



VOLUNTEER DRIVER MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT SERVICE

BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Volunteer Training

1. The rider centered design of the program means that the organization or agency DOES NOT recruit, screen, train, match, or manage volunteers in any way. Each approved TRIP Program client rider is required to recruit their own volunteer driver or drivers from among friends, neighbors, acquaintances, caregivers, or others they know. TRIP staff provides only education about how to recruit one or more volunteers and encouragement for the client's autonomous effort. When a rider has secured the services of someone to drive for them, all arrangements for travel are made through the mutual agreement of the client and their own volunteer driver without any involvement of the organization or agency. The process and arrangement is analogous to a person asking a friend to take them to the grocery store. It is an independent action that results in the friend providing volunteer hours and service for their friend. The TRIP Program and the organization or agency pays a mileage reimbursement to the client rider, who then distributes the mileage reimbursement to their volunteer(s) to help pay for the gas expense of their friend and incentivize the continued relationship of assistance. The "arms length" relationship that TRIP maintains with volunteers who assist TRIP Program clients has been adjudged by insurance risk managers as insulating ILP and its funders from liability exposure while still motivating a high level of individual volunteerism in the community. In 2009 TRIP was recognized as the best volunteer driver program in the country. TRIP has won many awards over the years for its innovative design.
2. Because we emphasize passengers recruiting their own volunteer drivers, we do not take on many of the responsibilities often associated with other kinds of volunteer driver models. The passenger makes the decision to ask a friend or neighbor to be their volunteer driver. The TRIP program is not a party to the decision to ask someone to be a volunteer or the agreement that is reached between the passenger and their volunteer. Many functions of other volunteer driver models that are associated with driver recruitment and matching drivers with passengers are not necessary in a TRIP program. TRIP does not recruit, screen, formally train or match volunteers with passengers, and the result is that the risk and liability associated with those activities is limited. This also substantially reduces the expense of operating the program.
3. Every TRIP program should provide a "Volunteer Driver Handbook", through the rider. This handbook should provide an overview of the program and how it operates, and what is expected of volunteer drivers, including how to complete mileage reimbursement forms.