

Senior Rides Program
(SB 294 & HB 626, Chapters 112 and 113, Acts of 2004)

A Report to the Maryland General Assembly

Maryland Department of Transportation
Maryland Transit Administration

MSAR #2407
November 2023

Introduction

This report was prepared in response to Senate Bill 294 and House Bill 626, enacted as Chapters 112 and 113, Acts of 2004. The language requiring this report is as follows:

"The Maryland Transit Administration, on or before November 1 of each year, shall submit to the General Assembly, subject to §2-1246 of the State Government Article, an evaluation of the Maryland Senior Rides Demonstration Program. The evaluation shall include the number, size, type, and location of the projects funded by the Program; the extent to which the Program is filling the need for door-to-door transportation for low- income to moderate-income seniors as those terms are defined in §7-1001 of the Transportation Article as enacted by this Act; any innovations in public-private cooperation and risk management that result from the Program; and any other information necessary to effectively evaluate the Program."

Background

During the 2004 session, the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation that established the Senior Rides Demonstration Program (SRDP) within the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). The provisions of the law that established the SRDP specified that the program would take effect beginning July 1, 2005, at the beginning of State Fiscal Year 2006. The one-year delay in implementation allowed the MTA sufficient time to develop the procedures, policies, and criteria for the program. The legislation set a maximum annual grant amount for the SRDP of \$400,000; however, the FY 2006 budget for the Program as approved provided the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) \$100,000 for distribution statewide by the MTA. All grants require the grantees to contribute a 25% match. The following organizations are eligible to apply for SRDP funding:

- government agencies;
- nonprofit entities; and
- faith-based agencies that provide transportation services and are exempt from taxation under §501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

To be eligible for a SRDP grant, an applicant must submit a proposal for a project that:

- provides door-to-door transportation for low-income to moderate-income seniors who have difficulty accessing or using other existing transportation services;
- uses primarily volunteer drivers who drive their own vehicles;
- uses a dispatching system to respond quickly to requests from eligible seniors for door-to-door transportation; and
- defines a geographic area for which door-to-door transportation is provided. Service may be provided to eligible seniors who do not reside in the geographic area as it is defined in the application, so long as service is not diminished to seniors who do reside in the target geographic area.

MTA staff anticipated that statewide, up to five projects would be approved for grants totaling \$100,000 in State funds in one or more of the following areas: the Baltimore Metropolitan Area; the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area; Western Maryland; Southern Maryland; and the Eastern Shore. To ensure equitable distribution of funds throughout the State, each award would be approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000 depending on the specific characteristics of each proposed project. Each grantee is required to submit quarterly reports as well as an annual report to the MTA.

Legislative Changes to the Senior Rides Program (SRP)

During the 2007 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, legislation was passed into law that adjusted the SRP's framework. Passage of House Bill 1189 (enacted as Chapter 268, Acts of 2007), resulted in the word "Demonstration" being removed from the program's official name. Effective October 1, 2007, the official name of the program became the Senior Rides Program (SRP). Chapter 268 also provided a 25 percent increase (from \$400,000 to \$500,000) in the annual amount of grants that can be distributed through the program. In addition, Chapter 268 removed all caps on the number of grants an applicant may receive in a single year, total number of grants an applicant may receive from the program, dollar amount a single applicant may receive, and dollar amount a geographic area may receive.

During the 2023 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 511 and House Bill 596 (Chapter 331, Acts of 2023) passed which, among other things, repealed the \$500,000 cap on the amount of grants that may be awarded under the Program. State budgetary constraints have kept the annual appropriation at a lower level.

Table 1 below shows SRP annual appropriations over the past 17 years (the first year, FY2006 was the demonstration program):

Table 1

SENIOR RIDES PROGRAM ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| FY 2007 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 | FY 2010 | FY 2011 | FY 2012 | FY 2013 | FY2014 |
| \$91,949 | \$122,375 | \$125,113 | \$132,919 | \$177,360 | \$175,897 | \$187,497 | \$187,487 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| FY 2015 | FY 2016 | FY 2017 | FY 2018 | FY 2019 | FY 2020 | FY 2021 | FY2022 | FY2023 |
| \$187,118 | \$187,030 | \$187,091 | \$187,091 | \$187,091 | \$187,091 | \$187,091 | \$187,091 | \$187,091 |

Process for the Senior Ride Program (SRP)

During the first program year, a process was established for SRP implementation. This included program outreach in which announcement letters were mailed to prospective applicants; application distribution meetings were held statewide; an application review committee was established; and awards were granted. The MTA continued using this process for the program in succeeding years and plans to do so in the future.

The funding process for FY 2023 SRP was conducted according to the following timeline:

- **January 21, 2022:** SRP program outreach began.
An announcement letter to apply for funding was mailed to:
 - Government agencies
 - Section 5310¹ mailing list that consists of non-profit entities, faith-based agencies,
 - Area Agency on Aging list, and
 - Retired Senior volunteer programs
- **February 3, 2022:** MTA presented a webinar on the FY 2023 Senior Rides Grant Application Process
- **January/February 2022:** MTA received questions and provided answers regarding the program
- **April 8, 2022:** Applications were due to MTA (because of continued COVID-19 restrictions via the MTA ProjectWise or via email to program manager)
- **April/May 2022:**
 - Application reviewed by committee members
 - Application Review Committee Meeting
 - Recommendations were submitted to MDOT and the State Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation (SCCHST) for grant awards. There was a total of nine applications submitted. All nine applications were approved for funding.
- **June 2022:** Notification of awards for FY 2023 was made to nine agencies whose applications were approved.
- **July 2022:** Grant funds for FY 2023 were disbursed.

¹ "Section 5310" refers to a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant program established under Section 5310 of Title 49 of the United States Code. Section 5310 provides grants for transportation services for elderly and disabled persons.

FY 2023 SRP Grant Awards

Nine applications were submitted requesting a total amount of \$285,365 in grant for existing or new senior transportation service programs. Based on the established scoring criteria and evaluation, the committee determined that all nine of the projects were eligible for full funding. Because of flat funding of \$187,091 since 2017, most of the applicants were only able to be partially funded. Each year, the demand for senior transportation programs increases and with that the demand for funding rises as well.

The awardees for FY 2023 are as follows:

- Action in Maturity, Inc. – Agency award: \$18,275 [Requested \$22,500]
- Caring Carroll, Inc. (new in FY2023) – Agency award: \$12,750 [Requested \$15,000]
- Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. – Agency award: \$9,960 [Requested \$20,000]
- LifeStyles of Maryland Foundation – Agency award: \$16,150 [Requested \$40,000]
- Neighbor Ride, Inc. – Agency award: \$33,640 [Requested \$33,640]
- Partners In Care² – Agency award: \$57,240 [Requested 150,000]
- St. Mary's County Dept. of Aging – Agency award: \$11,900 [Requested \$22,100]
- Wilson Ministry Center (Getting There Ride Share) – Agency award: \$14,425 [Requested \$22,100]
- Worcester Commission on Aging – Agency award: \$9,751 [Requested \$10,125]

The program grants were awarded in June 2023 for FY 2024. Following the announcements of the awards, a grant agreement with program guidelines for reporting statistical data and requesting reimbursement was sent to each grantee, and grant agreements were executed with the grantees.

Transportation Service Provided During FY 2023

This information is based on the operations reports provided by the grantees.

During FY 2023 and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, services continued to be provided to low to moderate-income seniors, including, transportation to medical appointments, social and recreation activities, and food and supply delivery.

² Partners In Care's grant reflects the grantee operating Senior Ride services in four jurisdictions: Anne Arundel, Frederick, Caroline and Talbot counties.

Trips Provided

The return to normal operations continued following the pandemic. The SRP grantees provided a total of 52,422 one-way trips to low and moderate-income seniors. The number of trips provided by each individual grantee during FY 2023 ranged from 61 trips to more than 21,900 trips for the year. The grantees' programs accumulated more than 394,700 miles and 33,850 hours of service. These miles and hours are directly attributable to senior transportation and other services provided. The miles and hours also include a small percentage of miles and hours reported by a very small number of paid drivers that participated in the program.

Table 2 shows the annual totals for the program's 17th year, for one-way trips provided, senior-ride miles, and senior-ride hours.

Table 2
TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED,
SENIOR RIDES PROGRAM,
FY 2023

| <u>Transportation Services</u> | <u>Total, Nine Grantees</u> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | FY 2023 |
| One-Way Trips | 52,422 |
| Senior-Ride | 394,709 |
| Senior-Ride | 33,877 |

The hours reported for the SRP include any time that the driver spent ensuring that the senior arrived at his or her specific destination. This includes, for example, ensuring that the senior got to a medical office within a large medical complex.

In FY 2023, the grantees continued to see improvements in service by providing more trips, traveling more miles and accumulating more hours as compared to FY 2022. There were 2,498 seniors transported; 733 more seniors than FY 2022. During the pandemic, several agencies switched from driving seniors to delivering food and supplies to those seniors in FY 2020, FY 2021, FY 2022; several agencies continued the practice in FY 2023, along with transporting passengers.

Table 3 below compares the five years in terms of trips provided and miles and hours accumulated.

**Table 3
TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED**

SENIOR RIDES PROGRAM, FY 2018, FY 2019, FY 2020, FY 2021, FY 2022

| <u>Transportation Services</u> | FY 2019 | FY 2020 | FY 2021 | FY 2022 | FY 2023 |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| One-Way Trips | 43,161 | 30,769 | 26,296 | 32,854 | 52,422 |
| Senior-Ride Miles | 381,230 | 308,974 | 214,391 | 323,584 | 394,709 |
| Senior-Ride Hours | 39,691 | 26,711 | 22,358 | 27,113 | 33,877 |

As stated above, the grantees provided transportation and/or services for 2,498 individual seniors during FY 2023; 733 more seniors served than in 2022. These were seniors with needs for access to medical appointments, trips for shopping and/or to religious services, frail or vision-impaired seniors who need an escort to travel, and seniors with needs for ongoing therapy or medical treatment. Many of these seniors are not able to rely on family, friends, or neighbors for their transportation needs. The SRP provides an alternative transportation service that allows the participating seniors to access needed services and to remain connected to their communities.

Table 4 shows the total number of seniors transported by grantee for FY 2023. 2,498 individual seniors as compared to 1,765 individual seniors who were served in FY 2022. This increase continues to be a measured recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and an aging population in the State. A continued increase in SRP ridership is expected for future fiscal years.

**Table 4
INDIVIDUAL SENIORS SERVED IN FY 2023**

| <u>Grantee</u> | <u>Seniors Transported</u> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Action in Maturity | 532 |
| Caring Carroll, Inc. | 66 |
| Comprehensive Housing Assistance | 52 |
| LifeStyles of Maryland Foundation | 241 |
| Neighbor Ride | 576 |
| Partners In Care | 893 |
| St. Mary's County Dept. of Aging | 48 |
| Wilson Ministry Center | 65 |
| Worcester Commission on Aging | 25 |
| Total | 2,498 |

Seniors Transported

Among the grantees, 579 volunteer drivers participated in FY 2023. The ability to attract and retain volunteers is essential for the program's success. The slow recovery from the COVID-19 global pandemic remained challenging for some grantees in FY 2023; however, most of the agencies continued to regain near pre-pandemic levels.

The programs funded by the SRP involve mostly volunteers transporting seniors in the volunteers' personal vehicles. Many of the volunteers provided the transportation service without any reimbursement or payment from the SRP grantee; however, a few grantees reported that an arrangement of reimbursement is available.

Table 5 shows the number of drivers by grantee for FY 2023.

Table 5
SENIOR RIDES PROGRAM DRIVERS
FY 2023

| Grantee | Volunteer Drivers | Paid Drivers | Total Drivers |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Action in Maturity | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Caring Carroll | 35 | 0 | 35 |
| Comprehensive Housing | 9 | 1 | 10 |
| LifeStyles of Maryland | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| Neighbor Ride | 261 | 0 | 261 |
| Partners in Care | 232 | 0 | 232 |
| St. Mary's County Aging | 13 | 1 | 14 |
| Wilson Ministry Center | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| Worcester COA | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| TOTAL | 579 (98%) | 10 (2%) | 590 (100%) |

Fees for Transportation Service

The cost of the transportation service for the participating seniors ranges from no-cost to modest. Where fees are charged, they range from a cost per hour for the trip, to a sliding mileage charge based on income. Most of the grantees noted that charges may be waived if the charges are a hardship for the senior.

Table 6 below summarizes the fee structure of the grantees.

**TABLE 6
FEES FOR SENIOR RIDES PROGRAM YEAR
FY 2023**

| Grantee | Fee Structure | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---------|------|---------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|---------|-----------------|---------|------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Action in Maturity | <p>The methodology for establishing the schedule is based on mileage first as well as what AIM has determined its cohort of underserved seniors can afford. AIM compares its rates to those charged by city taxi, Lyft, and Uber. Fees are also based on four decades of pricing individual rides in this program.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>MILEAGE</th> <th>FARE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to 2 miles</td> <td>\$5.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.3 to 3 miles</td> <td>\$6.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.1 to 4 miles</td> <td>\$8.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.1 to 7 miles</td> <td>\$12.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.1 to 15 miles</td> <td>\$14.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15.1 to 18 miles</td> <td>\$20.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18.1 to 24 miles</td> <td>\$25.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | MILEAGE | FARE | Up to 2 miles | \$5.00 | 2.3 to 3 miles | \$6.00 | 3.1 to 4 miles | \$8.00 | 4.1 to 7 miles | \$12.00 | 7.1 to 15 miles | \$14.00 | 15.1 to 18 miles | \$20.00 | 18.1 to 24 miles | \$25.00 |
| MILEAGE | FARE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Up to 2 miles | \$5.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.3 to 3 miles | \$6.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 to 4 miles | \$8.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.1 to 7 miles | \$12.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7.1 to 15 miles | \$14.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15.1 to 18 miles | \$20.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18.1 to 24 miles | \$25.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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|---|--|
| <p>Caring Carroll, Inc.</p> | <p>Prior to FY 2023, Caring Carroll had a tiered fee schedule based on income. Individuals with an income minus rent/mortgage of less than \$15K/year were completely subsidized (all rides were free). Individuals whose income minus rent/mortgage was between \$15K/year - \$24K/year were subsidized at 50% cost per ride. Individuals whose income minus rent/mortgage was over \$24K/year or those who did not want to provide financial information paid full price per ride. The cost structure was as follows: One-way rides within an area \$6, round-trip \$12. One-way rides between areas \$12, round-trip \$24. This schedule was based on a similar schedule of Neighbor Ride in Howard County. In our scheduling software, Assisted Rides, Carroll County is divided into 6 areas, Westminster, West Carroll, North Carroll, Finksburg, South Carroll and Mt. Airy. All Care Receivers are assigned to their specific area based on their address.</p> <p>The above schedule of fees was in effect <u>until May 2023</u>. The new current fee schedule is: All rides are \$10 regardless of one-way, round trip, within or between municipalities. All individuals whose income minus rent/mortgage under \$18K/year receive 3 free monthly rides. Rides beyond the 3 free rides are billed at the current price of \$10/ride. All individuals whose income minus rent/mortgage >\$18K/year or those who do not want to provide financial information are billed at \$10/ride. This schedule allows low-income seniors free rides but encourages them to plan their rides and requests and refrain from abusing free volunteer assistance. Caring Carroll will work to assist any individual experiencing difficulty paying the fees.</p> |
| <p>Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. (CHAI)</p> | <p>Seniors are not charged a fee.</p> |

LifeStyles of Maryland Foundation, Inc.

Fee Schedule

Users are requested to provide a small fee, based on a sliding scale system of the number of roundtrip miles and household income. Based on the participant’s proof of income, social security/retirement, and/or disability award users would be provided an estimate charge of their transportation cost. The current fee schedule is as follows:

| Household Income | Per Trip Rides Less than 10 miles | Per Trip Rides 11-25 miles | Per Trip Rides 26+ miles |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| \$771 or less | \$5.00 | \$8.00 | \$12.00 |
| \$772 - \$1,200 | \$6.00 | \$10.00 | \$15.00 |
| \$1,200 - \$1,600 | \$7.00 | \$12.00 | \$17.00 |
| \$1,601-\$2000 | \$8.00 | \$15.00 | \$20.00 |
| \$2,001 | \$9.00 | \$18.00 | \$23.00 |

The fee schedule is being modified for FY 2024 due to the increased transportation and administrative costs of operating the program.

Methodology for Fee Schedule

This fee alone would not cover the costs of providing this program; therefore, this grant was needed to assist in subsidizing the costs. LifeStyles will continue to research ways to allow this program to be self-sustaining.

Since the COVID pandemic, the agency is not invoicing persons on a monthly basis for any fees that they would have incurred that is not covered by another other funding source. Instead of drivers being responsible for collecting payment at the end of the service, payment can be made online or via USPS mail. The mileage log form allows for proper tracking of mileage, pick-up and drop-off sites (number of one-way trips). The volunteer drivers are reimbursed at a rate of \$.665 per mile to cover their personal mileage and vehicle expenses. Any mileage billed to the grant is done so at the approved state rate for reimbursement. Volunteers are reimbursed on a bi-weekly basis through the organizations’ QuickBooks payroll processing system to keep accurate records. Paperwork and fees collected is turned in weekly to the Transportation Director, who ensures that the fees to be collected are comparable to the paperwork (record) provided and the schedules provided to each driver. This is then verified by the Chief Financial Officer.

| | |
|---|--|
| Neighbor Ride | <p>As of July 1, 2022, roundtrip rides with a one-way distance from the passenger’s residence to the destination from 0 - 0.99 miles are \$10, from 1 - 4.99 miles are \$12.00, from 5 - 9.99 miles are \$18, from 10 - 14.99 miles are \$24, from 15 – 19.99 miles are \$30, and from 20-35 miles are \$36. All fees are charged per ride, not per person, so ride sharing is encouraged. Seniors who meet income eligibility criteria for no-cost service are eligible to access Neighbor Ride’s Good Neighbor Fund for their transportation needs. The Good Neighbor Fund is supported by grants and directed donations.</p> <p>In addition, Neighbor Ride again received grant funding (\$2828 in FY 2023) from ITNAmerica that funds vision related medical trips – up to \$10 per ride. This program will continue again in FY 2024. Neighbor Ride also receives funding from the Community Care Team at Howard County General Hospital to cover the cost of any trips provided to patients enrolled in Community Care Team programs.</p> <p>Neighbor Ride continued a full subsidy for clients that are Veterans during FY 2023 through a grant from Tower Cares (Towers Federal Credit Union) and has applied for FY 2024 funding as well.</p> |
| Partners In Care (PIC) | <p>PIC Ride Partners is a no -cost program. As a time-exchange, all members are encouraged to think about how they can help their neighbors in the program, but they may ask for rides whenever they are in need. Many of the riders give small donations, donate items to our PIC Upscale Boutique, make phone calls or bake for meetings at the office. This “time exchange” model ensures that all PIC members, including those who receive rides and other services, feel valued, are able to “stretch” their limited financial resources, can maintain their health, engage in the community, and remain independent in their homes.</p> |
| St. Mary’s County Department of Aging & Human Services | <p>Riders receive a monthly statement requesting a donation towards the cost of their trip and not a billing statement. This is due to the Program’s partnership with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) as charging a fee is not permissible under RSVP guidelines. It is important to note that no rider is denied service due to their inability to donate.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Wilson Ministry Center/Getting There Ride Share (GTRS)</p> | <p>The Wilson Ministry Center’s Getting There Ride Share (GTRS) uses a zip code based fare system per each round trip. A pay-as-you-go fee structure starts at \$5.00 per round trip within the senior’s zip code, and \$6.00 per round trip outside a senior’s zip code but still within Harford County or Cecil County. To other locations in Maryland, the range is \$10.00 to \$25.00 per round trip, on a case-by-case basis. Research shows if services are provided, consumers will be more vested in the experience than if there was no fee attached. GTRS serves very low- and low-income seniors who cannot afford a large fee for travel.</p> <p>Each fare is assessed per car, not rider, so more than one passenger can ride in the same car if traveling to the same destination. This allows for companions to ride and promotes ride sharing. During these times of inflation and increased gas prices, GTRS is looking for every possible way to double up with senior rides. GTRS looks for every possible way to double up with senior rides, instead of physically paying as you go. Passengers may opt to establish a personal account that can be debited whenever trips are provided. Accounting for these monies is captured in Assisted Rides program software and can be easily reconciled. In addition, those who are unable to pay for rides can document this need are not charged for rides. Donations received from the community as well as riders’ families and friends are used to cover the cost of rides for those who cannot pay. <u>No one is turned down for GTRS senior ride service due to an inability to pay fees.</u> A scholarship fund was also set up through a donation from a trustee of the Drescher Foundation and is funded annually.</p> <p>Payments can be made by cash, check or money order. No fees are charged for cancelled rides unless the senior is a no-show. No monies are ever exchanged between passengers and drivers. This would include physical therapy sessions and short-term help with dialysis transportation that may last up to 3 months.</p> |
| <p>Worcester Commission on Aging (WorCA)</p> | <p>In FY 2023, the WorCOA established a suggested donation of \$3.00 per one-way trip. The donation did not take into account the distance a volunteer would be driving. Some participants of the Adult Daycare program have friends and family that drove them and donated a portion, if not all, of the funds they received for mileage. The fees that were received by the van driver was mixed between the Senior Rides program and the Maryland Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program.</p> |

Characteristics of Programs

The legislation establishing the SRP mandated that the annual report on the program discuss any innovations in public-private cooperation and risk management achieved by the grantees.

Several agencies continue to see a return to normalcy following a decline of use of transportation services due to the COVID-19 Pandemic while other agencies continue to struggle with volunteer recruitment to regain full services. A few agencies continued to serve the senior population by delivering food and supplies.

Action in Maturity, Inc. values its partnerships with governmental and non-profits; however, it prides itself for its partnership with its volunteer drivers and the Baltimore City Health Department on Aging to annually distribute approximately 300 Farmers' Market coupon books directly to seniors who come on site and then schedule a series of van rides to nearby farmers' markets, free of charge, to recipients. In addition, this agency is known as Baltimore's "senior center without walls" and is counted as one of the fourteen (14) Baltimore City senior centers, utilizing its transportation program to bring seniors to its own services, classes, and events held throughout the city or bringing seniors to the services and events held by its counterpart senior centers.

New to the Senior Rides program, Caring Carroll, Inc. partners with the Bureau of Aging and Disabilities, the local hospital, the Health Department and numerous medical providers to obtain referrals and assist with transportation for those who do not qualify for medical assistance transportation. In addition, to oversee the agency's risk management program, it has access to an expert consultant in the field

One agency, affiliated with a faith-based organization, requires all volunteer drivers to take a variety of training classes which includes, but no limited to, safe and defensive driving, ABCs of being an effective volunteer, office and dispatch processes, and accident and incident procedures. In addition, this agency incentivizes drivers in the form of reimbursement for classes taken through a local community college or other local organizations. In addition to defensive driving training (the AARP Smart Driving Course), classes may include CPR/Advances First Aid certification, volunteerism, Alzheimer's and care giving.

Celebrating 30 years of service to seniors, this agency services three additional locations in Maryland – Frederick, Caroline and Talbot Counties. This grant recipient continued to work with state and local government offices of aging to ensure that the duplication of efforts is minimized. The agency also has a very popular upscale retail boutique that is now back in full operation after the slowdown of the pandemic.

An organization in Southern Maryland expanded its transportation services in Calvert and Charles Counties with low-to-moderate household incomes. In partnership with Calvert County's Office on Aging, the agency was able to retain significant in-kind support by providing part-time application assistance. However, the agency still has challenges recruiting volunteer drivers partially due to the increase insurance costs that volunteers have highlighted that compare then to being considered "for-hire" drivers. To overcome this challenge, the organization utilizes its paid drivers to assist when needed. In addition, the agency is working on a program to recruit and incentivize more volunteer drivers.

Many grantees require that all volunteers carry cell phones when driving their passengers; and one grantee provides cell phones for Senior Rides business and emergencies only.

One grantee communicates with volunteer and paid drivers on a weekly basis to discuss any concerns that may arise from participants and to see if additional social services assistance may be required.

Conclusion

The 17th year of the SRP is the 16th year that the program operated as a full-fledged, permanent program in the State of Maryland. All grantees have tremendously developed and improved their programs, serving the Baltimore City metropolitan area, and Anne Arundel, Carroll, Caroline, Calvert, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Talbot, St. Mary's and Worcester counties.

Senior citizens continue to express a need for affordable, on-demand, door-to-door transportation services. During FY 2023, a total of 2,498 unique seniors received transportation services, enabling them to make more than 52,422 one-way trips, to a variety of destinations such as doctor's appointments, grocery stores, farmers markets, and entertainment; many of which may not have occurred without the Program. Those that participate often express gratitude and passenger comments about the service are typically very positive.

The SRP continues to be an established record of innovative volunteer-based programs that provides an additional source of transportation for Maryland seniors who utilize it. Volunteers have successfully transported seniors from their residences to numerous destinations, providing a much-needed service to communities. The MTA will continue to work closely with grantees to ensure that Maryland's seniors receive the finest possible transportation services available.

The Program has taken great steps to address the vital transportation needs of seniors and is doing it in a way that encourages cooperation between private and public stakeholders.

Information provided by each grantee on its cooperative efforts and risk management is provided in Attachment A to this report.

ATTACHMENT A¹

"Senior Rides Program"

Report on Seventeenth (17th) Program Year
Sixteenth (16th) Year as a Full Program

State Fiscal Year 2023 Supplementation Information

Provided by Grantees
on Public-Private Cooperation and Risk Management

¹ Attachment A contains information taken from reports filed with MTA by Senior Rides Program grantees.

ACTION IN MATURITY

Cooperative Efforts

AIM values its many partnerships with Baltimore City agencies and not for profit organizations. These include: Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO), Baltimore City Housing Authority, Baltimore City Health Department Division on Aging, United Way 211, Keswick Multi-Care, Comprehensive Housing Assistance (CHAI), Catholic Charities, St. Mary's Outreach, AARP, Senior Legal Services, MedStar Good Samaritan and Union Memorial Hospitals, Civic Works, Johns Hopkins University, Loyola University, and the tenant councils of over 60 high rise senior living communities (of which 48 are low to moderate income HUD housing). AIM considers itself a partner of the MTA and FTA, as 5310 and Senior Rides funding helps sustain the transportation program.

AIM partners with Baltimore City Health Department on Aging annually to distribute approximately 300 Farmers' Market coupon books directly to seniors who come on site and then schedule a series of van rides to nearby farmers' markets, free of charge, to recipients.

Although it is known as Baltimore's "senior center without walls" AIM is counted as one of the 14 Baltimore City senior centers, utilizing its transportation program to bring seniors to its own services, classes, and events held throughout the city or bringing seniors to the services and events held by AIM's counterpart senior centers. AIM receives funding from the Title IIIB grant of the Older Americans Act as a sub grantee to the BCHD Division on Aging and CARE Services.

Risk Management

AIM makes risk management an integral part of its systems and processes. Prior to stepping into an AIM vehicle, whether volunteer or paid driver, AIM requires drivers to present a current driving record from MVA. Employed drivers have their background and fingerprints reviewed by the CJIS Central Repository. Paid drivers also under a pre-employment drug test (and random drug tests thereafter), as well as a DOT physical.

Volunteer drivers do inform the instructor or presentation leader when they are planning to drive a member home from an event. Riders are subsequently surveyed about their ride.

Paid drivers are trained in all safety procedures and must sign off on a number of policies including cell phone and drug use, as well as the process for completing an incident report. They are trained in CPR and First Aid as well. Before driving either van or TBR (transportation by request) vehicle, the driver performs a pre-trip inspection; at the end of the trip he or she performs a post-trip inspection, utilizing the DOT's list of standards. Drivers are re-trained at least quarterly to keep their skills sharp and safety top of mind. Board member Collins Downing, Director of Transportation at Towson University, assists with training.

AIM maintains both vans and cars in accordance with MDOT compliance and protocol, with regular checks on all equipment and parts. Complete maintenance records are kept at AIM's office.

AIM vehicles and drivers are insured by Consolidated Insurance (through Cincinnati Financial). AIM is covered under an umbrella policy and cyber security coverage. Chesapeake Injured Workers' Fund is AIM's workers' compensation insurance coverage. All the insurance certificates are available upon request.

AIM vehicles are equipped with a GPS system and cameras through Sperion Fleet which tracks vehicles, maintenance, and driver error.

CARING CARROLL, INC.

Cooperative Efforts

Care Receiver referrals come from the Carroll County Bureau of Aging and Disabilities, Carroll Hospital, Carroll County Health Department and numerous medical providers. Caring Carroll cooperates with the Carroll County Health Department Medical Assistance Transportation Coordinators when securing transportation for those who qualify or do not qualify for MA transportation.

Risk Management

All volunteers attend an in-person 1-hour orientation/training with the Executive Director. All volunteers are criminal background checked and MVA record checked through Sterling Inc. All volunteers sign a Statement of Confidentiality form and Release of Liability form, both of which are explained to them. Caring Carroll covers volunteers with Volunteer Excess Auto, Volunteer Accident and Volunteer Liability Insurance provided by CIMA Volunteer Insurance Services. Caring Carroll also carries Directors and Officers Insurance through CIMA and General Liability Insurance through Nonprofit Insurance Alliance. All information pertaining to the ride i.e. addresses, phone numbers, notes, etc. is accessible to the volunteer through the Assisted Rides online database.

Caring Carroll has access to a Risk Management consultant.

All Care Receivers are phone interviewed and then provided an in-home interview where questions are answered. They receive additional information regarding Caring Carroll services and policies during the in-home interview. At the same time, the volunteer interview team observes the Care Receiver's home environment and personal disposition. The interview team will also suggest additional resources, if needed. Care Receivers receive and sign a *Guidelines to Receive Caring Carroll Services* and *Consent to Release Information* (CC HIPAA form). Copies of these forms are kept in the Care Receiver's file at the Caring Carroll office.

COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING ASSISTANCE INC. (CHAI)

Cooperative Efforts

CHAI partners with CHANA and Jewish Community Services as part of the AgeWell Baltimore initiative, which provides resources and support so that older adults can age with confidence and dignity in their communities. CHAI developed the CHAIway Transportation Program to serve the transportation needs of older adults living in northwest Baltimore. CHAIway currently offers subsidized fee-for-service rides in collaboration with On The Go (OTG), a nationally recognized program that contracts with Uber/Lyft to coordinate rides. CHAI will launch a volunteer component based on its Northwest Neighbors Connecting Senior Rides Program. In addition, CHAI partners with Action in Maturity (AIM) to provide transportation through the Northwest Senior Shuttle (NWSS).

Risk Management

CHAI has worked closely with The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, as well as with our insurance company, to develop rules that protect drivers and the agency. Because of the relatively large size of the Associated, we were able to work with the insurance company to only require drivers to possess the minimum level of personal coverage, after which the organization's insurance will cover damages up to \$1,000,000. We have also developed an efficient background check system that is coordinated with other agencies of the Associated.

LIFESTYLES OF MARYLAND, INC.

Cooperative Efforts

LifeStyles of Maryland partners are comprised of the following:

- Calvert County Government: provides part-time administrative support, matching funds, and marketing distribution
- Calvert County Government provides matching funds to support the Senior Rides transportation program
- Calvert County Health Department provides matching funding to cover the subsidized portion of the transit fare
- Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland: provides regional transportation planning, coordination, wheelchair securement and safety training, grant funding availability and commuter assistance; coordinates the Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee; also provide participant referrals
- Faith-based community: assists with outreach efforts, providing program referrals, and recruitment of volunteer drivers; and,
- Community and Business Representatives: these partners represent a cross-section of the community.

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's Transportation Department provided technical assistance, training and assist with marketing and outreach on an as-needed basis. The agency is also part of the Rural Transit Coordinating Committee that meets quarterly with all Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS), human services transportation providers, and for-profit transportation

companies to discuss opportunities and challenges within the Southern Maryland region. Staff have participated in coordination meetings held across the region to encourage mobility management.

LifeStyles currently has 4 wheelchair accessible buses, 3 of whom were partially funded by MTA's Section 5310 program. The buses have broadened the organization's capacity to serve non-ambulatory residents. Drivers have been trained to do proper wheelchair securement and the paid drivers are DOT-certified. In addition, trips have been coordinated to allow for "trip-chaining" opportunities, especially for those that need access to grocery shopping.

LifeStyles has also purchased a transit software called ITN Country, which helps to develop routes for its drivers and allows individuals to submit applications and increased its usage of Charity Tracker, a web-based data collection system that allows staff to input information about the services provided. Reports can be generated that are real-time, that makes it more efficient for recordkeeping and tracking purposes. This system allows us to connect with other human services agencies to lessen the duplication of services, and to get a holistic picture of the total needs of the family. The Transportation and Facilities Manager inputs all services provided, including the number of miles, into this system and allows us to properly generate our quarterly reports.

Over the past few years, the agency has also seen an increased need to work with local agencies due to a growing number of seniors needing additional social and supportive services. LifeStyles has the ability to provide emergency food, clothing, and shelter and has offered that to some of the participants. The agency also participates in the Calvert County Adult Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) monthly meetings to discuss adults who may need access to supportive services, including transportation. The Transportation Manager works with the case management staff at both LifeStyles and the Office on Aging to coordinate efforts. To ensure a complete application process that the agency collects emergency contact information in such cases, and work with family members, when appropriate, to assist with ensuring the safety of all participants. In some cases, encouragement is made of family members and aides to ride along with participants to assist them during their doctor's appointments. Information regarding the program is also provided through the statewide 211 System.

Risk Management

Correspondence is made between paid and volunteer drivers on a weekly basis to the Transportation and Facilities Manager to discuss any concerns that may arise from particular participants to see if additional social services assistance may be needed. Each driver is asked to provide a valid Maryland drivers' license, and driving history and fingerprinting and background checks are conducted. Initial and random drug testing is also conducted by Lab Corp. All vehicles are properly inspected and state certified. Participating providers use fleet and passenger vehicles owned, operated and liability covered by the organization. LifeStyles of Maryland has general liability, auto, and sexual abuse harassment liability insurance with coverage of \$1,000,000 for each incident.

Our drivers are also equipped with the emergency contact and physician information for each user that is taken to their appointment. This is to ensure that all emergencies can be efficiently relayed to the appropriate persons and to the Transportation Manager. In addition, there is an on-call service that is available 24/7 that the drivers and/or participants can contact, who would then contact a Supervisor on Duty for emergencies.

Drivers of LifeStyles-operated vehicles are required to conduct pre- and post-inspections of the vehicles before and after use of the vehicle to ensure there is documentation of any damage that may

have occurred. The agency utilizes a vehicle maintenance plan to conduct preventive maintenance to avoid any potential vehicle risks.

NEIGHBOR RIDE, INC.

Cooperative Efforts

Neighbor Ride launched a pilot service in January 2020 providing wheel-chair accessible transportation. The service, called Community Connector, offers accessible transportation to older adults in Howard County to medical appointments five days a week. The service is a partnership among Neighbor Ride, Winter Growth, Inc. and the Hamel Family Foundation. While having to navigate the pandemic and suspensions of service due to the pandemic, Neighbor Ride and partners have been able to serve over thirty clients getting them to just over 525 medical appointments since launch. The service, while capacity constrained to one van and driver, has steadily grown from 113 to 160 to 210 rides from FY 2021 to FY 2023 that just ended. Neighbor Ride and Winter Growth continue to explore bringing on additional partners that have access to wheelchair accessible minivans to expand capacity.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the mounting food access challenges in Howard County, Neighbor Ride quickly pivoted to expand its transportation service to include food delivery. Neighbor Ride quickly partnered with the Howard County Office on Aging & Independence, Howard County Food Bank and HCPSS to provide delivery services using Neighbor Ride volunteers for those organizations clients that could not easily access their food pick-up locations. Deliveries started 3/21/20 and will continue for the foreseeable future. From 3/21/20 through 6/30/22 Neighbor Ride volunteers delivered 33,200 meal kits and 98,500 lbs. of food. Neighbor Ride added new delivery partnerships with the SAFE Food Pantry and the Howard County Loan Closet (durable medical equipment). Delivery services have greatly helped Neighbor Ride to keep volunteers engaged during the pandemic especially those that were not comfortable providing passenger rides during the pandemic. Neighbor Rides delivery partnership with the HC Office on Aging & Independence (largest delivery partner that represented 90% of our delivery work during the pandemic) ended in June 2022. Partnerships with the HC Food Bank and HC Loan Closet continue.

Neighbor Ride continued its work with various partners that provide additional ride subsidies beyond our Good Neighbor Fund. iTN America provided \$10 ride credits for vision rides. Neighbor Ride's partnership with Tower Cares (Tower Federal Credit Union) to provide additional ride subsidies for clients that are Veterans continues into its fourth year. Neighbor Ride has applied for additional funding from Tower Cares in FY 2024 that would grow the program further.

Finally, Neighbor Ride has added Baltimore Washington Financial Advisors as a new partner / sponsor of our volunteer program helping to support costs of the onboarding and training volunteers as well as share BWFA webinars and content related to living in retirement topics with volunteers.

Neighbor Ride continues to add nonprofit partners as well. We support A-OK Mentoring which provides volunteer opportunities for community members to tutor students in HCPSS with Neighbor Ride providing transportation for their age 60+ that need transportation to schools. Additionally,

Neighbor Ride started a partnership with the Central MD Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind providing their members who need it with transportation to their monthly meetings the first Tuesday of each month.

Risk Management

Driver Qualifications: Volunteer drivers must meet the following criteria:

- Be at least twenty-one years of age
- Possess a valid driver's license
- Have three years of recent driving experience
- Willing to consent and pass a criminal background check

Background Check Results Disqualifiers: Any person found guilty of any offenses in the following categories listed below will be disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer:

- Sex Offenses
- Felony Violence

Any person found guilty of the following offenses will be prohibited from volunteering for the period of time associated with each offense:

- Felony offenses within the last 10 years (other than violence or sex).
- All misdemeanor violence offenses within the past 7 years.
- All misdemeanor drug and alcohol offenses within the past 5 years, or multiple offenses in the past 10 years.
- Any other misdemeanor within the past 5 years that would be considered a potential danger to seniors or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.
- Anyone who has been charged with any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court cannot volunteer until the official settlement of the case. The settlement must meet the policy guidelines for accepting volunteers.
- Volunteers will serve at the pleasure of Neighbor Ride and may be dismissed from their volunteer duties at any time, with or without cause.
- Willing to consent to a driving history check (no more than 3 points)
- Willing to provide personal references
- Able to provide evidence of personal automobile liability insurance on the vehicle(s) to be used when driving as a Neighbor Ride volunteer
- Willing and able to maintain his/her vehicle(s) in safe driving condition. This includes ensuring that seatbelts are in working order
- Able to demonstrate an understanding of seniors and their potential limitations
- Willing to maintain the confidentiality of passenger information
- Available to commit to providing two passenger rides on a monthly basis

Driver Training and Safety: All Neighbor Ride drivers are required to attend a Volunteer Orientation session. Neighbor Ride's policies and procedures are reviewed during these sessions.

All drivers receive personal copies of these policies and procedures. Supplemental training sessions are offered at least once a year. Topics that may be covered at these supplemental sessions include CPR, defensive driving methods, emergency management, and proper techniques for assisting fragile seniors. Also, Neighbor Ride has worked closely with our insurance carrier to promote driver safety.

In an effort to protect its drivers from potential liability issues, Neighbor Ride's policies strictly prohibit volunteers from entering the personal residences of its passengers or individuals the passengers visit. This policy is highlighted at all volunteer orientation sessions. Neighbor Ride also requires all passengers to sign a Waiver of Liability. Signed waivers are kept in passengers' files in the Neighbor Ride office and scanned for secure backup.

Neighbor Ride requires all volunteers to carry cell phones when driving its passengers.

Passengers' safety is addressed by the conducting of criminal background and driving record checks on all volunteer drivers before they can begin providing services for Neighbor Ride. Copies of current auto insurance coverage and Maryland driver's licenses are maintained in each driver's secure Neighbor Ride file. Because ride coordinators have access to passengers' personal information, criminal background checks are also performed on them before they begin volunteering for Neighbor Ride. All potential volunteers are required to provide a personal reference who is contacted and asked standardized questions about the volunteer applicant.

Neighbor Ride's enrollment policy includes emergency contact information for all clients. This information is maintained in the passenger's record. It is included for reference with the ride details provided to drivers in the event of medical emergency or any other reason where it would be needed.

Also, monthly newsletters sent to all volunteers may include safety reminders, driving tips, policy updates and information to support their volunteer activities.

Vehicles Used: Neighbor Ride's drivers use their personal vehicles to provide transportation for seniors.

Vehicle Safety: As part of the application process, volunteer drivers provide information on the year and make of the vehicle(s) to be used in their service to Neighbor Ride. Further, volunteer drivers agree in writing to maintain their vehicles in safe driving condition. This includes ensuring that seatbelts are in working order and used by passengers transported for Neighbor Ride.

Liability Coverage: Each driver's personal automobile insurance policy provides primary liability coverage. In addition, Neighbor Ride currently carries general liability coverage for its volunteers. The policy includes the following coverage:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| \$2,000,000 | General Aggregate |
| \$2,000,000 | Products – Completed Operations Aggregate |
| \$1,000,000 | Personal and Advertising Injury |
| \$1,000,000 | Each Occurrence |

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| \$ 100,000 | Damage to Premises Rented |
| \$ 10,000 | Medical Expense |
| \$4,000,000 | Director's & Officer's |
| \$1,000,000 | Automotive Liability |
| \$2,000,000 | Umbrella Liability Aggregate |
| \$2,000,000 | Umbrella Liability Each Occurrence |

In FY 2022 Neighbor Ride added an Accident Insurance Policy that covers our participants and volunteers.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| \$50,000 | Accidental Death |
| \$50,000 | Accidental Dismemberment Maximum |
| \$10,000 | Accidental Paralysis |
| \$1,000,000 | Aggregate Limit of Liability |
| \$25,000 | Excess Accident Medical |
| \$50 | Deductible |

PARTNERS IN CARE

Cooperative Efforts

Partners In Care's origin is one of collaboration and cooperation with numerous government, private sector and nonprofit entities. In 1993, three dynamic, creative women forged a plan to help older adults in Anne Arundel County age in place and stay engaged in their community. PIC met with staff from Maryland Department of Aging on multiple occasions and agreed that it was fruitless to duplicate efforts. Instead, they worked together to identify the specific barriers that made it difficult, and sometimes, impossible for older adults to remain in their own homes. Transportation, or the lack thereof, was and continues to be a contributor to social isolation. PIC set out to establish a network of neighbors helping neighbors using a culture of time-banking to overcome such barriers.

Thirty (30) years later, PIC continues to work closely with divisions of Maryland Department of Aging at all of PICs sites, along with local and state transit agencies. Referrals made by PIC staff to other government entities include housing, social services workforce development and many more. PIC has also developed relationships with local hospitals, rehabilitation centers, etc., who often refer patients who are returning home and need transportation using PIC's Ride Partners program or Mobility.

Risk Management

Safety is priority one! The PIC ride program utilizes volunteers who use their personal vehicles to take members to an array of appointments. Following is a small sampling:

- Medical – doctor and dental, physical therapy, chemo, etc.
- Grocery and retail stores and food banks
- Banks and credit unions
- Social – lunch with friends, hair and nail appointments

Before a driver ever provides transportation to a PIC member, he/she participates in a two-hour orientation that provides an overview of the organization including its mission, vision and values. Step two includes a background check and motor vehicle records review. Step three includes personal references.

All PIC Volunteers drivers understand that their personal automobile insurance is their first line of defense. PIC supports that with \$1,000,000 automobile liability coverage. PIC staff serves on the Older Adult Driving Subcommittee through the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). PIC collaborates with AARP by offering quarterly sessions for Smart Driving for Older Adults education in the Anne Arundel County office and PIC has hosted numerous Car-Fit events through MVA. *(Please note that these sessions were suspended during the pandemic and will resume when safe to do so.)* These events serve as a tool to help provide a safer more comfortable driving experience for older drivers. All of PIC volunteer drivers have the opportunity to participate. These safety tools serve as a network to help mitigate risk management.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AGING

Cooperative Efforts

The Department works cooperatively with the St. Mary's STS ADA/SSTAP services to encourage riders to incorporate these services into their transportation options. Additionally, when eligible riders are encouraged to utilize the St. Mary's County Health Department's Medicaid transportation services. When services are unavailable through the Senior Rides Program, riders are provided information for private options,

Risk Management

New drivers continue to be required to attend the AARP Safe Driver course for their volunteer service. Additionally, each driver is offered the opportunity to become CPR/First Aid certified if they choose. Drivers also receive a first aid kit for their vehicles in the event of an emergency. The Program also purchases supplementary accident insurance which covers personal injury accidents.

WILSON MINISTRY CENTER - GETTING THERE RIDE SHARE (GTRS)

Cooperative Efforts

The Director receives numerous calls per week from government, local agencies, hospitals, individuals inquiring about GTRS. GTRS has an active website where hospital social workers, case

workers, citizens and rehabilitation centers can find answers to their questions. The Director is very responsive to these callers and returns calls the same day. GTRS brochures are distributed to numerous community centers, government agencies, Mason Dixon, Community Action agencies, small grocery stores and doctors' offices throughout Northern Harford and West Cecil Counties.

Collaboration continues with Harford County senior center directors, Harford Transit, Cecil Transit, RSVP-AmeriCorps-Cecil County, and the Transportation Association of Maryland, in hopes to bridge a closer relationship to make Senior Rides and GTRS more robust. The Director attends numerous business expos as well as sharing at the local Lions Clubs to recruit volunteers, and presented the GTRS services at several Harford County Senior Centers Lunch and Learns to recruit volunteers as well as seniors.

In addition, Grace Episcopal Church has an outreach food pantry monthly where information about GTRS is distributed to all patrons.

Risk Management

GTRS endeavors minimize risk and the director looks for innovative ways to operate the program effectively. The GTRS passenger and driver application forms were modified to include data collection on the status of COVID vaccinations and boosters. This information was established during the height of the pandemic and required by The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. This information is located privately on the Assisted Rides so that a volunteer can access this status when they self-assign for a senior ride.

All GTRS volunteer drivers are subject to criminal background and driving record checks. Results from the background and driving record checks must demonstrate no criminal record and that the volunteer driver has met vehicle safety and operating requirements. These checks are repeated annually. Once a background check is complete and the volunteer has attended a GTRS defensive driving and orientation training session, the driver is able to participate in the program. Topics in training include safe and defensive driving, the ABC's of being an effective volunteer driver, safety, job description, GTRS office and dispatch procedures and accident/incident procedures.

Volunteer drivers must provide the GTRS office with a copy of their driving record obtained from Maryland Motor Vehicles Administration. No drivers will be accepted in the program with more than 3 points on their record. Any at fault automobile accidents or additional points to a volunteer's driving is grounds for dismissal. GTRS reviews volunteer driving records and background checks annually. Additionally, all driver's license renewal dates as well as car auto insurance renewal dates are captured in AR. The director monitors non-compliance monthly and through AR software has the capability to send compliance reminders to those volunteer drivers.

Defensive Driver training is also required by all volunteer drivers. To incentivize drivers, GTRS can reimburse drivers for all safety courses. These courses can be taken online or in a classroom. (AARP Smart Driver Course is given at the Harford Community College approximately two times a quarter.) CPR/Advanced First Aid certification is also provided through GTRS once a year at the Darlington Volunteer Fire Company and renewal is required every 2 years. GTRS also sends out notifications to all drivers when there are other training opportunities in the local area that might help them as a

volunteer working with seniors. These may include topics on Alzheimer's, care giving, and volunteerism.

Recent round table discussion with Krista Gilmore, RSVP-Director, AmeriCorps and varied Cecil County agencies provided a chance for discussion of resources and innovative strategies for risk management and safety for volunteer drivers. This collaboration will continue in the future through quarterly meetings.

To minimize exposure to risk, GTRS provides door to door service and does not provide supportive transportation. Volunteer drivers are not to go into passenger homes or provide additional services while they are providing a ride for GTRS. All passengers must be ambulatory. Volunteers that are also enrolled with Cecil/Harford RSVP receive supplemental insurance (personal, automobile, liability) coverage while driving for GTRS. In addition, all registered passengers must sign a passenger waiver releasing GTRS and their volunteer drivers from any liability that may arise during a transport. Additional liability insurance is provided.

GTRS seeks to be proactive in their commitment to safety, continuing as a reliable program, additionally the GTRS staff recently completed the course in Risk, Liability and Insurance in Volunteer Transportation Programs, offered by NADTC.

All volunteers use their own vehicles, and these must meet state inspection requirements as established by the State of Maryland. Proof of vehicle safety inspections are required prior to a volunteer being authorized as a GTRS driver. The GTRS director has an agreement with a local garage to provide service and provide basic safety and operation checks for all volunteers' automobiles for a reduced fee. These types of checks to include emissions is important to continue as a strong viable senior rides program.

All passengers must adhere to the Maryland seatbelt law. All drivers must carry a charged cell phone for emergency use and no driver is allowed to use their cell phone while driving. All drivers are also provided a road kit to keep in their car if they do not already have something similar. This includes booster cables, flashlight, water and miscellaneous first aid items.

The GTRS program relies on the volunteer driver's personal insurance plus the umbrella coverage provided through the Grace Church policy with The Church Insurance Company of Vermont, which provides \$4,000,000 in liability coverage. This policy provides umbrella coverage beyond the volunteer drivers' primary insurance. The Wilson Ministry Center shares the same nonprofit IRS designation as Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, which supplies coverage for all volunteers engaged in the activities of the parish and the Wilson Ministry Center. GTRS is a Wilson Center program and is therefore covered under the church's insurance policy. The policy also holds harmless members of the Wilson Ministry Board from any liability in the event of an accident. As stated earlier, all volunteers enrolled in the Cecil/Harford RSVP also have additional excess liability insurance at a limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

WORCESTER COUNTY OFFICE OF AGING (WOR COA)

Cooperative Efforts

All WorCOA programs that use transportation are being coordinated by the Mobility Manager to help reduce duplication of resources. There are many referrals that we receive from Maryland Access Point of Worcester County for people that cannot afford transportation. We have been able to use volunteers in some cases to help those clients. In the past the Community for Life (CFL) program used the most volunteer drivers. Currently the CFL demand has grown so large that they have paid drivers for non-emergency medical trips. CFL also has a need for vans with ramps which reduces the volunteer pool. This year our SSTAP program could not handle all the needs of the seniors and disabled in Worcester County so they found a volunteer driver that was qualified to use a WorCOA wheelchair van to help with transportation on the northern end of the county. Without these volunteers, seniors may not be able to attend Adult Daycare services.

Risk Management

WorCOA has a Risk Manager that works with the Mobility Manager to make sure the volunteer drivers have proper training. WorCOA conducts background and driver license checks on all volunteers to reduce liability and put the volunteers through the same training as a paid driver under the supervision of the Transportation Manager.