve the service they provide to riders.

## What are the responsibilities of volunteers?

- Transporting riders from their homes to their chosen destinations, sometimes providing additional assistance such as helping climb stairs or opening doors to riders as needed.
- Driving defensively and responsibly, obeying all traffic and seat belt laws
- Reporting any incidences and emergencies immediately
- Keeping accurate records and submitting the required reports
- Treating all riders with dignity and respect

## Who needs insurance?

- Volunteers:
  - In Alberta, it is required by law that the owner of the vehicle has their own automobile insurance.
- The Organization:
  - Owned Automobile: If your organization owns vehicles, you are required to have owned automobile coverage. The Standard Endorsement Form (S.E.F.) 6c is the Public Passenger Vehicles Endorsement, which grants permission to use the vehicle to carry passengers for compensation or hire.
  - Non-Owned Automobile: While your organization cannot insure any vehicles it does not own (e.g., employee or volunteer), your organization can purchase non-owned automobile insurance. This insurance protects your organization against liabilities connected to any individual or company using a vehicle to undertake work for your organization.



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## What kind of insurance do I need?

- Not-for-profit organizations most commonly have **Commercial General Liability (CGL)** insurance, which is not legally required to carry, but may have contractual arrangements that require the organization to carry a \$1, \$2, or \$5 million.
- Endorsements may be added to an organizations CGL policy. The most popular endorsement with volunteer drivers is **Non-owned automobile insurance**.

## How is safety ensured?

- The best way to ensure your program runs safely and securely is for your organization to undergo proper risk management practices. It is a requirement for all drivers providing assisted transportation to have specific training related to the role. Training for volunteers must be structured to conform to the duties and responsibilities listed in the job description.
- Volunteers who treat all riders with dignity and respect, driving defensively and responsibly, obeying all traffic and seat belt laws will help ensure your program runs smoothly.

## Why would an assisted transportation volunteer driver program add value to my organization?

- It can help to bring larger volumes of people to your programs while simultaneously enhancing the lives of seniors by allowing seniors to stay active and involved in their communities.

Contact the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council:

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