Plan a Volunteer Driver Program

NVTC Exercise (Revised 2018)

- **Introduction**
  Volunteer Driver Program Highlights

- **Key Planning Questions**
  Identifies volunteer driver program service & organizational features

- **Organizational Features**
  Presents a list of ten organizational features to select for a planned volunteer driver program.

- **Service Features**
  Presents a list of ten service features to select for a planned volunteer driver program.

- **Feature Selection**
  The final task of the planning activity is to enter the selected organizational and service features into charts which provide visual illustrations of the planned volunteer driver program.

For More Information Visit

http://nationalvolunteertransportationcenter.org/

NVTC is an Initiative of CTAA with offices in Washington, DC & Albuquerque, New Mexico

Although some view volunteer driver programs as a “one best way” to service delivery, in fact they exhibit great variation in the way they are organized and the services they provide to passengers, many of whom may be older adults. Thus, each volunteer driver program generally reflects the needs, values, attitudes, and resources of the community in which it is located. This variation suggests the absence of a “one best way” for enabling neighbors to help neighbors.

Some provide transportation just for seniors,
others serve a more varied clientele.

Some provide service in rural areas,
others in urban and suburban areas.

Some have a large staff,
others operate solely with volunteer support.

Some only rely on volunteer drivers,
others also hire paid drivers.

Some have no budgeted expenses,
others have budgets in the million-dollar range.

Some reimburse volunteer drivers for mileage,
others do not.

Some provide rides for specific needs,
others provide rides to special destinations.

Some allow escorts to ride free,
others mobilize drivers as escorts.

Some use passenger vehicles only,
others use a mixed fleet of vehicles.

Some provide thousands of rides each year,
others provide hundreds of rides.

Some charge fees to passengers,
others request donations from passengers.

Some have tax support, grant funding, and donations,
others initiate fundraisers.
Some Key Planning Questions

Volunteer driver programs take many forms because of the many service methods that can be included in their operations. Perhaps planning should begin with a question. What is the goal? Once that question has been answered, there are a number of important organizational and service questions that must be answered. Several of these questions are listed below.

- Who is going to ride?
- Who is going to drive?
- What kind of vehicles will be used?
- How will the program be organized?
- What area will the program serve?
- Who will sponsor the program?
- How will the program be staffed?
- How will the program be funded?
- How will budget decisions be made?
- How will the program be coordinated?

- When will rides be available?
- What types of rides will be offered?
- What will be the destinations?
- How will eligibility be determined?
- What types of assistance will be provided?
- How and when will rides be scheduled?
- What training will be offered?
- How will risk be managed?
- What records will be maintained?
- What technology will be used?

Organizational Features of Volunteer Driver Programs

The features below are used by many volunteer driver programs to structure the organization of their volunteer driver program.

- Passengers
- Drivers
- Vehicles
- Organizational Type
- Service Area
- Sponsorship
- Staffing
- Funding
- Budget
- Linkage Relationships

Service Features of Volunteer Driver Programs

The features below are used by many volunteer driver programs to plan the services or activities of their program.

- Availability
- Trip Method
- Destinations
- Eligibility
- Assistance
- Scheduling
- Training
- Risk Management
- Records
- Technology

The following pages will enable you to use these organizational and service features in planning your own volunteer driver program.
Selection Of Organizational Features

In planning your volunteer driver program, your first task is to identify the organizational features you want to include. Please circle your selection.

1. What passengers do you plan to serve?
   - The general public and seniors
   - Seniors and People with Disabilities
   - Seniors Only
   - Other

#2 What drivers do you plan to involve?
   - Paid drivers
   - Volunteer Drivers
   - Paid & Vol. Drivers
   - Other

#3 What vehicles do you plan to use?
   - Owned/leased Vehicles
   - Volunteer Vehicles
   - Owned/ & Volunteer Vehicles
   - Other

#4 How will your program be organized?
   - Profit Corporation
   - Non Profit Corporation
   - Government Agency
   - Other

#5 What location (areas) will you serve?
   - Urban
   - Suburban
   - Rural
   - Other

#6 Who (what organization) will be the sponsor?
   - A Transportation Service Agency
   - A Human Service Agency
   - A Senior Service Agency
   - Other

#7 How will you staff the program
   - Paid Staff Only
   - Volunteer Staff Only
   - Paid and Volunteer Staff
   - Other

#8 How will you fund the program?
   - Government Grants
   - Foundation Contributions
   - Passenger Donations
   - Other

#9 How will you budget for your program?
   - Staff Decision
   - Staff with Board Involvement
   - Staff, Board, and Others
   - Other

#10 What relationships will you want to develop?
   - With Transportation Agencies
   - With Human Service Agencies
   - With the Faith Community
   - Other

Now that you have selected your organizational features, turn to the next page and select the service features you want to include in your volunteer driver program.
Now that you know how you want to organize your volunteer driver program, your second task is to identify the services or activities that you want to provide. Please circle your selection.

#1 When will your service be available?
- Weekdays
- Weekdays & Evenings
- Weekday, Evening, Weekend
- Other

#2 What trip method will you use?
- 1 way Trip
- Round Trip
- Trip Chaining
- Other

#3 What destinations do you want to serve?
- Life-Sustaining Destinations
- Life Enriching Destinations
- Life Maintaining Destinations
- Other

#4 What eligibility criteria will you use?
- Older Adult Passengers
- People with Disabilities
- Members of An Organization
- Other

#5 What assistance will you provide?
- Curb-to-Curb
- Door-to-Door
- Door-through-Door
- Other

#6 How will you schedule rides?
- Telephone
- E-Mail
- Self-Schedule
- Other

#7 How will you train your drivers?
- In-house Training
- Contract with Consultant
- Link with Public Transit
- Other

#8 How will you manage risk?
- Train Drivers
- Insure Drivers & Vehicles
- Purchase Insurance
- Other

#9 What records will you maintain?
- Accounting Records
- Destination & Mileage Records
- Volunteer Hours
- Other

#10 What technology will you use?
- No technology
- Spreadsheets
- Scheduling & Data Software
- Other

Now that you have identified organizational and service features turn to the next page and develop a pictorial representation of your planned volunteer driver program.
Volunteer Transportation Service Plan

Your final task is to fill in the blanks for each of the organizational and service features that you identified on pages #3 & #4. Once you fill in the blanks, you should have a pictorial representation of the volunteer driver program you have planned.

Organizational Features

- Linkages
- Passengers
- Budget
- Drivers
- Funding
- Staffing
- Vehicles
- Sponsorship
- Service Area

Service Features

- Technology
- Availability
- Records
- Trip Method
- Risk Management
- Destinations
- Training
- Eligibility
- Scheduling
- Assistance

Congratulations!
You have completed an important step in planning a volunteer driver program.
The National Volunteer Transportation Center resulted from the efforts of each of its founders to support existing and emerging volunteer transportation programs and services across the country.

In 2000, the Beverly Foundation began a research and awards initiative related to volunteer driver programs. In 2014, the National Volunteer Transportation Center opened with a database of more than 700 volunteer transportation programs throughout the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In 2015, Toyota and the NVTC partnered to undertake the Center’s STAR Awards program and a variety of other initiatives.

The NVTC website includes numerous technical and informational materials related to planning, organizing, and managing volunteer driver programs. Perhaps its most important asset is the wisdom, experience, and expertise of its founders who, as a group, bring to the Center a long history of transportation and aging research, direct service delivery, risk management