



Travelers Aid Society of San Diego

Volunteer Driver Handbook

Travelers Aid Society of San Diego volunteers may transport clients as a part of their service as Volunteer Drivers with the *SenioRide* program. The following handbook outlines Travelers Aid's transportation expectations and guidelines; they have been designed to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for both volunteers and clients.

Volunteer Drivers must be the age **21** or older, and in possession of a driver's license for a minimum of 5 years. Volunteer Drivers use their own vehicles to provide transportation services between the client's home and requested destination(s).

All volunteers who wish to provide transportation MUST complete and submit the following prior to the first vehicle stipend being issued:

Provided below is a checklist containing all the necessary documentation that must be signed and returned. Please use this list as a reference while marking the documents that need to be sent back to the Travelers Aid Society of San Diego.

- **TASD Disclosure Consumer Report – English and Spanish (annually) (included in the handbook)**
- **TASD Disclosure Regarding Background Checks Per California Law (annually) (fill out both sides, front and back, on form) (included in the handbook)**
- **TASD California Acknowledgement and Authorization for Background check (annually) (fill out both sides, front and back, on form) (included in the handbook)**
- **Driver Code of Conduct (included in the handbook)**
- **Copy of valid California Driver's license (must submit new information upon expiration)**
- **Copy of Auto Insurance (must submit new information upon expiration)**
- **Copy of current Proof of Vehicle Registration (must submit new information upon expiration)**
- **Completed W9 form with signature (included in the handbook)**
- **Copy of DMV Driving Record – This can be obtained from the DMV online for \$2.00, online with the \$5.00 mail-in record request, by phone at: 916-657-8098, or from a DMV Kiosk (check online to find a location near you at: dmv.ca.gov/portal/locations/kiosks/)**
- **Vehicle Assessment (annually) (included in the handbook)**

You may fax, email, or mail these documents to:

- Fax: (619) 295-3217
- E-Mail: allie@travelersaidsandiego.org
- Mailing Address:
Travelers Aid Society of San Diego
3160 Camino Del Rio S Suite 309
San Diego, CA 92108

Volunteer Driver Statement of Understanding

- The goal of the Travelers Aid Volunteer Driver Program is to provide safe and reliable transportation so that San Diego County Older Adults can remain healthy and independent.
- Volunteer Drivers of Travelers Aid drive their own vehicles and will receive vehicle stipends for providing round-trip rides. **The stipend is currently \$15.00 per round-trip.**
- The following minimum insurance coverage is required by the State of California: \$15,000 bodily injury, each person; \$30,000 bodily injury, each accident; \$5,000 property damage. Please understand that you must meet these standards for motor vehicle insurance, policy, or bond. Your personal insurance is the primary liability protection and must be issued by a company authorized to do business in the state of California. For your protection we recommend \$1,000 medical coverage for passengers (which is common for fully covered cars).

Volunteer Driver Stipulations

- I will provide proof of coverage of my vehicle insurance. In the event that my coverage changes or is cancelled, I will immediately notify Travelers Aid of such changes or cancellations.
- I have had a valid driver's license for the past five years. I will provide a copy of my valid driver's license. I will notify immediately and provide Travelers Aid with a copy of the following:
 1. A report if I am involved in a vehicle accident
 2. Any traffic citation that I have received while this agreement is valid
- I am physically capable of driving my vehicle safely and will not drive while using any drug that may affect my driving ability; this includes both prescription and "over the counter" medication
- My vehicle is mechanically sound and is equipped with seatbelts that both my passengers and I will use. I will maintain all records required by Travelers Aid Society of

San Diego. **I will not accept personal donations or require any payment from riders** but may remind riders that they are able to make donations to Travelers Aid if they wish.

- **I have not been convicted of any alcohol or drug related offences**, which include but are not limited to: driving while impaired, driving while under the influence, possession of a narcotic, public intoxication, etc. **within the last 10 years**. If this is to occur during my time as a Volunteer Driver, I understand I must report this incident and will no longer be able to drive as a Volunteer Driver for Travelers Aid Society of San Diego.
- **I am not a registered sex offender or registered arsonist**. I understand that if this does occur during my time as a Volunteer Driver, I will no longer be able to drive as a Volunteer Driver for Travelers Aid Society of San Diego.

Additional Administrative Information

Volunteer Driver services are designed to meet the needs of non-driving, older (60+) adults living in San Diego County. Many local older adults either cannot drive themselves, have trouble accessing and utilizing public transportation, and/or cannot afford private services. This portion of the *SenioRide* program was designed for clients who need door-to-door assistance and/or access to essential services to remain healthy and active within the community. Updates or changes of this document will occur as needed and all drivers will be notified by mail if any changes or rules have been implemented. We are always grateful for your services and thank you for participating in the Volunteer Driver Program. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at: **(619) 295-8393 x308**.

Vouchers:

- Each voucher submitted to Travelers Aid Society of San Diego (TASD) is eligible for a \$15.00 stipend. Each **client** is only allowed a maximum of **5 rides per month**. A client may receive rides from more than one driver, but is still limited to a total of 5 rides that are eligible for driver stipends. It is the client's responsibility to monitor the number of rides taken. Any vouchers over the limit of 5 after the date of the 5th ride will be disallowed. The best way to monitor this is to have each client only use one voucher sheet per month for all the rides received. This is suggested over cutting out each voucher or using one sheet for multiple clients. When you drive more than one client, please submit one sheet of vouchers per client.
- Except in the case of Emergency Shopping Vouchers (see below), a driver may not submit for a ride for a client who was not present for the trip or is not enrolled in the SR program. If you are unsure whether a client is enrolled in the program, please contact TASD to find out.
- Emergency shopping vouchers (ESV) are available if both the driver and rider agree on a delivery service for: food, pharmacy, or hygiene needs. The client is not required to be in

the vehicle for this service. ESV vouchers are counted towards the 5 vouchers total a rider is allowed each month.

- Vouchers must be submitted within 60 days of the rides. Vouchers submitted after the 60-day period are not eligible for stipends.
- To ensure there is time for processing the vouchers for monthly check requests, please submit all vouchers so they are received by TASD by the 15th of the month. There is no guarantee that vouchers received after the 15th will be processed that month.
- Vouchers must be **written and signed in pen**. If it is determined that voucher dates have been altered or signatures forged, they will not be eligible for stipends, and you will no longer be allowed to drive for the program.
- Vouchers must have a signature; if vouchers are not signed, they will be rejected and not eligible for stipends.

Vouchers may be submitted by fax, e-mail, or mail:

- Fax: (619) 295-3217
- E-Mail: allie@travelersaidsandiego.org
- Mailing Address:
Travelers Aid Society
3160 Camino Del Rio South Suite 309
San Diego CA 92108

Checks:

- Checks are issued once per month. This is typically at the end of the month, but may be postponed depending on funding cycles. As stated previously, there is no guarantee that vouchers received after the 15th of the month will be processed for a check request that month.
- Clients *may not be denied services* due to a driver waiting for payment.

Driver Documentation:

- To continue to be eligible for vehicle stipends for driving a client, *you must maintain* up-to-date license, insurance, and registration information on file with TASD. Reminders are sent the month prior, the month of, and the month following the expiration dates of these documents. No checks will be issued after an expiration date has been reached until proof of current documentation is received. If no documentation is received within 30 days of expiration, no vouchers will be considered valid for rides provided during this period, and no stipends will be paid. Stipend payments may resume once updated documents are received by TASD and then you may begin to submit vouchers moving forward.

- All drivers must live in San Diego County; exceptions will be made for those living near county lines. Proof of address may be in the form of the address provided on the license, insurance, or registration.

Vehicle Entry and Exit:

- *SenioRide* volunteer drivers will never be asked to transport a client who requires significant physical assistance transferring to and from a vehicle.
- Please allow plenty of time for a passenger to enter and exit your vehicle and provide gentle assistance upon the client's request. If you are unsure about the client's needs (i.e., needing assistance getting in and out of the vehicle), just ask. Be clear, considerate, and respect their wishes.

Transporting Personal Assistance Devices:

- Some clients require the use of personal assistance devices, such as braces, canes, or walkers. Volunteers will be notified in advance if the client will be using any such device, or if the client will need to transport such device.

Boundaries and Responsibilities:

- The days available, number of stops, and time spent with the client are up to you. Please make this clear in your communication with the client. This is a volunteer position and if you do not feel comfortable with what is being asked of you, you are not required to drive clients.
- If there are any issues with a client that you feel may need to be addressed, please let the staff at Travelers Aid know.
- Clients are never to be expected to pay or tip and should never be asked for additional funds for a ride. You may **NOT** charge a client for taking them a further distance or for waiting long periods of time. If it is determined that this has occurred, you will no longer be eligible to drive for Travelers Aid Society of San Diego.

Punctuality and Cancellations:

- Please arrive promptly for all driving appointments arranged with clients. Notify the client as soon as possible if you are running late or need to change the appointment time for any reason.
- There may be a time when you need to cancel your ride commitment. If so, please contact the *SenioRide* Program and the client immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- You may deny passenger transportation at the time of the appointed ride if it seems that transporting them could be a danger to you or the client.

Ensuring Safe Drop-Off:

- Please ensure that the passenger safely enters the drop-off location before driving away.
- When dropping off a client at a location other than their home, please ensure that the client has arranged for return transportation.

Client Awareness:

- In some cases, you may be the only individual who sees a client on a regular basis. We ask that you please aware of any changes in the client’s behavior or condition and communicate any concerns to the *SenioRide* Program.

Background Checks

Effective July 1, 2023, Travelers Aid will be required to conduct annual background checks for all staff and volunteer drivers to be compliant with SANDAG’s Program Management Plan.

All drivers must clear a criminal history check and driver records check before transporting members of the target population in performance of a SANDAG Specialized Transportation Grant Program funded project. Drivers must not have been convicted of a felony offense involving theft, fraud, burglary, robbery, crimes against the target population, and must not have any convictions for other felony offences within the previous ten (10) years. Moreover, drivers must have no convictions of a serious traffic violation, including but not limited to any of the following violations within the past five years:

- Reckless driving or endangerment
- Leaving the scene of an accident (hit and run)
- A suspended license or revoked license for moving violations
- Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Negligent driving

Safety:

- If a client and/or passenger require assistance with carrying items to and from the vehicle, the volunteer may assist the client and place said items inside the home
- Under no circumstances are Volunteer Drivers required to lift, carry, or provide special assistance that could harm himself/herself/themselves
- You are **NOT** expected or advised to lift clients or wheelchairs in and out of your vehicle

Rider Safety:

- It is required that all passengers wear seatbelts during the operation of the vehicle. If your passenger refuses to wear a seatbelt, DO NOT transport the client unless they show a signed statement from their doctor stating a medical reason for not wearing a seatbelt.
- If you feel that a passenger needs more assistance than you can provide, please contact Travelers Aid Society of San Diego.

If a Volunteer Driver is involved in an accident while providing volunteer services, we ask that the volunteer first assess the situation for injury and take any necessary steps to address passenger safety. Once it has been determined that all passengers are safe, the volunteer must complete a Travelers Aid Accident Report form and contact the program staff immediately.

In the instance of an injury, please abide by the following procedures:

- Use hazard warning lights and switch off your engine
- Do not move injured passengers unless they are in immediate danger of further injury
- Call emergency services immediately; provide them with information about the situation, and any other circumstances (i.e., if carrying oxygen) or if passengers have any special needs
- Obtain names and pertinent information of all witnesses (if possible)
- Call Travelers Aid staff to inform them of the situation

Travelers Aid Society adheres to the following Federal Regulation:

Consistent with 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §37.5(h), Travelers Aid Society shall not refuse to provide services to a user with disabilities solely because the user's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego or other persons. Consistent with this policy, Travelers Aid Society of San Diego, however, reserves the right refuse service to a user with disabilities because that user engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

Driver Code of Conduct

All Volunteer Drivers will always act in a professional manner

Reports of Volunteer Driver misconduct will be cause for immediate suspension from service and the *SenioRide* program. Confirmation of misconduct shall be cause for removal of the Volunteer Driver involved from serving riders. If a driver receives three complaints in a calendar year, it may also be grounds for immediate suspension from the program.

A Volunteer Driver shall:

- Offer assistance as appropriate or needed from riders
- Confirm, prior to allowing any vehicle to proceed, that all passengers are properly secured and their seatbelts
- Be polite and courteous to riders
- Respect for passengers' rights to confidentiality

A Volunteer Driver shall not:

- Solicit or accept controlled substances, alcohol, or medications from riders
- Solicit or accept payments from riders
- Make sexually explicit comments or solicit sexual favors
- Use alcohol, narcotics, or controlled substances, or be under the influence while on duty. Prescribed medication can be used by a driver if his/her/their duties can still be performed in a safe manner
- Wear any type of headphones or talk on the phone while driving and when clients are present
- Refrain from Smoking: We ask that you please refrain from smoking in your vehicle while transporting any clients; passengers also need to refrain from smoking in a volunteer's vehicle
- Drivers are NOT responsible for passengers' personal items

Code of Conduct Statement:

This Code of Conduct policy applies to the conduct of users of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego's services and facilities. Users include those who request transportation information or schedule trips with representatives of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego, use Travelers Aid Society of San Diego services or accompany other users as Primary Care Attendants or Companions. By using some or all of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego services or facilities, users accept and agree to this policy. If users do not accept and agree to this policy, they should not use Travelers Aid Society of San Diego services or facilities. This policy also applies to any vendors that Travelers Aid Society of San Diego may use for transportation.

All the parties mentioned above shall always act (whether in person, by phone, or via any other means of communication) with respect towards others, respecting their dignity, privacy, and safety. Prohibited behavior may cause immediate temporary or permanent suspension at the discretion of management. Management will research any incident to ascertain the nature of the violation prior to making a determining decision. Prohibited behavior, in person or through verbal or written correspondence, is defined as seriously disruptive acts of language of a violent, criminal, abusive, and/or discriminatory nature; OR that poses as an actual or perceived threat to the safety or (physical, mental, or emotional) well-being of themselves, other riders, or the program staff (including but not limited to volunteer, staff, contracted drivers, or dispatch, and all agency representatives of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego.

The following are a few examples of serious prohibited behavior:

- Committing an assault or battery on another user, a representative of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego, or any vendor for transportation

- Using threatening, abusive, harassing, or offensive language in all forms of communication to unreasonably and knowingly disturb or alarm another person, a representative of Travelers Aid Society of San Diego, or any vendor for transportation
- Safety violations – refusing to wear a seatbelt, refusing to follow public health orders, or creating distractions for drivers
- Repeated behavior or communication that has been previously addressed by the program representative

Grievance Submission Directive:

- Grievances by users, vendors, or representatives of Travelers Aid Society will be submitted via written emails or letters to program management:
- **Mailing Address:**
Travelers Aid Society of San Diego
3160 Camino Del Rio S Suite 309
San Diego, CA 92108
- **E-Mail address:** admin@travelersadidsandiego.org
- In case of immediate threats/ serious violations, service suspensions will be effective immediately and users will be notified in writing as early as possible, but no later than the first business day after the violation
- Initial response from staff within 3 business days acknowledging the receipt of grievance and initial start of investigation
- Staff will research and gather documentation to respond with a resolution within 1 week of grievance acknowledgement
- Termination of temporary or permanent suspension from all Travelers Aid Society of San Diego services will be communicated
- Temporary suspension for 30 days after investigation is complete and if violation(s) is/are confirmed
- A 2nd violation of any kind by the same user within a 12-month period may result in permanent disqualification/ suspension of a Travelers Aid Society of San Diego services

Appeal Submission Directive:

- Written email or letter to program management stating user wishes to appeal temporary or permanent suspension: provide e-mail, address, and agency time frame for submission of appeal within 30 business days of notice of suspension.

The request must include the following:

- User's full name, address, and contact information (user's phone number and/or email address)
- Evidence and reasons for why an issued suspension or termination should be modified or repealed

- Any appeals that do not adhere to the above Appeal Requirements will not be accepted for review
- Initial response from staff within 3 business days acknowledging the receipt of appeal and initial start of appeal review
- Determination of sustained, modification, or repeal of temporary or permanent suspension from all Travelers Aid Society of San Diego services to be provided within 2 weeks of acknowledgment letter/e-mail
- The Notice of Determination will be sent to the users address on record within 14 calendar days following the conclusion of the review of the hearing date, whichever is applicable. The appeal process is complete once the final Notice of Determination is sent to the uses

By reading the above information you are acknowledging your understanding your rights as a driver and volunteer for this organization. You recognize that safe driving is an essential part of your role. You will abide by the following safe driving standards. You are committed to safe, defensive driving at all times and will maintain a valid driver's license.

Vehicle Assessment

Travelers Aid Society of San Diego we will be asking for this information annually (each July)

Complete the information below for the vehicle you use when providing services as a *SenioRide* Volunteer Driver. The completed form can be mailed, emailed, or faxed to Travelers Aid Society of San Diego. If more than one vehicle is used, please include information for all vehicles.

Travelers Aid Society of San Diego
3160 Camino de Rio South
Suite 309
San Diego, CA 92108

Fax: (619) 295-3217
E-mail: allie@travelersaidsandiego.org

Vehicle Type (indicate "Automobile," "Cutaway Bus," "Minivan," or "Van" for the vehicle type):

VIN (Vehicle's VIN): _____

Seating capacity (Report the actual number of seats onboard the vehicle, *including* the driver's seat): _____

Year of manufacture, if known (Report the year the vehicle was built, not the model year):

ADA-Accessible (Answer "Yes" or "No" if your vehicle is accessible for people with disabilities and mobility needs): _____

Year of Rebuild (Report the year the vehicle was rebuilt, or enter "N/A" for not applicable):

Is this a new Vehicle as of July 1, 2025? _____

Manufacturer (Report the final manufacturer of a vehicle): _____

Model (Report the model name for a vehicle): _____

Odometer (Report the current odometer reading): _____

Date odometer was checked: _____

Estimated miles in fiscal year (Report the estimated or actual number of miles driven by a vehicle from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025): _____

I, _____ (print name) acknowledge receipt of the Volunteer Driver Handbook. The information I have provided for my vehicle is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. Additionally, I agree to follow the Code of Conduct described in the handbook

Signature

Date