Berlin COA Van

Policy and Procedures

The Council on Aging Van is available for transportation for residents who are aged 60 or older or any Berlin resident with disabilities.

* Residents who are temporarily or permanently living outside the Town of Berlin due to residence in an assisted living facility, nursing home, acute care center, rehabilitation facility, hospital or other facility for any reason are not eligible for COA van transportation.
* The COA Van is designed to provide limited transportation for residents providing that such persons do not have access to any other transportation arrangements.
* The COA Van will in certain circumstances, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the COA Director, deliver groceries to Berlin elders and residents who are in need of this service and qualify financially for food from the Food Pantry.
* Special programs/trips sponsored by the Berlin COA may utilize the COA Van.
* There is no fee for using the COA Van but there is a suggested donation amount of $3.00 both in town and out of town which will go to support the COA Van service. **NO CASH MAY BE ACCEPTED BY ANY COA PERSONNEL – ALL PAYMENTS IN THE FORM OF A CHECK ONLY, MADE PAYABLE TO THE “TOWN OF BERLIN” – THANK YOU!** Each passenger who makes a payment and/or donation will receive a receipt with the amount of donation for record purposes.

Van Scheduling

* Transportation services are available on Mondays – Fridays, 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., excluding holidays, as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays*** | | Out-of-Town trips (Physician/Personal appointments) | Please schedule appointments  between 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. |
| **Tuesdays** | | Out-of-Town trips (Shopping) | * Walmart at 9:00 a.m. * Market Basket at 12:00 p.m. * *Limited seating. First Come/ First Serve* |
| **Thursdays** | In-Town trips |  | |

* The COA Van gives priority to medical appointments but otherwise is available on a first- come, first-serve basis. Passengers are required to share the vehicle with other passengers.
* Driver vacation schedules may result in no available transportation.
* Passengers must fill out a “Berlin Transportation Form” which includes emergency contact information.
* Reservations should be made forty-eight (48) hours in advance; Monday & Tuesday reservations need to be made by the previous Thursday.

Passenger Pickup/Drop-off

* Our transportation service is curbsidepickup and drop off only. Passengers riding the van must be able to get on and off the van independently or must bring an escort/PCA Personal Care Attendant with them for assistance.
* Riders are expected to be ready 15 minutes in advance of your scheduled pick up time. Please allow a 30-minute window (15 minutes prior and 15 minutes after pick-up time). The van will only wait 5 minutes at your address.
* If you are a no-show for your trip, your return trip is automatically cancelled.
* Please provide the best number to reach you at on the day of the appointment when you schedule your ride.
* Drivers are not permitted to accept information regarding appointments, cancellations, or changes. You must call the COA office at 978-838-2750.
* Drivers must follow their assigned schedules and are not allowed to make last-minute changes to the schedule in order to accommodate passenger requests. If you need to make multiple stops during a single transportation appointment, please be sure to provide that information at the time you make the reservation so that we can schedule appropriately.
* The Van driver is not allowed to accept gratuities of any amount.

Cancellations

* Cancellations should be made as early as possible by calling the COA at least the day before.
* Passengers with recurring appointments must notify the COA as early as possible if you do not need services on a particular day.
* Continued last minute cancellations within a month/week may result in losing transportation privileges.

Wheelchair Accessibility

The COA typically operates with a wheelchair accessible van (which is ADA compliant with a wheelchair lift) so please let us know if you are using a wheelchair.  The van driver will operate the wheelchair lift and secure the wheelchair inside the van. If a passenger cannot propel their own wheelchair to and from the van, they must have an escort to assist them. The drivers cannot provide personal care or extra assistance. Please be sure to indicate if an escort is accompanying you when you make your reservation as we need to make sure there is sufficient seating capacity.

Van Safety

* All passengers are required to wear seatbelts. You may ask the driver for assistance in securing the seatbelt.
* Eating, drinking, and smoking (including e-cigarettes, marijuana) are prohibited on the van.
* Individuals who travel with medical equipment may be required to have a second individual travel with them.
* In the case of a medical emergency, the van driver will call 911.
* The Van Driver and the Council on Aging are not responsible for anything left unattended in the van. All items left behind will be brought to COA and held for 48 hours. After 48 hours items will be disposed of.
* No pets are permitted on the van unless they are trained serviced animals.
* Van service will be refused to riders who engage in disruptive or unsafe conduct.

Inclement Weather

* In the event of inclement weather, van service may be cancelled for the day. On days that Berlin schools are closed due to weather, the van service will also be closed. If the COA Director or van scheduler cancels van service, clients will be notified by phone.

Scheduling a Ride

For your convenience, a summary of our transportation service policy is provided herein. The complete policy is available by contacting the COA.

**Please call 978-838-2750 and provide the following information to book a ride:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Name, Address and best phone number to reach you |
|  | Date of your trip request |
|  | If you use a mobility device (walker, wheelchair, etc.) |
|  | If someone will be traveling with you to assist you |
|  | Address where you will be picked up |
|  | Exact address and location where you will be dropped off (you will be picked up at the same location for your return trip) |
|  | Appointment time |
|  | Return time (estimate your return pick-up time) |
|  | *Please note: if you will not be ready at your scheduled return time, call 978-838-2750 as soon as you know you will be late and may miss your return trip. A return trip is not guaranteed if you miss your scheduled pick up time.* |

Summary of Berlin COA Transportation Services

* There is no cost to use the Berlin COA Van; however, there is a suggested donation amount of $3.00 which will directly go to supporting the van service. If EZ-Pass is required for appointment- rider will be responsible for that toll amount. **NO CASH MAY BE ACCEPTED BY ANY COA PERSONNEL – ALL PAYMENTS IN THE FORM OF A CHECK ONLY, MADE PAYABLE TO THE “TOWN OF BERLIN” – THANK YOU!** Each passenger who makes a payment and/or donation will receive a receipt with the amount of donation for record purposes.
* **Please try to make your medical appointments during morning hours as the last van drop off time is 2:00 p.m.**
* Reservations must be made at least 48 hours in advance
* To make a reservation, call the COA at **978-838-2750** Mondays – Thursdays between the hours of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. If calling outside of these hours, please leave a message with your name and phone number so that the scheduler can call you back to book the reservation. You are *not* confirmed until you receive a phone call from Berlin COA.
* When scheduling a ride for Monday or Tuesday, you must call by the previous Thursday to make your reservation.
* Transportation services are available Monday – Friday, except for holidays.
* Van pick-ups start at 8:30 a.m. with the last pick-up to return home no later than 3:00 p.m.
* **Please be ready 15 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time** as we may need to accommodate more than one passenger. There is a 30 minute window for passenger pick-up.
* Passengers must be prompt at pick-up time. The COA reserves the right to leave after waiting 5 minutes.
* Transportation services must be within our service area.
* Transportation services are curbside pick-up and drop-off only.
* Emergency information must be on file at the COA for passengers riding the van.

Approved by the Berlin Board of Selectmen on 9/9/2019

Approved by the Berlin Council on Aging on 9/25/2019