



Volunteer Transportation

Rider Guide



2208 Second Avenue, Suite 100
Seattle, WA 98121

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Welcome to the Program

Welcome to Sound Generations Volunteer Transportation Program! Through the generosity and help of hundreds of volunteers in our community, we can provide you safe rides with kind companionship. The goal of the Volunteer Transportation Program is to provide safe and personalized transportation to and from medical appointments, and/or other essential medical services.

Purpose of this Rider Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with a brief background of the organization, a detailed guide on how the program works, and guidelines to ensure a safe, respectful, and positive experience for riders and their volunteer drivers.

Volunteer Transportation Program Overview

History

The Volunteer Transportation Program has been providing transportation to seniors in King County since 1975. The program grew out of a countywide network of agencies and individuals to centralize transportation services and provide consistent and equal accessibility for individuals over 60 years old.

Volunteer Transportation provides safe and reliable transportation to and from medical appointments and/or other essential services for older adults who meet rider eligibility requirements. Riders are driven to their appointment and back home again by a screened and trained volunteer in the volunteer's personal vehicle.

The Volunteer Transportation program is a program of Sound Generations, a nonprofit that manages several senior centers, Hyde Shuttle, Meals on Wheels, Minor Home Repair, nutrition programs, and other services for older adults. For more information about Sound Generations and its other programs, visit <https://soundgenerations.org/>.

Rider Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the Volunteer Transportation program, riders must be:

- A resident of King County
- 60 years of age or older
- Able to self-transfer into and out of a private vehicle
- Unable to use or with limited access to other transportation options

Program Contact Information

Call Center: **206-448-5740**

- **We suggest you save this number in your phone as “VTS Call Center”**

Toll-free number: **1-800-282-5815**

Call Center hours are from 8:00AM-4:30PM, Monday through Friday.
Closed on all Federal holidays

Agency website: <https://soundgenerations.org>

VTS website: <https://soundgenerations.org/our-programs/transportation/volunteer/>

Program Operations

To become a rider simply takes a phone call. There is no paperwork to complete, insurance information to confirm, or money required. There is no cost for a ride. Donations are accepted and welcomed!

While we do our best to fulfill every ride request, a ride is not guaranteed. If no volunteer is available for your ride, we will let you know **by the Friday before your appointment**. We do not accommodate same day ride requests.

Telephone interpreter services are available for non-English speaking callers.

Rider Responsibilities

Volunteer Transportation Services (VTS) staff and all the volunteer drivers work very hard to complete all rides. You too have responsibilities as a program participant. They are:

- 1. Sign-up for the Volunteer Transportation Program.**
- 2. You must speak with your driver prior; the driver will call you the day before your appointment to confirm details.**
- 3. Please allow two weeks' advance notice for a ride request.**
- 4. Cancel a ride request by calling the Call Center as soon as you know it is no longer needed.**

1. Sign-up with the Volunteer Transportation program

- A. Call the Call Center at 206-448-5740 (or 1-800-282-5815) to sign up.
- B. It is easy to sign up! You will talk with one of the Call Center staff who shares information about the program, addresses your questions, and gathers details necessary for a safe and pleasant ride to your appointment.
- C. Details gathered will create your personal profile. Your profile includes information such as a home address, emergency contact, if a caregiver or family member will be with you, and relevant preferences.

- D. Volunteer drivers are not allowed to lift a rider or bear their weight in any manner. Offering a hand for balance and opening doors is okay.
- E. Equipment: Canes, walkers, portable oxygen device, a guide pet, or service animal are allowed. Share this with staff so they can share it with volunteers allowing them to be fully informed and make the best choice for a ride request.
 - a. Walkers must be collapsible and able to be stored in a back seat or vehicle's trunk.
- F. We adhere to all Federal HIPPA laws and regulations.
- G. It is very important we know how you can be contacted by volunteers and program staff. Your volunteer driver must talk with you 24 to 48 hours prior to confirming your ride.

2. Call to enter a ride request

- A. Call the Call Center at 206-448-5740 (or 1-800-282-5815) to request a ride.
- B. Have all appointment and ride request details ready (date, time, duration, location, doctor's name and contact information, etc.)
- C. All ride requests must be made through the Call Center. Do not call volunteers to request a ride.
- D. You can request a ride up to thirty days in advance from the date of call.
- E. Please allow two weeks' notice for your ride request
- F. Provide accurate and important information.
 - For example, an accurate address with helpful details about how to find your house, how you prefer to be contacted by a volunteer driver (phone or text, and any time of day), and when a caregiver or family member will be with you.
- G. If your medical appointment requires any anesthesia or sedation of any type you are required to bring an additional person with you to the appointment.
- H. If no volunteer driver is available to take your ride request, Call Center staff will call you **on the Friday before your requested date to let you know**.
- I. Please remember that all rides are dependent on volunteer driver availability. A ride is not guaranteed.

3. Talk with your volunteer driver to confirm your ride

- A. When a volunteer driver accepts your ride request you will receive an automated phone call. This "robocall" is placed after 2pm. The "robocall" comes from number

760-237-4337 (San Diego). We suggest you save this phone number in your phone as “VTS Ride Request Accepted”. The “robocall” message is,

Hello. This is a reminder message from Volunteer Transportation for (appointment _ rider name). You have a ride scheduled for (appointment _ date and time) This ride has been assigned to (driver name). Thank you.

- B. The day before your requested ride, your volunteer driver will call or text you to introduce themselves, confirm your appointment is still scheduled, and confirm ride details: pick-up time, appointment time, addresses, length of appointment, etc.
- C. **It is very important you talk to the volunteer driver 24 to 48 hours prior to your requested ride.** This may mean picking up the phone when you see an unknown number and checking your voice mail. Return any voicemail left by a volunteer driver. If you have told us that texts are a preferred contact method, your volunteer will text you. You must respond to the text.
- D. When the volunteer does *not* talk with you, they notify Call Center staff. Staff then attempts to contact you. **If the volunteer and staff do not talk with you, we cannot confirm the ride therefore the ride request will be considered cancelled.**
- E. Be ready at your scheduled pick-up time. Drivers arrive promptly. If a problem arises or there is a delay, call the Call Center (206-448-5740). Likewise, we will contact you immediately with any news of a delay.
- F. Only a stop at your appointment is allowed. **No other stops are allowed.**

Step 4. Cancel a ride request

Call the Call Center immediately when you no longer need your requested ride. We will cancel the requested ride and notify the volunteer driver of the cancellation.

Donations

At any point during your ride, you have the option of donating to the Volunteer Transportation program. The suggested donation is \$10 per round trip but it is completely optional. All donations are tax deductible.

You will be provided with donation envelopes when you sign up for the program. When you run out of donation envelopes, please request more by contacting the Call Center. Your volunteer driver will also have donation envelopes.

If you prefer to donate via phone, call the Call Center (206-448-5740). You may also donate online at [@soundgen \(givesmart.com\)](https://www.givesmart.com/@soundgen)

Volunteer drivers cannot accept a "personal" donation or tip.

Unlawful/Inappropriate Conduct Policies

Sound Generations Unlawful/Inappropriate Conduct Policies are consistent with the State of Washington's Unlawful Transit Conduct as outlined in RCW 9.91.025 and King County's Regulation 28.96 Code of Transit Conduct. A rider shall not knowingly:

- A. Smoke in the vehicle or carry a lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar, cigarette or e-cigarette.
- B. Eat and/or drink in the vehicle.
- C. Ride under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, consume an alcoholic beverage on board, or be in possession of an open alcoholic beverage container.
- D. Play any audio/music player aloud. Wearing headphones when playing a radio, tape recorder, or audible game is permitted.
- E. Spit, expectorate, urinate and/or defecate in the vehicle.
- F. Bring into the vehicle odors which unreasonably disturb others or interfere with use of the service, whether such odors arise from one's person, clothes, personal articles, service animal, or any other source.
- G. Carry any flammable liquid, explosive, acid or other material likely to cause harm to others.
- H. Carry any dangerous weapons or firearms.
- I. Discard litter other than in designated receptacles or dump and/or discard any hazardous materials or substances.
- J. Obstruct or impede the volunteer driver, hinder or prevent access to the vehicle or use of the vehicle.
- K. Destroy, deface, or damage property inside the vehicle.
- L. Throw an object at the driver, a passenger, or out the window.
- M. Engage in loud, raucous, unruly, harmful, abusive and/or harassing behavior or language including profanity, racial, sexual, vulgar, or discriminatory comments.
- N. Engage in any other conduct that is inconsistent with the intended use and purpose of the Volunteer Transportation Program; refuse requests of the volunteer driver and/or Volunteer Transportation staff to cease such conduct.
- O. Engage in any discriminatory behavior towards volunteer drivers. Sound Generations' is committed to ensuring all of its programs and services are administered and provided free of discrimination to all employees, volunteers, and program participants.
- P. In accordance with Part 37.5 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Sound Generations' will not discriminate against any individual with a disability in providing Volunteer Transportation services because the individual's disability results in the appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy or inconvenience volunteer drivers, other passengers, or program staff, but does not pose a direct

threat. However, Sound Generations may deny service to an individual with disabilities if that individual engages in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct which poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others and which cannot be eliminated or mitigated by reasonable accommodation.

Policies

We take very seriously the care and safety of you and our volunteer drivers. The following section outlines specific expectations, policies, and behavior conduct to ensure an enjoyable experience for all.

Safety

You must remain seat belted at all times.

Snow & Ice

We do not provide transportation when there is snow or ice on the roads, sidewalks or parking lots. If it starts snowing during your ride, your volunteer is instructed to get you and themselves home safely then call staff to inform them all have arrived home. If it is impossible to proceed safely, volunteers will call staff for further instructions. If there is any doubt in the volunteer's mind a ride can be done safely, they are asked not to do the ride.

Title VI Policy Statement

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Sound Generations is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B. If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination under Title VI, you may file a complaint by completing a form that can be found on the Sound Generations Website. For the online form go to www.soundgenerations.org and click on About Us and then Equity Works and scroll to the bottom of the page.

Grievance Process

Please direct any complaint to the Transportation Supervisor by calling Erin Hudnell at 206-512-3351 or 206 369-4880. If you have a concern about your safety or comfort with a volunteer driver, we will take the appropriate steps to investigate the situation. Similarly, if a volunteer feels unsafe or uncomfortable with a rider, we will investigate and also ensure that the driver does not drive that rider again.

Sound Generations has a Customer Complaint Policy. Riders wishing to file a complaint and/or obtain a copy of the Customer Complaint Policy can contact our administrative offices at 2208 2nd Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121.

Leaving the Program

You may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to discontinue using Sound Generations' Volunteer Transportation Program. We ask that you call the Call Center (206-448-5740) when you wish to discontinue use of the program. Efforts will be made to determine if better accommodations can be made to facilitate continued program use, or if another program may be a better fit.

All riders leaving the program will be sent an Exit Interview Questionnaire to seek feedback about the program. We appreciate the opportunity to receive suggestions for bettering the rider experience. If you wish to resume use of the program in the future a new sign up may be needed.