



FAQs TRANSPORTATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE EAST LYME SENIOR CENTER



Who can ride with us?

We provide transportation service to any resident of the Town who is 60 or older or under 60 with a disability which prevents them from driving. You must be able to board and disembark from our vehicles with minimal assistance. To use the vehicle with the wheelchair lift, you must be able to maneuver to the vehicle. If you are not able, you can have someone travel with you that can assist. When in doubt, the Senior Center will determine if someone requires more assistance than can be provided by the drivers.

How do I apply for the service?



There is an application that all potential riders must complete before service can be provided. This is needed so questions or concerns can be addressed before transportation services begin. The same application is renewed annually during the month of your registration. This ensures that our information remains accurate.



What does the service provide?

We provide rides by non-medical personnel. The Senior Center currently uses 2 handicapped accessible buses that can transport 14 people (12 seats and 2 wheelchair areas). We maintain 1 handicapped accessible bus as a backup vehicle. Our service is NOT a fixed route – you call with your request and we come to you. However, our service is only door to door. Our drivers cannot enter your home. The drivers will provide minimal assistance, if needed, from your door to the bus and from the bus to the door of your departure location. The driver does **not** remain with you during your appointment.

Where can I go?

Our service will provide a ride to any destination within the Town Limits of East Lyme. In addition, we offer a ride every Monday to the New London/Waterford area.

When can I go?

Our service operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30am to 4:00pm barring any holidays, inclement weather or vehicle malfunctions. For in-town appointments, please do not schedule anything before 9am or after 3pm. For our out of town run, please schedule appointments between 10am and 11:30am.

What kind of destinations are we talking about?

We provides rides for physician appointments, outpatient physical therapy, outpatient testing (lab work, x-rays, etc), grocery shopping, general shopping, errands (bank, Town Hall), hair dresser appointments, activities at the Community Center (Senior Center, Library), personal needs, etc.

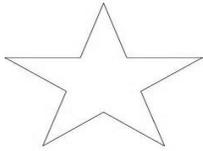
How do I get a ride?

Call the Senior Center at 860-739-5859 **at least 24 hours** in advance of your transportation need. Calling the day you need a ride is likely to be denied. You can also stop in the office to make your reservation or have a family member or friend make the arrangements. When you call for a ride, please know the date and time of your appointment, the name of the location and its address, if you will have a companion riding with you, and if you require the lift in order to access the vehicle. You must have a destination.

It is **strongly** recommended that appointments be given to the office as soon as they are known but please, no



more than two months in advance. Transportation requests are handled on a first come, first served basis but the Senior Center office does prioritize ride requests. The ride priorities are as follows:



1. Medical and dental appointments
2. Other appointments that are time sensitive such as the hairdresser
3. Lunch and Senior Center programs
4. Social visits, personal business and other requests
5. Grocery shopping is on scheduled days – see below

Please keep in mind that there will be times when a request cannot be accommodated because of the number of rides already scheduled. Our office will work with you to come up with an alternate plan. It is important that you tell us if an appointment needs to be re-scheduled or cancelled. The Senior Center office has an answering machine so you can leave a message about the change if we are not here to answer the call.

What happens on the day of my ride?

It depends on what your request is.



For appointments in Town

If you have an appointment in town, please be ready 30 minutes in advance of your scheduled appointment time. If for some reason we have to pick you up earlier than that, we will contact you as early as possible on the day of the appointment. Once you are done with your appointment, call the Senior Center office to let us know you are ready for pick up. We will alert the driver and get to you within a 30 minute window. If for some reason we are delayed, we will contact you so you know we have not forgotten you. It is always helpful for you to bring something to do while you wait. Remember, we are not just transporting you!

For the New London/Waterford run on Monday

The driver leaves the Senior Center at 8:45am to begin picking up passengers. Everyone who is on this run will be going into the New London/Waterford area together. Every week, our passenger list changes so it is impossible for us to provide you with a precise pickup time, so everyone needs to be ready by 8:45am. You can request up to 2 stops but please let us know your main destination. If we can accommodate 2 stops, we will. It normally takes the driver about an hour to pick everyone up before leaving town. If you are making any appointments in this area, please make them between 10am to 11:30am. For passengers that have an appointment, once you are finished, call the Senior Center office. We will notify the driver that you are ready. For all other passengers, the driver will notify you when they will be back to pick you up. Be sure you also understand WHERE your pickup location is.

For the shopping runs on Tuesday and Thursday

For passengers on the Tuesday morning shopping run, the driver begins pickups at 8:45am. Every week our passenger list changes so it is impossible for us to provide you with a precise pickup time, so everyone needs to be ready by 8:45am. You can request up to 3 stops but please let us know your main destination. If we can manage 3 stops, we will.

For passengers on the Tuesday afternoon shopping run, the driver begins pickups at 11:45pm. Every week our passenger list changes so it is impossible for us to provide you with a precise pickup time, so everyone needs to be ready by 11:45pm. You can request up to 3 stops but please let us know your main destination. If we can manage 3 stops, we will.

For passengers on the Thursday afternoon shopping run, the driver begins pickups at 8:45am. Every week our passenger list changes so it is impossible for us to provide you with a precise pickup time, so everyone needs to be ready by 8:45am. You can request up to 3 stops but please let us know your main destination. If we can manage 3 stops, we will.



When you call for your spot on the shopping run, be sure to inform the Office of all stops you need to make. Please be courteous to your other passengers. For example, if you need to run into the bank, have your deposit or withdrawal slip already made out. If you need to run into the pharmacy for a prescription, call ahead of time to ensure that it is ready. At all times, the driver will let you know when the bus will return and where your pickup location will be.

All passengers are asked to limit the number of shopping bags to 4. While the drivers can assist, it is not their responsibility to carry your bags so please only buy what you can personally handle. You will need to set the shopping bags on the inside seat next to you and on the floor below the inside seat next to you.

For every pickup regardless of your destination, please keep an eye out for the Senior Center vehicle. If the driver does not see you come out, they will blow the horn. If the driver still does not see you, they will call the Senior Center office and ask us to phone you. If there is no response to the phone call, the driver will continue on their way. The Senior Center will make a follow-up phone call to make sure everything is all right.

Please note the transit schedule is subject to change. The Senior Center office will contact any passenger registered for our service who is affected by any change in the schedule.

What are my responsibilities?

Be ready for us. Be sure to call us if something changes.

You need to ensure that we have a clear path to you. This includes doorways, sidewalks as well as driveways.

Please refrain from wearing strong perfume or cologne. Please be presentable and clean.

Inform the Office if you travel with a service animal. They are allowed to travel with you, but we would like to share some information with you.

Remember that this service is for everyone. There will be days when we are very busy and we may not be as prompt as you would prefer.

Practice good manners - remember the Golden Rule – “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you!”

You have to remain seated when the bus is in motion. You must wear your seat belt. We can help you, if needed.

Please respect the drivers and understand they have a responsibility to transport you safely. There are going to be times they cannot chat with you.

Don't call the drivers directly or ask them to make changes. We receive a lot of requests and work very hard to keep them organized. When the drivers leave the Senior Center, they have a plan. Making changes “on the fly” does not work. Calling them directly will not change the schedule.



What happens if the weather is bad?

We live in New England and chances are there will be bad weather. We will not operate the vehicles when road conditions are unsafe. Any cancellations on our end will be listed on Channel 3 and Channel 8, and the local radio stations. The Senior Center answering machine will also have an up to date message if transportation is cancelled.





How much does this cost?

The Senior Center office will provide transportation regardless of your ability to pay. If you can afford it, there is a donation box in the Senior Center office. You can drop off any amount during our normal business hours. Please do **not** give money to the drivers. The Senior Center also mails an annual appeal letter to all registered clients. Any amount is greatly appreciated. Please note, the transportation service receives the majority of its funding from the Town of East Lyme.

Can the Senior Center refuse to provide transportation?

The Senior Center is here to assist the residents in Town. However, there are times when we have to refuse the provision of a ride or revoke someone's privileges. If you do not uphold your responsibilities listed that can be cause for refusal of service. In addition, we may refuse transportation for the following reasons:

You are ill or have an acute sickness. Once you are better, you can re-join us. We can help you re-schedule your ride.

During a 6 month period, you fail to show for a scheduled ride 3 times. During a 6 month period, you are late 3 times for a scheduled ride. During a 6 month period, you did not inform the office of a cancelled scheduled ride 3 times. We understand there are times when people forget, however if a pattern develops, you will be notified of our concerns. If the practice continues, you will lose your privilege for 1 month.

In the judgment of the driver, you display objectionable behavior (such as but not limited to, being under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, smoke in the vehicles, engage in any type of violent activity, participate in any form of harassing behavior). You will be given a warning about this behavior. If it happens again, you will no longer be allowed to ride on the Town vehicles.

You are in possession of a weapon or use something as if it is a weapon. No one is ever allowed to be in possession of a weapon or to threaten anyone while riding the Town vehicles. If you are found to be in possession of a weapon, we will immediately ask you to disembark from the vehicle and you will no longer be allowed to ride on the Town vehicles.

If you feel that your transportation privileges have been improperly revoked, you may request, in writing, a meeting with one of the Board Members of the East Lyme Commission on Aging. Please direct this request to the Chairman of the East Lyme Commission on Aging. The request must be received within ten working days of the revocation of services. The Commission on Aging Board Member will respond, in writing, by setting up a hearing with the passenger within 2 weeks of the receipt of the request. At the hearing, the passenger will be asked to present their version of events and can have witnesses, if they choose, available. The Commission on Aging will be provided with a written narrative of events by the Director of the Senior Center.

This is not an all-inclusive list. There can be times when something happens that is not listed above that can potentially affect your status with our transportation service. The Senior Center office will relay to you our concerns if something does come up.

Do you have a suggestion for us? Complaint?

We want to hear from you. You can always call the Senior Center office at 860-739-5859 or write us a letter at: East Lyme Senior Center – 37 Society Road, Niantic, CT 06357.

Reviewed November 2018

