



Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.

Beyond the White LINES

Volunteer Driver Program Bulletin

Federal Advocacy – Charitable Driving Reimbursement Rate

*Encourage Your Representative to Cosponsor the DELIVER Act! **and** tell them this change must apply to all volunteer driving activities!*

H.R. 4942, the DELIVER Act - this bipartisan legislation will amend the tax code to increase the tax deduction for volunteers who deliver meals to homebound individuals from 14 cents per mile, where it has remained unchanged for nearly two decades, to the standard business mileage rate, which is currently 54 cents per mile.

While this is a great start, if the charitable rate is not increased overall, it creates an uneven playing field for volunteer programs. A volunteer could potentially volunteer for the same agency and be reimbursed differently depending on if they drive people or meals. It may be even harder to recruit volunteer escort drivers if they are reimbursed less or treated differently under the tax code. The tax code should not penalize volunteers for giving their time and resources. Share your data with legislators and explain why volunteers are important to your agency and the people in the community and why this rate needs to be increased across the board.

Take Action!

Sylvia Phillis, Aging Services Managers in Marquette County shared with us a resolution her County passed in regards to the charitable driving reimbursement rate. The Board was moved to action and the resolution was forwarded to all state and federal legislators and to Wisconsin Counties Association. Thank you Sylvia for your continued advocacy!

What action will you take?

Beyond the White Lines

is a publication of the Greater WI Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. dedicated to transportation, mobility and healthy, active communities.

For more information, contact Carrie Porter, carrie_porter@gwaar.org, 608-228-8092

Dates for your calendars

Registration OPEN!
[Managing Community Mobility](#), NTI Aug. 3-4, 2016 LaCrosse, WI

Aging Network Conference
Sept. 22-23, 2016
Wisconsin Dells

Fall Transportation Conference Oct. 4-6, 2016, Green Bay

RTAP regional training schedule found [here](#).

Summer 2016



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Volunteer Driver Program Surveys

As we all know, volunteer drivers are instrumental in the delivery of meals to vulnerable adults and to the transportation systems for older adults and individuals with disabilities, particularly in rural areas. Two surveys were recently completed for the 2 different volunteer driver programs in WI – one for the delivery of meals and one for transporting people. Both surveys had a greater than 78% response rate.

Below are some key findings from these surveys. This information will help us as we continue to advocate to keep volunteer programs strong in WI and to change policies that are detrimental to volunteer service.

- ❖ **There were over 2.2 million meals delivered by volunteers in WI in 2015.**
- ❖ **Almost 94% of these meals are delivered by over 5,800 volunteers. The average number of volunteer meal delivery drivers for each program is 75.**
- ❖ **There are over 60 volunteer driver escort programs in WI with over 2,200 volunteers. Programs can have as few as 2 volunteers and as many as a few hundred in urban areas. The typical number of volunteer drivers in rural areas is around 20.**
- ❖ **Volunteers not only deliver meals and provide rides, they are provide a safety check, socialization and personal support that our most vulnerable and isolated residents rely upon.**

***What data do you have about your volunteer programs?
Don't just collect data and stories, SHARE THEM!***

Volunteer Driver Insurance Issue Update

The volunteer escort driver program survey indicated that 22 of the 47 programs reported at least 1 driver experienced an issue with their vehicle insurance. Volunteers reported being told their personal vehicle insurance does not cover their volunteer activities, some were told they are making money so they need a commercial policy or that they are a delivery service (of meals) so they need commercial insurance. Many of these problems were caused by misinformation or misinterpretation of policy exclusions and policy changes by a local agent.

As a result of the Volunteer Driving Summit held in March and reported on in the last newsletter, the Insurance Services Office, ISO updated their forms with less confusing language about exclusions to personal policies. This means the customer will receive another notification of changes which will hopefully be less confusing than previous ones. This should clear up some issues that were a result of confusing exclusion language rather than actual policy changes.

The Office of Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) agreed to update the 2008 survey of insurance companies in WI. This survey will identify how each insurance company views volunteer activities and reimbursement versus compensation. The updated survey of insurance companies is due back at the Office of Commissioner of Insurance by the end of June. Once that is released, it will be distributed widely. The previous survey summary completed by OCI in 2008 has been extremely useful in helping volunteers communicate with their local agents and clear up misunderstanding about their volunteer activities.

Thank you to everyone who submitted stories, attended the summit and contacted their legislators and OCI – your efforts are making a difference!