

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON SAFE TRANSPORTATION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of persons served as well as staff during transportation and include the provisions for handling emergency situations.

II. POLICY

When transportation is the responsibility of the organization, staff will assist in transporting, handling, and transferring persons served in a safe manner and according to their *Support Plan* and/or *Support Plan Addendum*.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. Upon employment, staffs are informed of the requirement that they must hold a valid driver's license and maintain a safe driving record. Staff may also be required to complete additional training on safe transportation procedures. If staff does not have a current driver's license, or their driver's license has been revoked, they are to inform their supervisor and are not to operate organization vehicles.
- B. The Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director will ensure the safety of vehicles, equipment, supplies, and materials owned or leased by the organization and will maintain these in good condition. Standard practices for vehicle, equipment, supplies, and materials maintenance and inspection will be followed.
- C. Staff will transport persons served with an OMI vehicle. If there is no OMI vehicle, staff will attempt to use public or contracted transportation. Staff is not to have persons served transported in personal vehicles.
- D. When dropping off persons served at a site which requires a change in staff, transporting staff will ensure that staff or another responsible party are present before leaving the person served unless otherwise specified in the person's *Support Plan* and/or *Support Plan Addendum*. Any necessary information will be presented to the staff or other responsible party.
- E. In accordance with state laws, anyone riding in a moving vehicle must wear seatbelts and/or child safety restraints.
- F. Staff are prohibited by state law (MN Statutes, section 169.475) and organization policies from using a wireless communications device (cell phone, GPS, etc) while operating an organization vehicle or a personal vehicle while on company time that is in motion or a part of traffic upon a street or highway, with the exception of using the cell phone or GPS device for voice command directions. In addition, the voice command directions need to be loaded into the phone/GPS and the phone/GPS turned on to voice command for directions prior to operating the vehicle, and should never be changed or adjusted while operating the vehicle. Staff may not initiate, compose, send, retrieve, or read an electronic message; engage in a cellular phone call, including initiating a call, talking or listening, and participating in video call; and access the following types of content stored on the device: video content, audio content, images, games or software applications. If an emergency phone call, email or text must be made while driving, staff should locate a lawfully designated area to pull over, park and then make or answer the phone call, email or text.

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- G. Persons served using wheelchairs will be transported according to manufacturer's safety guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, safe operation and regular maintenance of lift equipment, checks of straps to secure the wheelchair to the floor of the vehicle, and use of adaptive seating equipment (i.e. headrests, lap trays) when appropriate. Staffs who are transporting persons served and who complete "tie-downs" of wheelchairs will receive training on how to do so and will be required to demonstrate competency prior to transporting persons using wheelchairs.
- H. Staff will receive training on each person's transferring or handling requirements for the person and/or equipment prior to transferring or transporting persons. All transfers and handling of persons served will be done in a manner that ensures their dignity and privacy. Any concerns regarding transportation, transfers, and handling will be promptly communicated to the Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director who will address these concerns. This will be done immediately if the health and safety of the person(s) served are at risk.
- I. When equipment used by a person served is needed, staff will place the equipment in a safe location in the vehicle such as the trunk of a car or back of the van. If an OMI vehicle does not have a designated storage space such as a trunk, staff will place the equipment in an area of the vehicle and secure it, when possible, so that there is limited to no shifting during transport.
- J. While transporting more than one person served and person to person physical aggression occurs, staff will pull over and stop the vehicle in a safe area as quickly and as safely as possible, redirect the persons served, and if necessary, attempt to contact another staff person, the Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director, On-Call, or "911" for assistance.
- K. Persons served are prohibited from driving OMI or staff vehicles at any time.
- L. Vehicle Usage:
 - 1. All organization vehicles are to be used for business purposes only. Staffs are not to use the vehicles for personal reason such as rides to work, class, etc.
 - 2. No smoking, eating or drinking in the vehicles by staff or persons served. Persons served and staff may have drinking water available.
 - 3. Staff will not be under the influence of mood altering chemicals including prescribed medication that could pose a risk to their ability to safely operate a vehicle.
 - 4. Only employees, volunteers and persons served by OMI are allowed in the organization vehicles. Operations Director may let the insurance carrier know of incidences in advance where other individuals may ride in the organization vehicles.
 - 5. Vehicles are to be kept clean inside and outside at all times.
 - 6. First Aid kits are located in each vehicle. Staff is required to let the Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director know if they have used something out of the kit or if it is missing so it can be replaced.
 - 7. The Program Coordinator or designated person of each site is responsible for filling the van with gasoline and scheduling basic maintenance.
 - 8. Staff is to let the Program Coordinator know in writing if they believe the vehicle needs any repairs. Program Coordinator will be responsible for notifying maintenance personnel of the need for vehicle repairs.

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9. Staff is not to take vehicles through bank drive through or automatic car washes. Soft Touch Car Wash is approved for mini-vans. Supervisors or designated person should charge the least expensive wash.
10. All staff will be trained on the Safe Transportation Policy.
11. There will be a clipboard/book kept in each organization vehicles with the following information:
 - a. Mileage Tracking Sheet
 - b. Vehicle Insurance Card
 - c. Accident Report Form
 - d. Emergency Phone Numbers

M. Before Starting in route:

1. Complete vehicle check. Check for dents, dings, broken lights or anything that would obstruct the vehicle from working properly. Document any potential new damage on "Vehicle Inspection Tracking Sheet" and follow instructions on form.
2. Ensure windows are free from debris, snow, etc so that there is clear visibility.
3. Adjust seat(s), mirrors, heat and air while sitting in the driver's seat, but prior to actual driving.
4. Assist those persons who need help into vehicle and secure all seatbelts.
5. Let the vehicle warm up prior to moving.
6. Look behind you when backing up and watch for low clearance trees, wires and underpasses. Before backing out of the garage be sure the mirrors are clear of the sides of the garage and that the garage door is all the way up.

N. Vehicle Accident/Emergency

1. In case of an accident or emergency while driving, immediately stop vehicle and assess the situation. Turn on hazard lights.
2. If a staff or person served is severely injured, call "911".
3. If the vehicle presents further serious hazard to traffic, persons or staff; it should be moved if possible. If not, leave the vehicle for accident information/verification by police.
4. Contact the local police
 - a. Give police all information they request; do not admit fault or liability at the scene of the accident.
 - b. Obtain the other driver's name, address and driver's license number. Use the "Driver Accident Report" and complete all the information requested on the form.
 - c. Obtain name and address of witness.
 - d. Obtain name and badge number of police officer.
 - e. If transportation home is needed in either an accident or emergency, contact another home for a ride or call yellow taxi service. When using a taxi service, charge the service to the organization.
 - f. If towing is required, contact Andy's towing. The Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director or On-Call will instruct staff where to have the vehicle towed.
 - g. The police will not always come to an accident site, specifically in the case of a rear end collision or if the accident occurs in a parking lot or residence driveway. The police will not come to the accident site if there was no other vehicle involved in the accident unless injuries have occurred. Staff should still follow all the above listed steps to ensure safety of persons served.
5. Staff will notify Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director or On-Call of any vehicle accidents.

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6. Staff will complete a vehicle accident report.
7. Staff will complete an incident report for each person in the vehicle if applicable.
8. Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director will review vehicle accident report and complete the supervisor vehicle accident report.
9. Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director will by email notify Operations Director by the next working day of the vehicle accident.
10. Operations Director will notify Maintenance Personnel of the accident and to assess the vehicle for any vehicle repairs that need to be made.

O. Mechanical Breakdown

1. If a mechanical breakdown occurs, stop vehicle in a safe location and turn on hazard lights.
2. Staff should then call supervisor or on-call for instructions.
3. If transportation is needed, contact another home for a ride or call yellow taxi service.
4. If towing is required, contact Andy's towing. The Program Coordinator/Program Manager/Program Director or On-Call will instruct staff where to have the vehicle towed.