



NANTWICH AND RURAL

VOLUNTEER TRANSPORT SERVICE POLICY & PROCEDURES

1 Introduction

This policy and procedure recognises the valuable contribution made by voluntary drivers. It also identifies the procedures necessary to ensure The Nantwich & Rural Volunteer Transport Service (VTS) meets its legal and charitable duties and its duty of care to members, volunteers and the general public.

2 Voluntary Drivers

Each voluntary driver's licence shall be checked by the co-ordinator prior to the volunteer being accepted and then annually for any new endorsements or convictions along with the driver's insurance certificate where applicable. Copies will be kept in a confidential file.

Volunteers shall have a minimum of 5 years driving experience. There is no upper or lower age limit for volunteers providing they meet all other requirements including being healthy and able to drive comfortably with elderly passengers. When a driver has endorsements, these will be considered by the Co-ordinator.

All voluntary drivers will have undertaken Volunteers Induction and will have been subject to enhanced DBS checking. Any relevant health conditions which might affect the carrying out of voluntary driving duties need to be declared by potential and existing voluntary drivers and discussed on a confidential basis with the co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator reserves the absolute right, at its discretion, to reject any volunteer either before or after appointment if it is not satisfied that the above criteria are being appropriately observed. If concerns about a driver's ability to continue to undertake the voluntary driving role are raised with Nantwich & Rural VTS this will be confidentially discussed with the driver initially, including the obtaining of any necessary health advice by agreement.

See the full details of Driver Induction Procedure at Appendix A.

3 Volunteers' Vehicles

All vehicles used for the VTS must be roadworthy as outlined by UK law, have a valid MOT certificate where appropriate and be taxed for use on the roads.

Nantwich & Rural VTS reserves the right to inspect vehicles from time to time to ensure that they are suitable for the purpose of carrying vulnerable people including presentation and cleanliness.

Volunteer driver's vehicles must be a suitable size and model to ensure that the passenger can gain direct access to the back seat and can then sit in the back, a reasonable distance from the driver.

4 Transportation of Passengers

The volunteer shall ensure that the passengers wear a seatbelt at all times. Where a passenger refuses or where it is not possible for passengers to wear a seatbelt, the driver shall refuse to carry the passenger. There shall be no medical exemptions to this rule.

Children will not be carried as a passenger at any time.

Guide dogs and hearing dogs shall be carried by volunteer unless there are good reasons for not doing so.

Volunteers have the right to refuse to carry a passenger if they feel their conditions is such that it warrants more care and support than the volunteer is able to give or if the passenger's condition or behaviour is such that it could pose a risk to a passenger's safe transportation.

5 Client Eligibility

Users of the VTS will be within the CW5 postcode area (and limited appropriate surrounding areas) and referred via:

- Volunteers who are supporting clients and identify a need with their client
- Cheshire East Community Team
- Local GP Practices/Social Prescribers
- Other chosen organisations

The referring organisation will contact the co-ordinator.

This service is primarily limited to journeys to the following destinations:

- Hospital
- GP Practices
- COVID-19 Vaccination sites

The VTS will be used where there is no reasonable alternative means of transport for the client. Checklist:

- Have they got any friends/family/neighbour that could provide transport?
- Have they got the means to pay for a regular taxi?
- Do they realise that donations are welcome?

See the full details of the Referral Process and Transport Procedure at Appendix B.

6 Training

The co-ordinator shall maintain a log of training received by each volunteer, including induction training for voluntary driving, and take responsibility for the co-ordination of training opportunities. This will include disability awareness, appropriate moving and handling advice and customer care.

7 Rest Breaks

The VTS is a local service and long journeys are not anticipated but in the event that they are required and the VTS has agreed to undertake them, volunteers shall take 15-minute rest breaks every two hours both within and between journeys. Volunteers should not drive for long periods of time in addition to their normal working hours or during their normal sleep time.

8 Insurance

Volunteers must inform their insurance company of their voluntary driving. An acknowledgement from the insurance company must be seen and a copy obtained by the co-ordinator before any driving activity is undertaken.

Drivers must have Fully Comprehensive insurance, which shall include suitable and adequate legal liability cover. The co-ordinator will review all volunteer insurance arrangements on an annual basis.

Nantwich Buddies will ensure the necessary public liability and employer's liability insurance is in place whilst the volunteers are providing transport under the terms of this policy.

9 Parking Tickets, Penalty Notices and Fines

The payment of any parking tickets, penalty notices or fines incurred during a VTS journey will be the responsibility of the driver.

10 Identification Badge

Volunteers shall wear an ID badge (either from their volunteer group or from Nantwich & Rural VTS) at all times when acting as voluntary drivers.

11 Expenses and Reimbursement

Reimbursement by Nantwich & Rural VTS for actual expenses incurred is available in accordance with rates determined by Nantwich & Rural VTS from time to time. It is open to volunteers to claim expenses or not at their discretion. Claim forms are available from the co-ordinator and need to be submitted as soon as possible. Nantwich & Rural VTS will aim to make payment within the following month.

Mileage rates will be in line with the Fixed Profit Car Service which allows for payment of mileage allowances without the need for Nantwich & Rural VTS of the volunteer to keep detailed records for tax purposes. However, details of who requested transport and of the journey shall be maintained for administration and payment purposes.

12 Donations

Donations will be encouraged as a contribution to the administration costs of the VTS. Whoever refers the client to the VTS will usually ensure that the client is aware of this. When donations are received by the driver, they must be put into a sealed envelope with the date and client's name. They must then be registered with the co-ordinator and handed to the coordinator at the earliest opportunity. The coordinator will keep a log of all donations.

13 Alcohol

Drivers shall not drink alcohol or take any drugs which may impair driving ability for at least 12 hours before journey, nor do so for the duration of voluntary driving.

14 Luggage

Luggage or equipment shall be stored securely in the boot of the vehicle.

15 Accident, Illness or Injury

In the event of an accident, Nantwich & Rural VTS or the emergency services should be contacted immediately.

If a client becomes ill during a journey the driver should call for an ambulance.

All accidents and incidents should be recorded via the Co-ordinator on Nantwich & Rural VTS accident form.

16 Volunteer Obligations

All volunteers shall be informed of their rights and obligations as outlined in this policy, a copy of which shall be provided to them on the commencement and following each revision.

17 Status of Volunteers

Once appointed as volunteers, Nantwich & Rural VTS does not guarantee to provide any voluntary work, nor is the volunteer obliged to undertake any voluntary work offered.

It is the intention of Nantwich & Rural VTS and of the volunteer that the volunteer arrangement does not in any way constitute a contract, either of employment or any other legally binding contract except that Nantwich & Rural VTS will reimburse volunteer's expenses, if requested, in accordance with this policy.

Nantwich & Rural VTS reserves the right to terminate the appointment of any volunteer without liability on any grounds which at its sole discretion it considers appropriate.

APPENDX A

Driver Induction Procedure

1. Driver requirements:

- The volunteer must have at least 5 years driving experience
- The volunteer must have enhanced DBS
- The volunteer must obtain confirmation from their insurance company that their policy covers voluntary driving.

2. Pre-Induction Documents

The volunteer will be sent the relevant overarching policies if they have not previously read them (all can be found on the Nantwich Buddies website in the 'Volunteer Resources' section under 'Policies and Guidance'):

<https://www.nantwichbuddies.org/policies-procedures>

- Volunteer Policy
- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

Together with the following documents specific to the VTS:

- VTS Health & Safety Guidance
- Volunteer Driver Registration Form (volunteer to complete & sign)
- VTS Drivers' Agreement (volunteer to complete & sign)

3. Volunteer Induction

Once the enhanced DBS and insurance company confirmation has been received, the co-ordinator will carry out the induction with each volunteer and:

- Check driving licence and make a note of the number
- Check MOT and make a note of expiry date
- Check insurance company confirmation that policy covers voluntary driving (coordinator will need to keep a copy of confirmation)
- Check that the volunteer has read the documents
- Talk through VTS Health & Safety Guidance
- Talk through the Volunteer Driver Registration Form
- Talk through Drivers' Agreement
- Explain the process

After induction, the volunteer will be sent:

- Minor Incident/Accident Report Form
- Guide to Donations (to keep in vehicle)
- Compliments/Complaints Procedure (to keep in vehicle)

APPENDIX B

Referral Process & Transport Procedure

- A. When a request for the VTS is received, the co-ordinator will request the following information (or ask for the Service Request Form to be sent through if one has been completed).
- Name of Client
 - Address and destination of client
 - One way or return journey
 - Best/safe place to park at client's address
 - Should driver stay in the car or knock on the door
 - Time/date transport is required
 - Contact number
 - Any particular needs (e.g. difficulty getting into high car)
 - Known risks (dangerous road, hostile neighbours etc.)
 - Preference of male/female driver
 - Where has the referral come from

The co-ordinator will advise the client/referrer that they will ring back to confirm whether the service can be provided or not.

- B. The co-ordinator will put the request on the Transport WhatsApp chat and ask for responses.
- C. The co-ordinator will call the client/referrer to confirm whether the service can be provided or not. If it can, then the client will be given the volunteer driver's name and told that the volunteer driver will call them to confirm arrangements.
- D. The volunteer driver will call the client to make the necessary arrangements.
- E. If the VTS is unable to provide the service, they will be signposted to other providers.
- F. The co-ordinator will keep a record of all jobs completed.
- G. The co-ordinator will log all donations.