

## What is The Village Shuttle?



**The Village Shuttle** is a transportation initiative between COAD's RSVP program and The Athens Village. RSVP volunteers provide trips using their own vehicles to shopping, doctor appointments and other travel destinations. There are no fees to clients using the service and the effort is supported through federal grant funds, state funds and local support.



**The Athens Village** is a group of neighbors working together to help each of us age gracefully in our own homes.

**Our Mission:** Enable members to live independently, comfortably and safely in their homes. **Our Vision:** A dynamic, responsive community of members who support meaningful and fulfilling lives for one another. Research, including that of insurance companies, has shown that people are much better off in their own homes than in assisted living facilities. The Athens Village works with a number of local, regional and national agencies to further the interests of its members.

The Athens Village office is located at ACEnet, 94 Columbus Rd., Athens  
The phone number is 740-447-0500.

**The Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development (COAD)** is a private, non-profit community-based organization serving rural, mostly Appalachian, counties in eastern and southern Ohio. It is comprised of seventeen Community Action Agencies that serve a 30 county area. COAD has three major program divisions: Community Development, Early Care and Education and Senior Programs. COAD also offers scholarship assistance and leadership development opportunities. COAD's mission is to provide a unified voice and representation for its member agencies and the constituents that they serve - primarily low-income families, children, and the elderly. Since 1971, COAD has worked to improve the quality of life for all residents of Appalachian Ohio.



**Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)** COAD became the sponsoring agency for the RSVP program in Athens and Hocking Counties starting September 1, 2009. Together with RSVP in Gallia, Jackson and Vinton Counties and its other senior programs, RSVP provides a wide range of possible volunteering options. RSVP offers maximum flexibility and choice to its volunteers. RSVP matches the personal interests and skills of older Americans (55 and older) with opportunities to help solve community problems. RSVP volunteers choose how and where they want to serve - from a few hours each month to over 40 hours a week.

RSVP makes it easy for older adults to find the types of volunteer service opportunities that appeal to them. RSVP volunteers provide hundreds of community services. They tutor children in reading and math, help get children immunized, model parenting skills to teen parents, participate in neighborhood watch programs, plan community gardens, deliver meals, help with cultural arts programs, offer disaster relief to victims of natural disasters, and help community organizations operate more efficiently. RSVP is provided in Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties.

## **The Village Shuttle “How To” Manual**

Standard rules of conduct and procedures are necessary for the efficient and safe operation of any program or business. The contents of this Volunteer Driver Manual have been prepared with the objective to provide information that may be helpful both to volunteer drivers and to Village members receiving rides. This Manual is intended to help reduce liability risks by providing consistent methods of operation for the program. Volunteer drivers want to know what is expected of them and how to handle certain situations. Likewise, members being served want to know how The Village Shuttle operates, and what their responsibilities are when utilizing this service.

### **Mission Statement:**

The Village Shuttle is focused on meeting transportation needs of members The Athens Village and on providing our dedicated volunteers with a satisfying experience.

### **Description of Service:**

The Village Shuttle will provide non-emergency transportation for members of The Athens Village and a caregiver or assistant if required by the member. Rides will be provided by RSVP volunteers who will drive their own vehicles. Drivers provide a curbside-to-curbside service from a pre-scheduled pick up location to a pre-scheduled drop off location.

The RSVP/TAV “Village Shuttle” transportation project will observe the following standards:

#### **A. We will strive to always provide safe, reliable, and efficient service.**

- We will instruct drivers to use vehicles that are clean and in safe operating conditions. Volunteers have the right to accept or deny certain requests made of them. However, by accepting a request, the volunteer is committed to the rider to fulfill that need.
- Volunteers will obey all traffic laws. They have the right to insist that passengers also obey laws and safety rules.
- Volunteer drivers should report any passenger concerns, trip changes, or unusual occurrences immediately to Mary Lewis, RSVP Program Manager at 740-594-8499 or TAV staff at 740-447-0500. Staff will respond immediately to major concerns or within 3 days if not urgent.

To participate in this project, all volunteer drivers complete the RSVP orientation. All drivers **MUST**

- have access to and use email on a daily basis
- go through a background check
- complete RSVP driver training
- fill out timesheets with mileage, and turn these in to RSVP

**B. Volunteer Drivers will maintain a valid driver license and liability insurance.** RSVP also carries secondary insurance for the driver and vehicle.

**C. This transportation program does not expect volunteer drivers to provide specialized care of passengers other than driving.**

Any claims that arise from vehicle accidents that occur while volunteering for the Village Shuttle Driver Program must be reported and handled in accordance with the Ohio Vehicle Code and other relevant statutes. If there are any accidents or injury related incidents, both the rider and the volunteer driver must notify the Village office so that proper steps regarding any potential liability can be followed. An Incident Report must be completed by the driver and reported to the Volunteer Coordinator within 24 hours of the incident.)

**Service Area**

There are no restrictions on the destination of trips requested. A member of The Athens Village may request in county transportation or out of county for medical or non-medical reasons. However, there are no guarantees that requests will be met.

**Days and Hours of Service**

The volunteer driver responds as he or she is able. Transportation assistance may be requested for any day of the week, during business or evening hours. Transportation is available by appointment only and on a first come first served basis.

**Scheduling and Cancellation Procedures.**

The rider being driven (who **must** be a member of The Athens Village) can request transportation for any reason by going online at <http://rsvpvillagetravel.weebly.com> or by calling The Athens Village (740-447-0500).

- ✓ When a request is entered, all volunteer drivers get an email with the request details. The driver who has the time available will reply to the system to fulfill the request. The driver's reply to the system also notifies all other drivers that that request has been filled. The driver then contacts the client privately, verifying details of the ride and finalizing a plan for the trip. Drivers may also make a reminder call to the client to confirm that a ride is coming, and to ensure that the client still needs a ride.
- ✓ All rides must be requested at least 48 hours in advance. Ideally a rider will make the request as soon as the need arises. The drivers keep track of their time and mileage. Drivers may request reimbursement monthly for mileage through the grants received by RSVP; riders do not pay for being driven.

To request a ride, members must first complete the "Rider Registration Agreement" at <http://rsvpvillagetravel.weebly.com>. If the member has no access to a computer or prefers to use TAV staff assistance, this form can be completed by calling 740-447-0500.

An actual request is made by completing the "Ride Request Form" which asks for specific details about the assistance needed (pick-up location, appointment date and time, drop off location, and duration of appointment if a round trip is requested, any special accommodations necessary.) This can also be done via e-mail from the website or by calling 740-447-0500 with assistance from TAV staff.

We reserve the right for our volunteers to refuse a service based on safety or health concerns.

Passengers are expected to be ready and watching for their rides at the prearranged pick-up time and place. If a passenger does not come out to the vehicle within 5 minutes, unless arranged otherwise, the driver may leave, and it will be considered an unexcused cancellation. If a rider needs to cancel a ride, he/she needs to inform the volunteer driver as soon as possible. Cancellations after that may be considered an unexcused cancellation. A pattern of repeat unexcused cancellations may result in the member being temporarily suspended from the project.

## **Donations**

Donations, grants and senior levy funds are the sources for the RSVP Volunteer Driver programs. If a rider wishes to make a donation for mileage reimburse for volunteer drivers for “The Village Shuttle”, it should be made directly to COAD RSVP, PO Box 787 Athens, Ohio 45701. Drivers cannot accept cash donations.

Donations by check are to be made payable to COAD RSVP and can be given to the Volunteer Driver or mailed to: COAD RSVP, PO Box 787 Athens, Ohio 45701. Donors will receive a letter verifying their tax-deductible donation.

## **Passenger Assistance**

This program is curbside-to-curbside service. It is expected that the rider will wait outside his/her home for the driver to arrive. Riders must be able to independently get into and out of the vehicle. For the safety of the rider and the driver, the volunteer driver is not expected to enter the rider’s home.

If a member needs assistance s/he may also invite a companion for shopping or other assistance.

If the rider needs assistance, it is the rider’s responsibility to make appropriate arrangements. It is also the rider’s responsibility to provide advance notice when scheduling transportation for an accompanying companion.

## **Transporting Personal Items**

If a member intends to bring any luggage, packages, or large objects, the rider must notify the volunteer driver when confirming travel plans. It is then at the discretion the volunteer driver if the objects can be transported. It is not expected that the driver will carry or move a rider’s personal items.

Service animals will be allowed if prior arrangements have been made with the volunteer driver. Pets may only be transported in specially designed pet carriers. This special need should be noted on the “Ride Request Form”

## **Passenger Conduct and Responsibilities**

1. Be sure to use your seat belt.
2. The Village Shuttle will not transport children under six years of age; if a child requires a child seat, the rider must provide it.
3. Please be punctual and ready before your driver arrives. Drivers are not expected to wait if a passenger is running late. If you live in an apartment complex, be waiting at a designated location.
4. Drivers are not expected to physically assist passengers. If you need further assistance, please bring someone along who can help you.
5. All stops must be scheduled in advance. Volunteer drivers are not allowed to make unauthorized or unscheduled stops. If you change your destination, you need to notify the dispatcher by 3 PM the prior day.
6. Please be courteous and considerate of others. Before eating or drinking in the vehicle, please check with the driver.
7. Do not distract the driver while he/she is driving. This includes talking excessively, or asking for radio and controls to be adjusted.
8. The driver is responsible for in-vehicle behavior; all instructions and safety rules are to be followed.
9. Inappropriate behavior such as foul language, lack of personal hygiene, etc. will not be allowed.
10. The program reserves the right to refuse service based on violation of these standards.

## Passenger Comment and Complaint Procedures

The Transportation Program is responsive to all commendations and complaints. Passengers may call or send written comments to COAD RSVP, PO Box 787 Athens, Ohio 45701. We will document complaints received verbally from passengers or other volunteers and respond immediately. Written complaints are kept on file for risk management and documentation purposes.

The Village Shuttle transportation project is dedicated to providing a safe and reliable service to our members. We thank you for your support and welcome your input. If you have any comments or suggestions call or write us.