

Disabled Veteran's Transportation



A volunteer driver program of Catholic Community Services providing no-cost door-through-door transportation to veterans with a disability residing in Snohomish County.

How the program works:

- ▶ Client Enrollment: veterans call our client intake line and CCS staff complete a simple application over the phone. We mail them a Client Consent Form which they sign and return to us with a copy of their COVID vaccination card.
- ▶ Volunteer Driver registration: volunteers complete a comprehensive application process, which includes three references, proof of insurance and vehicle registration, a clean driving record, clean WSP and NSOPW background checks, as well as an in-person orientation and a vehicle inspection and driving test.
- ▶ Once clients are enrolled they call our Transportation Line to request their rides. We require one week's notice for ride requests. The rides are entered into the RideScheduler system and drivers select the rides they want online. Drivers use their own vehicles to drive clients and report their hours and miles each month for mileage reimbursement.

Service stats

- ▶ Disabled Veteran's Transportation program has been serving local veterans since its inception in 2011.

The following statistics reflect service since 12/14 when we transitioned to RideScheduler software:

- ▶ 11,032 one-way boardings
- ▶ 364,961 miles
- ▶ 20,300 volunteer hours
- ▶ 116 Veterans served
- ▶ 90% male/10% female
- ▶ Age range 28 years to 98 years



Looking back at COVID-19...



- ▶ From the very start of the pandemic, we retained volunteers who never stopped driving veteran clients.
 - ▶ For the time period of March 1, 2020 through February 28, 2022
 - ▶ 1,352 one-way boardings
 - ▶ 44,072 miles
 - ▶ 2,469 volunteer hours
- ▶ Extreme safety measures were put into place: Both driver and passengers to wear masks. Passenger to sit in back seat whenever possible. Vehicle must be be wiped down before and after each trip: door handles, seatbelt, seats, dashboard. CCS provided any/all PPE that the drivers needed.
- ▶ All drivers and most clients have provided proof of COVID vaccination

What makes this program special?

- ▶ The only no-cost transportation option that will cross county lines in order to drive veterans to their essential medical appointments.
- ▶ Often the only transportation option for rural vets who have no services near where they live.
- ▶ Door-through-door service makes trips safe and convenient - clients with a disability don't have to wait lengthy times or be waiting outdoors at bus stops in inclement weather.
- ▶ Many of our drivers are also Vets and they enjoy sharing their experiences.

What our veteran clients say about the program...

- ▶ “Just the fact that a lot of kind people take their valuable time to volunteer to help those that need the help. I would be lost without Catholic Community Services.” *Dennis D., Port Susan*
- ▶ “Thank you for this wonderful service.” *Eugene P., Everett*
- ▶ “Reliability; friendly, knowledgeable, safe drivers.” *Don B., Monroe, WA*
- ▶ “During Covid, I would not have been able to take care of my needs without my volunteer driver. I am most grateful and humbled. I like feeling safe when out in public places.” *Mike C., Mill Creek*
- ▶ “They wait patiently for me to grocery shop and even help me get my groceries to my second floor apartment. The drivers are always polite and very friendly.” *Taylor D., Everett*
- ▶ “I like the feeling of confidence that I can get to and from my destinations. Always on time. Thank you, and please continue to help us veterans.” *Randolph H., Everett*

Final thoughts....



Disabled Veteran's Transportation, is a small program, but an essential one. It is often the only option for veterans living rurally, with mobility or PTSD issues, or needing out-of-county transportation.

We request a high priority ranking that will allow us to continue this necessary program for our local veterans and get them where they need to go, safely.

Last month, KOMO4 ran a lovely story featuring our program - Enjoy!

<https://komonews.com/news/home-of-the-brave/army-veteran-catholic-community-services-everett-ccse-vietnam-era-veteran-private-sector-lab-job-transportation-coordinator-check-in-clinic-va-hospital-seattle>