

# Volunteer Driver Programs

## *Truth or Fiction and 20 Facts*

### **VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAMS: TRUTH OR FICTION**

What follows are suggested features of a volunteer driver program. Check each feature that you believe is true.

1. Volunteer driver programs only serve older adult passengers.
2. Volunteer driver programs only use the vehicles of volunteer drivers.
3. Volunteer driver programs are prevented from paying drivers.
4. Volunteer driver programs always go to life-enriching destinations.
5. All volunteer driver programs provide assistance.
6. Volunteer driver programs generally provide services within a single jurisdiction.
7. Volunteer driver programs only operate in urban areas.
8. Volunteer driver programs generally are so small they do not need software.
9. All volunteer driver programs must schedule passenger rides.
10. Volunteer driver programs only provide round-trip services.
11. Volunteer driver programs need to be free-standing organizations.
12. Volunteer driver programs are, by definition, low-cost services.
13. Volunteer driver programs are unsafe for drivers and passengers.
14. Volunteer drivers' insurance premiums increase if they use their own vehicle.
15. Volunteer driver programs must charge for rides to support their services.
16. Volunteer driver programs have only been in existence for the past 10 years.
17. Volunteer driver programs receive most of their financial support from fares.
18. Volunteer driver programs usually are sponsored by government agencies.
19. Volunteer driver programs almost never serve rural areas.
20. Volunteer driver programs cannot secure insurance coverage.

*For the answers to the above questions, see the 20 facts below.*

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Please visit the numerous fact sheets and exercises in addition to the planning, implementation, and evaluation sections of the TurnKey Kit.

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## 20 FACTS

1. Although volunteer driver programs often serve older adult passengers, the passengers served are determined by the population targeted, the sponsoring organization, or the funding sources.
2. In addition to “volunteer vehicles,” volunteer driver programs often own and/or lease vehicles. However, vehicle ownership can increase the costs of providing service.
3. Many volunteer driver programs include volunteer and paid drivers, although paying drivers can increase the costs of providing transportation services.
4. Volunteer driver programs often limit their transportation destinations because destinations are often dictated by factors other than passenger transportation needs.
5. Volunteer driver programs generally provide assistance; however, they may not provide assistance at levels sufficient to meet the needs of some older adult passengers.
6. Many volunteer driver programs provide services beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of the city, county, or even the state.
7. While there are many volunteer driver programs located in urban areas, a much larger number are located in suburban and rural areas.
8. Regardless of their size, inexpensive software can assist volunteer driver programs in scheduling rides and in managing data related to the delivery of transportation services.
9. Although most volunteer driver programs schedule trips, some types of specialized software allow drivers and riders to schedule their own trips.
10. Each stop is counted as a one-way trip and many volunteer driver programs provide what is called “trip chaining,” which allows for multiple stops during a single outing.

11. Some volunteer driver programs are independent and free-standing organizations; however, the majority appear to be located within a menu of volunteer, older adult, or human services.
12. Volunteer driver programs may provide transportation services for exceptionally low costs; but paid drivers, owned vehicles, paid staff, and overhead can dramatically increase costs.
13. Volunteer driver programs generally appear to be low-risk transportation services. They report very few crashes involving bodily injury or property damage.
14. Auto insurance premiums are based on miles driven, not who is riding in the car, so premiums should not increase because the car's owner volunteers to drive.
15. Although the majority of volunteer driver programs employ grants, donations, contributions, and fundraising activities to support their services, a small number charge a fare.
16. Volunteer driver programs that only field volunteer drivers generally average 17 years as transportation service providers.
17. Primary sources of funding for volunteer driver programs include individual contributions, foundation contributions, government grants, and fundraisers.
18. Volunteer driver programs generally are sponsored by nonprofit organizations.
19. Volunteer driver programs provide services in urban, rural, and suburban areas, although a greater percentage provide services in suburban and rural areas.
20. A volunteer driver's insurance is the first line of coverage for property damage or bodily injury. Volunteer driver program insurance generally covers the program, drivers, and passengers.

*\*The above information includes data from 582 volunteer driver programs identified by the Beverly Foundation Star Awards applicants 2008 - 2012.*