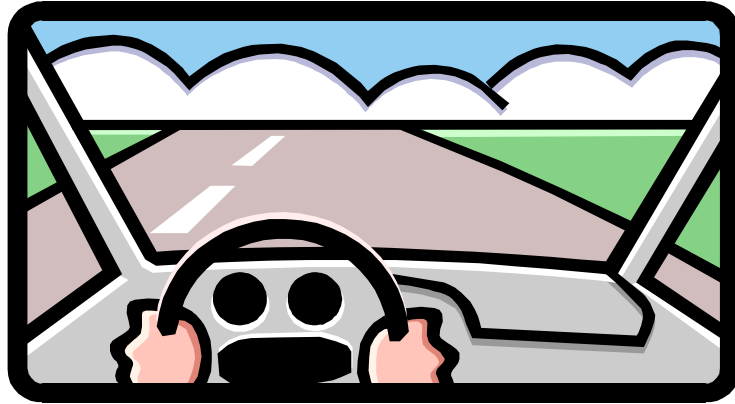
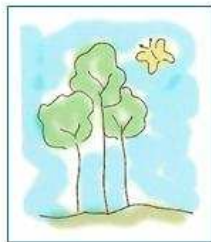


Volunteer Driver



Manual



NORMANDALE CENTER FOR
Healing & Wholeness

Background

The Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness was founded by Normandale Lutheran Church, Fairview Health Services, Lutheran Social Services and Lutheran Brotherhood. It incorporated in 2000 as a nonprofit and has a mission of: “walking with” seniors in transition and their family caregivers, to support them in spirit, mind, and body.

This *Volunteer Driving Manual* was developed by the *Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness* in 2006 and updated in 2008.

You are welcome to share this with other organizations who may wish to adapt the *Driving Manual*, however we request that this work be cited as the reference source document as follows:

Pope, S. and Paone, D. (2006). *Volunteer Driving Manual*. Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness: Edina, MN. Revised 2008.

In an effort to keep track of organizations using the *Volunteer Driving Manual*, we request that you send us a letter or e-mail note with the following information:

Organizational Name and Address
Key Contact Person
Phone Number
E-Mail address

Please describe your intended purpose/use and the number of volunteers you are working with or training.

Please send to:
Care Team Coordinator, Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness
6100 Normandale Rd., Edina, MN 55436

Thank you.

More information can be found at: www.healing.normluth.org

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Reflections on Volunteers

Most people volunteer to help others in some way or to promote a cause they feel is worthy of their time. Over 60 million (or about one of every four) people in the U.S. volunteer each year (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

Interestingly, research shows that those who volunteer regularly also receive benefits from providing the service. Volunteers receive physical, emotional, and social benefits. According to a report released in April 2007 by The Corporation for National and Community Service, there is evidence that volunteers actually lead longer, healthier lives. Volunteering has a positive effect on one's sense of purpose and helps a person see beyond their own needs or concerns. It may provide a new role for a person and a new social network. These effects are especially noted in volunteers age 60 and older.

In many religions, serving others and the community is a practice that is expected or encouraged. Volunteers live out their faith through helping others without expectation of payment or of service in return.

And behold, some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were trying to bring him in, and to set him down in front of Him. And not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, right in the center, in front of Jesus. And seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

Luke 5:18-20

Background of Volunteer Driver Program

Who Are We?

We are the volunteer drivers of the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness. We are the friends of seniors who need assistance. We are friends of the seniors' family members who need respite and relief from their on-going responsibilities.

Who Are We Serving?

The Center serves seniors and their family caregivers who live in Edina and the southwest Metro suburbs (e.g., West Bloomington, Richfield, Eden Prairie, sections of St. Louis Park, and other surrounding neighborhoods). The mission of the Center is to promote independence and alleviate burden, ministering in mind, body, and spirit. Individuals may come to the Center seeking one time help or ongoing support. Anyone is welcome—both people who are members of Normandale Lutheran Church and those who are not.

Why Transportation?

Many studies of older people reveal that one key service needed in later life is convenient and safe transportation—particularly to get around town to doctor's appointments and to run errands. Volunteer rides are an important part of this transportation picture.

What Is Valued?

As Volunteer Drivers, you provide the seniors:

- Independence
- Friendship/socialization
- A sense of connection to the community and to routine
- Quality of life

INDEPENDENCE—In American society, one's sense of independence often is tied to the ability to drive one's own car. A car is so much a symbol of freedom. When the senior and the senior's family make the decision not to drive any longer, life changes; independence is altered forever. Losing the ability to drive is a major adjustment for most. Many seniors admit that giving up their cars was one of the

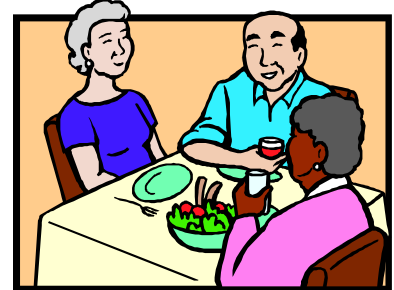
most difficult decisions they ever made. Ultimately, they made the decision for their good and the good of others. It is a commendable sacrifice that may not be fully appreciated.

A period of feeling dependent upon others follows. It is no longer a matter of going where he/she wants, when he/she wants. The barriers to getting where one wants to go can loom large. Public transportation is often spotty. Family and friends are often busy or are unaware of the daily needs. Senior van services may be full of regular riders. In addition, often the senior's need to get to places increases at this time, as she/he has more health conditions, more medications, more doctors, more appointments. The senior has to plan far in advance for rides and appointments. Even the errands of daily life, to hair appointments, to meetings, to meals in restaurants, to visits with friends, or to worship services become difficult. This can isolate the senior in ways that diminish her/his sense of self. It becomes another period of grieving in the senior's life.

Volunteer drivers can help bring back that sense of independence and self-direction through providing regular, consistent rides or even occasional rides. Having a service that is predictable, friendly, and "door-to-door" feels more familiar than a bus or van service—more in keeping with the way the senior has previously experienced transportation in his/her community.

FRIENDSHIP/SOCIALIZATION—When a senior is no longer able to drive, friendships can be affected. Many of the senior's friends may have also lost their abilities to drive. Visiting each other in person becomes difficult. Visiting over the telephone just isn't the same as seeing a friend face to face.

If there are family members involved in providing rides, visiting friends may be seen as a luxury. Busy schedules often don't afford the caregiver with the time to drive the senior to visits with friends. The senior may give up even trying to initiate contacts with friends because "it takes too much effort."



Volunteer drivers who provide regular support often come to know some of the habits and life history of the senior—conversations happen while the ride occurs. The service goes beyond the ride itself. It can even lead to a friend relationship and camaraderie that enhances the senior's life satisfaction.

SENSE OF CONNECTION—Being able to attend programs or events and participate in the life of one's community can keep a person connected to his/her

past and the people who are important in his/her life. That sense of connection is one aspect of living a “quality life,” that has purpose and meaning. If a routine has been forged over a lifetime (e.g., regular attendance at worship services, Tuesday night card game, Saturday morning book club), keeping those activities part of life into the senior years becomes so important.

RESPITE—Another aspect of volunteer rides is the “break” it gives to family members and friends who are the regular source of rides in the senior’s life. An occasional or weekly ride from a volunteer can provide a day off from driving for others.

IN SHORT—Volunteer drivers provide seniors and their caregivers:

- Enhanced capacity to maintain independence
- Increased opportunities for worship and for socialization
- Relief from loneliness
- Possibilities of new friendships
- Assistance with activities of daily living
- Assurance that they are not being overlooked by their communities
- Opportunities to explore emotions relative to aging, ill-health, and loss of independence and control
- Gift of “free time” to caregivers

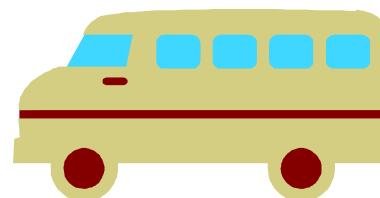
“In my years of working with seniors and their families, it has become apparent to me that transportation and socialization are two of the greatest needs of seniors. Certainly, they are cause and effect. Perhaps without realizing it, when a volunteer is providing transportation for the senior, the volunteer is also providing much needed socialization. A good deal of conversation happens between the driver and the senior on the way to and from an appointment, as well as while waiting with the senior in the physician’s office when that is necessary.”

Shirley Pope, Care Team Coordinator
Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness

Transportation Options for Seniors

What About Paid Transportation Sources?

Transportation options do exist for seniors and others who are not able to drive. A senior may live in an area that is served by public transit and/or private transportation agencies, and often these options are workable, but there are challenges.



Accessibility

Most transportation systems through local municipalities or community agencies have geographic boundaries that may be strictly enforced. A senior may live in an area that is not served by these transportation sectors or may need to cross a boundary to get to an appointment. In the western suburbs of the Twin Cities, there are many instances when a senior needs to go to a place beyond where the local service can take him/her (e.g., being picked up at home in Edina and needing to be taken to an appointment in St. Louis Park). Reciprocity between municipalities or even across county lines would be a great advance in service among the public and private agencies but in many cases it is a goal yet to be reached.

Sometimes a senior has mobility limitations and may need the driver to provide him/her an escort into and out of the vehicle or into and out of the medical office. Most of the sectors don't provide such an escort even to those seniors with vision difficulties. The senior who has even slight mobility issues—such as the need to use a cane or a walker—may not be able to receive the necessary assistance with mounting entry steps into the transportation vehicle.

Affordability

Certain sectors may not provide transportation at a cost that a senior on a fixed, limited income can afford. Even a cost of \$5.00 can be seen as a deterrent to getting a ride. If multiple rides are needed each week, the cost can add up to more than a senior is able to pay to get around.

Reliability

Seniors have certain expectations, just as all of us have, and that is the expectation to be picked up by the driver at the time established with the representative of the

agency. The prompt arrival of the driver is necessary for the senior's on-time arrival at medical and other appointments. Otherwise, there is ensuing stress and disruption of schedules for the senior and the medical staff.

Physical Demands and Safety

Some agencies or transportation systems cover large routes and ask the senior to be ready and waiting to be picked up an hour early. Then, when the appointment is complete, the senior may wait one or two hours to be picked up for the return trip. This can be very physically taxing for an older person and can leave him/her vulnerable and alone in public for long periods of time. The uncertainty of what might happen during long waits can inhibit a senior's willingness to use that transportation option.



Suggested Steps for Getting a Ride

(A one-page tip sheet, "Suggested Steps for Getting a Ride," is given to potential riders who use the services of the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness. This tip sheet can be found in your Volunteer Driver's packet of materials.)

The Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness encourages seniors to explore alternative means of getting local transportation from one of the public services before calling the Center's office. Often there is an agency that will meet all or most of the senior's needs. The Center tries to encourage the senior to explore alternatives first as a means of getting the senior familiar with existing ride programs and taking some of the mystery out of public transportation. Oftentimes it is something that the senior finds workable—and can restore some level of independence and feeling of self-reliance. However, as noted above, there will be occasional needs for a ride that transportation systems can't meet. With enough notice, the Center can fill the gap. We recognize that the need for transportation of seniors, metro-wide, is increasing.



How Is a Ride Request Processed at the Center?

- 1. SENIOR'S CALL RECEIVED**—The Volunteer Driver Coordinator or another Center staff person will receive the request for a ride. Pertinent information is duly noted and entered in the record/database, such as:
 - Date call received
 - Name, address, and telephone of senior
 - Date and time of appointment

- Address of appointment
 - Time driver will pick up senior
 - Special instructions
 - Special directions to place of appointment
- 2. CALL MADE TO POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER DRIVER**—Calls are made to those who have expressed an interest in driving seniors and who have also gone through background checks. The name and telephone number of the volunteer driver who is able to drive this particular assignment is noted in the record.
- 3. SENIOR'S CALL SCREENED**—The Volunteer Driving Coordinator serves as both the volunteer's advocate and the senior's advocate. The Coordinator screens all those requesting rides, by asking:
- Do I, the Volunteer Driving Coordinator, know this person requesting a ride? Has the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness served this person before?
 - How did the caller become aware of the Center's volunteer driving program?
 - Where does the rider live?
 - Where does the rider need to be driven?
 - Does he/she need to be driven in daytime hours? During rush hours?
 - What, if any, mobility issues does he/she have?
(**REMEMBER:** Volunteers for Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness do not lift or transfer.)
 - What kind of physical assistance does the rider require?
 - If using a walker or cane, it will need to be stowed. Is there room in the car?
- 4. CONFIDENTIALITY IS MAINTAINED**—The Center adheres to a policy of confidentiality—confidentiality of personal and private information relating to the senior and to you, the volunteer driver, as well. The records of volunteer drivers and their assignments are kept private and for the eyes of Healing & Wholeness staff only.

The Volunteer Driver Coordinator does not provide the volunteer driver's phone number to the seniors. Thus, if a call comes in from a driver or a senior who needs to cancel his/her ride, someone from the Center will notify the volunteer driver to cancel the ride or call for a backup driver.

Volunteer Driver Expectations and Considerations

Driver Readiness/Cancellation

Volunteers should never drive when tired or taking medication(s) which may cause drowsiness. Likewise, if a driver is sick, it is best to cancel. Call the Volunteer Driver Coordinator in advance as soon as possible if you feel you will be unable to make your scheduled driving appointment for any reason.

Please Note: If there is a concern about potential infections/viruses with either the driver or rider, remember that thorough hand washing is the best method for avoiding the spread of disease.

Confidentiality

Volunteers must observe confidentiality regarding seniors they drive. Instead of talking to others, Volunteer Drivers are to talk with the Volunteer Driver Coordinator. An innocent, off-hand remark to someone else may be misconstrued and cause harm to the senior, the Driver Volunteer, and/or the Center.

Payment

Volunteers do not receive payment for time or mileage. If a rider is insistent about paying for his/her ride, suggest he/she make a tax-deductible contribution to Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness. Volunteers should be careful not to accept payments or gifts from passengers, as this could be viewed as using the vehicle “for hire”—which would affect personal automobile insurance coverage.

Some volunteer drivers choose to deduct their mileage driven as a volunteer “for charitable purposes” from their taxes. The mileage rate for such deductions is set by the Internal Revenue Service (14 cents a mile in 2007). Check with your accountant or the IRS (web site: www.irs.gov) for current rates and limitations.

Auto Insurance

The Center does not have insurance coverage for volunteer drivers. The Volunteer Driver must have his/her own automobile insurance policy that will cover damage to the vehicle, to self, and to others. Check your policy and know the requirements of your own insurance company.

Listening and Communicating

Listening and communicating with the passenger is an important part of the volunteer service. Positive communication can make your trip much more enjoyable and reduce confusion. Some of the riders may have vision or hearing limitations or limited speaking abilities.

Principles of Good Communication*

- Use positive and helpful body language (be aware of what your facial expressions are telling them. Are you showing interest in what they say?)
- Speak directly and clearly.
- Be patient. Take your cues from the rider's behavior.
- Allow plenty of time for a response.
- Do not interrupt.
- Keep directions simple by explaining them one step at a time. Reintroduce steps when necessary.
- Use easy to understand language.
- Don't overwhelm the person with too much information.
- Be calm, or at least attempt to appear calm. Be aware of your tone of voice.
- Empathize. Try to put yourself in his place, so that you can see his point of view.
- Avoid argument and criticism. This puts others on the defensive.
- Ask questions. Encourage your rider to talk.

If your rider has a hearing impairment:

- Face the person when you speak (though not when operating a car).
- Lower the pitch of your voice.
- Do not over-articulate.
- Rephrase your statements for clarity.
- Allow enough time for a response.
- Don't shout. Shouting raises the pitch of your voice. Older people more often lose the ability to hear higher pitches than lower pitches.

Body language plays a large part in good listening. Examples include:

- Consistent eye contact powerfully conveys your attention
- How close physically you are to the other person
- An empathetic facial expression shows you understand
- Your gestures

- Your utterances such as “Hmm, uh-huh, ohhhh” may seem silly but actually tell the person we’re really listening.

What Physical Assistance Must I Provide?

The Volunteer Driver Coordinator will always try to inform you in advance of passengers who have special needs (such as low vision or hearing) and what you may expect. The Center has set boundaries on what a volunteer does in providing a ride to the senior both to protect the senior and to protect the volunteer. Many of our riders use walkers or canes, and we encourage them to use this equipment when getting a ride. However, we are not able to provide rides to people who cannot walk to the car and get into it by themselves. The Volunteer Driver Coordinator screens out riders who need to use wheelchairs so as to eliminate any “lifting and transferring.” There are wheelchair-accessible van services for persons with mobility impairment.

Here are some tips for the volunteer:

- **Remind** the senior to bring his/her walker or cane, if applicable.
- **It is okay** for a volunteer to assist the senior by lending your arm for his/her stability in walking.
- **Once the senior seats himself/herself in the car**, the volunteer may pick up his/her feet, and while the senior turns in place in the seat, place his/her feet on the car floor.
- **The volunteer may assist** in buckling the seat belt and then close the car door.

Remember:

Volunteers Drivers and Care Team Volunteers of the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness:

- Do not lift or transfer the senior
- Do not drive for 9-1-1 calls
- Do not carry, feed or toilet
- Do not administer or set up medications



* Source for *Principles of Good Communication: Volunteer Driver Training Program Educational Module* prepared by Lyngblomsten, St. Paul, MN; found at: <http://www.healthministries.info/module7/7resourcesheets.html>

Body Mechanics for Lifting (Equipment)

If the Volunteer Driver is helping a senior who is using a walker, she/he should use proper body mechanics when lifting and stowing this equipment. *Most muscle strains are preventable.*



- **Plan the lift**—Check the area for slippery spots or possible tripping hazards. Wearing appropriate non-skid footwear will be safer for both you and for the person whom you are assisting.
- **Use proper stance**—spread your feet apart to shoulder's width.
- **Keep** your head and upper body as **upright** as possible.
- **Lower your hips** to the height of the object you intend to lift by bending your knees and hips rather than your back.
- Lift with your legs.
- Do not attempt to lift with your back alone.
- When lifting, **don't rotate your spine**; shift the position of your feet to turn.
- Know your limits.
- **Push or pull** an object instead of lifting whenever you can.
- **Carry weight** as close to your center of gravity as possible.
- **Bear weight** on your forearms rather than your hands.



Source for *Body Mechanics for Lifting*: Lyngblomsten, St. Paul, MN

Volunteer Drivers' Check List

1. Maintain a valid driver's license and automobile liability insurance.
2. Submit to background and driver's checks by the Center.
3. Operate a safe and a clean vehicle.
4. Drive safely and observe all traffic signals and driving rules of the road.
5. Wear a seatbelt and require passengers to do the same. (You are responsible for the occupants of your car.)
6. Be neat and clean in appearance. Wash hands.
7. Be punctual in the performance of assigned duties.
8. Call immediately if unable to keep an assigned request.
9. Introduce yourself. Be polite, friendly, understanding, and courteous. Be aware of riders' visual or hearing limitations.
10. Respect others' religious beliefs, and not impose your beliefs on others.
11. Not eat, drink, smoke, or engage in private cell phone conversations while driving. (Likewise, passengers should not eat, drink, smoke, or otherwise distract the driver while being driven.)
12. Remind the senior to keep track of his/her personal items. (Drivers are not responsible for these personal belongings).
13. Be responsible for the cost of moving or parking violations.
14. Maintain a mileage log for your own tax purposes, if necessary.
15. Immediately report any problem stemming from a transportation assignment.



(Adapted from material from Easter Seals, Project ACTION; the Northeast Massachusetts Regional Transportation Partnership; and Lyngblomsten, St. Paul, MN)

Volunteer Driver Feedback and Reporting

Volunteers' opinions and suggestions regarding the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness Volunteer Driver Program are encouraged and are most welcome. Please direct such comments to the Volunteer Driver Coordinator. In addition, drivers should report on the following situations:

- Volunteers should report any passenger concerns, trip changes, or unusual occurrences to the Volunteer Driver Coordinator.
- Volunteers should promptly report any accidents or incidents to the Volunteer Driver Coordinator. (See the Emergency/Incident Procedures section and the Volunteer Driver Incident Report in this packet.)
- Very rarely, the volunteer driver may observe something about the senior's living situation or conditions that causes concern about his/her safety or well being. These concerns should be communicated to the Volunteer Driver Coordinator and otherwise kept confidential. (*See the Safety and Security Issues, Vulnerable Adults Act of 2005 section for more information.*)

NOTE: At times, a staff person from the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness may call you to gather time and mileage information for periodic reports the Center must provide to the State or other funding agency. We have Volunteer Contact Forms to help you keep track of the service you are providing (a sample form is included in your packet). It is simple to do and keeps our records accurate. We thank you, in advance, for helping us to track all the service you are providing!



Emergency/Incident Procedures

It is wise to be prepared for the unexpected! Emergencies may arise and will require good judgment on your part. Always report situations to the Coordinator—both minor and major concerns—so that possible future needs may be anticipated.

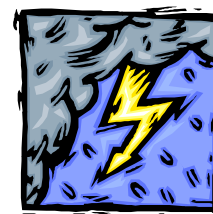
The following guidelines are intended to help you in the event of an emergency.

Accidents

- Volunteer drivers must never leave the scene of an accident.
- Always report every minor or major situation (even fender benders) to the Volunteer Driver Coordinator, even if there is no apparent damage. Calling for a police report is recommended. Remain calm and document the incident so no details are forgotten. (See Incident Forms in your packet.)
- Do not make statements about who is at fault to anyone except police.
- In the event of a serious accident, call 911 and wait for an ambulance to arrive. Do not attempt to move the victims/passengers. Administer first aid to your passengers if the situation is life threatening and if you are trained in such procedures.
- Remember that the owner of the car/driver is responsible for carrying the necessary insurance. This insurance is what will cover costs in the case of an accident.

Bad Weather

- Volunteers should never feel obligated to drive if roads are hazardous or foul weather threatens driver or passenger safety.
- If weather conditions require you to seek safety, do so immediately.
- Passengers may not like having to wait out a storm; but you, the driver, must consider safety first. If possible, call the Volunteer Driver Coordinator or a Center staff person to notify us of your situation and whereabouts.
- If assistance is needed, call a local police department.
- We recommend that volunteer drivers carry a first aid and/or safety survival kit.



Ill Passengers/Emergencies

Sometimes unexpected medical issues or emergencies arise.

We strongly recommend that the volunteer driver not transport during a medical emergency. Let the paramedics respond, since they have the proper equipment and training.

Emergency Warning Signs . . . When to Call 9-1-1

The following warning signs, compiled by the American College of Emergency Physicians, suggest you should seek immediate help:

- Sudden pain at any location in the person's body. Chest pain or pressure in the upper abdominal area, for example, can signal a heart attack.
- Sudden inability to speak or one side of face sagging
- Sudden dizziness, headache, or change in vision
- Weakness, fainting, or loss of consciousness
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Suicidal or homicidal feelings
- Significant bleeding, whether or not accompanied by pain

Some common-sense ground rules to follow...in addressing an emergency situation:

Keep calm. Try not to panic. Often a few deep breaths will help you.

Reassure the victim. A light hand on the shoulder may help.

Do no harm. Do not move a person who has fallen, been injured, has lost consciousness, or who complains of neck pain.

Be prepared. Keep the numbers of emergency contacts and emergency services posted near the telephone.

If in doubt, call 9-1-1. As a volunteer, you are not expected to be able to assess medical symptoms. Call 9-1-1. If there is time, call the emergency contact person (e.g., relative) to let them know you have contacted emergency services personnel.

Calling for help. Be calm and clear. Clearly give the emergency dispatcher the key information including: the person's location, what the problem is, your name, the victim's name, the telephone number at your location, and directions, if asked. If it is after dark, make sure the house numbers are visible and a light is on outside/inside.

From: Mayo Clinic Family Health Book, Second Edition, Morrow and Company, Inc. New York, 1996.

Passenger Responsibilities

The following are the responsibilities of the passengers who are enjoying transportation provided by you, the Volunteer Driver of the Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness.

1. Passenger must use his/her seat belt. The only exception is if the passenger has a written letter from a physician providing an exclusion from wearing a seat belt. A copy of the physician's written letter must be on file in the Center. When such a letter is on file, Volunteer Driver will be notified of its existence.
2. Passenger must be punctual and waiting at the front entrance to his/her home or apartment building. If it is necessary to make other arrangements, the rider must make the information available at the time the trip is scheduled.
3. For the safety of the passenger and the driver, the Volunteer Driver is not to lift or transfer the passenger. The Volunteer Driver may offer his/her arm as assistance in walking.
4. Passenger is asked to be courteous and considerate.
5. Passenger should show respect for the driver and follow all instructions and safety rules.
6. Distracting activities by the passenger, such as eating, drinking, smoking, or cell phone use, should be avoided.
7. **The passenger must not request Volunteer Driver to make stops at destinations outside of the pre-arranged trip as established by the Volunteer Driver Coordinator or another member of the Center staff.**

(Adapted from information provided by Lyngblomsten, St. Paul, MN, 11/2004)

Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness reserves the right to refuse service based on violation of these standards.

Boundaries

The Volunteer Driver Coordinator establishes a basic set of boundaries as contained throughout this manual. In addition, Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness wants its Volunteer Drivers to set their own boundaries. If a rider makes seemingly harmless requests with which you are not comfortable, **you are to decline**. In fact, the Center supports you in your boundaries.

Your Time

- Be realistic about your available time.
- Don't over commit.
- Don't comply with rider's requests to make stops at destinations other than the destination pre-established by the Volunteer Driver Coordinator. Please, report any such requests to Coordinator.

Your Privacy

- Usually, seniors and their caregivers should not call Volunteer Drivers at their homes. The Center does not provide Volunteer Drivers' telephone numbers.
- Gently turn aside any conversational questions the senior or his/her caregiver may ask you if you prefer not to answer.
- If a senior tries to arrange a ride with Volunteer Driver to an appointment on his/her own, explain that the senior must arrange for rides through the Center's Volunteer Driver Coordinator.
- At times, friendships develop between drivers and riders. In these cases, the driver should keep the Volunteer Driver Coordinator in the communication loops about additional support that could be provided. With regard to ongoing rides, we ask that the Volunteer Driver and senior continue to use the processes outlined in this manual.

Safety and Security Issues

Why Require Background Checks?

The Normandale Center for Healing & Wholeness has never had any “incidents” involving our volunteer driving program and does not want to have any “incidents” in the future. In 2005, the Center began requiring background and driver checks of all its volunteers and of its staff. In this way, steps have been taken to ensure that we are screening volunteers. This helps protect all Volunteer Drivers and Care Team Volunteers and the work that the Center does for all seniors.

*Why Church/Faith-Based Groups Are Vulnerable**

Why are church or faith-based programs sometimes vulnerable to being “victims” of someone who does not really have the best interest of the program or the senior in mind? Here are some reasons:

- Churches have programs of assistance for seniors in their own homes, and services are often provided on a one-to-one basis where others are not around.
- Churches are communities of trust. The ministries and the members of the church are trustworthy and have an innate trust in others.
- There may be a lack of safeguards established to protect church ministries and members.
- There is an easy access to programs since churches are welcoming to all without discrimination.

As the aging population increases and the needs of this population increase, there is an increasing need for more volunteer workers to serve the elders.

*Adapted from information provided by Lyngblomsten, St. Paul

Vulnerable Adult Act Of 1995

(The following information is summarized from information taken from the Minnesota Department of Human Services Web site. For more information on Minnesota's Vulnerable Adult Act, visit www.dhs.state.mn.us. Click on "Aging," then click on "Adult Protection.")

People who depend on others for care or assistance in daily living have an elevated risk of being harmed by others and an increased risk for self-neglect. Frail, elderly, and disabled personal are especially at risk. Abuse, neglect, and exploitation are the most common forms of harm, and may take place anywhere.

Many vulnerable adults may understand that they are being mistreated, but are reluctant to report abuse or neglect for reasons such as:

- They fear retaliation by the caregiver or loss of care completely.
- They don't understand that the law will protect them and make certain their legal and human rights are restored.
- They may not wish to acknowledge reduced capacity for self-care out of fear that they will be "put away somewhere" and lose their freedom.
- They may not be aware of the number of services available to assist them with daily tasks.
- If abusers are family members, they may fear damaging this relationship and/or placing the family member in legal difficulty.

Who Is a Vulnerable Adult?

A vulnerable adult is any person, 18 years of age or older who is:

- A resident or inpatient of a healthcare facility or receives services from a licensed home care provider or a person or organization that provides personal care assistance under the state's medical assistance program.
- An individual who lives at home or in a facility and is unable or unlikely to report maltreatment of him or herself because of a physical or mental infirmity or other physical, mental, or emotional dysfunction that impairs a person's ability to provide adequately for his or her own care without assistance.

What is Maltreatment?

A vulnerable adult is a victim of maltreatment when he or she is subjected to abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation. The following provides a brief synopsis of definitions of maltreatment:

Abuse—Conduct producing pain or injury, such as hitting, slapping, kicking; use of malicious oral, written, or gestured language; unreasonable confinement or involuntary seclusion.

Neglect—Failure to provide for basic needs, such as food, shelter, health care, and supervision

Neglect may be perpetrated by the individual or the caregiver. It is not neglect for an authorized person (such as a durable health care power of attorney or in fulfillment of advanced directives) to make decisions to give or withhold healthcare, feeding, or spiritual means of healing.

Financial Exploitation—Engaging in unauthorized expenditure of funds entrusted to the actor by the vulnerable adult which results or is likely to result in detriment to the vulnerable adult.

Reporting under the Vulnerable Adult Act

The first point of contact if a Volunteer Driver suspects maltreatment of a senior is the Volunteer Driver Coordinator or the Center’s Executive Director.

When Must a Vulnerable Adult Maltreatment Report Be Made?

A person who has reason to believe a vulnerable adult is being or has been maltreated, or has knowledge that a vulnerable adult has sustained a physical injury that is not reasonably explained, shall immediately report. Immediately is defined as “as soon as possible” but within 24 hours. When in doubt, make a report.

Where Must Vulnerable Adult Maltreatment Reports Be Made?

Volunteer Drivers and Care Team Volunteers must report such concerns in person or by telephone to the Center’s Executive Director or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Penalties and Protections

Legal statutes are in place to protect those who report maltreatment of vulnerable adults. There is no civil or criminal liability for good-faith reporting, and the identity of the reporter is not divulged except by consent of the reporter or by order of the court. Good-faith investigative activities are also afforded civil protections.

In addition, penalties are in place for retaliation against reporters, as well as for intentional false reporting and negligent or intentional failure of mandated reporter to report.

Helpful Hints from AAA

Although driving seems almost second nature to many seasoned motorists, it's still a skill that requires constant, complex coordination between your mind and your body. Staying focused at all times helps ensure that you and those on the road with you stay safe.

Distractions

You may be surprised to learn that distractions can come from almost anything that makes you look away from the road, move in your seat, or think about things other than driving. Even operating controls inside your vehicle can divert your attention enough to distract you from driving safely.

Today's fast-paced world is filled with distractions. After reviewing crash-report data and footage from cameras mounted inside the vehicles of study participants in two states, researchers concluded that it's not only the new or high-tech gadgets that are creating the biggest distractions. Drivers today are getting distracted by many of the same things that distracted drivers 100 years ago – passengers, things that catch one's attention outside the vehicle, and objects in the vehicle that move or fall over. Activities like eating, smoking, and reading often distract as much or more than high-tech ones.

Filtering out the things that compete for your attention can be challenging. Keeping yourself focused on driving is critical for your safety.

Multi-tasking?

If you're driving your vehicle, you are already multi-tasking. At a minimum, you are operating a piece of heavy machinery at high speed, navigating across changing terrain, calculating speeds and distances, and responding to all the other drivers and obstacles around you. Putting one more activity into the mix—even talking to your passenger or changing a radio station—can be enough to make you lose control of your vehicle or fail to respond in an emergency.

What to Do?

READY, SET, GO—Adjust seat positions, climate controls, sound systems, and other devices before you leave or while the vehicle is stopped. Know how your controls work, so if you must adjust something on the fly, you'll be less distracted. Always keep your windshield and headlights clean.

KEEP IT LIGHT—Don't get wrapped up in emotional, intense, or complicated conversations. Your job is driving the vehicle, and that must be your main focus.

PLAN AHEAD—Read maps and check traffic and weather conditions before you leave, so you'll be prepared for your trip. Use a passenger as your navigator and assistant, if possible.

WEAR A SEAT BELT!—In Minnesota, wearing seat belts is the law. Even if you are going to drive only a short distance under ideal conditions, it makes sense to wear your seat belt.

STRESS-LESS—There are many things you can do to make driving less stressful and make your own responses less emotional.

- Anger will do nothing to get you out of irritating traffic situations. Taking a few slow, deep breaths and forcing yourself to smile are excellent stress relievers.
- Choose to be a responsible driver. Recognize when you are becoming angry.
- Try to avoid the kind of traffic you know is likely to generate anger in you. The smoother the traffic flow, the less the anger and the fewer the collisions.

WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED— Take as much control as you can of your health habits and life style, recognizing the obvious connection between command of personal health and skill in driving.

- Set up periodic, thorough examinations with your eye doctor, and take the corrective steps recommended by your doctor. Reduce the amount of driving you do after dark and at twilight.
- Check with your physician or pharmacist to determine what the side effects of prescribed medications might be and what, if anything, you can do to counter them, particularly as they apply to driving.
- Learn more about the relationships between good health practices and how they can help you drive safely longer. Keep in mind that the slowness that comes with aging can be deterred or overcome by motivation and regular exercise.

(*The information contained under “AAA Rated” is provided by AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, a not-for-profit publicly supported charitable educational and research organization.)

References and Resources

AAA (Automobile Association of America)

Foundation for Traffic Safety

www.seniordrivers.org

AARP

www.aarp.org/drive

American Medical Association

Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers. American Medical Association/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration/US Department of Transportation. June 2003.

http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/433/help_older_driver.pdf

Easter Seals (Project ACTION)

- A SOLUTIONS PACKAGE for Volunteer Transportation Programs
- Caregiver Transportation Toolkit. Easter Seals. Chicago, IL.
- Video: "Transportation Solutions for Caregivers: A Starting Point" (TRT 13:34).

www.projectaction.easterseals.com

Health Ministries Network of Minnesota

Volunteer Driver Training Program Education Module

Prepared by Lyngblomsten, St. Paul, MN

<http://www.healthministries.info/module7/7intro.html>

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