

Susquehanna - Wyoming County Transportation Program Policy Guide



♥ Trehab- Susquehanna – Wyoming County Transportation
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Table of Contents

- I. What is SWCT?**
- II. Scheduling a trip**
 - A. Changes to your scheduled trip**
- III. Pick Up/ Drop Off – 15 minute pick up window**
- IV. Escorts**
- V. Packages**
- VI. No-Show/ Cancellation Policy**
- VII. Bullying Policy**
- VIII. Prohibited Behavior**
- IX. Buckling Up**
- X. The Medical Assistance Transportation Program Section**
 - A. Mileage Reimbursement MATP ONLY**
 - B. Urgent Care Transportation MATP ONLY**
 - C. Out of Service Schedule Trips MATP ONLY**
- XI. Fraud or Misuse of Services**
- XII. Discipline for Offenses**
- XIII. Service Animals**
- XIV. Transporting Oxygen/Respirators**
- XV. Inclement Weather**
- XVI. Client Fare**
- XVII. Prepay Balances**
- XVIII. Credit/Debit Card Policy**
- XIX. Filing a Complaint**

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I. What is SWCT?

Susquehanna-Wyoming County Transportation is a Shared Ride (SWCT) is a Shared-Ride Transportation Service sponsored by the PA Department of Public Welfare, PENNDOT, and other funding sources.

The definition of Shared-Ride is demand-responsive transportation, which is available to the general public, operates on a non-fixed route basis, and charges a fare to all riders. Passengers must agree to share the vehicle with other passengers during a given trip, traveling to doctor's appointments, shopping, etc. SWCT coordinates trips with people going to the same general area, at the same general time.

Anyone who resides in Susquehanna or Wyoming County can utilize this service. An individual may qualify for free or discounted fares if they are eligible for a specific program.

These programs / funding sources are:

- Senior Shared-Ride
- Medical Assistance Transportation (MATP)
- Persons with Disabilities (PwD)

Those who do not qualify for these programs can still ride as a member of the general public. Please contact the SWCT office to see what you may qualify for and request an application.

**SWCT does not discriminate against any person because of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, handicap/disability, military status, marital status, or other protected classifications. All rules, policies, and procedures apply to all riders.*

II. Scheduling a trip

- To schedule a trip please call or email the SWCT business office 1 business day in advance before Noon for in County trips, and 2 business days for out of County trips.
- Contact our office to schedule a trip during office hours: Monday- Friday between 8am and 4pm by phone at 570-278-6140 or by email: swct@trehab.org.

- We recommend scheduling in county trips 2 to 4 business days in advance and 3-5 business days for out of county trips. Longer distance trips require more notice.
- Information you need to have available when scheduling your trip:
 - A. Date & Time to be at scheduled destination
 - B. Address & phone number of destination,
 - C. How much time you may need at destination
- If you are going to a medical appointment, and think you may need to go to the pharmacy for a prescription, schedule this trip the day before, as same day trips cannot be provided under many sponsors.
- You will be given a pick up time & fare (if applicable) at the time you schedule your trip. If you do not have this information, please contact SWCT prior to your scheduled trip.
- Scheduled trips may need to be adjusted to coordinate with the schedule.
- When you schedule your trip you will be given a pick up time (this pick up time typically may be double the amount of time it would take in a car due to the need to pick up others on way to destination.)
- If your pick up time changes more than 15 minutes, we will make every effort to contact you the day before with the changes.
- If you need to make changes to your trip please contact SWCT as soon as possible.

A. Changes to your scheduled trip

- Adjustments cannot be made through your driver when you board the bus. If you would like to make a change, please call the office the prior business day.
- Unless medically necessary, please try to reduce frequent and unnecessary changes

Each situation is reviewed on case by case basis.

III. Pick Up/ Drop Off – 15 minute Pick Up Window

- **15-minute pickup window:** When booking a trip, the client is given a pick up time. The 15 minute pick up window means that SWCT can arrive to pick up the client anywhere between 15 minutes before or 15 minutes after the scheduled pick up time, and still considered on time. The client must be ready for pickup 15 minutes before scheduled pickup

time and must be available to board the vehicle within 5 minutes of arrival. This allows time for pick-up of other clients, traffic delays, and other changes in schedule.

- Our drivers provide door-to-door service, which means non-medical assistance from the door of your home to the vehicle. This applies from the vehicle to the door of your destination. If you require this type of service, please let your driver know.
- Clients may arrive at their provider's office/destination no more than 1 hour before a scheduled appointment with the exception of out of county trips (no more than 2 hours for out of county trips).
- We pick up clients no later than 1 hour after an appointment is finished.
- If we do not meet these timelines and are kept waiting, please call at – 570-278-6140, or toll-free at 866-278-9332 to report the problem and alternative arrangements will be made. Although these are the Department of Human Services standards we strive for less wait times and in very rare occurrences will wait times be longer.
- If client is running early or late with appointment at the destination, please contact and communicate with staff. Also communicate where client will be waiting for the driver if client decides to for example, get food nearby or visit someone on another floor.

IV. Escort Policy

- If needed, clients may bring ONE courtesy escort with them at no cost in the following situations:
 1. If client is under 18 years old, they must be escorted by a parent or other relative/guardian.
 2. If client cannot travel independently or they need any assistance due to illness or physical/mental disability (client may be required to provide verification from their physician.).
 3. If client does not speak English, they may bring someone to interpret for them.
 4. Parent child situation: children cannot be considered an escort if the child is under 18. If medical appointment is for parent, parent must find

appropriate childcare. If parent cannot keep appointment due to lack of childcare, please refer to cancellation policy.

Each situation is reviewed on a case by case basis.

V. Packages

- Four bags per client or what an individual can carry in one trip - bags and other packages may be an obstruction to other passengers and driver may be considered a safety hazard. All bags/packages must be secured at all times.

VI. No-Show/Cancellation Policy

- If you need to cancel your ride for any reason please call or e-mail the office (after hours you can leave a message). Please include the following information: your name, date of trip to be canceled, destination of trip, & your phone number. Cancellations can be made up to 2 hours prior to your scheduled pick up time. This allows us time to make changes to driver's schedules.
- A no-show occurs when a client does not cancel his or her trip at least two hours in advance (of scheduled pick up time), cancels at the door, or is not present within 5 minutes of driver's arrival.
- No shows and late cancellations create significant problems for Susquehanna-Wyoming County Transportation and our clients. These types of infractions are a financial burden to the program and an inconvenience to other clients and daily schedules.
 - 1st Offense: The client may be reminded of policy by mail or phone call.
 - 2nd Offense: The client may be again reminded of policy by mail or phone call. All standing orders/subscriptions will be reviewed to confirm if needed.
 - 3 or more in a 90-day period is considered excessive no-shows. "Provisional booking" may be enacted in lieu of suspension. The

client is notified of third policy violation and detail discussions of defining why no-shows are occurring and how to prevent them in the future. Standing orders/Subscriptions may be cancelled and at this time and the client may only be allowed to book future trips one business day ahead between the hours 8am-Noon. The client must also be required to call the day of service to confirm scheduled pick up at least two hours prior to scheduled pick up time or by 5:30am. If our office does not receive confirmation of the trip, we reserve the right to cancel the trip and transportation may not be provided for that day.

- *Each Violation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.*
- Habitual policy violations may warrant suspension.

VII. Bullying Policy

- Susquehanna –Wyoming Transportations top priority is our client’s wellbeing. SWCT demonstrates intolerance of harassment and bullying within our program. Any occurrence that jeopardizes the comfort, safety, and/ or wellbeing of our clients, drivers and agency staff is unacceptable behavior. If an instance occurs, we will proceed with action of discipline for the offense. Bullying is repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others.
- Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that when an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when being addressed. Harassment and bullying both involve behavior which harms, intimidates, threatens, victimizes, offends, degrades, humiliates or undermines a person.
- Examples of verbal and physical behavior that is bullying or harassment that could lead to a program offense may include but are not limited to:
 - Offensive material that is displayed publicly
 - Verbal abuse or comments that belittle people
 - Unwelcome and hurtful jokes

- Direct or subtle threats
- Offensive gestures
- Ignoring, isolating or segregating a person
- Staring or leering in a sexual way
- Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature
- Aggressive physical behavior
- Repeated behavior which a person has previously objected to
- Use of inappropriate or offensive language or body language
- Public humiliation in any form
- Spreading rumors and gossip about an individual

Each Violation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Any unacceptable behavior listed above may result in a DISCIPLINE FOR OFFENSES.

VIII. Prohibited behavior

- Prohibited behavior: Any occurrence that jeopardizes the comfort, safety, and/or wellbeing of clients, drivers and agency staff. This is deemed UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR. Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated.
- Rules as follows:
 - No Smoking on vehicle such as cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, vaping, pipes, etc.
 - No weapons on the vehicle such as knives and firearms.
 - Do not exit the vehicle before it comes to a complete stop.
 - No drugs or illegal substances or use of drugs/alcohol on the vehicle.
 - SWCT will not transport any individual who appears to be visibly intoxicated.
 - No offensive displays of public affection.
 - No unsafe or unruly behavior while on bus.
 - No illegal activity.
 - Offensive personal hygiene is unacceptable.
 - No purposeful acts of damage or vandalism to SWCT vehicles and/or other property.
 - No bullying other passengers or the driver.
 - No excessive foul language

- Riders must dress in a manner that is appropriate for public transportation; including wearing a top (shirt), bottoms (pants, shorts, skirt, dress), and footwear with soles

IX. Buckling Up

- Safety 1st. Buckle up your seat belt. It is the law.
- Your driver may not move the vehicle until ALL passengers are properly buckled. ---Thank you.
- Car seats are required for children according to PA state laws, and MUST be provided by and secured by the parent.

This section is specifically for clients with the MATP sponsor

X. The Medical Transportation Program Section (MATP)

A. Mileage Reimbursement (MATP ONLY):

- If a MATP client has a vehicle available or knows someone who has a vehicle available to take a client to a medical appointment, we will provide mileage reimbursement. As the medical assistant transportation provider (MATP) we are required to assign the least costly mode of transportation, as well as most appropriate service available as sponsored by the Department of Human Services.
- Reimbursement is given for the shortest distance from the client's home or "client location" to the MATP provider and the return trip. This is based on the mileage calculated on MapQuest or MapPoint. We will reimburse at the rate of 12 cents per mile.
- We will reimburse for parking expenses and tolls if receipts are provided.
- We will provide a form to be completed, which includes mileage from the trip and parking/toll costs. Please email or call to request a form prior to appointment.
- Client must have the medical provider sign to verify that you were there. Forms must be completed in its entirety to process payment.

- Client can turn in reimbursement request immediately after the trip or at the end of the month. Checks will be held until payment has reached \$10 dollars or more.
- SWCT will NOT reimburse any costs that are for trips more than 30 Days from the date trip was taken. (MATP application must be on file.) Reimbursement occurs biweekly on Thursdays.
- **Methadone:** MATP Only. Client must go to closest provider if utilizing Mileage Reimbursement. More than one individual riding together can only turn in one form (and note who travels together.)
- **Pharmacy:** MATP only must go to the closest pharmacy or one while on route to destination to be covered under MATP. This applies to Shared Ride and Mileage Reimbursement.

Each mileage reimbursement is reviewed on a case by case basis.

B. Urgent Care Transportation (MATP ONLY)

- Client may need transportation on a short notice for an urgent care matter. Urgent care is any illness or severe condition which under reasonable standards of medical practice would be diagnosed and treated within a 24-hour period, and if left untreated could rapidly become a crisis or emergency situation. Discharge from a hospital is also considered Urgent care. Please allow time for accommodations to be made on such short notice.
- Urgent Care includes any situation where a client's medical provider had told them to come to their office or to obtain some other medical treatment or service, that day or within the next 24 hours.
- SWCT has a process for responding to any urgent care requests and will make every effort to help our clients get the medical care they need.
- This program is sponsored by Department of Human Services. Those without MATP can utilize service for full fare as same day transportation.
- Transportation to Urgent Care facilities and/or walk in clinics is NOT permitted by MATP under any circumstance. All doctor appointments must be scheduled in advance.

C. Longer Distance/Out of Service Schedule Trips (MATP ONLY)

- Longer distance trips (more than 40 miles one way) must be reserved at least 10 business days in advance to ensure arrangements can be made.

D. Pharmacy Verification

- MATP now requires verification of pharmacy visits. Please be prepared for your driver to request proof of prescription. A receipt for a prescription or a prescription bottle is acceptable as long as the date listed/filled is same date in question.

XI. Fraud or Misuse of Services Policy

- Any occurrence of a fraudulent act of knowingly misusing the services. Examples of situations may include but are not limited to:
 - Using MATP services for non-medical activities.
 - Falsifying a doctor's signature or medical facility's referral.
 - Falsifying or exaggerating mileage for reimbursement on an invoice
-

XII. Discipline for Offenses

- Discipline for Violation of Services:
 1. First Violation: A documented verbal warning with discussion with client and staff member. The client will immediately be called by staff describing the occurrence, the date of the occurrence, and the explanation of the offense.
 2. Second Violation: A written warning. This will immediately be mailed to the client describing the occurrence, the date of the occurrence, and the explanation of the offense, and a reminder of the first occurrence.

3. Third Violation: 30-day suspension of SWCT program services. A letter of suspension will be mailed to client describing the occurrence, the date of the occurrence, and the explanation of the disciplinary action.

Each occurrence is reviewed on a case by case basis.

XIII. Service Animals

- Passengers with disabilities are permitted to have a service animal to assist in travel or trip purpose, regardless of fare or program sponsor.
- Service animals are animals that have been trained to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities. Service animals are the responsibility of the client and must be controlled at all times, with no disruptions to the passengers.
- Notify the office prior to the trip if client will be traveling with a service animal.
- If the animal is a pet, it must travel in a carrier.

XIV. Transporting Portable Oxygen/Respirators

- Portable Oxygen and/or Respirators are permitted for passengers as needed. Clients are responsible for maintaining a sufficient supply of oxygen to complete their travels.
- Oxygen must be in a cylinder and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Before boarding, make sure valves are securely closed and each cylinder is to be inspected ensuring it is free of cracks and leaks. Listen for leaks and if a cylinder is dented or damaged, it should not be transported. The client is responsible for handling oxygen with care.
- Oxygen must be strapped down securely during transport, never being stored in the aisle. Extra cylinders must be accompanied by the consumer at all times.

Notify the office, prior to the trip, if you are traveling with Portable Oxygen and/or Respirators.

XV. Inclement Weather

- As safety is a top concern for our clients, there may be times during the winter months that our transportation services may need to be closed or delayed due to bad weather and road conditions.
- If three or more of the School Districts in Susquehanna County are closed, please assume that our transportation services are also closed. If you have any questions or concerns if services are operating due to inclement weather, please contact the SWCT office the next business day.
- If time allows, we will make every possible attempt to contact clients, if trips need to be rescheduled. If you do not hear from us please contact our office the next business day to reschedule.
- Due to variations in locations and areas, Susquehanna and or Wyoming County may differ if road conditions allow.
- Delays are sometimes necessary; if the client is unsure of a delay in our service please call our office.

XVI. Client Co-pay

- You will be given your co-pay amount upon booking your trip. You are expected to have the co-pay available to pay each driver every time you board the bus. Also you are expected to have exact change as drivers may not have change available. If you do not pay your co-pay you may not receive transportation services for that day as fares are to be collected date of service. Which may result in a no-show. If you are unsure of your co-pay or need to confirm the amount, please call the office. Everyone is charged the same fare however; co-pay amount due depends on what sponsors you may qualify for.

XVII. Prepay Balances (effective 11/1/18)

- You can now apply money to your account and let us handle the rest. Our software will track and automatically deduct your fare from your prepay account when you board the vehicle. SWCT now accepts cash, check, and/or credit/debit card payments to be applied to prepay balance. To make a payment, you may come into our office located at 81 Industrial Drive, Montrose; mail a check to SWCT-Trehab, PO Box 366, Montrose, PA, 18801 or call and make a Credit/Debit card purchase over the phone by calling 570-278-6140. Prepay balances never expire and are non-refundable. You can check your prepay balance by contacting our office via phone at 570-278-6140.

XVIII. Credit/Debit Card Policy (effective 8/30/17)

- SWCT accepts credit and debit card payments. There is a minimum payment amount of \$25. To make a credit card purchase, you may come into our office located at 81 Industrial Drive, Montrose; or call and make a purchase over the phone by calling 570-278-6140. Our drivers do not have the ability to accept card payments when you board the bus. Credit card payments are non-refundable and must be received at least two hours prior to scheduled pick up.

XVII. Filing a Complaint

- A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or a dispute concerning our services, staff, operations, or policies. Complaints can be submitted within 5 days by telephone, 570-278-6140 or toll-free 866-278-9332, or writing to: Trehab-SWCT, PO BOX 366, Montrose, PA 18801. Or Email: swct@trehab.org
- All complaints will be documented and the circumstances surrounding the situation will be reviewed. Upon receipt of the complaint, a staff member, who was not directly involved with the complaint, will review the complaint. The staff member will then issue a response of the complaint resolution to the consumer within seven business days.

- If the staff response is not satisfactory to the consumer it may be appealed to the Executive Director; and when appropriate, the client sponsor will then be involved. Consumer will receive a response of complaint resolution within 7 business days.

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*SWCT is a Shared Ride Public Transportation Service. We are not a medical transport, and staff is not medically certified. SWCT reserves the right to deny services to any individual that poses a health or safety risk to themselves, other passengers, or our staff at any time. Risk factors may be determined based on reasonable observance and/or the inability to safely use public transportation services, in accordance with SWCT safety standards and/or state standards and may be referred to a more specialized medical transportation service. Reasons may include but not limited to, what is referred to as bariatric transport; exposed open wounds; extreme hygiene concerns that may be infectious or susceptible to infections; etc. SWCT is not equipped to provide this level of care and does not provide this level of service, as it is out of the scope of a Shared Ride Public Transportation service. SWCT will make every possible effort to offer reasonable accommodations, if not with SWCT then with another transportation provider that is more equipped for the individuals' needs. You may also refer to 211.org for additional resources.