



## **Volunteer Driver Policy Handbook**

*Last Updated: December 16, 2016*

## Table of Contents

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM.....	3
POLICY STATEMENT.....	3
SERVICE HOURS.....	3
CODES OF CONDUCT.....	3
DRIVER REQUIREMENTS.....	4
DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES.....	4
CONFIDENTIALITY.....	5
TRIP ASSIGNMENTS.....	5
CLIENT NO-SHOW POLICY.....	5
VOLUNTEER NO-SHOW POLICY.....	6
FARE COLLECTIONS.....	6
INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS.....	6
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE.....	6
INCIDENT POLICY.....	6
IF YOU ARE IN A CRASH.....	7
MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT.....	7
PASSENGER ASSISTANCE.....	7
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY.....	8
SAFE DRIVING.....	8
VOLUNTEER RIGHTS.....	8

On behalf of RMFTB, welcome to the Volunteer Driver program. With your assistance, help people who cannot drive live a productive life. Thank you for joining our mission to give independence back to those who face challenges every day.

## **PURPOSE OF PROGRAM**

A volunteer driver is one who provides common carrier transportation and is not contractually bound to provide services. Volunteers are those drivers who are using their own vehicle or a vehicle owned by RMFTB and assigned to the driver to transport people to destinations that fit each client's needs. Volunteers are reimbursed 14 cents per approved mile driven in their own vehicle. Volunteers are never intentionally asked to provide a service that would duplicate a service already being provided by any agency within RMFTB's service area.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of those individuals who drive their own vehicles. It is the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. As such, RMFTB endorses all applicable South Carolina state motor vehicle regulations relating to driver responsibility. RMFTB expects each driver to drive in a safe and courteous manner pursuant to the following safety rules. The attitude you take when behind the wheel is the single most important factor in driving safely.

## **SERVICE HOURS**

The RMFTB office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. In addition, the office has a voice mail system operating 24 hours per day. Messages left after hours will not be reviewed until the next business day. The office is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday afternoon, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

## **CODES OF CONDUCT**

- I will conduct myself with dignity, courtesy, and consideration.
- I realize, since I am a volunteer, I do not receive payment for my time. Furthermore, I will not accept tips or request that my meals be paid by passengers.
- As a volunteer driver, I will not make derogatory or discriminatory remarks to or about passengers because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance.
- I will not impose my religious beliefs or lecture passengers.
- I realize that sexual harassment or contact with passengers is illegal, inappropriate and not allowed.
- I will not use alcoholic beverages or mood altering drugs while serving as a volunteer driver.
- I will be punctual in the performance of my duties.
- I understand I must respect the privacy rights of the passengers I serve. I understand that personal, medical, psychiatric and financial information is private non-public data. Information on these subjects may be shared only with the dispatcher or other staff only.

- I recognize that as a volunteer driver, I represent The RMFTB Program. I have an obligation to my volunteer assignment, to those who direct it, to the clients, and to the public to uphold these codes of conduct.

***Volunteer drivers violating codes of conduct may be dismissed at any time***

## **DRIVER REQUIREMENTS**

All RMFTB volunteer drivers must have the following:

- Must be at least 21 years of age.
- Volunteer drivers must have
  - photocopies of valid motor vehicle license and proof of insurance
  - Current automobile liability insurance
    - 100,000/300,000 injury, 50,000 property damage and 50,000/100,000 Uninsured/Underinsured motorist) on file at RMFTB prior to receiving trip requests.
    - Proof of insurance will be kept on file at the RMFTB Office.
- ***If involved in an accident while on volunteer duty, RMFTB does not cover the volunteer's insurance deductible, and the volunteer's automobile insurance will be considered the first source for claim resolution.***
- Motor Vehicle Records will be ordered at the initial application and periodically to assess employees' driving records.
- Report any crashes or passenger incidents occurring while on duty for RMFTB to the office immediately. (If after hours, leave detailed telephone message and report on next business day.)
- Any volunteer who has a driver's license revoked or suspended shall immediately notify the RMFTB office and discontinue driving for RMFTB.
- RMFTB must be notified prior to a scheduled trip if any additional passengers will accompany driver and RMFTB passenger. Bringing additional riders for conversation or company is fine, and often a good idea. Make sure the client always feels included in the conversation.
- Adhere to the RMFTB Codes of Conduct.
- Keep the RMFTB office advised when unable to drive as soon as it is known. Sudden situations that prevent driving such as family emergency or personal illness should be reported immediately, so the volunteer scheduler can make other arrangements for any pending trips.
- Adhere to all guidelines regarding meal reimbursement, mileage reimbursement, use of cellular phones, etc.
- Attend training sessions and special meetings sponsored by the program.
- Pass a drug screening test and background check.

## **DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Transport passengers in a safe and lawful manner. Seatbelts are required by WI law unless passenger has a physician's letter of excuse and a copy of this on file with RMFTB
- Be prompt so riders arrive on time for scheduled appointments.
- Walk with riders into their appointments and to their doors when returning home. Driver may assist a passenger by lending an arm. Driver will request the help of medical facilities or family when transporting adults who need higher levels of assistance

- Observe confidentiality regarding riders, treating everyone with dignity and respect
- No smoking in vehicles when in service for RMFTB
- Decline any tips or gifts and encourage donations to RMFTB
- Call RMFTB within 24 hours of a scheduled ride if unable to complete a trip
- Accurately complete mileage log forms and mail or bring to the office by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month for the prior month's trips.
- Refer ride requests to the RMFTB. Reimbursements come only for approved trips
- Only transport people in non-emergency situations. In case of an emergency, call the local ambulance service, 911
- Every effort should be made to avoid use of a cellular phone while driving for RMFTB. Plan ahead, in order to avoid making phone calls while driving. Please pull over if you need to call our office
- Notify RMFTB of any changes affecting your ability drive safely, including loss of valid driver's license, insured vehicle or driving ability.
- Refrain from drinking or using prescription or over the counter drugs that might impair your driving ability within six hours of driving for RMFTB

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers must keep names of and information about passengers confidential. Friendliness, reliability, courtesy and the ability to be non-judgmental and accepting of different lifestyles and values are necessary attributes for the position. Confidentiality is maintained for the protection of the rider and RMFTB. Volunteers will use the following procedures:

1. All written and unwritten material on riders is considered confidential.
2. Volunteers do not have access to any passenger files maintained by RMFTB.
3. If a volunteer receives information from a rider and there is a reasonable suspicion that abuse - physical, sexual, economic or emotional - has occurred, then, the driver will share that information with RMFTB staff as soon as possible.
4. The fact that information about an individual has been made public through the news media does not alter the fact that a person still has confidentiality privileges within RMFTB.

## TRIP ASSIGNMENTS

All rides must be pre-approved and assigned to volunteers by the RMFTB office. The driver **will not be reimbursed** for any ride that is not assigned by RMFTB. Additional side trips or returning home during layovers will not be permitted unless authorized by RMFTB. Special care needs to be taken when a volunteer is accepting a telephone assignment to ensure that all information is recorded accurately and completely.

## CLIENT NO-SHOW POLICY

If a client fails to keep an appointment as assigned to the volunteer driver, the office is to be notified immediately. The driver should make a reasonable effort to be sure that the client is aware that the driver is ready and waiting to take the client. Drivers must wait for fifteen minutes past the appointed pick up time before leaving and reporting a no-show. The RMFTB policy for no-show appointments is very specific. Passengers receive two written warnings about no-shows, and upon the third no-show, the client shall be ineligible for rides for 30 days.

## **VOLUNTEER NO-SHOW POLICY**

If you are a “no-show” for a trip, you will receive a written warning. After the 2nd “no-show”, your participation in RMFTB will be suspended for 30 days. Upon the 3rd “no-show”, your participation as a driver with RMFTB will be permanently terminated.

## **FARE COLLECTIONS**

All fees will be collected by the RMFTB office. Drivers will not be responsible for collecting any payment from the clients. Clients will pre-pay for services and rides will only be scheduled if payment has already been received. Clients are responsible for paying any parking fees incurred while being driven to their destination(s).

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS**

In the case of inclement weather, the volunteer driver has the right to cancel the ride, even on short notice. The volunteer driver must call the office and the passenger when a decision is made to cancel. Nothing is more important to us than the safety of the volunteer driver and passenger. In most cases passengers would rather not travel during inclement weather, and would usually prefer to reschedule. Only travel when you are confident you can make the trip safely.

## **VEHICLE MAINTENANCE**

Proper vehicle maintenance is a basic element of any transport vehicle to ensure a safe, roadworthy vehicle.

- Registration and Inspection is the responsibility of the volunteer driver.
- The vehicle should be cleaned (interior & exterior) regularly to help maintain its good appearance.
- An accident packet should be kept in the glove compartment of each vehicle.
- The vehicle manufacturer’s maintenance schedule should be referenced and closely followed regarding recommended maintenance intervals.
- A Mileage Log must be kept in each vehicle and each trip must be recorded.

## **INCIDENT POLICY**

Report any incident involving the volunteer driver and/or passengers in any way must also be reported to the office as soon as possible after it occurs. Examples of reportable incidents are a passenger who uses inappropriate language or behavior, a passenger who refuses to use the seat belt, a passenger who slips while entering or exiting your vehicle, etc. The office will advise the volunteer if an accident/incident form needs to be completed. For risk management purposes, all accidents and any incident that involves personal injury or other liability must be documented and kept on file at the office.

Any complaints or issues regarding volunteer driving should be discussed with the Volunteer Scheduler. Passenger complaints about volunteers are documented on a passenger complaint form. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Volunteer Scheduler or the Program Director will decide the next steps. In most cases the volunteer driver is asked to offer her/his perspective of the situation. If follow up action is needed, both the driver and the passenger will be notified.

## **IF YOU ARE IN A CRASH**

Every accident should be reported, investigated and reviewed. The primary purpose of investigating a crash is to find out the cause and initiate action to eliminate or control it. Another purpose is to obtain information to be used in determining whether the accident is preventable or non-preventable. Any volunteer who is in any kind of crash must:

- Do not declare fault
- Move to a safe location and, if possible, secure your vehicle out of traffic
- Call police/sheriff and (if needed) seek medical assistance
- Remain Calm, Courteous, Consistent your version of the accident
- Obtain complete identifying information from those involved – people and vehicles
- Complete the Accident Investigation form
- Obtain the names of the witnesses including addresses and phone numbers
- Notify the RMFTB Program as soon as possible

## **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

Drivers must enter the trip information upon pickup and then delivery of the client to their final destination. Complete all columns of the trip log beginning with the date of the trip and passenger name. The odometer reading is taken at the start of the volunteer assignment and again when the client is returned home. If taking more than one passenger on a given trip, record odometer readings for each passenger. Layover time that is spent waiting in the lobby or parking lot of the location is considered volunteer time. A volunteer driver will not be paid mileage for returning home or making additional stops during layover time. If the client requests to stop and pick up a prescription and the driver has time to accommodate the request, the additional mileage will be reimbursed. Please make sure you document the additional stop on the mileage log.

Mileage logs should be sent to the RMFTB office after your last trip of the month. If you do not turn in your mileage log, you may have to wait until the next month to be reimbursed.

## **PASSENGER ASSISTANCE**

For the safety of the client and the driver, the volunteer driver is not expected to provide any more assistance than lending an arm for balance. A driver may lend a hand to steady a client while entering or exiting the vehicle. Drivers are not required to carry packages for the clients but are encouraged to help out as long as the request is reasonable and the volunteer will not injure themselves while assisting the client.

If a passenger becomes weakened during their appointment (such as kidney dialysis) and is unable to walk, the volunteer shall ask staff at the pickup point for assistance. At no time is a volunteer to carry a client. A volunteer driver is prohibited from transporting a client who needs that type of help. If no one is able to help the client, please call 911.

RMFTB's volunteer driver services are door-to-door service. Exceptions to this rule must be expressly requested. A volunteer driver has the right to accept or refuse any trip for any reason.

Service animals are permitted with prior notice. The volunteer driver will always be notified if a service animal will be riding along. Non-service animals are not allowed.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

All of the staff and volunteers at RMFTB are committed to respecting the individuality of each person. We respect race, culture, age, religion, affectional orientation, and individuals with disabilities. We strive to provide a positive and confidential environment where the well-being of each person is respected.

## **SAFE DRIVING**

- Drivers should be mentally and physically rested and alert prior to each trip.
- Drinking of alcoholic beverages while driving, or driving while under the influence of alcohol or restricted drugs is prohibited and disciplinary action will be enforced
- Traffic laws must be obeyed. Speed shall never be faster than a rate consistent with existing speed laws and road, traffic and weather conditions. Posted speed limits must be obeyed.
- Drivers are required to maintain a safe following distance at all times. One vehicle length for every 10 mph is a minimum recommendation.
- Avoid driving in other driver's blind spots; attempt to maintain eye contact with the other driver, either directly or through mirrors.
- In adverse conditions, reduce speed to a safe operating speed that is consistent with the conditions of the road, weather, lighting, and volume of traffic.
- Turn signals must be used to show where you are heading; while going into traffic and before every turn or lane change.
- When passing or changing lanes, view the entire vehicle in your rear view mirror before pulling back into the lane.
- Be cautious when backing up. Walk around your vehicle and know your surroundings before backing up.

## **VOLUNTEER RIGHTS**

- Drivers have a right to privacy. Your personal information is not given or sold to anyone who is not directly affiliated with RMFTB.
- Drivers have a right to refuse a trip due to passenger or escort misconduct.
- Drivers have a right to file a complaint by contacting RMFTB.
- Drivers have the right to refuse a trip if the driver feels uncomfortable providing the scheduled trip by immediately calling RMFTB.



