



## **First Mile, Last Mile Cancellations & No-shows Policy and Procedures**

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Issue Date: **September 19, 2018**

Effective Date: **September 19, 2018**

Responsible for Review: **Program Director**

Scheduled Review Date: **September 19, 2019**

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**The above referenced Organization Name will be known as VTC throughout this document.**

### **CANCELLATIONS**

Client must be made one hour or more prior to a scheduled trip by calling the VTC Office at (315) 714-2034. If you are calling before or after office hours you must leave a message on the on call phone at (315) 323-3740. If the client cancels the trip when the vehicle arrives it is also considered a no show.

Drivers must wait 15 minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time for a client to get in the car. The volunteer driver must make every attempt to notify the client that he/she is at the pick-up location (knock on the door, call the client or honk). If no one appears or if the driver must leave because a rider is not ready to travel at the scheduled pick-up time, it will be considered a No-Show.

### **PATTERN AND PRACTICE OF NO-SHOWS**

One of the worst inconveniences for Client is waiting for other clients who never board the vehicle when it arrives to pick them up. Volunteer Drivers are obligated to wait 15 minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time for a client to enter the car. If no one appears, it will be considered a No-Show. The driver notifies VTC that their client is a no-show, confirms the time, and leaves the site to pick-up or drop-off the next client.

Clients that enter the car more than 15 minutes beyond their scheduled pick-up time are reported as a No-Show/Late-Show.

If the client cancels the trip when the vehicle arrives it is called a no-show. Again, the driver notifies VTC that the client has not boarded the vehicle, confirms the time, and leaves the site for the next client.

No-Shows are posted to the client's file. If a VTC client has No-Show filings totaling 30% of their last 20 trips (6 violations), they will be contacted by VTC and issued a warning letter. If a VTC client has No-Show filings totaling 30% of their last 50 trips (15 violations), they may be suspended for up to 7 consecutive calendar days. This suspension will be communicated in writing, by mail by the Program Director.

***PLEASE NOTE:*** Only No-Shows that are under the rider's control will be counted against the rider. No-Shows caused by reasons beyond the rider's control (e.g., scheduling problems, late pick-ups, operational problems on the part of the transit provider, family emergencies, or extreme medical conditions), or due to operator error will not be counted against the rider.

## **STEPS FOR FILING AN APPEAL**

### **I. Filing an Appeal**

- A. All appeals must be filed in writing with the VTC office.
- B. Appeals must be filed within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the original determination of ineligibility, temporary or conditional eligibility, suspension of service, or denial of a specific trip request. If the 60th day after the original determination or trip denial is on a weekend or legal holiday, an appeal will be accepted on the next subsequent business day.
- C. Appellants are urged to state in their appeal letter the reasons why they believe the determination does not accurately reflect their ability to use VTC service for First Mile/Last Mile, or why suspension is inappropriate. Written material regarding the specific functional ability of the applicant/client or relating to the general nature of the individual's disability may be submitted at this time. This will assist VTC reviewers in their initial review of the appeal.
- D. An applicant may, however, request an appeal hearing without providing additional detail and without the submission of additional written material or information.

### **II. Receipt and Scheduling of an Appeal Hearing**

- A. Upon receipt all appeals will be date-stamped and referred to the Executive Director or his/her designee for initial review and consideration. The Executive Director or his/her designee may choose to:
  - Reverse a determination of ineligibility or revise duration or conditions of eligibility;
  - Authorize a specific trip request which had been denied;

- Schedule the matter for a hearing by the Review Board;
  - Cancel or modify a suspension of service
  - Initial review of appeal request by the Executive Director or his/her designee will normally be conducted within five (5) business days of the receipt of the appeal. If the Executive Director or his/her designee makes the determination, it is then taken to the review board.
  - Appeals before the Review Board will normally be completed within the calendar month following the receipt of the appeal, pending the meeting schedule of the Review Board. The Review Board will render its determination within thirty (30) days of its consideration of the appeal.
  - The Review Board may consist of the Executive Director, Program Director, a volunteer driver and if necessary, a licensed medical professional.
- B. The Review Board shall hear and consider;
- Any information, written or verbal, received from the applicant;
  - The statements of the of the applicant, his/her advocate and any other witnesses offered by the applicant;
  - Information from VTC or staff regarding its services; and,
  - Any other material deemed that by the Review Board to be germane to the consideration of the appellant's ability to utilize FMLM.
- C. The determination resulting from the appeal will be made in writing within 30 days and will state the reason(s) for the decision. The client will be notified by phone and mail of the outcome.

## **V. Interim Service**

- A. During the period between the receipt of an appeal of determination regarding eligibility and the determination of the Review Board, no service will be provided to the applicant.
- B. If an appeal is taken based upon a suspension of service for any reason other than violent or threatening behavior, service will be provided until an appeal hearing is concluded.
- C. If an appeal is taken based upon a suspension of service for violent or threatening behavior, service will not be provided during the appeal.

## **VI. Privacy of Appellants**

All Review Board copies of appellant's applications and supporting materials remain the property of VTC and will be returned to the Compliance Officer at the conclusion of the appeal hearing.

- A. Members of the Review Board are strictly prohibited from discussing the details of an appeal regarding the name or other identifying characteristics of the appellant with any person not directly involved in the appeal. Members may discuss information of a general sort regarding a particular type of disability and its functional impact upon an

individual's ability to use First Mile, Last Mile services and preparation for a hearing, but are advised to take care of that information specific appellants is not shared.

- B. Appellants will be asked to state if they wish to have the hearing conducted in closed session. At the appellant's request, all parties except Review Board members, VTC staff, the appellant and his/her advocate will remain. Witnesses as necessary for the conduct of the hearing will be excluded from the hearing.
- C. The deliberations of the Review Board shall normally be conducted in an executive session in order to allow for the full consideration of the appellants medical records and condition. Appellants may, however, request that these deliberations be conducted in a public session.
- D. The vote determining the outcome of the appeal will be conducted in public, and the assessment of the appellant's functional ability to utilize VTC First Mile, Last Mile service, excluding medical diagnosis and other private medical information, will be rendered in writing.