

Volunteer Driver TurnKey Kit

Planning Implementation Evaluation



Senior Friendliness & Volunteer Driver Programs

Volunteer Driver programs can be critical to older adults who have limited their driving or have stopped driving altogether. However, it is the degree of “senior friendliness” of the volunteer driver program that will determine whether transportation enables seniors to experience a sense of independence, to get where they need to go, and/or to enjoy an acceptable quality of life.

Research conducted by the Beverly Foundation and policy and program initiatives of government and non-profit agencies at the national, state, and local level have defined the 5 A’s. Today they have been adopted as criteria for standards in senior transportation. The 5 A’s include five key factors below:

The 5 A’s of Senior Friendly Transportation

- Availability:** Transportation services that are available to seniors... Not only are services offered, but they meet expectations of time availability (evenings/weekends) and quantity (rides not limited).
- Acceptability:** Transportation services that are acceptable to seniors... Service quality is deemed satisfactory in terms of advance scheduling, vehicle cleanliness, driver sensitivity to seniors, and wait time.
- Accessibility:** Transportation services that seniors can access... Services are easy to use because they offer supportive assistance (e.g. driver comes to door) and they provide rides where seniors need to go.
- Adaptability:** Transportation services that can be adapted to senior needs... Services accommodate seniors’ needs for scheduling multiple stops, and providing additional support (assistance with walkers and wheelchairs, and help at destination).
- Affordability:** Transportation services that are affordable for seniors and the program... The potential for low-cost operations can enable programs to offer services free of charge, and to be financially sustainable.

Adopting senior friendliness criteria can provide a means for thinking about and assessing just how senior friendly a transportation service is, or could be. Such criteria also can serve to establish a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of coordination efforts and can provide benchmarks that help move coordination initiatives forward.

“The Senior Friendliness Calculator”, a method for calculating senior friendliness, is on the back page.

Calculate the Senior Friendliness

Now you might want to review your program's senior friendliness. To do so, check each of the factors below that are represented within your program. Each check equals one point. When you have completed your review, add up your score and look at the scoring key at the bottom of the page to know where you are on "the road to senior friendliness."

Availability: The Volunteer Driver Program....

- provides transportation to seniors
- is able to recruit and retain sufficient number of drivers
- can provide transportation anytime (days, evenings, weekends)
- does not limit number of rides
- maintains organizational relationships with human & transit services

Acceptability: The Volunteer Driver Program....

- uses automobiles to provide majority of transportation
- does not require advance scheduling
- involves riders to determine appropriate wait time
- conveys guidelines to ensure vehicles are clean and well maintained
- provides driver "sensitivity to seniors" training

Accessibility: The Volunteer Driver Program....

- can accommodate needs of majority of elders in the community
- can take riders to destinations beyond city & county boundaries
- provides "door-to-door" transportation
- provides training to riders on how to access services
- can provide services to essential and non essential activities

Adaptability: The Volunteer Driver Program....

- can accommodate riders who need or want to make multiple stops
- makes an effort to link riders with other services when appropriate
- can access vehicles to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers
- provides "door-thru-door" transportation when needed
- will provide transportation escorts when needed

Affordability: The Volunteer Driver Program....

- provides insurance coverage for volunteer drivers
- does not charge seniors for transportation services
- accepts passenger donations for transportation services
- covers the driver's deductible in the event of a crash
- is willing to reimburse drivers for mileage or costs

Total **The Road to Senior Friendliness**

0 5 10 15 20 25

