

**SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN COMMUNITY
ACTION PROGRAM
LIFT Program**

**VOLUNTEER
DRIVER HANDBOOK**
Connecting People in Southwest Wisconsin

SWCAP VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM

On behalf of SWCAP, welcome to the volunteer driver program. With your assistance, we will provide services that otherwise could not be done. We thank you for dedicating your time and talents. We believe that you are unique because you are willing to give of yourself to help others.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of SWCAP Volunteer Driver Program, LIFT, is to provide safe, dependable, affordable and courteous transportation services to people in Grant, Lafayette, Richland, Iowa and Green Counties and the surrounding area. We aim to coordinate services whenever possible.

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

A volunteer driver is one who provides common carrier transportation and is not contractually bound to provide services. Volunteers are those drivers who are using their own vehicle or a vehicle owned by SWCAP and assigned to the driver to transport people to destinations that fit each client's needs. Volunteers are reimbursed 50 cents per approved mile driven in their own vehicle. Volunteers are never intentionally asked to provide a service that would duplicate a service already being provided by any agency within SWCAP's service area.

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of those individuals who drive their own vehicles. It is the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. As such, Southwest CAP endorses all applicable state motor vehicle regulations relating to driver responsibility. The Company expects each driver to drive in a safe and courteous manner pursuant to the following safety rules. The attitude you take when behind the wheel is the single most important factor in driving safely. All volunteer drivers are encouraged to take PASS training and Defensive Driving training. SWCAP will pay for the training.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

The transportation office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Friday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.. In addition, the office has a voice mail system operating 24 hours per day. Messages left after hours will not be reviewed until the next business day. The office is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday afternoon, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The Volunteer Driver program attempts to provide non-emergency transportation services to people who have no other means of transportation. Rides can be requested for medical and counseling appointments, social services, shopping, or social activities. Since volunteers are limited and schedules fill up very quickly, a trip request does not guarantee that a ride will be provided.

Volunteers are reimbursed for their expenses within agency limits while on an authorized agency assignment, but are not considered employees of SWCAP. Volunteers are an important part of the Transportation Program, and the time and resources given by our volunteer are greatly appreciated by the passengers we serve as well as the agency staff. The reimbursements provided by SWCAP to volunteer drivers are intended to cover the costs of completing the volunteer assignment. **Volunteers should not enter into this assignment with the expectation of "earning" money.**

CODES OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

I will conduct myself with dignity, courtesy, and consideration.

I realize, since I am a volunteer, I do not receive payment for my time. Furthermore, I will not accept tips or request that my meals be paid by passengers.

As a volunteer driver, I will not make derogatory or discriminatory remarks to or about passengers because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance.

I will not impose my religious beliefs or lecture passengers.

I realize that sexual harassment or contact with passengers is illegal, inappropriate and not allowed.

I will not use alcoholic beverages or mood altering drugs while serving as a volunteer driver.

I will be punctual in the performance of my duties.

I understand I must respect the privacy rights of the passengers I serve. I understand that personal, medical, psychiatric and financial information is private non-public data. Information on these subjects may be shared only with the dispatcher or other staff only.

I recognize that as a volunteer driver, I represent The LIFT Program and Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program. I have an obligation to my volunteer assignment, to those who direct it, to the passengers, and to the public to uphold these codes of conduct.

Volunteer drivers violating codes of conduct may be dismissed at any time

All volunteer drivers or volunteer applicants must meet all of the following criteria to drive for SWCAP.

- All drivers must be at least 18 years of age.
- Volunteer drivers must have photocopies of valid motor vehicle license and proof of insurance (current automobile liability insurance meeting Wisconsin minimum insurance requirements – LIFT recommends 100,000/300,000 injury, 50,000 property damage and 50,000/100,000 Uninsured/Underinsured motorist) on file at LIFT prior to receiving trip requests. Proof of insurance will be kept on file at the Transportation Office. If involved in an accident while on volunteer duty, SWCAP does not cover the volunteer’s insurance deductible, and the volunteer’s automobile insurance will be considered the first source for claim resolution.
- Motor Vehicle Records will be ordered at the initial application and periodically to assess employees' driving records.
- Submit completed annual vehicle inspection form.
- Report any crashes or passenger incidents occurring while on duty for SWCAP to the office immediately. (If after hours, leave detailed telephone message and report on next business day.)
- Any volunteer who has a driver’s license revoked or suspended shall immediately notify the LIFT Program and discontinue driving for LIFT.
- LIFT must be notified prior to a scheduled trip if any additional passengers will accompany driver and LIFT passenger. Bringing additional riders for conversation or company is fine, and often a good idea. Make sure the rider always feels included in the conversation.
- Only vehicles with current annual inspections may be used to transport clients.
- Adhere to the SWCAP Codes of Conduct.
- Keep the transportation office advised when unable to drive as soon as it is known. Sudden situations that prevent driving such as family emergency or personal illness should be reported immediately, so the volunteer scheduler can make other arrangements for any pending trips.
- Adhere to all guidelines regarding meal reimbursement, mileage reimbursement, use of cellular phones, etc.
- Attend training sessions and special meetings sponsored by the program.

Responsibilities of a SWCAP Volunteer Driver:

- Transport passengers in a safe and lawful manner. Seatbelts are required by WI law unless passenger has a physician’s letter of excuse and a copy of this on file with LIFT
- Be prompt so riders arrive on time for scheduled appointments.

- Walk with riders into their appointments and to their doors when returning home. Driver may assist a passenger by lending an arm. Driver will request the help of medical facilities or family when transporting adults who need higher levels of assistance
- Observe confidentiality regarding riders, treating everyone with dignity and respect
- No smoking in vehicles when in service for LIFT
- Decline any tips or gifts and encourage donations to LIFT
- Call LIFT within 24 hours of a scheduled ride if unable to complete a trip
- Accurately complete mileage log forms and mail or bring to the office promptly for prompt reimbursement
- Refer ride requests to the LIFT. Reimbursements come only for approved trips
- Only transport people in non-emergency situations. In case of an emergency, call the local ambulance service, 911
- Every effort should be made to avoid use of a cellular phone while driving for LIFT. Plan ahead, in order to avoid making phone calls while driving. Please pull over if you need to call our office
- Notify LIFT of any changes affecting your ability drive safely, including loss of valid driver's license, insured vehicle or driving ability.
- Refrain from drinking or using prescription or over the counter drugs that might impair your driving ability within six hours of driving for LIFT

Confidentiality

Volunteers must keep names of and information about passengers confidential. Friendliness, reliability, courtesy and the ability to be non-judgmental and accepting of different lifestyles and values are necessary attributes for the position. Confidentiality is maintained for the protection of the rider and LIFT. Volunteers will use the following procedures.

1. All written and unwritten material on riders is considered confidential.
2. Volunteers do not have access to any passenger files maintained by LIFT.
3. If a volunteer receives information from a rider and there is a reasonable suspicion that abuse - physical, sexual, economic or emotional - has occurred, then, the driver will share that information with LIFT staff as soon as possible.
4. The fact that information about an individual has been made public through the news media does not alter the fact that a person still has confidentiality privileges within LIFT.

LIFT PROGRAM POLICIES

Trip Assignments

All rides must be pre-approved and assigned to volunteers by the transportation office. The driver **will not be reimbursed** for any ride that is not assigned by LIFT. Additional side trips or returning home during layovers will not be permitted unless authorized by LIFT.

Rides will be dispatched by telephone. Special care needs to be taken when a volunteer is accepting a telephone assignment to ensure that all information is recorded accurately and completely.

Driver may specify certain geographic areas or be available for travel throughout the state. In fairness to everyone it is expected that all volunteers be willing to drive a combination of short and long trips.

No-Show Policy

If a passenger fails to keep an appointment as assigned to the volunteer driver, the office is to be notified immediately. The driver should make a reasonable effort to be sure that the passenger is aware that the driver is ready and waiting to take the passenger. Drivers must wait for fifteen minutes past the appointed pick up time before leaving and reporting a no-show. The SWCAP policy for no-show appointments is very specific. Passengers receive two written warnings about no-shows, and upon the third no-show, the passenger shall be ineligible for rides for 30 days.

Fare Collections

Depending upon the funding source responsible for the ride, some passengers may be required to pay a fare for their trip. If the volunteer driver is instructed by the dispatcher that the passenger is to pay a fare, the volunteer shall collect the fare at the beginning of the trip. Passengers are asked to pay fares by cash or check payable to SWCAP which are then turned in along with the driver's trip sheet. Cash collected is **not** to be sent by mail. If a driver encounters a passenger who does not pay, it is to be reported to the office immediately and also recorded on the trip sheet. The office will determine what action is to be taken with the passenger.

Inclement Weather Conditions

In the case of inclement weather, the volunteer driver has the right to cancel the ride, even on short notice. The volunteer driver must call the office and the passenger when a decision is made to cancel. Nothing is more important to us than the safety of the volunteer driver and passenger. In most cases passengers would rather not travel during inclement weather, and would usually prefer to reschedule. Only travel when you are confident you can make the trip safely.

Vehicle Maintenance

Proper vehicle maintenance is a basic element of any transport vehicle to ensure a safe, roadworthy vehicle.

- Registration and Inspection is the responsibility of the volunteer driver.
- The vehicle should be cleaned (interior & exterior) regularly to help maintain

- its good appearance for you and LIFT.
- An accident packet should be kept in the glove compartment of each vehicle.
- The vehicle manufacturer's maintenance schedule should be referenced and closely followed regarding recommended maintenance intervals.
- A Mileage Log must be kept in each vehicle and each trip must be recorded.

Incident Policy

Report any incident involving the volunteer driver and/or passengers in any way must also be reported to the office as soon as possible after it occurs. Examples of reportable incidents are a passenger who uses inappropriate language or behavior, a passenger who refuses to use the seat belt, a passenger who slips while entering or exiting your vehicle, etc. The office will advise the volunteer if an accident/incident form needs to be completed. For risk management purposes, all accidents and any incident that involves personal injury or other liability must be documented and kept on file at the office.

Any complaints or issues regarding volunteer driving should be discussed with the Volunteer Scheduler. Passenger complaints about volunteers are documented on a passenger complaint form. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Volunteer Scheduler or the Program Director will decide the next steps. In most cases the volunteer driver is asked to offer her/his perspective of the situation. If follow up action is needed, both the driver and the passenger will be notified..

What to do in Case of a Crash - Crash Investigation

Every accident should be reported, investigated and reviewed. The primary purpose of investigating a crash is to find out the cause and initiate action to eliminate or control it. Another purpose is to obtain information to be used in determining whether the accident is preventable or non-preventable. Any volunteer who is in any kind of crash must:

- Do not declare fault
- Move to a safe location and, if possible, secure your vehicle out of traffic
- Call police/sheriff and (if needed) seek medical assistance
- Remain Calm, Courteous, Consistent your version of the accident
- Obtain complete identifying information from those involved - people and vehicles
- Complete the Accident Investigation form
- Obtain the names of the witnesses including addresses and phone numbers
- Notify the LIFT Program as soon as possible

Recording Trips on Driver Daily Log Sheets

Log sheets are due in the office every other Friday. Because passenger trips are closed out and billed to funding sources monthly, a trip sheet is submitted even if the

volunteer driver drove only one day during the month or had only a small dollar amount in reimbursement for the month.

Complete all columns of the daily log beginning with the date of the trip and passenger name. The odometer reading is taken at the start of the volunteer assignment. If taking more than one passenger on a given trip, record odometer readings for each passenger.

Layover time that is spent waiting in the lobby or parking lot of the location is considered volunteer time. The hours in which a volunteer is on lay over away from home are eligible as volunteer duty hours. A volunteer driver **will not be paid mileage for returning home during lay over** time.

Passenger Assistance

For the safety of the passenger and the driver, the volunteer driver is not expected to provide any more assistance than lending an arm for balance. A driver may lend a hand to steady a passenger while entering or exiting the vehicle. Under no circumstances is a volunteer expected to carry packages or personal items for passengers.

When the volunteer receives an assignment, the scheduler is to inform the volunteer of any additional assistance that the passenger may need. It is up to the driver to decide if he or she is comfortable in providing the assistance requested.

Passengers able to transfer from a wheelchair may be transported, but must transfer into the car without lifting from the volunteer driver. The driver can place the wheelchair in the trunk or backseat. If a passenger becomes weakened during their appointment (such as kidney dialysis) or trip and is unable to walk, the volunteer shall ask staff at the pickup point for assistance. At no time is a volunteer to carry or lift a passenger. A volunteer driver is prohibited from transporting a passenger who needs that type of help. If no one is able to help the passenger, please call 911.

SWCAP's volunteer driver services are door-to-door service. Exceptions to this rule must be expressly requested. A volunteer driver has the right to accept or refuse any trip for any reason.

Service animals are permitted with prior notice. The volunteer driver will always be notified if a service animal will be riding along. Non-service animals are not allowed.

Non-Discrimination

All of the staff and volunteers at SWCAP Volunteer Driver Program are committed to respecting the individuality of each person. We respect race, culture, age, religion, affectional orientation, and individuals with disabilities. We strive to provide a positive and confidential environment where the well being of each person is respected.

Safe Driving

- Drivers should be mentally and physically rested and alert prior to each trip.
- Drinking of alcoholic beverages while driving, or driving while under the influence of alcohol or restricted drugs is prohibited and disciplinary action will be enforced
- Traffic laws must be obeyed. Speed shall never be faster than a rate consistent with existing speed laws and road, traffic and weather conditions. Posted speed limits must be obeyed.

Defensive Driving

- Drivers are required to maintain a safe following distance at all times. One vehicle length for every 10 mph is a minimum recommendation.
- Avoid driving in other driver's blind spots; attempt to maintain eye contact with the other driver, either directly or through mirrors.
- In adverse conditions, reduce speed to a safe operating speed that is consistent with the conditions of the road, weather, lighting, and volume of traffic.
- Turn signals must be used to show where you are heading; while going into traffic and before every turn or lane change.
- When passing or changing lanes, view the entire vehicle in your rear view mirror before pulling back into the lane.
- Be cautious when backing up. Walk around your vehicle and know your surroundings before backing up.

SEAT BELT AND CHILD SAFETY SEAT POLICY

In compliance with Wisconsin Law, all SWCAP Transportation Volunteers will use seat belts and child safety seats, while operating a motor vehicle when engaged in volunteer assignments for SWCAP.

Child safety seats are the **responsibility of the rider**. Below are the types of seats that should be provided and used in back seats only:

Rear-facing child safety seat when child

Is less than 1-year-old or
Weighs less than 20 pounds.

Forward-facing child safety seat when the child:

Is at least 1-year-old but less than 4-years-old
Weighs at least 20 pounds but less than 40 pounds.

Booster seat is required when the child:

Is at least 4-years-old but less than 8-years-old
Weighs at least 40 pounds but less than 80 pounds
Is not 57-inches (4-feet, 9-inches) or taller.

Volunteers not complying with the Seat Belt and Child Safety Seat Law will be subject to disciplinary action and /or dismissal.

MVR Review Criteria

- ALL TYPE 'A' VIOLATIONS (as defined below) WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION OF THE VOLUNTEER AND WILL DISQUALIFY ANY POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER DRIVER.
- ANY VOLUNTEERS SHOWING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING WILL BE RESTRICTED FROM DRIVING COMPANY VEHICLES:
 - One (1) or more type 'A' Violations in the past 3 years.
 - Three (3) or more accidents (regardless of fault) in the last 3 years.
 - Two (2) or more at-fault accidents in the last 3 years.
 - Three (3) or more 'B' violations in the past 3 years.
 - Any combination of accidents and type 'B' violations which equal four (4) or more in the last 3 years.

Type 'A' Violations:

- Driving While Intoxicated
- Driving While Under the Influence of Drugs
- Negligent Homicide Arising out of the use of a Motor Vehicle (gross negligence)
- Using a Motor Vehicle for the commission of a Felony
- Aggravated Assault with a Motor Vehicle
- Operating a Motor Vehicle without the Owners Authority (grand theft)
- Reckless Driving
- Speeding in excess of 20 or more miles over the posted speed limit (racing)
- Hit and Run (Bodily Injury or Property Damage)
- Failure to obey or eluding an officer
- Falsifying an accident report
- Failure to stop or leaving the scene of an accident
- Operating During a period of Suspension or Revocation

Type 'B' Violations:

All Moving Violations not listed as type 'A' Violations.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is illegal and against the policies of Southwest CAP. Sexual harassment is unacceptable behavior relating to sexual activity or characteristics.

Any employee who believes he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act as soon as possible after the alleged harassment occurs to his/her supervisor and Southwest CAP's Human Rights Officer. When one of these is the alleged harasser, the complaint should be made to that person's supervisor. An investigation of all complaints will be undertaken immediately. Any employee who has been found to have sexually harassed another employee will be subject to appropriate actions ranging from a written warning to termination from Southwest CAP. Given the nature of sexual discrimination, Southwest CAP recognizes that the question of whether a particular action or

incident is a purely personal, social relationship without a discriminatory employment effect requires a factual determination based on all facts in this matter. Southwest CAP also recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent persons.

Southwest CAP hopes all its employees will continue to act responsibly, as in the past to maintain a pleasant working environment free of discrimination. Southwest CAP encourages any employee to raise questions he or she may have regarding sexual harassment, discrimination or affirmative action with Southwest CAP's Human Rights Officer or Executive Director.

Closing Statement

The LIFT Program at SWCAP is dedicated to providing safe, dependable, affordable, and courteous service to our passengers. We thank all of our volunteers for their efforts and welcome their input at all times. Any comments or suggestions can be addressed to Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program, 201 S Iowa St, Dodgeville, WI, 53533, 608-930-2191

Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI

Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program, Inc.

- ✓ Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program, Inc. operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program, Inc..
- ✓ For more information on Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program, Inc.'s civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact 800-704-8555; email <mailto:title.vi.complaint@swcap.org>; or visit our administrative office at 149 N. Iowa St., Dodgeville, WI, 53533. For more information, visit www.swcap.org
- ✓ A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC, 20590.
- ✓ If information is needed in another language, contact 800-704-8555.

Si se necesita informacion en otro idioma de contacto, 800-704-8555.

I have read **The Volunteer Driver Handbook** and agree to abide by the policies and codes of conduct described herein.

Volunteer Driver

Mobility Manager

Date