



**GOVERNMENT CENTER  
600 EAST FOURTH STREET  
CHASKA, MN 55318  
952-442-2323**

The following **Transportation Program Policy** has been adopted by Carver County Veteran Services:

Carver County Veteran Services will provide Carver County veterans free rides to on-site appointments at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center (VAMC), the Shakopee VA Community Based Outreach Clinic (CBOC), and the St. Paul Regional Office (Whipple Building).

### **When can I utilize the Transportation Program?**

The Transportation Program can be used for morning and early afternoon appointments on weekdays. When making your appointment at the VAMC or CBOC, please tell the VA scheduler that you will be receiving transportation from your County's Veteran Services Office. This will help coordinate appointments accordingly and within the transportation schedule. Medical appointments should be scheduled as follows:

- **Minneapolis VAMC - Make appointments between 8:00 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.**
- **Shakopee VA CBOC - Make appointments between 8:00 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.**

### **How do I schedule a ride with the Transportation Program?**

It is best to request a ride soon after your appointment is scheduled. To request a ride and receive confirmation:

- **Call 952-442-2323 as soon as your able and no later than 11:00 a.m. the business day before the scheduled appointment.** For example, if the appointment is on a Monday, the ride request must be made no later than 11:00 a.m. the Friday before the appointment date. Due to scheduling requirements, we are unable to accommodate requests made after that time.
- **Inform the office of all appointments times and whether the veteran has any special needs (i.e. wheelchair, walker, service animal, oxygen, etc.).** This includes special assistance at appointments provided by Client Assistance Services (CAS). To set up assistance with CAS, please call them directly at 612-467-1834 prior to requesting a ride.
- **Expect a call from Carver County Veteran Services the afternoon of the business day prior to the scheduled appointment to confirm the appointment and coordinate pickup times.** For example, if a veteran calls our office on Monday, July 20, to request an appointment for Monday, July 27, we will contact the veteran with their scheduled pickup time on the afternoon of Friday, July 24.

**Note:** *Ride requests can be made via voice message. Please include your name, the veteran's name, date and time(s) of appointment(s), VA facility, and contact number. To reduce high-call volume, please do not leave multiple messages for your request.*

### **If I have a medical emergency, what should I do?**

**Call 911 in case of an emergency.** The Transportation Program is not equipped or qualified to respond to emergency calls.

What you can do:

Any Emergency Department and inform them you're a VA enrolled patient

Inform the emergency care provider to report your emergency treatment to the VA Centralized Emergency Care Reporting Center as soon as possible after your treatment starts by using the VA Emergency Care Reporting portal or calling the VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline.

VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline: 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842)

### **What if the VA cancels my appointment, or if I need to cancel my ride request?**

If you need to cancel or reschedule your ride request, please call the office at 952-442-2323 as soon as you're able to inform us of the change. Your call will help us schedule pickup times accordingly.

### **Can I have someone ride with me to my appointment?**

A personal attendant (i.e. spouse, adult family member, or friend) may accompany the veteran if space is available. Please note the following:

- If a personal attendant rides with the veteran, they must stay with veteran while at appointments.
- If a veteran is scheduled for outpatient surgery that requires anesthesia, a personal attendant will be required to ride with the veteran.
- Depending on the veteran's physical/behavioral condition, we may require a personal attendant to ride with the veteran to the appointment.

### **What should I expect when getting picked up?**

Please allow for a *10-minute window* before and after pickup times.

- The driver will use a phone to contact the veteran and inform them of any delays due to weather conditions, road construction, traffic conditions, etc.
- During your pick up, the driver will confirm the set appointment times with you.
- Both vehicles used by the Transportation Program have wheelchair accessibility. When calling to reserve a ride, please state that you plan to use a wheelchair, scooter, walker, etc.
- Passengers riding Veteran Services vehicles are expected to be bathed, wear clean clothes, and be well groomed. All riders owe the other passengers, the VA medical staff, and the driver this courtesy. If the driver arrives for the pickup and the veteran or their personal attendant is not in compliance with this request, they may be denied transportation.
- In cases which a nursing home or an assisted care facility must be called to ready the veteran for pickup, that facility should be informed of your request prior to requesting your ride.
- For the safety and security of drivers and other riders, those participating in the Transportation Program are expected to be respectful while on the bus and when at VA facilities. Behavior issues may result in being removed from the Transportation Program.
- For weather cancellation concerns, please reference the Winter Weather Cancellation Policy.
- While at VA facilities, it is extremely important to be in communication with the Transportation Driver. Veterans are highly encouraged to utilize the driver phone number (612-269-5353) to update the driver on "day of" changes/adjustments. Also, be mindful that the driver oversees all pickup/drop off operations while on the road and at VA facilities.

### **What should I expect when getting dropped off?**

The bus driver will coordinate a meeting location/time in the VAMC or clinic waiting area. To reduce wait times and increase overall efficiency, follow the Transportation Driver's instructions, and keep them informed of any changes, additional appointments, and/or emergencies during your time at the VAMC or CBOC.

- If you are given an additional appointment while at the VAMC or CBOC, please contact the Driver and let them know of any changes or cancellations in your schedule.
- If you have coordinated a ride home other than the bus or are being dropped off at a different location than pickup, please inform Veteran Services staff member when requesting the ride. We are unable to accommodate unannounced changes due to safety reasons for the veteran.
- If it is determined you need to be kept overnight at the VAMC, please contact the Driver immediately.

**Questions? Please call.** If you have any questions regarding the Transportation Program or need information about veterans' benefits, please contact Carver County Veteran Services at 952-442-2323.