

# SUWANNEE VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY RIDER'S GUIDE



## TELEPHONE NUMBER REFERENCE

SVTA OFFICE: (386) 362-5332  
(800) 258-7267  
M-F 8am-5pm

Closed weekends and all federal holidays.

TO MAKE A TRIP RESERVATION  
M-F 8 am to 5pm  
(386) 362-5332 OPTION 2

LISTEN TO and FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

TO FILE A COMPLIMENT or COMPLAINT  
(386) 362-5332 or (800) 983-2435

IF YOU ARE HEARING IMPAIRED, BLIND OR  
SPEECH DISABLED CALL 7-1-1 FL RELAY FOR  
ASSISTANCE.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE

### TDTF RIDERS

Transportation (Disadvantaged Trust Fund): This Trust Fund is a state grant for those in need of transportation to medical and other life-sustaining appointments, but who have no means of transportation and who do not qualify for other programs. In order to qualify to ride under TDTF, you must have a complete, and current, approved TDTF Eligibility form, along with proof of household income on file. This form can be mailed to you or you may pick one up at our office. Basic qualifications include, but are not limited to: no operating vehicle or other means of transportation. The \$2 co-pay, each way, **MUST** be paid to the Bus Operator prior to boarding.

OTHER PAYMENT PROVISIONS: SVTA can also transport the public under standard fare (private pay). This means the rider pays a flat rate for certain trips, whether it is in or out of your county. To learn the rates for a specific trip, please call the SVTA main office at (386) 362-5332 OPTION 2.

*Grocery store trips may be scheduled for a standard fare, or private pay, based upon availability. There is a three, grocery store issued, bag limit for shopping trips. This rule will be strictly adhered to.*

MEDICAID: You must contact your HMO to set up Medicaid medical transportation.

## SVTA RIDER CODE OF CONDUCT:

Rider is required to follow these rules of conduct to insure everyone's safety:

1. Riders are responsible for their personal hygiene. If your personal hygiene is offensive to others, you will be refused transportation.
2. Use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs are not permitted while on vehicles.
3. Eating & drinking are not permitted on vehicle unless medically necessary.
4. Riders who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to board.
5. Abusive, threatening, obscene language or discourtesy of any kind will not be tolerated. Riders may not create a hostile scene.
6. Riders and escorts are responsible for a \$2 co-pay each trip, and must have exact change, each time you board.
7. Rider must not engage the driver in conversation or distract the driver in any way.
8. Rider must use earphones when using personal listening devices.
9. Rider may not ask driver to make special stops during transport.
10. Rider is responsible for all personal items. SVTA is not responsible for missing or lost items or misplaced property.

11. Riders must use seat belts if available. Wheelchairs or any other mobility device must be properly secured and fastened before SVTA vehicle can move.

12. Wheelchairs and walking devices must be in good repair. *Client is responsible for providing and maintaining their own wheelchair.*

13. Riders who need special assistance must have an escort. The escort must age 18+ & must be available to aid rider as needed.

14. When transporting children, the following Florida Child Car Seat Laws must be followed:

If the vehicle that you are being transported in is equipped with seat belts:

**Minors under 18 years old must be in a seatbelt.**

Florida law requires children age 5 and under to be secured properly in a crash-tested, federally approved child restraint device.

- **Children ages 0-3** must be in child restraint devices of a separate carrier or a vehicle manufacturer's integrated child seat.
- **Children age 4 and 5** must be in a separate carrier, integrated child seat or booster seat.

**Car seats may not be left on the vehicle.**

## ***SVTA RIDER'S QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE***

The Suwannee Valley Transit Authority (SVTA) is a public transit agency serving the citizens of Columbia, Hamilton and Suwannee Counties. SVTA is governed by the SVTA Board of Directors. Two County Commissioners from each of the three counties make up the SVTA Board of Directors.

### ***STATE'S DESIGNATED CTC***

SVTA is the state's designated 'Community Transportation Coordinator' (CTC), meaning that SVTA is the transportation agency for non-emergency medical transportation for the state's Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund (TDTF). For Medicaid sponsored, non-emergency medical transportation you must contact your HMO to set up your transportation for medical appointments. To schedule transportation under the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund, call the numbers located on the front of this brochure. All non-emergency transportation is done by way of public and shared ride transportation. SVTA is fully ADA compliant, serving ambulatory, wheelchair and stretcher riders.

### ***COMMUNITY DISASTER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES***

During a community disaster, SVTA will work with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) of your county to transport residents to designated evacuation shelters. All routine transportation will be suspended during times of state declared disaster.

### ***ESCORTS and SERVICE ANIMALS***

If you use a wheelchair or other mobility device, you must be able to move around with your device under your own power. You are responsible for providing and maintaining your

own wheelchair. If you need assistance in moving about (i.e. you cannot roll your wheelchair without assistance, or walk to the vehicle without help), you must have an escort with you. The escort must be at least 18 years of age and fully capable to help you move about and assist you in case of an emergency. The escort must stay with you while you are on the SVTA vehicle. SVTA does NOT provide escorts. If you have an escort, you **both** must pay the co-pay. Service Animals may accompany a rider. Rider is responsible for animal's hygiene and behavior.

### ***CERTIFICATION***

SVTA is safety and security certified by the Florida Department of Transportation. SVTA meets state / federal safety requirements for Public Transportation under Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 14-90.

### ***TO MAKE A RESERVATION***

Trip reservations must be made at least 3 business days in advance of the day you need transportation. Trip reservations are taken weekdays from 8am to 5pm. Call (386) 362-5332 OPTION 2 to make a reservation. You must have all required information ready, such as the doctor or treatment facility's name, address, phone, date and time of appointment. The Reservationist cannot look up this information for you. When your reservation is logged, you will be given a confirmation number. This number is proof that you made an appointment. SVTA is not responsible for missed appointments because you did not call in on time or did not provide correct information. Call for your reservation as soon as you become aware of your appointments.

### ***SUBSCRIPTION TRIPS***

If you have an appointment that will continue for an extended period of time (i.e. physical therapy or dialysis treatment) SVTA can set up a Subscription trip for you. This will put you on a

schedule for the duration of your treatment so you will not have to call in each time. Pick up and drop off locations must be the same throughout the subscription.

### ***TO CANCEL A RESERVATION***

Please notify SVTA if you must cancel your scheduled trip. Call (386) 362-5332 OPTION 1. If you do not cancel within 8 hours prior to your scheduled pick up time, you will be considered a NO SHOW. A NO SHOW occurs when the driver arrives to pick you up and you are not ready to board the vehicle. If you are a NO SHOW or if you cancel when the SVTA vehicle arrives, all your trips for that day will be cancelled as well.

### ***THE DAY OF YOUR TRIP***

**You must be ready to board your SVTA Transport vehicle when it arrives at your location.** The Driver *cannot* wait for more than 5 minutes as s/he must move on to pick up the next rider. SVTA recommends that you be ready at least two (2) hours ahead of your expected pick up time. If you require an escort to help you move about, that escort must be ready to board with you.

### ***AFTER APPOINTMENT PICK UP***

If you were not given an 'after appointment pick up time', you will be considered a 'will call'. This means that when you are finished with your appointment, call (386) 362-5332 OPTION 1 and tell us that you are ready for pick up. SVTA will send the nearest available transport for your return home.

### ***PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION & SHARE RIDE***

SVTA does its best to get you to your appointment on time with minimal wait times. SVTA is public transportation only and uses

a shared ride program, meaning that others will share your ride. SVTA covers a 2,300 square mile area and serves many riders. In order to get everyone to their appointment on time, you may have a very early pick up time. You may be on the transport vehicle for up to 2 hours or longer. You may have to wait for your transport for up to 2 hours or more, depending on your pickup point within the 3 counties. You must be prepared to wait, so bring appropriate provisions: water, snacks, medications, personal hygiene items & reading materials.

### ***COMPLIMENTS***

#### ***COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES***

SVTA strives to provide safe, professional service. If you have a compliment or complaint, please call (386) 362-5332 or (800) 983-2435. If you are a TD or Medicaid Rider, the initial complaint must be filed within 15 business days. Medicaid has strict time frames for filing a complaint, grievance, appeal or request for a Fair Hearing.

### ***PRIVACY***

SVTA complies with all federal and state privacy laws, including HIPPA. SVTA will never share your information with anyone who is not authorized by law to have it. You MUST keep SVTA updated with your address, telephone number and emergency contact information. SVTA is not responsible for missed appointments because you have not updated your contact information with us.