



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Neighbor Rides?

A strategic initiative of United Way of Chittenden County (UWCC) supported by a dynamic group of community partners to help meet the transportation needs of elders and persons with disabilities.

2. How does it work?

UWCC recruits and orients potential volunteers then refers them to Special Services Transportation Agency (SSTA) to complete background checks. SSTA matches and dispatches qualified volunteers to transport elders and persons with disabilities who have no appropriate means of personal or public transportation available.

SSTA is contracted to take trip requests and coordinate rides for passengers. They do this according to guidelines from partners who provide the funding. When a trip meets guidelines and can be efficiently matched with a volunteer driver, SSTA puts them together to make it happen.

3. Who pays for this?

Funding for rides comes from a variety of partners through federal, state and local sources. Many rides are limited to priorities set by partners because of funding restrictions. For example, some funders only provide rides for specific reasons such as medical trips or adult day programs, while others may pay for social and personal trips

4. Why should I volunteer for Neighbor Rides?

Vermont's population is aging rapidly, and national statistics show that one in five persons age 65 and older no longer drive. Many are forced to stay home on any given day because they lack transportation options. They make fewer trips to the doctor, to the grocery store and to social, family and religious activities.

The nominal increases in resources have not been able to keep pace with the continuing surge in demand. As a result, transportation providers often must restrict personal and social requests for rides and limit rides to medical appointments, senior centers and adult day programs.

5. How does Neighbor Rides benefit the community?

Neighbor Rides uses volunteer drivers to stretch transportation dollars further by decreasing the cost per ride. While some passengers will continue to need trips in a lift-equipped van with a professional driver, many are mobile enough to receive rides from volunteers. Volunteer drivers have the potential to increase the number of rides passengers receive since they generally are less expensive than a ride in a contracted van, sedan, or taxi.



6. What kind of insurance do I need?

Volunteers must carry a minimum of \$25,000 per person/\$50,000 per accident insurance with a minimum of \$10,000 property damage. These are the minimum requirements set by the state of Vermont.

7. What about my insurance rates?

They stay the same. In 2010, Vermont State Assembly passed a law that prevents an insurer from imposing a surcharge or otherwise increasing the rate for a motor vehicle policy solely on the basis that the person insured is a volunteer driver.

8. What if there is an accident?

Serving as a volunteer driver does not change liability. If there is an accident, and you are at fault, your personal auto insurance is responsible. If you are not at fault, the other driver's insurance is responsible.

9. How large of a time commitment do I have to make?

It depends on you. Neighbor Rides volunteers create their own schedule, deciding when and how often to provide rides. All rides are scheduled one-way, so volunteers do not wait at appointments with passengers.

10. What about mileage reimbursement?

Volunteers can receive reimbursement for the miles they drive. Mileage is calculated at the current GSA (General Services Administration) rate. As of January 2015, the rate is \$.575 per mile.

13: Who are the Sponsoring and Partner organizations?

- CVAA
- Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
- Chittenden County Transportation Authority and its community partners
- Department of Vermont Health Access
- Fanny Allen Corporation
- Special Services Transportation Agency
- UVM Medical Center
- UVM Center on Aging

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