



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject	Program Area	Revised	Number
Transportation	Safety	November 2024	3.6

Purpose:

Our House, Inc. provides transportation for residents and program participants. The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that all participants are transported safely, and
- To ensure that all agency owned vehicles are used and operated safely and in compliance with all Federal, State and local laws and regulations.

VEHICLE USE:

- A. Agency vehicles are only to be used for the purpose of transporting participants to/from their home/apartment, business/errands and agency related business/errands. This usage includes, but is not limited to:
 - Transporting participants to medical, dental and other related health appointments,
 - Transporting participants or program participants to employment or job training,
 - Transporting participants or program participants for social and recreational activities,
 - Shopping for food, clothing and other participant/agency purchases,
 - Access to community resources such as the library, places of worship, post office, bank, etc.,
 - Fulfilling administrative responsibilities such as: meeting attendance, attendance at trainings/conferences, etc.
- B. **Agency vehicles are NOT to be used for staff personal errands/business.**
- C. **Staff is not allowed to transport a participant in their personal vehicle without prior approval from the Program Director.**

VEHICLE SAFE OPERATING PRACTICES:

- A. Only agency-approved drivers (refer to pg. 3, "Drivers") will be permitted to drive agency vehicles.
- B. The agency vehicle will not transport more participants than its specified capacity.
- C. All participants must be supervised by at least one staff at all times.
 - a. **Participants CANNOT remain unsupervised in the vehicle.**
 - b. **Any time staff must exit the vehicle, all participants must exit and remain with the staff.**
- D. **The vehicle cannot be left running when passengers are entering or exiting.**
- E. **Drivers are responsible for conducting a face check of all passengers to ensure all the right participants are in the vehicle prior to leaving a site/program location.**
- F. **Vehicle keys must be in the possession and control of a staff person at all times. If keys are in the ignition, a staff person must be occupying the driver's seat.**
- G. **Seat belts must be worn at all times by the driver and all passengers.**



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject	Program Area	Revised	Number
Transportation	Safety	November 2024	3.6

- H. **Use of cell phones (including hands free) or any other mobile electronic devices while operating a motor vehicle is prohibited, except in the case of an emergency.** This includes, but is not limited to, answering or making phone calls, engaging in phone conversations, reading or responding to e-mails and text messages, adjusting a navigating/GPS device and/or accessing the Internet. These restrictions do not apply to calls made to report an emergency. In all such cases, all cautionary measures should be practiced. If a call must be made or received while on the road, pull over to a safe place and put the vehicle in “Park”. If adjustments need to be made to a navigation/GPS device, pull over to a safe place and put the vehicle in “Park”.
- I. **No eating or drinking is permitted in the vehicle(s).**
- J. Prior to use on every trip, it is the responsibility of the driver to:
- Conduct a pre-trip inspection of the vehicle to ensure it is in safe operating condition.
 - Remove snow or ice, if applicable, from all vehicle exterior surfaces, including the roof.
 - Clear driveway, parking area, of snow, ice, or any other debris that may hinder the vehicle from safe passage.
- K. Agency vehicle(s) will comply with all safety, inspection, and licensing requirements established by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission. Refer to OHI SOP Vehicle Management & Maintenance 4.1.
- L. Agency vehicles will meet all insurance requirements specified by the Division of Developmental Disabilities. The current vehicle registration, insurance card and handicap placard will be kept in the agency vehicle at all times. When new insurance, registration cards, or handicap placards arrive, they will be distributed by the Office Manager to the home/apartment/program.
- M. Rules and emergency procedures will be reviewed annually with all participants, at minimum, or when a new participant is a first-time passenger in a vehicle.
- N. Agency procedures must be followed in the event of an accident. Refer to 9.6 “Vehicle Accident Procedures”.
- O. No obstacles shall block the passage to the door(s).
- P. Drivers shall drive defensively at all times and obey all traffic laws. This includes adherence to all speed limits, traffic signals and signs.
- Q. In the event the driver is ticketed for any reason, the driver must report the ticket to their administrative supervisor and HR. The driver is responsible for paying all fines, fees and court costs.

DRIVERS:

- A. All employees are required to provide OHI with a photo copy of a valid driver’s license (for their employee file) and provide authorization to OHI to conduct a motor vehicle record check at time of hire and, at minimum, semi-annually throughout their period of employment.



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject	Program Area	Revised	Number
Transportation	Safety	November 2024	3.6

- B. All employees operating OHI vehicles at any time or operating any motor vehicle while working must be at least 21 years of age, have a current and valid driver’s license for the vehicle in use, and a good driving record. A valid driver’s license means a license that is not provisional, probationary, suspended, revoked, or expired.
- C. Human Resources staff is responsible for conducting MVR checks (every 6 months) and notifying management of driver status: “Approved Driver” or “Disqualified”, in compliance with OHI Insurance Carrier Screening Guidelines, OHI Employee Handbook and OHI SOP Vehicle Accident Procedures 9.6. Employee drivers who are determined to be “Disqualified” may be prohibited from driving OHI vehicles and may be subject to termination of employment. Human Resources will run a driving abstract when an OHI employee gets into an auto accident and it’s determined to be their fault and if an employee has too many points on their license they can be terminated.
- D. Employees with an out-of-state driver’s license must, if they reside in New Jersey, obtain a New Jersey driver’s license within sixty (60) days of New Jersey residency.
- E. At the time of each driver’s license renewal or change, employees are responsible for submitting their new license to be photocopied by Human Resources to be kept on file.
- F. The OHI Human Resources Department is responsible for approving staff to drive OHI vehicles.
 - Employees **MUST** report to Human Resources any motor vehicle conviction or change in driving status immediately. Failure to report these changes may result in discipline, up to and including termination.
- G. Drivers must have a current First Aid and CPR certification.
- H. All drivers will be trained by the senior staff person in charge of each site on how to operate the vehicle(s) properly and safely before driving duties commence.
 - Training will include current defensive driving techniques, proper operation of wheelchair lifts and securing devices (if applicable), Emergency Procedures, Vehicle Accident Procedures, and Transportation Policy and Procedures.
 - A copy of the QA Orientation Acknowledgement Form shall be maintained in accordance with SOP 10.13 Records Retention Policy.

TRANSPORTATION OF DAY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

The following policies and procedures are in compliance with NJ DHS/DDD “Standards for Adult Day Programs”, Chapter 12B, regarding provision of transportation for participants who live in the geographic area of the OHI day service programs, e.g. Employment Services (ES), all Hope Autism Solutions (HAS) programs, and the Volunteer Action Program (VAP), unless otherwise specified in the Agency’s contract or in a participant’s Service Plan.

- The need for special transportation accommodations including, but not limited to, the need for an aide or escort shall be determined by the IDT and documented in the Service Plan.



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject	Program Area	Revised	Number
Transportation	Safety	November 2024	3.6

- Each participant, is to be picked up and returned to his/her designated home or pick-up point.
- The cost of transportation is included in the NJ Medicaid rate reimbursed to OHI for participants who reside within the OHI catchment area.
 - Participants who reside outside the catchment area will be billed for transportation at the rate determined by NJ Medicaid for each mile beyond the catchment area.
- Curb to curb transportation is provided under the following circumstances:
 - Neither the driver nor the vehicle aide, when present, is required to escort a participant from the home to the vehicle or vice versa.
 - If accompaniment is necessary, the caregiver is responsible for providing assistance from the home to the vehicle and vice versa.
 - If the location of the participant's home is within a feasible distance to the location of the day program or service provided and served by OHI's transportation system.
 - NOTE: Requests for accommodation to allow participant participation in OHI day programs when OHI is unable to provide transportation will be considered upon submission of an OHI SOP 3.6B - Transportation by Guardian Acknowledgement/Approval Form. Exceptions will be approved on a case-by-case basis and approvals are subject to termination if the terms and conditions set forth in Form 3.6B are not in compliance by the participant/guardian.
- Participants are responsible for being ready to board the vehicle when it arrives at their home in the morning.
- **An OHI SOP 3.6A - Transportation by Guardian Acknowledgement /Approval Form, specifying whether or not the participant can be dropped off and left unsupervised is required for all participants at time of intake. The form shall be:**
 - **Signed by the participant (or legal guardian, where applicable).**
 - **Signed by the home representative if different from the guardian.**
 - **Maintained in the participant's record.**
 - **Reviewed annually at the Service Plan meeting with a new form completed every five (5) years.**
- **In the event that a participant cannot be dropped off (drop offs cannot be conducted before 3pm) and left unsupervised, and no responsible staff/adult is visible, the vehicle/driver shall wait a maximum of ten (10) minutes and call supervisor before continuing on their route with the participant on board. The caregiver is then responsible to pick up the participant from the day program or authorized location.**
- In the event of a transportation cancellation or early dismissal due to inclement weather or other circumstances outside of the control of OHI, the Director of the program(s) affected are responsible for activating the Emergency Phone Chain via text and voicemail message sent out



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject	Program Area	Revised	Number
Transportation	Safety	November 2024	3.6

through CallMultiplier software which will notify the participant's caregiver/parent/guardian of the cancellation.

- The driver/aide may decide not to accept a participant onto the vehicle if there are significant indications that they are ill. This procedure is acknowledged by the OHI 3.6A - Day Services/Supports Guardian Transportation Sign-Off Form.
- If the participant will not be utilizing OHI provided transportation services on a given day, it is the responsibility of the participant, or guardian/caregiver (as applicable), to notify OHI no later than 8:00 a.m. that day.
- Transportation of any participant may be temporarily suspended if there are chronic problems with pick up or drop off, non-compliance with OHI transportation policies, or participant participation circumstances affecting the ability of OHI to safely transport the participant or other participants in that same vehicle.
 - NOTE: Refer to additional OHI Suspension and Discharge Policies and Procedures contained in the OHI Employment Services - Handbook of Rights and Services, as applicable.