



10 Questions

for Dianna Rossi by Lisa Biedenbach

What are your responsibilities as Transportation Assistant?

We help older adults live independently in their homes. We make transport our members coming to Central Connections and older adults in our community who need transport to essential destinations, such as dialysis, doctors, and pharmacies, and grocery stores, and to nonessential destinations, such as banks, post office, and hair salons. I schedule drivers and client pickups and instruct drivers and other employees in first aid and CPR. Before coming to Central Connections 5 years ago, I worked 13 years for the Franklin Police Department as a paramedic and full-time 911 dispatcher.

How many vans and drivers are in the Central Connections fleet?

We own 7 handicapped equipped vans and employ 11 drivers, with 6 drivers on the road Monday through Friday. We need more vans to accommodate client needs. We operate with state and federal funds.

How are drivers trained?

They receive on-the-job training for up to 4 weeks, take D.R.I.V.E./PASS training and a defensive driving course, and become certified in CPR and first aid. Director of Transportation Josh Blackmore is a certified D.R.I.V.E./PASS instructor. Every driver undergoes an annual background check. We follow Council on Aging and Ohio Department of Transportation guidelines. Vans are safety inspected annually. Each maintenance concern is addressed and recorded.

How does a person qualify for transport?

A client must be age 60 or over and live in Middletown or the close surrounding area to qualify for transport by Central Connections. We offer members free transport to Central Connections for congregational lunch or any activity. Anyone seeking transport out of this area must qualify for Elderly Services Program (ESP).

How does ESP work for transportation needs?

A client must be age 65+ to qualify for ESP. A person should first call ESP to learn about eligibility and additional services available. If a person age 65+ requires long-term dialysis or is a cancer patient needing radiation or chemo treatments, the person should contact ESP and be assigned a case worker and complete paperwork for eligibility. A person who qualifies for ESP transport can be taken to medical appointments in other cities, such as West Chester or Dayton.

How is Title III used for transportation?

Title III is funding to provide transportation for older adults age 60-65 going to doctors, pharmacies, and grocery stores. It covers the zip codes in Middletown and surrounding area that is assigned to Central Connections. We accept donations from Title III clients.

How many clients and trips does Transportation average a month?

400-600 trips a month; 250+ clients. We are reimbursed by ESP and Title III after we bill them. This revenue helps us pay for vans and their maintenance.



Transportation Assistant Dianna Rossi schedules transport for older adults and instructs drivers in first aid and CPR for Transportation Services at Central Connections.

How can a person schedule transportation?

Call Transportation Services, 513-422-6233, to schedule transportation. We can book a month in advance. We are efficient in scheduling pickup of clients who want to come to Central Connections, for example, an 8:30 AM pickup for morning programs, a mid-morning pickup with arrival time around 11:00 AM for congregational lunch, and an early afternoon pickup. We stop operating daily at 4:30 PM.

What does a Punch Card cost?

A \$50 Punch Card entitles a person to 11 single-way trips for essential and nonessential trips in Middletown and the 10-mile surrounding area of Trenton, Monroe, and Franklin. A one-way trip is \$5. Purchase a Punch Card in Transportation Services, located in the building behind Central Connections.

What sets Transportation at Central Connections apart?

Our courteous and prompt drivers. We won't leave a client stranded or waiting for hours. 🌱