**PROGRAM POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

Transportation

The following policies and guidelines have been established to permit Council on Aging to provide quality, reliable and affordable service to all its clients.

**SAFETY POLICY**

All vehicles are wheelchair accessible and supplied with the appropriate safety gear for transport. All drivers are required to be CPR, First Aid and Passenger Assistance certified with a Passenger Endorsement on their license.

**PRIORITY OF TRIPS**

Precedence of services are provided in the following order:

1. Medical (doctor offices, dental offices, medical facilities, therapists, mental health facilities and pharmacy)

2. Nutritional (grocery)

3. Business (banking)

4. Benefit Programs (Division of Family Resources and Social Security, Housing Authority)

5. Visitation of spouses or other significant relationships whom reside outside client’s home)

**PASSENGER PROTOCAL AND REQUIREMENTS**

* Drivers are ***NOT*** permitted to enter homes, lift clients, bring wheelchairs down stairs or perform any other task that driver views as unsafe for client
* Drivers are permitted to only wait 10 minutes after arriving at the pickup location. Passenger must be ready upon driver arrival with coat, purse, meals, keys, etc. positioned for departure.
* Residents of skilled nursing facilities must be ready to depart at the scheduled pickup time. Resident must be waiting at the nurse’s station or other designated area, as drivers are not permitted to escort client from their room.
* Clients are picked up at their scheduled time following appointments. Due to commitments to other clients, COA cannot guarantee alternative pickup times if one’s appointment is completed early.
* Seatbelts must be worn at all times in which the vehicle is moving. Individuals with medical conditions limiting seatbelt securement must sign a refusal to wear form.
* Smoking, alcohol and weapons (or other material deemed harmful) are not permitted in any Council on Aging vehicle.
* Passengers with known contagious conditions are asked not to schedule transportation services until the illness is resolved
* Disruptive or abusive behavior is not tolerated under any circumstances, including physical altercations, threatening and intimidating language, excessive profanity, destruction of Council on Aging property and shouting at Council on Aging staff. This behavior can and will constitute the following resolve:

1. 1st Offense: written warning

2. 2nd Offense: two week suspension of services

3. 3rd Offense: one month suspension of services

4. 4th Offense: ninety days suspension of services

5. 5th Offense: permanent revocation

Council on aging reserves the right to expedite penalties if extraordinary circumstances exist. Where conflicts between Real Services A2AA and COA regulations and COA policies conflict, a remedial penalty will be implemented.

* Passengers with extensive medical or physical needs may schedule an attendant transport to assist them during their trip. Council on Aging reserves the right to require an attendant be available if the situation requires.
* Title IIIB recipients are expected, under terms of fund acceptance, to offer a donation. All funding sources are insufficient in their coverage all costs associated with transportation services. Approximately $10 of the per trip cost is not compensated by funding sources. Although all donations are voluntary, they assist Council on Aging in continuing to provide services at no-fee and reduced rates.
* Passengers are expected to contact the Council on Aging main office at 574-295-1820 to report any misconduct or dissent from protocol by any staff or representatives of Council on Aging

**SCHEDULING A TRIP**

* No trip can be scheduled without a completed application on file with Council on Aging of Elkhart County Inc.
* Requests for services should be submitted 48 hours in advance of an appointment. Trip requests received after this time cannot be guaranteed but accommodation will be attempted.
* Cancellations must be received by 12 noon the day before service or 24 hours in advance of all appointments, whichever is greater, to avoid penalty as outlined in the Cancellation Policy.
* Medicaid recipients must schedule their appointments through Southeastrans using their toll-free number 1-855-325-7586.

**Public Notice of Rights under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Council on Aging of Elkhart County, Inc.

Council on Aging of Elkhart County, Inc.operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Any person who believes he or she has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory due to your race, color, or national origin may file a complaint with Council on Aging of Elkhart County, Inc.

For information on Council on Aging of Elkhart County, Inc.civil rights plan and the procedures to file a complaint contact David Toney by phone at (574) 295-1820, email at [info@elkhartcoa.org](mailto:info@elkhartcoa.org), on our website at www.elkhartcoa.org,or visit our office at 131 West Tyler Street, Suite 1A, Elkhart, Indiana 46516**.**

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration at:

Federal Transit Administration

Office of Civil Rights

Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator

East Building, 5th Floor –TCR

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE

Washington, DC 20590

For those receiving financial assistance from the Title IIIB program for transportation services or Medicaid, Choice, SSBG, TIII or TIIIE, complainants unsatisfied with their resolution may contact the FSSA at 888-673-0002 or the A2AA at 800-552-7928.

If information is needed in another language or alternate formats contactDavid Toney at (574) 295-1820 or [info@elkhartcoa.org](mailto:info@elkhartcoa.org).