

# Opportunity Partners

## OP-ISS-11: POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON SAFE TRANSPORTATION

New 1/1/14

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of persons served as well as staff during transportation and include the provisions for handling emergency situations.

### II. POLICY

When transportation is part of the services provided, staff will assist in transporting, handling, and transferring persons served in a safe manner and according to their *Community Service and Support Plan* and/or *Community Service and Support Plan Addendum*.

### III. PROCEDURE

- A. Upon employment, staff are informed of the requirement that they must hold, when required, a valid driver's license, appropriate insurance, and maintain a safe driving record. Staff whose job duties include driving will also be required to complete additional training on safe transportation procedures.
- B. The Transportation Department and/or Designated Manager will ensure the safety of vehicles, equipment, supplies, and materials owned or leased by the company and will maintain these in good condition. Standard practices for vehicle, equipment, supplies, and materials maintenance and inspection will be followed.
- C. Staff will transport persons served using the appropriate transportation vehicle for the designated purpose. Staff will follow any procedures specific to their specific service location and/or program.
- D. For contracted transportation, the Designated Coordinator, Designated Manager and/or Transportation Department will ensure that all required documentation is completed and submitted before the first trip is scheduled. Opportunity Partners staff do not provide supervision on contracted transportation rides.
- E. When dropping off persons served at a site which requires a change in supervision of that person, transporting staff will ensure that staff or another responsible party are present before leaving the person served when specified in the person's *Community Service and Support Plan* and/or *Community Service and Support Plan Addendum*.
- F. In accordance with state laws, anyone riding in a moving vehicle must wear seatbelts and/or child safety restraints.
- G. Staff are prohibited by state law (MN Statutes, section 169.475) to compose, send, or receive an electronic message while operating a motor vehicle. This includes a program vehicle or a staff person's own vehicle. An electronic message (as defined by state law) "means a self-contained piece of digital communication that is designed or intended to be transmitted between physical devices. An electronic message includes, but is not limited to, e-mail, a text message, an instant message, a command or request to access a World Wide Web page, or other data that uses a commonly recognized electronic communications protocol. An electronic message does not include voice or other data transmitted as a result of making a phone call, or data transmitted automatically by a wireless communications device without direct initiation by a person."
- H. Persons served using wheelchairs will be transported according to manufacturer's safety guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, safe operation and regular maintenance of lift equipment, checks of straps to secure the wheelchair to the floor of the vehicle, and use of adaptive seating equipment (i.e. headrests, lap trays) when appropriate. Staff who are transporting persons served and who complete "tie-downs" of wheelchairs will receive training on how to do so and will be required to demonstrate competency prior to transporting persons using wheelchairs.

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- I. Staff will receive training on each person's transferring or handling requirements for the person and/or equipment prior to transferring or transporting persons. All transfers and handling of persons served will be done in a manner that ensures their dignity and privacy. Any concerns regarding transportation, transfers, and handling will be promptly communicated to the Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager who will address these concerns. This will be done immediately if the health and safety of the person(s) served are at risk.
- J. When equipment used by a person served is needed, staff will place the equipment in a safe location in the vehicle such as the trunk of a car. If a program vehicle does not have a designated storage space such as a trunk, staff will place the equipment in an area of the vehicle and secure it, when possible, so that there is limited to no shifting during transport.
- K. If there is an emergency while driving, staff follow emergency response procedures to ensure the person(s) safety. This will include pulling the vehicle over and stopping in a safe area as quickly and as safely as possible. Staff will use a cell phone or any available community resource to contact "911" for help if needed. If a medical emergency were to occur, staff will call "911" and follow first aid and/or CPR protocols according to their training.
- L. While transporting more than one person served and person to person physical aggression occurs, staff will pull over and stop the vehicle in a safe area as quickly and as safely as possible, redirect the persons served, and if necessary, attempt to contact another staff person, the Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager, or "911" for assistance.
- M. Persons served are prohibited from driving program or staff vehicles at any time.