



Transportation Services

Standards of Operation and Scope of Services

*Based on standards set by the New York City Department for the Aging and the New York State Office for the Aging.
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Introduction

Individual transportation service provides trips for older adults who have requested the service due to mobility limitations or inability to drive or use public transportation. The purpose of individual transportation service is to enable older persons to participate in community programs such as senior centers, to access medical care, to do errands necessary for daily living (e.g. access grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, food pantries) and to maintain family and other ties to the community when they would not otherwise be able to do so. Individual transportation may be provided through car or taxi service, or bus/van pick-up. It may be door-to-door, curb-to-curb or pick-up along a fixed route or semi-fixed route. More than one passenger may be accommodated on an “individual transportation” trip if the vehicle permits (e.g. the vehicle may pick up each passenger from his or her home for a trip to a senior center). The provision of individual transportation requires information about the client’s transportation needs (intake) in DFTA’s client data system.

Group transportation service provides trips to a group of older individuals from the same pick-up point to the same destination, to recreational, cultural, educational and social events, community gyms, theaters, farmers markets, shopping centers and other locations. Group transportation promotes socialization and community involvement. Participation is not restricted to those with mobility limitations. Information about the individual’s transportation needs (i.e. Transportation Intake) does not need to be completed for group participants, but the client must be registered in DFTA’s client data system.

Transportation services are provided directly with a program’s own vehicle(s) or through sub-contract or arrangement with one or more qualified entity (e.g. car or taxi service; private bus company).

Unless otherwise indicated, the standards below apply to Stand-alone Transportation Programs as well as Senior Center and NORC Programs that offer transportation services.

Scope

Standard 1. Service Description

The program provides transportation services to seniors residing in the program’s catchment area that enable older individuals to enhance their mobility and participate in community life.

Compliance 1.1

- Trip destinations may be to locations outside the program’s catchment area, as program capacity permits.
- With DFTA approval, limited trips may be provided to locations outside the boundaries of the five boroughs of NYC.
- With DFTA approval, trips may be provided to seniors who reside outside the program’s catchment area.
- It is expected that programs operationalize transportation services as stated in the program’s response to the Transportation RFP.
- Trips may include, but are not limited to, medical appointments, social service appointments, stores, banks, senior centers, paid or volunteer jobs, recreational activities and place of worship.

Compliance 1.2 “Transportation Only” Programs can demonstrate that:

- The provider accepts referrals and trip requests from eligible clients residing anywhere in its catchment area.
- The provider does outreach to community members and not only to members/clients of programs operated by its sponsoring organization.

- As program capacity allows, it receives and accepts referrals from all senior centers in its catchment area, as well as social service providers, health care organizations, other community organizations, etc.
- The program conducts regular outreach throughout the catchment area so that potential clients are aware of its services.

Note: Transportation may be provided on an exceptional basis to an individual who lives outside the program's catchment area. Trips are authorized in writing (with reason for providing the trip explained) by the program director or transportation coordinator.

Standard 2. Eligibility

Individual transportation service is provided only to age-eligible individuals with an assessed and documented need for the service.

Compliance 2.1 A worker conducts an intake with each individual requesting individual transportation prior to service provision to screen for eligibility and to obtain pertinent information. Exception: When the client has an emergency need for individual transportation, the interview (and intake) may be completed after the first time service is provided.

Note: The program may accept referrals from hospitals, case management agencies and other social service agencies as indicating client meets eligibility criteria.

Compliance 2.2 The program provides individual transportation only to age-eligible clients who require the service for one or more of the following reasons:

- The trip is beyond walking or driving ability.
- A permanent or temporary physical, cognitive, sensory, or mobility limitation prevents utilization of public transportation.
- Terminals for public transportation are situated beyond the individuals walking ability.
- Trip by public transportation requires transfers beyond the individual's ability.

Note: Clients who do not meet eligibility criteria are assisted with referral to other programs if possible, and a "service ticket" is completed in DFTA's client data system.

The program does not provide medical transport to Medicaid clients. Exception: A Medicaid client may receive transportation to a medical appointment only if the client cannot obtain a prior approval number through the Medicaid system. In addition, the program may provide transportation to social and medical adult day care only in the event the client is not Medicaid eligible or cannot get this service through his/her Medicaid Managed Care Plan.

Compliance 2.3 The program registers each client found to be appropriate for Individual Transportation and enters information about transportation need into the client's record.

- When the program receives a referral for individual transportation from another DFTA program through DFTA's client data system, the program will acknowledge the referral.

Standard 3. Persons with Disabilities

The program accommodates older persons with disabilities.

Compliance 3.1 Any new vehicle purchased or leased with City funds for providing DFTA transportation services meets Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. (The program may choose a vehicle that does not meet ADA requirements only if the program has adequate ADA-compliant vehicles available.)

- Programs that do not own or lease an accessible vehicle have sub-contract or formal arrangements with an organization that can accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Car Service providers used by the program for persons with disabilities comply with the NYC Tax and Limousine Commission's wheelchair accessibility Rule 6-07(f) and provide wheelchair-accessible service upon request, at an equivalent price and service level as non-wheelchair-accessible transportation.

Compliance 3.2 Drivers provide assistance to clients who require help getting on and off the vehicle if there is no escort available.

Compliance 3.3 Home attendants or other escorts arranged for by the client may accompany persons in need of special assistance on the trip. *Note: Units may not be counted for these individuals.*

Compliance 3.4 The program provides current and accurate information on Access-A-Ride for eligible clients and assists with applications and referral as needed.

Standard 4. Accommodating Clients

The program accommodates as many clients as possible or facilitates their access to other transportation services.

Compliance 4.1 Where possible, the program maintains linkages/referral arrangements with other transportation providers that can assist the client(s) when the program is not able to provide requested services.

- The program manages a database of transportation alternatives (Access-A-Ride, local car services, other DFTA-funded transportation programs, etc.), and is able to refer/connect clients when necessary and appropriate.
- Clients for individual service are placed on a waiting list only when the client's needs cannot be accommodated through referral or linkages.

Compliance 4.2 The program uses a rotation system or other volume management tactic when recurring group trips cannot accommodate everyone who wants to participate.

Standard 5. Voluntary Contributions

The program provides opportunities for passengers to make a voluntary contribution.

Compliance 5.1 The Program complies with Federal and State requirements regarding voluntary contributions. (**See Standard 6 of the General Program Standards.**)

- Contributions are voluntary and confidential.
- No person will be denied service because of an inability or failure to pay the suggested contribution..
- Passengers will be informed of the actual cost of the trip.

Service Levels

Standard 6. Budgeted Units

The program provides the number of budgeted transportation units annually.

Compliance 6.1 The total number of units delivered for transportation services is within the variance allowed by DFTA.

Compliance 6.2 The number of units reported to DFTA for transportation service matches the number of one-way trips clients received, as documented in DFTA's client data system. (i.e. Service levels reported on invoices in CAMS match levels recorded in client data system.)

Standard 7. Unit Definition

The program uses the correct unit definition in documenting the provision of services.

Compliance 7.1 The unit of service is each one-way trip per older adult.

Example 1: The program transports 5 senior center members to and from the center because these older individuals have a mobility limitation, or because walking or driving to the center or taking public transportation is not feasible. This is an example of individual transportation. It is reported as ten units of transportation (five people travel round trip).

Example 2: The center organizes a day trip to Yankee Stadium to see a baseball game. Forty-three older individuals participate. This is an example of group transportation. It is reported as eighty-six units of transportation service (forty-three individuals travel round trip).

Example 3. The program takes an older individual to the senior center. After lunch, the program drives the older individual to a local shopping center to pick up medications and groceries. The older individual is then picked up and transported home. This is an example of individual transportation. It is reported as three units of transportation service (one individual x three separate trips/locations).

Compliance 7.2 Transportation units are not counted for trips provided to:

- Home attendants or other persons under the age of 60 who accompany service consumers.
- Persons whose trips have been purchased from the program by another agency.

Staff Appropriateness and Continuity

Standard 8. Staffing Level

The program has sufficient staff to provide the transportation service.

Compliance 8.1 The program maintains sufficient staff to provide the services as described in the program's RFP proposal.

Standard 9. Staff Qualification

Transportation staff is appropriately qualified.

Compliance 9.1 Driver license requirements. Each driver has an appropriate license:

- Class D or Class E: Small van (18,000 pounds or less/adult seating capacity up to 14 including driver).
- Commercial Driver's license C with a passenger endorsement: van (26,000 pounds or less/adult seating capacity of 15 or more).
- Commercial Driver's License B with a passenger endorsement: bus (26,001 pounds or more/adult seating capacity of 15 or more).

Compliance 9.2 Driver qualifications prior to employment. Each driver meets these qualifications prior to employment:

- Three years of licensed driving experience (documented on application form).
- No convictions for driving while intoxicated during past two years.
- No more than one moving violation within past two years.
- Two References (checked).
- Background Check.

Compliance 9.3 Ongoing driver qualifications.

On an annual basis, the program obtains information about each driver's record during the past year from the Department of Motor Vehicles. (Request can be made on required form MV-15).

- The program takes appropriate steps to discipline or terminate the employment of any driver with a DWI conviction or moving violation.
- The program ensures that drivers complete a defensive driving course within six months of employment.

Standard 10. Staff Training and Supervision

Transportation service staff are appropriately trained and supervised.

Compliance 10.1 The program documents that all new staff are oriented/ trained on the following:

- the aging process, including how to work with older persons (e.g., effects of aging on mobility, sight and hearing, and cognition);
- assisting passengers to get in and out of the vehicle safely when necessary;
- courtesy to passengers;
- safety and accident prevention;
- operation of motorized lifts and assistive devices;
- protocols for inclement weather or natural disaster;
- protocols in the event of a break-down or vehicle problem;
- what to do if passenger gets sick;
- accident management and reporting;
- emergency plans and protocols.

Compliance 10.2 A designated supervisor meets regularly with all staff that provide transportation either individually or in a group to review service delivery issues.

Compliance 10.3 A supervisor accompanies each driver on a trip at least once yearly and documents performance.

Procedures and Methods

Standard 11. Quality of Service

The program ensures that service is safe, efficient, timely and reliable.

Compliance 11.1 The program monitors service delivery to ensure that drivers use safe driving techniques, are courteous, sensitive to the needs of passengers, and free from any health or lifestyle problems that might endanger passengers or interfere with the performance of their duties.

- The program annually reviews the safety and courtesy records of any sub-contractors or other companies with whom it arranges for transportation services for its clients.

Compliance 11.2 The program ensures that drivers at fault in an accident are either required to take remedial steps to improve their driving (defensive driving course or other type of retraining), subjected to disciplinary action or terminated.

- The program ensures that any sub-contractors or other providers of arranged transportation for program clients:
 - Report all accidents involving clients to the program.
 - Share with the program any police reports on accidents involving the program's clients.
 - Require drivers at fault in an accident to take action to improve their driving (defensive driving course or other type of retraining, subject these drivers to disciplinary action or terminate their employment.
- The program terminates any arrangement with a sub-contractor or other provider of transportation services to its clients if more than one at-fault accident occurs during a year.

Compliance 11.3 Emergencies on Trips

- The program has a written plan to deal with emergencies that occur on trips, such as accidents, medical emergencies or the disappearance of a participant from the group.
- The written plan specifies what to do for the ill or injured individual; what to do for the rest of the group; criteria for ending the trip; who to notify and what forms to complete.
- A staff person or volunteer of the organization that has organized the trip accompanies each trip as the designated "leader", knows the exact population count, and has been trained on emergency procedures.
- Before each group trip the designated leader does a head count and checks that participants carry identification, and that they have the telephone number of the center.
- Group trip participants are informed of what to do in the event they are separated from the group, or if they intend to leave the group for any reason.
- If a participant is "lost" from the group, and her/his whereabouts cannot be ascertained, the incident is immediately reported to the program and sponsor, to DFTA and to the police, if warranted.

Compliance 11.4 The program dispatches vehicles and orders car service in a timely and efficient manner.

- Passenger pick-up for individual service is timely and reliable.
- Passengers are notified in a timely manner when pick-up will be earlier or later than scheduled.
- Drivers are equipped with cellular phone or beeper, or the program has two-way radio enabling the driver to be in contact with the dispatcher and/or transportation coordinator.
- Sub-contractor(s) and other providers of arranged transportation to program clients, inform the program immediately when unable to pick up a client for whom a reservation has been made.

- A back-up driver is used if a driver is not available.
- If the program's vehicle(s) are out of service, the program coordinates with other transportation providers in its area or makes appropriate accommodations to minimize service disruption.
- The program has a written procedure for receiving reservations and scheduling service provision.

Compliance 11.5 The program has a procedure to avoid any passenger being “stranded” – i.e. not picked up for a scheduled return trip.

- Sub-contractors and other providers of transportation arranged by the program notify the program immediately when any client is “no show” after a reservation has been made.

Compliance 11.6 All vehicles, including those used by sub-contractors or other providers of transportation arranged by the program, are equipped with seat belts, first aid kits and fire extinguishers and signs are posted in vehicles requiring passengers to use seat belts.

Standard 12. Monitoring Costs

The program monitors costs charged by providers of car/taxi/ambulette services to the program.

Compliance 12.1 The program has an accurate method of reconciling invoices received from car/taxi/ambulette service providers against the program's authorization records.

Physical Equipment

Standard 13. Vehicle Safety

Vehicles are in safe operating condition.

Compliance 13.1 The program ensures the safety of its own leased or owned vehicles, vehicles of subcontracted transportation providers.

- Vehicles are equipped with working fire extinguishers.
- Each vehicle is equipped with a first aid kit.
- Seat belts are in good working order.
- Regular maintenance and safety checks are scheduled. Vehicles are also inspected regularly by the transportation coordinator or other qualified supervisor to identify safety, comfort and accessibility issues.
- Vehicles are inspected by a state certified vehicle inspection station annually.
- Vehicles are registered annually.
- Repairs are timely.
- Wheel chair lifts and other equipment on the vehicle are maintained in working condition.

Standard 14. Vehicle Maintenance

Vehicles are maintained in good condition.

Compliance 14.1 Vehicle condition

- Exteriors of vehicles are washed on a regular basis

- Interiors of vehicles are clean.
- Litter is removed from vehicles on a daily basis.
- Vehicles are protected against theft and vandalism.

Standard 15. Vehicle Insurance

Vehicles are appropriately insured.

Compliance 15.1 The program maintains vehicle insurance coverage from a company licensed or authorized to do business in the State of New York.

- Coverage names the City and DFTA as additionally insured on a primary and non-contributory basis.
- Coverage protects against all liability for bodily injury, death, personal injury and property damage in an amount not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence and two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in aggregate as well as physical damage collision and comprehensive coverage (\$250 deductible) required for all vehicles with less than 35,000 miles and/or less than three years old.

Documentation and Recordkeeping

Standard 16. Documents and Records

Records and documentation are properly maintained.

Compliance 16.1 The program maintains appropriate records and documentation.

- **Transportation Logs – Paper.**
 - The Daily Route Sheet, and/or Car Service Reservation Sheet, and Contribution Record is completed each day service is delivered for each vehicle in use.
 - Logs indicate date, passenger names, whether the trip was one way or both ways, purpose of the trip, pick-up location and destination, and pick-up and return times. Logs also include a place to record whether a contribution was received.
 - The driver of the vehicle signs the daily record.
 - The Transportation coordinator (or supervisor) and one other staff person count the contributions received, and both sign the record.
 - Daily totals of one-way trips made by each vehicle, and contributions received, are transferred to a Transportation Monthly Record of Volume.
 - The Group Transportation Log is used to document one-way trips for special events when the place of origin and the destination are the same for all passengers.
- **Weekly mileage, fuel use, and fuel costs.**
 - The weekly DFTA mileage, fuel log and maintenance check record is kept up-to-date.
 - Separate receipts signed by an authorized individual and bearing license plate number, date of purchase, number of gallons purchased, cost of fuel, name of purchaser (agency name), name of seller (city, county), and invoice number are kept on file.

- **Equipment maintenance checks, inspections, and repairs.**
 - Maintenance checks are documented on the weekly mileage, fuel log and maintenance check record.
 - A record of repairs is kept for each vehicle.
 - The annual inspection record and registration for each vehicle is maintained on the vehicle.
 - The program documents the date, reason, and length of time that vehicles are out of service.

- **Car/taxi/ambulette service agreements.**
 - Contracts and any other written agreements are kept on file.
 - Billing records are kept on file.

- **Staff qualifications and training records.** Each driver's personnel file contains:
 - Copies of current license
 - Completed Job Application Form
 - Annual New York State Motor Vehicle print-out
 - Documentation of new driver orientation, training, and any ongoing training with name of participant, date of orientation, date of training, content of training, name of person providing the training.

- **Complaint and accident files.**
 - Complaint files are maintained, with appropriate actions taken documented.
 - Accident files are maintained, with all pertinent documentation, police reports, etc.

Adherence to Target Populations and Target Areas

See General Program Standards – Adherence to Target Populations and Target Areas