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**WELCOME!**

Thank you for signing up to perform the *mitzvah* of helping seniors feel more connected to their community by being a volunteer driver. As a J Ride volunteer, we hope that you will find your contribution rewarding and positive. This guide will help orientate you the volunteer driving and answer many questions you may have. If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to contact the **J Rides office at 703-537-3074.**

**VOLUNTEER DRIVER JOB DESCRIPTION**

Volunteer drivers pick up passengers, drive them to programs at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia or anywhere the J administers programs, events or meetings and then return them to their homes. Occasionally driving re-quests may be one-way only.

***Qualifications***

* Enjoy working with a culturally diverse group of seniors and/or persons with physical limitations
* A desire to assist individuals with special transportation needs
* Must possess a valid driver’s license and good driving record
* Must clear background checks
* Must show proof of auto insurance
* Must be at 21 years of age

***Benefits***

* Satisfaction of helping others
* Accomplishment in providing a much needed community service
* Developing new friendships with Riders and other Volunteers

**VOLUNTEER DRIVER DUTIES**

* Provide safe, accessible transportation to and from J programs
* Reasonably assist Riders as needed during pick-up and drop-off
* Volunteers are not required to engage in activities wherein they do not feel comfortable.
* Ensure Riders make it safely to their destination

***Volunteers are expected to:***

* attend orientation and training session
* decline any gifts or tips that may be offered
* be prompt and reliable
* notify the office and rider as soon as possible when unable to report for a scheduled ride
* protect confidential information
* treat members and other volunteers with respect
* exercise good judgment

***The following are examples of the assistance provided by Volunteer Drivers. Volunteers are not required to perform any activity that may risk their personal well- being or the well- being of the Rider.***

**Gentle Assistance:**

* Open doors
* Provide verbal guidance
* Listen to rider’s stories
* Encourage rider’s independence
* Provide companionship to riders during their ride

**Physical Assistance:**

* Help riders walk to and from the vehicle
* Provide support for riders entering and exiting the vehicle
* Help riders with seatbelts and securements
* Negotiate limited stair steps
* Help riders with assistive devices
* Help riders carry light packages

**Examples of Services NOT offered by Volunteer Drivers**

* Assistance to riders regarding personal hygiene/restroom needs
* Lifting of heavy bags/items (weight limit to be set by individual volunteers based on their personal abilities)
* Preparing of meals
* Housekeeping and/or yard work
* Skilled medical care

**Volunteer Drivers have the Responsibility to:**

* Follow all program guidelines, including safety guidelines, when participating in program activities.
* Be courteous and considerate of Riders and others. Inappropriate behavior, vulgar language, lack of personal hygiene, etc. cannot be tolerated.
* Maintain confidentiality and privacy regarding agency information, riders/clients, and staff.
* Be honest about your expectations and abilities.
* Be punctual and presentable for all scheduled rides.
* Notify staff as soon as possible if they need to cancel/reschedule a ride.
* Follow the ride schedule as planned.

**Vehicle & Driving Safety**

* It is required that Riders and Volunteers wear seatbelts at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
* Volunteers should refrain from using cellular devices (i.e. phones, blackberries, PDAs, etc.) while operating vehicles. Should a Volunteer receive a call, or need to make a call while a ride is in progress, he/she should drive to a safe location, park the vehicle, and proceed with the call.
* Volunteers should NEVER drive when tired or while taking medications that cause drowsiness. The use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs while providing or utilizing program services is strictly prohibited.
* Volunteer drivers are expected to follow all traffic laws at all times, including following posted speed limits and utilizing turn signals when appropriate. Drivers will be responsible for the cost of any traffic & parking violations they incur, including speeding and red light tickets.
* Obey all traffic laws. Volunteers will be responsible for traffic violation tickets, including red light and speeding tickets, they incur while operating program vehicles.
* Report any concerns they have regarding Riders, vehicles, program operations, etc. to program staff.
* Maintain a valid driver’s license and safe driving record.

**COMMITMENT**

The length of your commitment depends on your availability. J Rides provides volunteer drivers access to our ride scheduling software that lets you select your driving assignments, offering volunteers a flexible schedule. You can volunteer as little or as much as you’d like. There is no limit to the amount of time you can volunteer to this program!

We do ask that once you have committed to a ride you make every effort to fulfill that commitment.

**INSURANCE**

Volunteer drivers must have their own insurance coverage when driving in their own automobiles. The Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia has an umbrella liability insurance policy in place to provide additional coverage in the event of an accident. A copy of the volunteer’s current auto insurance card must be on file with J Rides. The volunteer driver’s fuel and/or mileage are considered tax-deductible charitable contributions for their income tax purposes.

**BACKGROUND CHECKS**

J Rides volunteer drivers must also complete a secure online driver criminal background and check of Virginia DMV motor vehicle records. A link will be emailed to you to perform this check. This will take just a few minutes.

**PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a JCCNV member or another volunteer. Such information should never be shared outside the organization.

**DAYS AND HOURS OF SERVICE**

To place a ride request, eligible riders can call J Rides at 703-537-3074 and leave a message. The volunteer coordinator will return the call within the next business days. Ride requests must be made at least five days in advance. Ride Requests can be made for any day and anytime that a J program is scheduled. We recommend riders secure a ride before signing up for an activity.

**RIDESCHEDULER GENERAL GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES**

If you want to view the available rides, open www.nvrides.org and log into your account using your email address and the password provided by J Rides. We encourage you to periodically check your profile to make sure your personal data is up to date.

If you receive a phone call from a rider cancelling a ride, please inform the Ride Coordinator via email or phone call as soon as possible. If the rider has a new Date/Time for their appointment, tell them to call the J Rides and leave that information for the Ride Scheduler.

If you find a rider is not available for pick up, please inform the coordinator who will attempt to speak with the rider’s emergency contact.

Normally drivers will be able to accept rides directly from the RideScheduler email sent whenever there are rides available. When a driver clicks on “Accept” in the table attached to the email they will automatically be logged into the RideScheduler home page for drivers.

From there you can view the “Available” rides, your assigned rides using the “My Appointments” button, and input miles driven in “Mileage Report”.

A driver who accepts a ride will receive an automatically generated email acknowledging their acceptance and providing the contact information for the rider. The driver must call the rider to confirm the ride and arrange a pick up time.

The day before a ride, both the driver and the rider will receive an automatically generated phone call reminding them of the ride.

***UNACCEPTING A RIDE***

If you want to un-accept a ride you have signed up for, open the RideScheduler web page www.nvrides.org and log into your account using your email address and the password provided by the NV Rides. If you don’t see a login screen you are probably still logged in from your last visit to the site. Your name will appear in the Welcome part of the blue box on the left side of the home page.

Go to “My Appointments” and click on the “Un-accepts” line on the ride you wish to un-accept. The ride will automatically be placed back in the “Available” listing under the “Appointments” tab.

You must call the rider back and inform them of your un-acceptance of their ride. Please inform them the ride is being made available for someone else to Accept.

An automatic email will be sent to the ride coordinators telling them a driver has unaccepted a ride. The coordinator will inform all the drivers (using the standard email used to schedule a new ride) that the ride is back in the available listing for a new driver to select.

***MILEAGE REPORT***

You can put your odometer readings (or just put the miles driven in the “odometer end” box) in the system under the “Mileage Report” button in the Appointments tab. The totals will be available as an end of the year report for your tax filings.

***LOGGING OUT***

When you are finished with a session, do not forget to Logout of the system by clicking “Logout” under the “My Info” tab.

**RIDER PICK-UP**

Before Drivers depart from the vehicle pick-up location they should call the Rider to notify him/her they are on the way and to make sure he/she is still planning on taking the trip.

When the Volunteer Driver arrives at the Rider’s pick-up address he/she will go to the door and knock/ring for the Rider (unless otherwise specified). The Volunteer Driver may enter and assist the Rider with final preparations if requested (i.e. help with a coat or packages, etc.), and assist the Rider to the Vehicle as needed.

If a Rider does not answer, the Volunteer Driver should attempt to call the Rider again. If there continues to be no answer, the Volunteer Driver should contact the program office. Office staff will attempt to contact the Rider or Rider’s Contact. If we are unable to reach that person, we will contact the Rider’s emergency contact. If there appears to be an emergency situation, program staff will contact the local authorities for assistance and an incident report must be completed.

**If you have any questions, please contact J Rides at 703-537-3074 or email jrides@jccnv.org.**

Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia

8900 Little River Turnpike

J Rides Direct: 703-537-3074

[JRIDES@JCCNV.ORG](mailto:JRIDES@JCCNV.ORG)

**Additional Contact Information:**

Jennifer Kanarek, NV Rides Manager, 703-537-3071, JenniferK@NVRides.org

Gina Cocomello, NV Rides Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, 703-537-3070, [GinaC@NVRides.org](mailto:GinaC@NVRides.org)

***THANK YOU FOR GIVING THE GIFT OF A LIFT.***

***ENJOY THE RIDE!***

*J Rides is supported by NV Rides. NV Rides is a network of service providers aiming to enhance and improve volunteer transportation throughout the region. In partnership with Fairfax County and Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA), and with additional support from The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia, the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia (JCCNV) is administering this community-wide initiative so that more non-driving older adults will be able to get where they need go at no cost, and “age in place” for as long as possible.*

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