

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



SoLO
Life
Opportunities

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Chelmsley Wood
Birmingham
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Charity No. 1102297
England Company No.
5025939

Transport and Travel

Category: **members/clients/tenants**

Introduction

Transportation is a discretionary service offered by SoLO.

SoLO strives to be fair to all of its stakeholders. This document sets out its policy and guidelines for the provision of transport.

Policy Statement

SoLO recognises that for some of its **members/clients/tenants** there is a need to provide transport. This is to ensure equality of provision and access. Those **members/clients/tenants** who have no other means of accessing the service will be given transport where funding allows, in compliance with our transport criteria.

Wherever possible SoLO will take into account the needs of the children, young people and adults by ensuring that the provision of transport is:

- Fair to all – giving equal access
- Safe

Transportation is a very costly service and there is no general obligation upon SoLO to provide transport. However, SoLO recognises that, for some **members/clients/tenants**, volunteers and staff transportation is essential to enable them to access our services. SoLO will do everything possible to provide transport for those who need it within the limitations of the funding available.

Volunteers are entitled to and will be encouraged to claim for 'out of pocket' transport expenses to a maximum amount of the equivalent of a day saver.

All of SoLO's services are tailored to meet the needs of the **members/clients/tenants** who attend them, and the needs for transportation are taken into account when setting up projects and budgeting. When transport is provided it should be taken from the appropriate budget.

SoLO is able to provide transport for a wider range of **members/clients/tenants** by:

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- Obtaining additional external funding for specific services
- Obtaining additional external funding for specific groups of service users (e.g. those living in particular wards)
- Volunteers or staff providing transport for individuals.
- Parents and Carers paying for the transportation

Every attempt will be made to ensure that **members/clients/tenants** who are able to travel safely **and** independently will be encouraged to do so.

Occasionally, when additional transport is provided, a nominal sum representing part of the cost of the transport will be requested from the **members/clients/tenants** or their parents and carers. In these cases, they will be notified beforehand.

SoLO will do everything possible to ensure that transport is provided for the **members/clients/tenants** who meet the criteria. Staff will assist anyone who requests help in filling out of forms and appeals in respect of transport provided by SoLO.

Staff

SoLO staff may be provided transport in exceptional circumstances, e.g. when asked to cover for another member of staff working on a project that they cannot get to or arrive on time for without being provided with a taxi; or to enable a disabled employee to fulfill certain duties.

Occasionally, staff may provide transport for **members/clients/tenants** within their own vehicle (this needs to be properly risk assessed and authorised beforehand). Staff can do this only if they have provided proof of personal and business use insurance to do so (they will be required to confirm this). On these occasions, SoLO staff will be reimbursed for 'out of pocket' transport expenses. This allowance for this will be in line with our current mileage rate which is set at a fixed rate each year.

Volunteers

Some volunteers may provide transport as part of their voluntary work – particularly in the case **of** special events. They can only do this, if they have provided proof of insurance to do so. This must include personal and business use (they will be required to confirm this).

SoLO volunteers will be reimbursed for 'out of pocket' transport expenses. For car owners who incur costs in the course of their voluntary work a mileage allowance is available. This allowance is set at a fixed rate each year.

If exceptional circumstances require a volunteer to travel by taxi the cost will be reimbursed provided that prior agreement has been awarded by an appropriate project manager.

Criteria

SoLO has a transport criteria which applies to the provision of transport and this is provided to every **members/lient/tenant** or, in the case of children, to their parents and carers, prior to the scheme and the allocation of transport will be agreed on this basis.

There is an appeal process, if the **member/client/tenant** or their parent or carer is not happy with the way in which the criteria has been applied to them, and this is contained within the criteria documentation.

Change of Address

If a **member/client/tenant** moves address, following transport being allocated, this may affect the provision of transport. Whilst we will make every effort possible to accommodate the service user on a new transport route, it will be subject to availability.

Change of Venue

If we have to change a service venue we will review individual eligibility for transport.

Travelling Time

SoLO will endeavour to **try to** restrict travel time to less than one hour for each journey, particularly for passengers with special needs. This may mean mini-buses, coaches, taxis are not full.

SAFETY

Drivers

Minibus drivers provided by SoLO or other voluntary organisations will have been trained to a MIDAS standard (**or equivalent**) and travelling under their organisations permit (under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985).

Anyone driving a minibus for SoLO must be over 21, hold a clean, full driving licence for 2 years and undertake a MIDAS (**or equivalent**) minibus driving test.

All drivers employed by SoLO will be DBS checked and reference checked. Where ever possible drivers hired from other organisations will have been similarly checked by their organisation.

Drivers, when driving for SoLO, must not consume any alcohol 12 hours before or during their driving duties.

Escorts

All escorts (paid or voluntary) travelling with our **members/clients/tenants** will be DBS checked and reference checked.

Children and vulnerable young people will be accompanied by a SoLO support worker who will act as an escort for the journey.

Vulnerable adults will be assessed and provided with an escort if appropriate.

Vehicles

SoLO owns one minibus and also contracts external companies and charities to provide transport. They will be a reputable provider and references will be sought.

If any of the drivers responsible for driving during the projects are in any way unhappy about the safety or suitability of the vehicles they have been asked to drive they must report their concerns to the appropriate project leader or manager at SoLO immediately. If the person cannot be contacted the driver should not risk either himself or others and drive the bus before it has passed as fit for purpose by an approved mechanic.

Staff and Volunteers using their own vehicles to transport service users must ensure that their vehicle is roadworthy and checks have been made on oil, water, and fuel.

Safety during journeys

members/clients/tenants will be transported in a safe manner:

- Prior to all journeys the driver will complete the SoLO mini-bus check-list.
- Wheelchairs will be clamped on and checked by drivers in line with their MIDAS training.
- All occupants will wear seatbelts and this will be checked by the escorts.
- Drivers must not carry more passengers than there are seat belts.
- Babies and very young children must be seated in an appropriate child seat. Parents of child under the height of 135 cms will be encouraged to provide an appropriate car seat/booster seat and this will be fitted to the vehicle for the journey if possible.
- Where possible, **members/clients/tenants** and escorts should sit in the rear of the vehicle.
- Escorts should have easy access to the vehicle door.

The driver will not depart until he or she is satisfied that the vehicle and its passengers are safe.

The escort will be provided with:

- The dates, times of the day and pick up/drop off points for the journeys.
- Contact numbers for the project leader and other emergency numbers.
- Needs assessment (**including medical needs**) and emergency consent forms for each **member/client/tenant**
- A high visibility jacket to be worn when escorting a large number of people who need to be (i) physically escorted off the bus including wheelchair users; or (ii) who have challenging behaviour; or (iii) who have been risk assessed accordingly.

Drivers and escorts must not smoke whilst carrying **members/clients/tenants** for SoLO projects.

- When dropping a **member/client/tenant** at their home, the support worker, escort or volunteer must ensure that they are safely in their home before leaving. In the case of a minor, they must not leave the child or young person until they are assured that an appropriate adult is at home. Escorts will accompany **members/clients/tenants** to their front door, or knock on the front door and ask parents/carers to collect the member from the bus, and follow any risk assessments as appropriate. **The member/client/tenant should not be left with anybody other than who has been indicated to by the carer, if this arises the escort should contact the SoLO office for authorisation.**

In the event of a fire, the Driver and Escort must follow the procedures in SoLO's Fire Safety Policy and are responsible for:

- the safe evacuation of **members/clients/tenants**
- contacting parents and carers and informing SoLO's On-Call Staff Member
- arranging safe transportation home of **members/clients/tenants**. In the first instance determining whether parents/carers are able to collect members and liaising with SoLO's On-Call to organise taxis for any remaining members
- completing an Incident Report or logging the incident in the Fire Log Book
- Fire fighting equipment will be checked on an annual basis. The equipment on SoLO's minibus will be checked on a regular basis

In the event of a seizure or emergency medical situation:-

- The Escort and Driver should follow procedures in SoLO's Emergency Treatment Policy. In the event of a seizure the driver should pull over somewhere safely and call Emergency Services and wait for them. The Escort should inform the parents/carers.

In the event of an accident, the Escort and Driver should follow the procedures outlined:

- Escort and driver must call 999
- Escort and driver must check on safety of **members/clients/tenants**
- Evacuate where they can to a safe place
- Escort and driver must contact SoLO's on call person and then parents/carers at first available opportunity
- Escort and driver must make arrangements for safe transportation home of members

Staff or Volunteers Providing Transport for **members/clients/tenants**

Where transport is provided in volunteer or staff cars, drivers must provide SoLO with evidence of a good driving record and insurance for personal business use. SoLO will pay the cost of this insurance if it incurs an additional premium (where it is deemed to be cost effective). Where appropriate an escort will be provided. A full risk assessment will be carried out to ascertain if an escort is required. If an escort is required but not available, SoLO will provide a taxi so that the staff member or **member/client/tenant** they will be reimbursed at the current mileage rate.

SAFETY

Members/clients/tenants travelling by Taxi from Project

Some members/clients/tenants are dropped off and picked up from SoLO projects by taxi on their own. It is the responsibility of their parents or carers to arrange the taxi as most projects do not provide transport unless stated.

SoLo have a duty of care to ensure that the member/client/tenant is delivered safely into the taxi, and then the duty of care is passed on to the taxi driver to ensure that the member/client/tenant is delivered safely to the agreed destination. SoLo staff are not responsible for the member once they are safely in their taxi but they must ensure that they are in the correct taxi that has been booked for them and that any concerns related to the safety of the members are addressed before relinquishing responsibility.

If a member/client/tenant is being picked up by taxi then this must be communicated to project staff with the taxi booking details and recorded. If this is a regular arrangement then the details must be recorded in the members/clients/tenants profile.

The taxi booking details required are:

- The name of the taxi firm booked and their contact details
- The time booked for pick up
- The name it is booked for and the destination
- The payment arrangements

Before the member/client/tenant gets into a taxi when it arrives project staff must:

- Check the taxi firm is correct
- Ask the driver for the name and destination they are booked for
- Check the ID badge of the taxi and driver (taxi's are legally bound to display their ID number and a photocard of the driver)
- Check for any issues that may be a concern to the members/clients/tenants safety (e.g. any visual faults to vehicle, seatbelt not working)

Only when staff are satisfied that the details are correct and there are no apparent issues should the member/client/tenant be authorised to leave in the taxi.

If staff are not satisfied about the details they should refer to the Project Leader who can contact the parents/carers and/or taxi firm for further confirmation. The Project leader should explain to the taxi driver that they must confirm the details in order to safeguard our vulnerable members from harm or potential harm.

If there are any further issues then the Project Leader can contact the Project Managers or SMT or on call if out of hours.

Member/client/tenant being picked up from project

Some members/clients/tenants are dropped off and picked up from project by family members, friends or carers. Solo have a duty of care to ensure that the member/client/tenant is safely released from SoLO's care.

If a member/client/tenant is being picked up then this must be communicated to project staff along with the details of the person picking them up. If this is a regular arrangement then this must be recorded in the members profile.

The details staff will need to know are:

- The name of the person picking them up
- Their relationship to the member
- The details of the care agency or transport agency if someone has been employed to pick up (with ID confirmation where possible)
- Time expected to pick up

When the person has arrived to pick up the member/client/tenant then Project staff should check:

- The details match the person picking up
- If the member/client/tenant recognises them
- care or transport agency ID badge

If staff have any concerns that the details do not match or concerns regarding the safety of the member/client/tenant leaving with this person then they must refer to the Project Leader who can contact the main parent/carers or the care/transport agency for confirmation.

If there are any further concerns then the Project Leader can contact the Project Managers or SMT or on call if out of hours.

Members/clients/tenants travelling to and from project independently

Some members/clients/tenants walk and/or use public transport to get to and from project. SoLO have a duty of care to members/clients/tenants while they are on project but once they have left the project base they are no longer supported by staff. Any member/client/tenant who travels independently must have this recorded in their care plan and agreed by their main care provider. We want to ensure that members/clients/tenants who travel independently are fully able to do so as safely as possible.

Solo staff will need to know:

- what mode of transport will be used (ie walk/bus/train/bus and walk)
- what time will they usually arrive and leave project
- what route will they usually take (ie bus routes, roads and crossings used)
- what will they do if they experience any difficulties while travelling
- agreed action plans with main carer if there are any concerns (e.g. not arriving at destination by expected time)

When the member/client/tenant leaves project staff can check with them that they are confident and familiar with their route, and address any obvious factors that might hinder their journey (such as bad weather, known traffic delays). Staff should make a note of the time they have left.

If staff have any concerns about a member/client/tenant travelling independently they should discuss immediately with the Project Leader who can contact the main care provider or emergency contact or Project Manager/office/on call (if out of hours) for advice and guidance on what action to take.

EFFICIENCY AND VALUE FOR MONEY

When using hiring vehicles, drivers and escorts, SoLO will consider the following when deciding on suppliers:

- Quality of vehicles
- Quality of staff
- Reliability
- Competitive prices

We will do this by:

- Taking advice and references from other organisations that regularly use transport providers for similar client groups, e.g. Solihull MBC transport officer, SoLO.
- Taking note of comments received through evaluation from **members/clients/tenants**, staff and volunteers.
- Comparing prices from different companies and charities
- Considering other costs e.g. length of time we would need to pay an escort

The final decision will be based on a balance of quality, efficiency and cost effectiveness.

EVALUATION

SoLO will evaluate the transportation during the standard evaluation of the overall project. If appropriate, amendments to provision will be made based on evaluation evidence.

TRAINING

Staff and volunteers will receive instruction on this policy at a level appropriate to their role.

Additional Information

Rules regarding child safety seats were checked on the internet. The RAC guide to child safety seats, when and how they should be used, is available to project managers (www.rac.co.uk/web/knowhow).

Linked with:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and criteria:

- Health and Safety
- Personal Safety
- Complaints
- Grievance
- Fire Safety
- Emergency Treatment
- Transport Criteria

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TRANSPORT REQUEST FORM

Free transport can only be provided to those who meet the criteria outlined below.

Applicants will be required to explain precisely how they satisfy these requirements.

- Those with no family vehicle at all and not able to access the activity on foot or by public transport due to disability, and would suffer financial hardship if transport was not made available. A taxi or minibus will be arranged.

- Those with no family vehicle at all who can use public transport, but would suffer financial hardship if transport costs were not met. Bus fares will be reimbursed

I, **request transport for my child..... on the following dates.....**
.....

I feel that I meet the criteria for free transport because....

(Please state your reason(s) relating to one or more of the above criteria – provide as much information as possible)

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.....

I do not meet the criteria for free transport, but cannot transport my child myself and will pay the-£12.50 per day

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**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO
Children’s Project Manager, SoLO Life Opportunities, 38 Walnut Close
Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham B37 7PU**