

Choice Services Program transportation program

The Choice Services Program transportation program helps older adults obtain rides within the Denver region. Although most participants use the program for transportation to medical appointments, participants may use the program for personal trips such as to local stores, social outings and cultural activities.

All Choice Services Program participants will be provided the same monthly limit to use to schedule transportation through a contracted transportation provider of their choice. Area Agency on Aging staff will notify participants of the limit upon enrollment in the program. The limit is subject to change at any time due to funding availability. Once a participant reaches their monthly limit, the participant will not be eligible for additional trips until the following month. The cost of trips is determined by the contracted transportation provider at time of scheduling. Area Agency on Aging staff will use estimates to track participant progress toward their limit. Funding becomes available on the first of each month and expires on the last day of the month. Funds do not roll over month-to-month.

Program eligibility requirements, details about available contracted transportation providers and limitations are outlined below.

Area Agency on Aging ride line

720-278-2345

Call the Area Agency on Aging ride line for all Choice Services Program transportation-related needs, including to:

- Schedule or change **all rides** with Carepool, HopSkipDrive or other contracted providers.
- Request Regional Transportation District transit tickets.
- Set up Uber funds account.
- Ask general questions.
- Please call HopSkipDrive directly at 1-844-467-7547 to **cancel** a scheduled ride.

We make life better!

Area Agency on Aging staff can answer questions about transportation options as well as how to access long-term services and receive the support necessary to remain independent in the community. Area Agency on Aging staff can help family members, caregivers, friends and professionals learn about services available in the Denver region. Please note, due to high call volume, staff will return calls within 48 business hours.

Choice Services Program eligibility (subject to change at any time):

All rides are subject to the availability of funds. Area Agency on Aging staff are responsible for ensuring services are available to as many people as possible throughout the region. Area Agency on Aging staff reserve the right to use their discretion in approving or denying rides for any reason.

To qualify for the Choice Services Program, a participant must:

1. Be 60 or older.
2. Live in the Area Agency on Aging service area and the transportation provider service area (this includes Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin and Jefferson counties).
3. Be ambulatory and able to independently transfer into and out of a vehicle
4. Be able to coordinate other transportation options if their ride cannot be completed.
5. Independently request rides. Caregivers may request transportation on behalf of a participant under the following conditions:
 - The participant is unable to request transportation independently.
 - The participant consents to have the caregiver request transportation on their behalf.
 - The caregiver reads and understands these guidelines, and signs this form to indicate their agreement.

- A “caregiver” is defined by the State of Colorado as “Family caregivers of individuals, providing informal in-home, and community care to an older adult (60 years of age or older) who is ‘frail’ and determined to be functionally impaired.”
6. Not be a resident of a skilled nursing home or assisted living facility.
7. Not be a recipient of:
- Long-Term Care Medicaid
 - Old Age Pension A.
 - Old Age Pension B.
 - Modified Adjusted Gross Income Medicaid.
 - Supplemental Security Income/Mandatory Medicaid.

These individuals qualify for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation through IntelliRide and therefore do not qualify to use transportation for medical trips covered by the Choice Services Program.

Regional Transportation District

To request RTD tickets:

- A. Call the Area Agency on Aging ride line at 720-278-2345 to request tickets each month. Please leave a message with the participant’s name, phone number, address, the type of tickets (local full-price, local discount or Access-a-Ride), and the number of tickets requesting.
- B. Area Agency on Aging staff mail tickets once a week.
- C. Local full-price tickets are available to participants between the ages of 60 and 65. As of 2023 local discount tickets cost \$2.80 each, and are available in books of 10 (\$28).
- D. Local discount tickets are available to participants older than 65. As of 2023 local discount tickets cost \$1.40 each and are available in books of 10 (\$14).

- E. Access-a-Ride tickets are available to individuals who are Access-a-Ride certified through RTD. As of 2023 Access-a-Ride tickets cost \$5 each and are available in books of 6 (\$30). Participants who believe they would benefit from Access-A-Ride but who are not yet certified may request an application by calling RTD or the Area Agency on Aging ride line. Note: Access-a-Ride participants may use RTD service at no charge.

All tickets are subject to the availability of funds. All prices subject to change. Requesting tickets does not guarantee that the Area Agency on Aging has tickets available.

Transportation Contractors Limitations

- **Carepool** and **HopSkipDrive** do not provide service on national holidays. Please ask staff for details.
- Participants may not use **Carepool**, **HopSkipDrive** or **Uber** for the purpose of moving belongings.
- **Carepool**, **HopSkipDrive** and **Uber** drivers will not operate as a patient escort or provide post-procedure accompaniment.
- **Carepool** and **HopSkipDrive** will not transport animals unless participants have the proper documentation to verify that they are service animals. When scheduling, please notify staff of service animals that will be present.
- **Carepool**, **HopSkipDrive** and **Uber** cannot be used for transport to bars, casinos, dispensaries, liquor stores, Denver International Airport, work or dialysis.
- Rides must originate and end within the Area Agency on Aging's service area.

Carepool

262-333-1410

Trips available:

Monday-Friday

7:30am-5:00pm

HopSkipDrive

1-844-467-7547

Trips available:

Monday-Sunday

12:00am-11:59pm

Participants must call Carepool or HopSkipDrive directly if they have a question about or wish to cancel an already-scheduled ride. Carepool and HopSkipDrive cannot schedule a ride or change ride pick-up times and locations for trips that are paid for using the Choice Services Program.

Requesting a ride with Carepool and HopSkipDrive:

- A. Call the Area Agency on Aging ride line with no less than three business days' advance notice to request rides or to make changes to an existing ride. **Rides canceled with less than 24 hours' notice may result in the participant's suspension from the Choice Services Program transportation program.**
- B. Participants may call up to a month in advance to schedule rides.
- C. Riders can call **as late as:**
 - **Monday** to schedule a ride for **Thursday** or later.
 - **Tuesday** to schedule a ride for **Friday** or later.
 - **Wednesday** to schedule a ride for **Saturday***, **Sunday*** or **Monday** or later.
 - **Thursday** to schedule a ride for the following **Tuesday** or later.
 - **Friday** to schedule a ride for the following **Wednesday** or later.
- D. Calls must be received by 5 p.m. to be considered within three business days.
- E. ***Carepool** does not provide transportation on Saturdays or Sundays.
- F. Holidays observed by the Area Agency on Aging or Carepool or HopSkipDrive do not constitute a business day for scheduling purposes.

F. Leaving a message on the Area Agency on Aging ride line voice mail does not constitute scheduling a ride. All ride requests must be approved verbally by Area Agency on Aging staff. Due to high call volumes, staff will attempt to call back within 48 business hours.

G. Participants may bring a caregiver to support them during the ride, but that individual must be enrolled with the Area Agency on Aging prior to riding as a caregiver and the participant must mention that a caregiver will be present during scheduling.

H. **HopSkipDrive** prioritizes children going to and from school, therefore, program staff recommend participants avoid scheduling rides between the hours of 7-9a.m. and 2-4p.m. on weekdays.

I. Inclement weather disclaimer: Participants are encouraged to use their best judgment when determining whether to schedule a ride or keep a ride appointment when the weather may be unsafe. If a participant chooses to not go on their ride, they must cancel the day before. Area Agency on Aging staff will do their best to help participants plan for appointments but if a participant does not show up for the ride due to weather, they may be suspended from the Choice Services Program transportation program.

On the day of a trip:

- Program staff request that participants be ready at least 10 minutes before their driver arrives. Drivers will wait up to 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time before departing. If a driver wait time exceeds 15 minutes, a wait time fee may be charged.
- If the driver has not arrived for a scheduled pick-up time, please call Carepool at 262-333-1410 or HopSkipDrive at 1-844-467-7547

Uber profiles

Limitations:

- Rides paid for by Choice Services Program funds are only for the purpose of going to destinations serving the needs of the participating older adult. The Area Agency on Aging will pay for rides provided to the enrolled participant and their companion(s). The Area Agency on Aging **will not** pay for rides purchased that do not serve the enrolled program participant.

We make life better!

- Area Agency on Aging Uber funds are only effective in the following counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, and Jefferson.
- The primary payment option must be set to “DRCOG” when requesting a ride using the allotted Area Agency on Aging funds. Should this designation not be made the participant will be held liable for each expense accrued to personal credit card(s) associated with their Uber account.
- The Uber profiles program requires participants to provide their personal credit card as a secondary payment option for Uber. The participant will enter their credit card information directly into the Uber app. The Area Agency on Aging does not hold any participant credit card information. If the cost of rides purchased through Uber exceeds the approved monthly limit, participants will be held liable for all expenses charged to the personal card(s) on file with Uber.
- The Area Agency on Aging’s Uber payment method does not cover tips given to drivers. **All tips** provided to drivers will be billed to the participant’s personal account.
- Please note:** Scheduling rides in advance with Uber may result in additional charges.

Choice Services Program suspension criteria

Area Agency on Aging staff makes every effort to be fair to both participants and contracted transportation providers and to meet the transportation needs of older adults. A participant will be suspended or disenrolled from the program for the following reasons:

- Abuse, harassment, inappropriate language or behavior toward Area Agency on Aging staff or contracted transportation providers.
- Multiple no-shows or cancellations with less than 24 hours' notice of the scheduled ride.
- Using Area Agency on Aging funds to provide rides to non-program participants.
- Not following the policies and procedures.
- **60 or more days** of participant inactivity will result in dis-enrollment. In such instances, participants are welcome to apply for the wait-list for the Choice Services Program by calling the Area Agency on Aging ride line at 720-278-2345.

We make life better!

No-show/late cancellation policy:

Participants are responsible for canceling 24 hours or more in advance of a scheduled ride and being ready to leave when the driver arrives at the appointed time. Participants must make a good effort to attend trips by contacting the contracted transportation provider if they cannot locate the driver. The suspension levels for no-shows/late cancellations are as follows:

- **Warning:** Accruing a total of four late cancellations or no-shows within a six-month period will result in a written warning.
- **First suspension period:** Accruing an additional six late cancellations or no-shows within a six-month period will result in a 30-day suspension period.
- **Second suspension period:** Accruing an additional six late cancellations or no-shows within a six-month period will result in a 90-day suspension period.
- **Third suspension period:** Accruing an additional six late cancellations or no-shows within a six-month period will result in a 180-day suspension period.
- **Final suspension period:** Accruing an additional six late cancellations or no-shows within a six-month period will result in permanent suspension from the program.

*See Participant Rights document attached for detailed appeal process.

Client Information and FAQs Sheet

We are so glad you found us! Please keep this information for your records.

Provider and Area Agency on Aging Information:

Your Service Provider: **Choice Services Program**

Your local Area Agency on Aging: **Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)**

What is an Area Agency on Aging?

We're glad you asked! The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is a regional agency that is designated by the state to administer federal, state, and local funding to meet the needs of older adults in their community. The AAA provides programs and services to older adults and caregivers directly and through contracts with community provider agencies. AAAs also serve as advocates for older adults.

Service Information:

The service you are requesting is funded through the Older Americans Act (OAA) and/or Older Coloradans Act (OCA) funding. This federal and state funding helps older adults, 60+, remain in their homes and communities of choice. Requests for services are processed as funds allow. We can provide you with referrals to other resources in your area, but we will not reach out to them without your permission.

What is the purpose of this form?

We ask you to fill-in this form for several reasons:

- To help us learn about you so we can offer services that best meet your needs
- To help us understand the needs of older adults in our community
- To help us show the need for funding our programs
- To help us meet reporting requirements from our funders

Taxpayer money funds these programs. We must prove that the funding only serves eligible clients and targets older adults and caregivers most in need of services. This paperwork helps us meet that level of accountability.

Income information is not used to determine your eligibility for services. Income and other demographic information (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity) are collected for anonymous demographic reporting purposes. None of your personal information, such as your name or date of birth is disclosed in reporting. You have the right to refuse to provide any of the information requested on the form.

What happens with my information?

We enter your information into a secure state database. As you receive services, we record the services you received in the database. This helps us prove how we spent the funding. The database is secured to the standards outlined in Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH). This means your data remains safe and confidential.

Will you sell my information?

No. We will never sell your information.

How do I provide feedback?

We love hearing how we can improve. Contact your service provider at **303-480-6700** or **areaagencyonaging@drcog.org**. Because we value your input, we may at times send you a survey to ask for your feedback.

How do I file a complaint, grievance, or appeal?

Complaint/Grievance/Appeal Procedure:

You have the right to file a complaint or grievance with the organization asking you to fill out this form. If you are not satisfied with the organization's decision, you can appeal the decision to your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA), and/or the State Unit on Aging (SUA). The complete Complaint/Grievance/Appeal Procedures are available upon request by contacting your local AAA and/or the SUA as follows:

<p>Denver Regional Council of Governments, Area Agency on Aging 1001 17th Street, Suite 700 Denver, CO 80202 303.455.1000</p>	<p>Colorado Department of Human Services, State Unit on Aging 1575 Sherman Street, 10th Floor Denver, CO 80203 303.866.2800</p>
---	---

Can I make a contribution?

We accept contributions to help defray the cost of services and to support our efforts. Every dollar we receive goes back into the programs and services. Contributions are voluntary and are not required to receive services.

You can send to contributions to:

DRCOG, Attn: Accounts Receivable, 1001 17th Street, Suite 700, Denver, CO 80202.

What other resources are available?

Feel free to reach out to your Area Agency on Aging to get more information about the services available in your region. We love to help!

For information about available services in the region, you can contact:

DRCOG, Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

Call (303) 480-6700 or e-mail AreaAgencyonAging@drcog.org

You can also call the statewide Aging and Disability Resources for Colorado (ADRC) for information about resources in your area: 1-844-COL-ADRC / 1-844-265-2372

How can I help?

We couldn't meet the needs of older adults in our communities without the amazing help from volunteers and members of our Regional Advisory Councils. Reach out to either your provider or your AAA to see how you can help make a difference in the lives of older adults in our community.