

## TIP SHEET

JANUARY 2016

# Family-Run Organizations Transporting Parents, Youth and other Family Members: Policies and Procedures

Transportation assistance is a common need for the families supported by family-run organizations. In light of this, family-run organizations must recognize the liability and expense that comes with transporting family members, and ensure that policies and procedures are in place to govern how and when family members are transported by family organization employees.

A number of factors should be considered when determining whether family organization employees will provide transportation including program and contract requirements; policies and procedures; organizational liability coverage; individual employee car insurance coverage; and leveraging transportation assistance to develop sustainable supports.

### Program and Contract Requirements

- Transporting family members is a service. As with other services, it is important to clarify the purpose and parameters. In defining transportation services consider the following questions:
  - Will transportation be provided for *any* family member who makes a request or only families or family member(s) enrolled in certain programs?
  - Is transportation provided only to allow for participation in the organization's programs or is transportation provided for other purposes as well?
  - Is there a limit to the amount of time or number of trips per day/week?
  - When and how will families transition to finding their own means of transportation?
- Transporting families is an expense. Adequate funding must be available to the organization to cover mileage, staff time, and liability insurance for the organization and for the employee.
- If the organization is not contractually obligated to transport families, organizations can consider other options for transportation. For example, check to see if program funds can be used to pay for taxis, bus tokens, or private car services; or explore partnering with other community-based organizations for transportation.

### Policies and Procedures

It is critical to have policies and procedures in place to govern transportation services and protect the organization, its employees, and the families it serves. A sample of recommended policies and procedures include:

- **Documentation:** Employees who transport families must have proof of:
  - A valid driver's license;
  - Current automobile insurance;
  - A Department of Motor Vehicles driving record with no moving violations (usually in the past 3 to 5 years), or multiple violations of the same kind over 3 to 5 years;

This resource was produced by the Family Run Executive Director Leadership Association (FREDLA) in its role as a core partner of the National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth and Family Mental Health (NTTAC)



*This document was prepared for the National Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health under contract with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Contract #HHSS280201300002C. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.*

- Current automobile registration;
  - Documentation should be maintained in employee personnel files and updated annually; and
  - Employees are expected to inform the organization immediately if their status changes, such as loss of driving privileges due to accident or loss of automobile insurance.
- **Safety Protocols:** To ensure the safety of the organization's employees, as well as that of family members, safe driving guidelines are necessary. For example:
    - Safety Belts - Employees and all passengers must wear safety belts at all times.
    - Mobile Phone Usage - Employees should not use mobile devices while transporting family members. In the event a call must be made or answered, the employee should stop in a safe, approved area to make/take the call or read/respond to texts.
    - Driving Rules and Regulations - Employee drivers must comply with all local, state, and federal driving regulations and laws.
    - Routine Vehicle Maintenance - Vehicles should be in good repair; lights including headlights and brake lights must be fully operable, brakes must be in good working order, and the vehicle must be equipped with proper safety equipment in the event of an emergency (i.e., flares, battery cables, spare tire, etc.).
    - Parking - Employees should park in well-lit areas and on the street whenever possible. Avoid having the vehicle blocked in, such as in a person's driveway, whenever possible.
    - Unattended Vehicle - Employees must turn the vehicle off and remove keys from the ignition whenever the employee is outside of the vehicle.
    - Consumption of Alcohol or Illegal Substances, Prescription or Over-the-Counter Medications - Employees will not consume any alcohol or illegal substances prior to, or during, operation of their vehicle for employment related responsibilities. The same policy applies to prescription medication or over-the-counter medication that may impair functioning or cause drowsiness.
    - Transporting Young Children - Employees should engage the child safety locks in the vehicle (if possible) and have knowledge about the proper use and installation of child safety seats appropriate to a child's age and size.
    - Transporting Youth - Employees are encouraged to have another adult in the car when transporting youth of all ages. If another adult (parent, guardian, caseworker, other employee) is not able to be in the vehicle, employees should pay attention to the following:
      - Youth should be seated in the backseat and wearing safety belt at all times;
      - Written consent from parent or guardian should be obtained prior to transporting the youth and maintained with the youth's record as documentation of consent; and
      - Transportation assistance is provided only to identified youth and only to the agreed upon destination(s); employees do not make stops or pick up other youth on the way.
    - Maximum number of passengers - Employees must limit the number of family members transported at any given time to the number of passengers in the car manufacturer's maximum occupancy guidelines.
  - **Driving Contracts:** Driving contracts can be an effective way to ensure family organization employees fully understand the policies and procedures governing the transportation of families and/or youth. Contracts provide additional documentation demonstrating the organization's efforts to minimize the potential for adverse consequences when transporting family members.

## Organizational Liability Coverage

- Family-run organizations can be held liable in the event of an accident if an employee is transporting a family member as part of their employment duties. This is the case whether the employee is driving the organization's vehicle, or their own personal vehicle.
- Family-run organizations that transport family members should have Commercial Liability Insurance (aka General Liability Insurance, [Business Liability Insurance](#) or [Commercial General Liability](#) (CGL) Insurance. Most states require this form of insurance. It is also recommended that organizations have a rider or endorsement on their Commercial Liability Insurance for Employer Non-Owned Vehicles. This coverage is specifically for vehicles operated by employees as part of their employment duties but that are not owned by the organization, such as personal or rental vehicles.

- The organization's insurance policies should be examined closely. An insurance broker or agent can provide an assessment of the organization's coverage, identify gaps in coverage, and ensure that the organization and their employees have adequate coverage.

## Individual Employee Car Insurance Coverage

- An employee's personal car insurance policy typically does not provide coverage for family members being transported as part of the employee's work responsibilities.
- Employees should contact their personal car insurance agent, notify them that their employment responsibilities include transporting family members, and obtain the necessary rider on their coverage.
- Business car insurance policies can be added on to existing policies or purchased separately through a different insurer. A business car insurance policy will provide coverage when using a personal vehicle for transporting family members on the job.

## Organizational Examples

Below are several examples of family-run organizations that have addressed the areas of consideration outlined above and developed policies to govern the practice of transporting parents, youth and other family members.

### Allegheny Family Network - Pennsylvania

Family Support Partners occasionally transport families in their personal vehicles. The organization's liability carrier requires that Family Support Partner staff carry \$100,000/\$300,000 limits on their automobile insurance. Staff understand that this is a way to help build engagement with families and may be necessary due to the circumstances of the family. The organization provides consistent training to staff on empowering vs. enabling, looking at deeper needs, and how to help families rely on and build natural supports.

#### Allegheny Family Network Resources:

- [Car Insurance Survey](#)
- [Mileage Reimbursement Policy](#)

### Georgia Parent Support Network – Georgia

The Georgia Parent Support Network transports children and youth and sometimes their parents, or guardians. The organization requires each driver to have a background check, provide proof of current driver's license, motor vehicle record, and auto liability insurance. Copies of these records are kept on file and audited monthly. The Georgia Parent Support Network has insurance policies above and beyond the staff's personal car insurance to cover the organization in the event of an accident.

### Parent Support Network of Rhode Island

The Parent Support Network of Rhode Island carries transportation insurance policies to cover the organization and its employees who transport parents, youth, and other family members. Documentation and annual safety trainings are required, especially in crisis response, for issues such as domestic violence and mental health crisis in the home. The organization has also drafted safety policies.

#### Parent Support Network of Rhode Island Resources:

- [PSNRI Draft Protocols](#)

### The Family Involvement Center - Arizona

The Family Involvement Center employees are encouraged to transport parents, youth and other family members if they feel safe. The employee's supervisor discusses the issue of transportation and the decision is at the employee's discretion. Employees are trained on safety policies/practices, state requirements for minimum insurance coverage, and are expected to notify their personal insurance carrier that their vehicle is used for work purposes.

**Requirements include:**

- \$10,000 for property damage, \$15,000 for bodily injury, \$30,000 for an accident;
- Current valid driver's license, registration, and insurance paperwork;
- Personal insurance policy - organization policy covers in a catastrophic event; and
- Worker's compensation will cover medical expenses of the employee.

**Family Involvement Center Resources:**

- [CL 1360 Transportation](#)

**Total Family Care Coalition – Washington D.C.**

Total Family Care of Washington D.C. transports parents, youth, and other family members and has developed a policy outlining procedures for employees who provide transportation.

**Total Family Care Resources:**

- [TFCC Youth Transportation Policy](#)

## Acknowledgements

FREDLA is grateful to the following family-run organizations for generously sharing their policies and procedures for the creation of this document.

Allegheny Family Network - Pennsylvania  
Georgia Parent Support Network - Georgia  
Parent Support Network of Rhode Island  
The Family Involvement Center - Arizona  
Total Family Care Coalition - Washington D.C.

## ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NETWORK FOR CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The National Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health (TA Network), funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Child, Adolescent and Family Branch, partners with states and communities to develop the most effective and sustainable systems of care possible for the benefit of children and youth with behavioral health needs and their families. We provide technical assistance and support across the nation to state and local agencies, including youth and family leadership and organizations.

## ABOUT FREDLA

This resource was produced by the Family Run Executive Director Leadership Association (FREDLA) in its role as a core partner of the National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth and Family Mental Health (NTTAC), operated by the National Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health (TA Network), funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Mental Health Services, Child, Adolescent and Family Branch.