

Compassionate Rides Program - Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Program Description:

The Compassionate Rides Program provides transportation services to individuals in Mercer County affected by the opioid crisis. This program ensures access to critical resources such as medical appointments, recovery meetings, job interviews, and essential services, supporting individuals on their path to recovery and stability. Volunteers play a vital role in delivering safe, respectful, and compassionate transportation to those in need.

1. General Guidelines

- **Operating Hours:** Rides are scheduled based on volunteer availability and pre-approved requests.
- **Request Process:**
 - Requests can be made by phone via the Compassionate Rides number or by completing a transport request form at the office.
 - All phone requests require the requester to complete a form before the completion of the ride. Forms must be submitted before drop-off.
- **Mission Alignment:** Volunteers must use discretion when approving requests, ensuring rides align with the program's purpose of supporting recovery and essential needs. This is not a general rideshare service.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteer Responsibilities Include:

1. Request Intake and Approval

- a. **Phone Requests:** Record the requester's name, reason for transport, and destination. Inform them they must complete a transport request form prior to drop-off.
- b. **Form Review:** Review submitted forms to confirm eligibility. Approve requests that align with the program's mission (e.g., recovery meetings, healthcare appointments) and politely decline ineligible requests (e.g., trips to liquor stores or non-essential destinations).

2. Transportation Service

- a. **Pre-Trip Checks:**
 - i. Inspect the vehicle for safety (e.g., brakes, lights, fuel).
 - ii. Ensure the vehicle is clean and ready for passengers.
- b. **Passenger Safety:**
 - i. Confirm passengers' identities and verify the ride details (e.g., destination, purpose).
 - ii. Ensure all passengers wear seatbelts before starting the trip.
- c. **Assisting Passengers:**
 - i. Provide assistance for passengers with mobility challenges as needed (e.g., opening doors, helping with seatbelts).
 - ii. Be attentive to passengers' needs and observe for signs of discomfort or distress.
- d. **Prohibited Activities:**
 - i. Smoking, alcohol or substance use is strictly prohibited in the vehicle.
 - ii. Trips to liquor stores or establishments that sell alcohol exclusively are not allowed.
- e. **Communication:**

- i. Engage in light conversation to make passengers feel at ease but avoid discussing sensitive topics unless initiated by the passenger.
- ii. Offer information on other programs or resources available if appropriate.

3. Mileage and Record-Keeping

- a. **Mileage Tracking:** Record starting and ending mileage for each trip.
- b. **Transport Request Form Completion:** Complete the transport request form after each ride, documenting the passenger's name, destination, purpose, and mileage.
- c. **Form Submission:** Submit completed forms to the office for tracking and reporting purposes.

4. Post-Trip Duties

- a. **Clean-Up:** Sanitize high-touch areas in the vehicle (e.g., door handles, seatbelts) after each trip.
- b. **Incident Reporting:** Report any issues, concerns, or rule violations to the Program Coordinator immediately.

3. Key Procedures

A. Intake Process:

- Answer calls on the Compassionate Rides number and gather key details (name, destination, purpose).
- Explain the transport request form requirement and ensure it is completed before the ride.
- Review all requests to confirm alignment with the program's mission.

B. Ride Execution:

- Greet passengers warmly and confirm their destination upon arrival.
- Remind passengers of the no-smoking and no-alcohol policy before starting the ride.
- Drive safely and attentively, ensuring passengers feel comfortable throughout the journey.

C. Post-Ride Actions:

- Confirm passengers have reached their destination safely.
- Record trip details, including mileage and any observations, on the transport request form.
- Sanitize the vehicle and prepare for the next trip.

4. Prohibited Activities

- **Smoking, Alcohol, and Substance Use:** These are strictly prohibited in the vehicle.
- **Non-Essential Trips:** Decline requests to destinations such as liquor stores or other locations that do not align with the program's mission.
- **Unscheduled Stops:** Do not make unscheduled stops or take detours unless required for safety or emergencies.

5. Incident and Emergency Procedures

- **Incident Reporting/Emergency Situations:** Any issues, including passenger disputes, safety concerns, or accidents must be documented and reported to the Program Coordinator immediately.
 - In case of an emergency call 911 if needed and notify the Program Coordinator.
 - Remain calm and reassure passengers while waiting for assistance.