

Town of Hebron Dial-a-Ride Guidelines

A Service Through the
Russell Mercier Senior Center
14 Stonecroft Drive
Hebron, CT 06248
Phone: (860) 228-1700

This policy applies to the Town of Hebron's Dial-a-Ride program. The Dial-a-Ride program's objective is to serve as many people as possible in a fair, efficient, and effective manner and to help promote independent living and reduce isolation for seniors and disabled adults.

Any and all incidents/injuries should be reported to the Dial-a-Ride driver immediately upon their occurrence with necessary intervention provided. All incidents/injuries require the driver or Senior Center staff to file an applicable written report.

If you have any problems/concerns/suggestions, please notify the Senior Center as soon as possible. All feedback on your Dial-a-Ride experience, positive or negative, is appreciated and important for program improvement/modification.

Eligibility:

- Hebron residents 60 years of age and over and disabled adults age 18 and over.
- Hebron's Dial-a-Ride typically provides exterior door to **exterior door pick-up/drop-off service** (including assistance opening and closing doors) unless logistical reasons preclude the driver from being able to leave the vehicle. Individuals requiring additional support such as getting into and/or out of their homes/buildings or with personal tasks, and those who are medically fragile or cognitively impaired, etc., must secure suitable caregiver assistance. Individuals who have received sedation/general anesthesia may only be transported with a suitable caregiver.
- Only service animals accompanying applicable passengers will be allowed in vehicles. No other animals are allowed.
- Drivers may escort passengers from exterior door to exterior door, but may not enter a passenger's home or assist passengers beyond the exterior door of a building. Drivers may assist passengers with packages of a reasonable size and weight (typically no more than 30 pounds) from exterior door to exterior door. It is important that you provide information regarding your need for escorting and/or assistance with packages at the time that your reservation is made in order for appropriate time to be scheduled/accommodations made.
- **Drivers may not lift passengers** and drivers are unable to provide any personal care.
- Dial-a-Ride is **not an emergency or medically-supported/equipped transport service**. Please call 9-1-1 if there is an emergency or an appropriate ambulance service for medically-supported transportation.
- Dial-a-Ride **is not available to perform errands on behalf of individuals**. It is exclusively available to provide transportation service for eligible passengers.
- Hebron residents, not eligible for this service based on disability, who are under the age of 60, may utilize Dial-a-Ride exclusively for participation in Senior Center organized outings with boarding and disembarking from the Senior Center only.
- All Dial-a-Ride participants must provide statistical data (Consumer Registration Form 5 plus addendum), and are responsible for notification of changes, as dictated by State and Federal funding sources. Only required statistical information will be shared. All personal identifying information will be kept confidential.

Eligibility Exception for Non-residents:

- Non-residents who are 60 years of age and over and non-resident disabled adults age 18 and over may utilize Dial-a-Ride vehicles for Senior Center organized outings only with boarding and disembarking from the Senior Center.
- All non-resident Dial-a-Ride passengers must provide statistical data (Consumer Registration Form 5 plus addendum), and bear responsibility for notification of changes, as dictated by State and Federal funding sources. Only required statistical information will be shared. All personal identifying information will be kept confidential.

Cost:

- Hebron's Dial-a-Ride service receives financial support from the Town of Hebron through the Elderly/Handicapped Van budget, the Connecticut Department of Transportation through the State Matching Grant for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation, and the North Central Area Agency on Aging through the Federal Older Americans Act.
- Fares are as follows:

Residents:

1. \$0.50 each way within Hebron
2. \$1.00 each way within contiguous towns (Andover, Bolton, Colchester, Columbia, Glastonbury, Lebanon, and Marlborough)
3. \$2.50 each way within the above denoted service area (Bozrah, Coventry, Cromwell, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, Franklin, Manchester, Mansfield, Portland, Rocky Hill, Salem, Vernon, Wethersfield, and Windham)
4. \$4.00 each way within Farmington, Haddam, Hartford, Middletown, New Britain, Newington, South Windsor, Tolland, and West Hartford
5. \$5.00 each way within Bloomfield, Norwich, and Windsor
6. \$7.00 transportation fee for in-state destinations outside of the above denoted service area for group outings organized by the Senior Center which will be added to the total trip fee
7. \$10.00 transportation fee for out-of-state destinations for group outings organized by the Senior Center which will be added to the total trip fee

Non-Residents - transportation is available for group activities / outings only, space permitting, at the same rates denoted above for residents which will be added to the total trip fee

Fees for transportation must be paid in advance through the Senior Center offices. When purchasing transportation, individuals will receive a non-expiring transportation punch ticket which holds the value of the amount purchased. If paying by check please make checks payable to the Town of Hebron.

Additionally, confidential contributions/donations are welcome and will be used exclusively to expand Dial-a-Ride services. You are under no obligation to provide a contribution – **contributions are purely voluntary**. Service provided to you will not be adversely affected in any way due to a contribution not being made.

- Dial-a-Rider drivers are unable to accept gifts and/or gratuities.

Service Availability:

- Dial-a-Ride service generally operates Monday through Friday 8:30AM to 4PM. For occasional medical appointments and Senior Center organized outings, accommodations may be able to be made outside of this operational framework. Additionally, based on significant need/demand (minimum 5 to 10 eligible residents), and/or the absence of other available resources, local Dial-a-Ride service may be provided outside of the typical schedule.

- Dial-a-Ride service is not available during Town holidays or as dictated by inclement weather/road conditions (i.e. inclement weather/road conditions may warrant cancellation of operation, a late start, or early suspension of service).
 - If schools are closed due to poor weather/road conditions, Dial-a-Ride will typically not operate
 - If schools are delayed 1 hour due to poor weather/road conditions, Dial-a-Ride will typically not be delayed
 - If schools are delayed 90 minutes due to poor weather/road conditions, Dial-a-Ride will typically not begin operation until 8:30AM
 - If schools are delayed 2 hours due to poor weather/road conditions, Dial-a-Ride will typically not begin operation until 9AM
- Requested trip origin **or** destination must be in Hebron (e.g., trips cannot originate from an outside-of-Hebron skilled nursing facility/convalescent home to an outside-of-Hebron destination).
- Routine transportation related to employment is not provided.
- For Senior Center organized outings, if needed, Dial-a-Ride eligible Hebron residents may request transportation from home.
- Dial-a-Ride is provided through the operation of two multi-passenger, handicapped accessible (including lifts) buses, and one standard 4 door sedan.
- Doorways to the multi-passenger handicapped accessible buses are 30 inches in width, requiring the navigation of 3 steps. The lifts can accommodate a total gross weight of 600 lbs. and wheelchairs/scooters with maximum widths of 34 inches. It is the responsibility of the passenger utilizing an assistive device to ensure its safety, stability, and proper operation/use. Wheelchair bound passengers may be transported in a properly secured position, however, individuals utilizing a scooter, must drive the scooter onto and off of the lift, transferring into and out of a passenger seat to insure adequate safety.

Scheduling/Prioritization:

- Except for Senior Center organized outings, Dial-a-Ride service is limited to within Hebron plus the following destinations - Andover, Bloomfield, Bolton, Bozrah, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Cromwell, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, Farmington, Franklin, Glastonbury, Haddam, Hartford, Lebanon, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, Middletown, New Britain, Newington, Norwich, Portland, Rocky Hill, Salem, South Windsor, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windham, and Windsor
- Dial-a-Ride operates in accordance with the following prioritization given to advance scheduling:
 - Non-emergency medical/pharmaceutical appointments/transportation Senior Center's congregate nutritional lunch program
 - Appointments related to financial/homecare/legal assistance programs
 - Group clinics/health screenings (e.g., those scheduled at the Senior Center)
 - Senior Center social events/outings, informational/educational sessions, etc.
 - Trips limited to within Hebron or contiguous towns (Andover, Bolton, Colchester, Columbia, Glastonbury, Lebanon, Marlborough) for other personal needs
- Dial-a-Ride service is typically routinely available Fridays for Hebron residents for grocery shopping (monthly schedule as posted in the Senior Center newsletter to Ted's Food Center, North Windham Wal-Mart Supercenter, and Marlborough Big Y), pharmacy, banking, and post office.
- Dial-a-Ride service is typically routinely available to Hebron Interfaith Human Services' Food Bank and to Hebron's Mobile Foodshare site exclusively for Hebron residents twice monthly each on an every-other week basis as posted in the Senior Center newsletter.

Reservation Process:

- **Reservations can be made by calling the Senior Center Monday through Thursday between 8AM and 4:30PM, and/or Friday between 8AM and 1PM.** Dial-a-Ride drivers cannot make reservations/schedule changes. The Senior Center must be contacted regarding all requested reservations/changes.
- Every effort will be made to accommodate requests as scheduling permits. Providing as much advance notice as possible will typically increase the probability of your reservation request being granted. Additionally, the Senior Center will make every effort to augment your reservation only when extenuating circumstances exist.
- When making reservations, please be prepared to provide appointment time, approximate length of appointment, **complete address of destination**, etc. This information is particularly important since on occasion, it will be necessary for one vehicle/driver to provide transportation to your destination while another vehicle/driver will provide your return trip.
- Should you need to change or cancel a reservation, you must provide advance notice of greater than 2 hours prior to the start of your pickup “window” (see below) by calling the Senior Center Monday through Thursday between 8AM and 4:30PM, and/or Friday between 8AM and 1PM.
- Your flexibility may be required since, in order to efficiently/effectively accommodate the high number of transportation requests received to divergent destinations, grouping rides by the geographic area and times, unless contraindicated based on medical condition, may be necessary.
- Please be mindful of the fact that additional requested stops beyond your scheduled reservation can result in drivers being delayed for other pick-ups/drop-offs, increased operational costs, etc. Additional stops/destination changes will only be granted, schedule permitting, for extenuating circumstances (e.g., need to pick-up a prescription following a medical appointment transport).
- If applicable, also provide information regarding special needs (e.g., require vehicle with lift, additional time needed for boarding and/or disembarking vehicle due to mobility impairment, etc.). A pick-up time/vehicle assignment will be provided to you that we will adhere to as closely as possible barring extenuating circumstances. There is a ½ hour “window” on your pickup time – for example, the “window for a 9:00AM pickup is between 8:45AM and 9:15AM. The driver may arrive anytime within your “window”
- Your cooperation is requested by being ready and waiting for boarding the vehicle during your above referenced pickup window. In accordance with Connecticut Anti-Idling Regulations (R.C.S.A. 22a-174-18) Dial-a-Ride will wait no more than 3 minutes following which the driver will then notify the Senior Center of your “no show” forfeited reservation. Multiple instances of “no show” forfeited reservations and/or late cancellations of less than 2 hours before the start of your pickup’s “window” (four times within a 12 month period) may result in suspension of services.
- Accommodations will be made based on situational necessity only and cannot be made based on vehicle and/or driver preference.
- Scheduling often precludes drivers from waiting for the conclusion of passenger appointments. All passengers will be provided with business cards listing the Senior Center’s telephone number and the Dial-a-Ride vehicles’ cellular phone numbers to be utilized exclusively for notification of your need for a return trip or as may otherwise be necessary. Dial-a-Ride cellular phones are for the exclusive use of Senior Center staff and may be used by passenger in extreme instances only.

While Riding:

- Seatbelts must be worn by drivers and passengers at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- Smoking is prohibited in all Dial-a-Ride vehicles.
- All mobility devices, packages, etc. must be secured so as not to obstruct pathways or otherwise impede safety.
- In accordance with Connecticut Anti-Idling Regulations (R.C.S.A. 22a-174-18), vehicles may not idle for more than 3 minutes.
- Dial-a-Ride drivers are bound by strict standards of confidentiality both on and off duty. Private information about passengers cannot be communicated to other passengers or other persons outside of necessary Senior Center personnel.
- Dial-a-Ride service may be refused and/or services suspended in the following situations:
 - passenger appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
 - passenger conduct/behavior is inappropriate, abusive, noncompliant, or disruptive
 - passenger is physically, mobility, hygienically, or cognitively compromised to the point that it raises serious concerns for the passenger, other passengers and/or the driver
 - passenger's needs cannot be accommodated due to limitations dictated by vehicle specifications and/or necessary assistive devices
 - passenger's driveway/walkway/steps, ramp, etc. is deemed unsafe/significantly obstructed due to snow, ice, branches or other hazards

For those needing to travel outside of our service area and/or outside of our operational hours, some other options are:

- ⇒ American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery (800) 227-2345 or (203)379-4600 —volunteer drivers take ambulatory, income restricted cancer patients needing free transportation to treatment destinations throughout CT; 72 business hours advance reservations are required; vehicles may accommodate light-weight wheelchairs, however, individuals must be able to get in and out of the vehicle on their own
- ⇒ Disabled American Veterans Transportation Network (860) 667-6759 Newington or (203) 932-5711 West Haven— volunteer drivers provide free transportation for ill and disabled veterans to medical appointments at the Newington or West Haven VA medical center; must call at least 5 days in advance of appointment; vehicles are not wheelchair accessible
- ⇒ CT Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (860) 913-2550 or (800) 344-4867 —offers free wheelchair accessible transportation for up to 2 round-trip rides per fiscal year (October through September) to medical appointments only for income eligible chapter members with MS; must give at least 2 weeks advance notice
- ⇒ CT Chapter of the ALS Association (877) 257-2281 or (203) 874-5050 —Van rides to medical appointments for ALS patients utilizing a wheelchair; limited to 4 round trips per year; 24 hours advance reservation is required; fees are on a case-by-case basis
- ⇒ Services with set fees:
 - * Allied Rehabilitation Centers (860) 741-3701—provides transportation services for people ages 60+ or any age if disabled, for medical appointments, shopping and other needs; 24 hour notice is required
 - * Ambassador Wheelchair Service (860) 257-0885 – provides non-emergency medical transportation services to individuals who require assistance when traveling to routine medical appointments, procedures, and screenings. Also provide long distance and one-way transports and airport, train and bus station transport
 - * Curtin Transportation (800) 526-3794—provides statewide transportation for any reason; must call at least 24 hours in advance; must specifically request wheelchair accessible vehicle if needed