

Blair Senior Services, Inc. Transportation Program Service Guide

Blair Senior Services provides transportation for residents of Blair County to anywhere within Blair County. A fleet of 36 wheelchair lift equipped vehicles provide, on average, over 450 one way trips per day to people with special transportation needs. This guide includes policies and procedures, rules and regulations, and guidelines for using the transportation system.

Blair Senior Services provides a door-to-door, shared ride transportation service. Shared ride is unlike a taxi or limousine service. Consumers share the vehicle with other passengers going in similar directions at similar times.

Blair Senior Services' Transportation Office is open Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The office is closed Saturday, Sunday and the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, The Day After Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Please Note - Same day service is not provided.

Who is eligible to ride?

The Pennsylvania Shared Ride Program is a program for people age 65 and older. Individuals can ride for any trip purpose to any location within Blair County. The State pays for 85% of the total trip cost and the remaining 15% is paid through rider copays and AAA sponsorship.

Transportation services are available to individuals between the ages of 60 and 64, to Senior Centers, medical facilities, and some select locations. Transportation Office staff can assist with trip reservations. The trip cost, less the rider copay, is covered by the AAA sponsorship.

The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP), through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, can arrange and pay for medical trips for people meeting the program guidelines. The Blair Senior Services' MATP Department can be reached at 695-3500 with any questions concerning eligibility or applications.

The Persons with Disabilities (PwD) Program is available for consumers between the ages of 18-64, and is a reduced fare transportation program for people with disabilities that are not covered by other programs. Transportation Office staff can assist with the application process.

Blair Senior Services also provides complimentary paratransit services for AMTRAN. People who live within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of an AMTRAN route may qualify to ride. Application and approval questions can be directed to AMTRAN staff at 944-4074.

General Public Transportation is available for any individual who does not fit into one of the above-mentioned programs. There is no sponsorship for trip costs, so the rider must pay full fare at the time they board the vehicle.

What do I need when I call to schedule a trip?

- Your full formal name, which will be entered in our computer system. Please refrain from using middle names, nicknames, etc.
- Your appointment date and time, including the time you wish to arrive at your destination.
- Your destination's address.
- The name of the doctor, facility or destination of the trip that you are requesting.
- Any mobility device you may be using.
- If you will have an escort with you.
- The time you will need to be picked up for the return trip, if necessary.

You may call up to two weeks in advance, but no later than 2:00 p.m. one business day prior to your appointment. Blair Senior Services does not offer "same day service" and trips that need to be scheduled the same day may require a premium copay.

You are not limited to one round trip per day. If time and vehicle availability permit, multiple trips may be scheduled. You can also set up a "subscription", which is defined as a trip or series of trips that occur at the same time, same location and same day of the week over the course of several weeks. An example would be a beauty shop appointment that occurs every Friday at 9:45. This trip series can be entered into the computer system so they will automatically be generated and eliminate the need to call in every week.

BSS Transportation has a reminder service to make your trips even easier!

Starting June 4, 2018, each evening before your scheduled ride, you will receive an automated call to remind you of the details of your trip – your destination and time for pickup. If your plans have changed, you'll have the option to cancel on the spot. Once you cancel a trip via the reminder service, you cannot add the trip back in the following business day.

The day of your trip, you'll receive another reminder call that your van is just 15 minutes from your door. Once again, if your plans have changed, you can cancel without needing to make a phone call.

If your phone number has been changed, please be certain to update our staff. Thank you!

If you should you need to cancel a trip, please call the Transportation Office as soon as possible during regular office hours. If you need to cancel a trip the same day, you may call the office as early as 7:00 a.m.

How much will my trip cost?

Total fare costs are based on mileage, the distance from your front door to the door of your destination. The Transportation Office staff can calculate the cost of your trip at the time of the reservation. You must pay the driver when you board the vehicle or the trip may be denied.

What happens on the day of my trip?

At the time of your reservation, you will be given a “window” of time during which the driver will arrive to pick you up. You should be ready and watching for the driver during that time. The driver will, upon arrival, knock on the door or ring the doorbell. The driver can wait a maximum of five minutes at the pick-up location and will have office staff contact you by phone if he/she cannot locate you. After five minutes, the driver may be instructed to designate your trip as a “no show” and continue on with the schedule. We may not be able to come back later.

Blair Senior Services provides “door-to-door” service, which means the driver will accompany passengers from the door of the origin to the door of the destination. The driver is unable to go “through the door” at either a pick up or drop off location.

All vehicles are equipped with lifts that can handle a total combined weight of the mobility device and consumer up to 850 pounds and can accommodate a mobility device size up to 30” x 48”. Any mobility device larger or heavier, may be unable to accommodate.

Passengers, who are not in a wheelchair but use other mobility aids, or who cannot safely use the steps, may use the wheelchair lift to board the vehicle.

All passengers are required to wear seatbelts or the appropriate securement system. Blair Senior Services’ drivers will assist you if you are unable to fasten your own seatbelt. Refusal to use a restraint system could result in denial of service.

Should you need to bring any items onto the vehicle, such as groceries from a shopping trip, the driver is only able to provide assistance with what can be reasonably carried in one trip.

During inclement weather, it may be necessary to cancel your trip or modify your pick up location based upon the driver’s judgment. You will be contacted by phone to be made aware of the situation.

The goal of scheduling is to make the most efficient use of the vehicles to ensure that the service is available to as many people as possible. At the same time, each consumer should experience service that is sensible and appropriate to his or her needs. If you feel your trip

is unreasonably long or illogically scheduled, please call 695-3500 and ask to speak to a supervisor to express your concern.

Summary of Blair Senior Services' Transportation Program

When scheduling a trip:

- Reservations for the next business day must be made no later than 2:00 p.m. one business day prior to your appointment.
- Trips may only be scheduled two weeks in advance.

When riding:

- You must be ready when the van arrives. If you are not ready within five minutes of the van's arrival, the van will leave and will not return.
- You must pay each fare as a one way trip. Have correct change ready when you board the van. Drivers will not be able to accept round trip fares. This assures that your account is correctly credited.
- When shopping, the number of bags must be limited to what you and the driver can reasonably carry in one trip to your door. Drivers will not enter your home. No exceptions.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 695-3500; toll free at (800) 458-5552; TDD 949-4856.

Transportation Service Guidelines and Policies

- Blair Senior Services does not provide "emergency" or ambulance service.
- Profanity or abusive language is not permitted.
- Weapons of any type are not permitted.
- Smoking is not permitted in the vehicle.
- No standing or exiting while the vehicle is in motion.
- Pets are not permitted. Consumers may travel with service animals that have been trained to assist. Service animals include guide dogs or other animals that provide aid to people with vision, hearing or mobility impairments. The client should inform the call taker at the time of reservation if they are traveling with a service animal.
- Service may be suspended or refused to individuals who engage in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct that affects the driver or other passengers.
- Unacceptable personal hygiene may result in a suspension of service.
- Passengers who are required to pay a fare must have exact change and pay when boarding the vehicle. "Round trip" payment is not permitted.
- Consumers are responsible for notifying the Transportation Office of any address or phone number changes. Any changes in mobility status should also be communicated.

Transportation Payments

Blair Senior Services, Inc. cannot allow consumers to be billed at the end of the month for transportation services. Payment of the fare is required when you board the van for your trip.

- When scheduling your trip, please be sure to ask for the exact fare for each stop of your entire trip.
- We ask that the exact fare is provided as our drivers do not provide change. Their primary focus is passenger safety.
- Since the trip charges occur at each stop/drop-off for your individual trip, consumers must pay for each individual stop/drop-off as it occurs. Round trip payments cannot be accepted.

The following steps will be taken for consumers who do not pay before boarding the van:

- First Occurrence will require a verbal warning
- Second Occurrence will require a written warning
- Third Occurrence will result in the trip being denied

If you are currently a consumer who is billed and have questions or need assistance with this transition, please contact Dennis Wisor or Craig Russell at the Blair Senior Services' Transportation Office at 695-3500.