

Assisted Rides for Seniors Proposal

As the head of the State Office on Aging, Lieutenant Governor Henry McMaster has identified the shortage of transportation options for seniors in South Carolina as a priority issue. He believes this issue presents an opportunity for the private sector and the faith community to address this issue through a network of non-profit organizations.

For the past two years, Lieutenant Governor McMaster has discussed this critical issue throughout the state, noting that greater access to transportation is critical to seniors enjoying an enhanced quality of life, which allows them to remain at home safely and independently for as long as possible.

The need for privately operating transportation services is real. The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging (LGOA), in partnership with its 10 Area Agencies on Aging, conducts annual regional and statewide needs assessments. Each year, transportation is identified as the number one unmet need for older South Carolinians. The needs are not currently being met, thereby making it necessary for the private sector to play a critical role in meeting this important need.

Proposed Mission

The mission is to connect volunteers, community professionals, and funders in designing, developing, and implementing an assisted rides program that aid in the independent living needs of older adults in Lexington County.

Proposed Goal

To connect clients to the community by building personal relationships with volunteers, staff, and the community at large, as well as meeting the transportation needs of our older adult community by providing assisted rides.

Services

Provide assisted rides to those individuals age 60 and over in a defined region (Lexington County), who are in need of transportation for essential trips such as medical, shopping, or for other activities that prevent social isolation.

Organizational Action Items (Needs)

A core group of supporters is necessary to establish an organization to coordinate the assisted rides program.

- An attorney is necessary to incorporate the organization, and to obtain non-profit status.
- Obtain funding to establish the organization and to assist in the greater development efforts needed to provide services and to sustain the mission.
- Seek partners to aid in identifying potential volunteers and funding opportunities.
- Hire a minimal staff of paid and/or volunteer coordinators to operate and coordinate the efforts.

- Locate space to host the organization.
- Address legal issues, including volunteer liability.