

**Policy and Procedures**

Transporting Client / Providing Client Meal Policy

The general policy of Take the Next Step (TTNS) is that staff will not transport Take the Next Step clients in their own personal vehicles. We have this policy to physically protect the staff person from an attack by the client, to protect staff and Next Step from a law suit, and to protect the client from advances by a staff member. TTNS does not support the giving of extra services to favored clients.

However, TTNS serves individuals and families who have a reduced number of resources. Often our clients do not have access to transportation. Also, many of our clients are discouraged and do not have anyone in their life to listen to them or mentor them. Therefore, we often fall into situations where we need to quickly help a client get to an appointment or we are moved to share some quality time with a client by taking them to get coffee or something to eat.

Occasionally, a staff member and/or volunteers will have developed a relationship with a client over time and the TTNS personnel feels totally comfortable and willing to transport the client. The TTNS staff/volunteer should still communicate their intention to transport or provide for the client with their own resources using a flight plan, a text, or phone call to the program lead.

All TTNS staff will submit a copy of their driver’s license to our insurance company for approval as a possible driver with clients. They will fax a copy of their driver’s license with the attached form.

If it becomes necessary or the staff member feels inspired to transport a client and/or provide them with a meal, the following steps should be followed:

* For minor aged clients, a permission slip must be signed by their parent(s) or guardian.
* Volunteers should not transport clients, youth, teens, children, or adults, unless requested by their program lead.
* Discuss the situation with their program lead or designee. Ask for their wise counsel as to if you should transport or provide a meal/coffee for a client.
* Sometimes these situations can arise without much warning. So if you are alone and encounter the client and their situation, call or text the program lead or board member to seek their wisdom.
* Seek to find another staff person or a trusted friend of the client to accompany you. Our goal is to not have staff in a one-on-one situation with a client. This is for physical safety for both parties as well as to prevent allegations for in appropriate behavior against our staff.
* Staff will fill out a “Flight Plan” and place it in the client’s file. This can be done after the outing if the situation demands immediate action
* After confirming with the program lead, go ahead and take the client.
* Complete the Debrief section on the Flight Plan from the client’s file.
* Report back to the supporting program lead or board member how the outing went.