



TOWN OF MARBLEHEAD

COUNCIL ON AGING

Suzanne Gruhl
Chair, COA Board
Lisa J. Hooper
Executive Director

10 Humphrey Street
Marblehead, MA
Tel: (781) 631-6737
Fax: (781) 639-3431

Standards of Independence for Senior Center Participation - Transportation **Effective July 2021**

Our programs are primarily designed for and targeted to people age 60 and older.*Others may participate when staff has been consulted. These standards have been developed with the understanding that our staffing cannot responsibly oversee those who are not at a level of independence where their safety can be assured. Participants are urged to arrange for personal companions if they need special assistance in their daily routines, including personal and medical care. Please note the following standards of independence and behavior with respect to senior center attendance, transportation and COA sponsored trips. They are designed for the benefit of everyone, inasmuch as possible, who would like to take advantage of Senior Center programs and COA transportation:

Participants of the senior center must:

1. Complete a participant card providing the staff with the name and telephone number of a person to contact in case of an emergency. If a participant experiences a medical problem while on the premises, it is expected (but not mandatory) that the participant will follow the recommendation of the senior center staff to seek appropriate medical attention.
2. Take responsibility for their own personal care, including hygiene, toileting, continence and feeding.
3. Be reasonably oriented, capable of independent decision making and capable of planning their own activities (e.g., transportation, lunch, financial transactions) or be accompanied by a companion/escort responsible for orientation.
4. Avoid causing disturbances or disruptions, and show respect for building facilities, staff, other participants and personal property of others.
5. Be responsible for their own personal health and medical care, including the taking of medications, monitoring special diets, etc. Senior center staff are not trained or authorized to, and shall not, provide assistance with medication and other personal health or medical care.

6. Be able to access activity areas and transportation vehicles independently or be accompanied by a companion/escort who will manage access. Transportation clients who have difficulty boarding vehicles will be evaluated by COA staff and may be required to use lift for boarding for safety reasons. COA vehicles are equipped and senior center building is equipped with accessible entry.
7. Passengers must be ready for pickup 30 minutes prior to in-town appointments and 60 minutes prior to out-of-town medical appointments.
8. Drivers will wait no more than five minutes for passengers at any location, after which the ride may be cancelled. The COA staff may make one attempt, as time allows, to call a passenger who is not responding to the presence of a van.
9. Passengers shall be considerate to other passengers, respectfully communicate with drivers, and be courteous and patient to ensure efficient and effective COA transportation service.

Disruptive or inappropriate behavior that infringes on others use of COA Transportation will not be allowed. Some examples of disruptive or inappropriate behavior may include:

1. *Smoking or using illegal substances on the COA Van. Participants who are under the influence of illegal drugs and/or alcohol will be asked to leave immediately.*
2. *Stealing, damaging, altering or other inappropriate use of the Senior Center facilities or equipment*
3. *Violence or threats of violence. Such acts will result in (1) the participant being asked to leave; (2) the temporary suspension of COA Transportation privileges; or (3) the permanent suspension of COA Transportation privileges (see below).*
4. *Distributing leaflets or soliciting patrons within the COA Van is not permitted.*
5. *Using personal electronic and communication equipment in a manner that disturbs other Riders is also not permissible. (Devices that play music may be used with headphones so long as the volume does not disturb others. Cell phones may be used as long as their use does not disturb others).*

If inappropriate behavior is witnessed or reported, the staff will use discretion to take corrective action, e.g., asking the participant to abstain from the inappropriate behavior, or if necessary, contact the police, doctor, ambulance or emergency contact person. Repeated violations may result in the participant being asked to leave; or the temporary or permanent suspension of senior center privileges.

COA Van passengers, who fail to comply with Marblehead COA Standards of Independence and transportation policies or procedures, or who fail to respond affirmatively to safety requests made by a driver, subsequently may be refused service.

If a patron experiences a mental health episode but is later capable of conforming his/her conduct to these standards, then reasonable accommodation requests will be considered. Otherwise, permanent suspension may result.

If a participant cannot meet the required standard, an Outreach Worker is available to discuss options and reasonable accommodations.

The staff is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere for as many community senior citizens as possible

**Older Americans Act (OAA) nutrition services may be provided to a spouse who is less than 60 years of age, based on OAA regulations.*

I have read (or have had read to me) the Marblehead COA Standards of Independence for Transportation and agree to comply with all terms. I understand that failure to abide by the policies may result in refusal of transportation or Senior Center service.

Name: (print) _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____