

City of Sheboygan Senior Services Travel Host & Companion Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines regarding staff and volunteer accompaniment on Senior Services travel programs, including day trips, overnight bus trips, and flying trips. These guidelines ensure participant safety, appropriate staffing, and fiscal responsibility in line with department and City of Sheboygan policy. This policy is intended to supplement the City's Financial Policy Guide provisions relating to Employee Travel Expenses.

Trip Classifications

Senior Services travel programs are categorized as follows:

- Day Trips: One-day excursions with no overnight stay.
- Bus Trips: Multi-day trips involving one or more nights in hotels, typically using a motorcoach. Trips may be planned by an external vendor or by Senior Services staff.
- Flying Trips: Multi-day trips involving air travel and an itinerary planned by an external vendor.

Staff Travel Hosts

A designated Senior Services employee will serve as Travel Host for travel programs. The Travel Host is responsible for overall trip coordination, traveler safety, and acting as the primary liaison between travelers, vendors, and the Senior Services Department. Hosts who are compensated on an hourly basis shall maintain a record of their time in fifteen-minute increments noting work time and personal time, if any, and shall submit this log to the Director of Senior Services upon return to work after a day trip. The Director of Senior Services will maintain this log for seven years to support timekeeping audits.

Selection & Approval of Travel Companions

Volunteer travel companions are selected by the staff host and approved by the Director of Senior Services and the Senior Services Commission. Travel Companions should be individuals who the Staff Host knows to be helpful, professional, and capable of assisting the group. Companions must complete any required volunteer application, liability waiver, and background screening authorization prior to approval for travel. Staff hosts should ensure that a volunteer is selected early enough in the travel planning process to afford the City adequate time to conduct the volunteer background check.

Trip Expenses

Staff Host expenses related to meals, entertainment, and transportation are paid by the City/trip budget as well as other miscellaneous expenses necessary for participation. Personal expenses are the Staff Host's and Travel Companion's responsibility. Volunteer Travel Companions are personally responsible for all expenses not provided in a particular trip package. These expenses may include, among others, airfare, luggage, meals, and lodging.

Trip Selection and Host Assignment

Each year, the Senior Services full-time staff team meets to select upcoming travel offerings. The selection process considers:

- Feedback and requests from prospective travelers.
- A balanced mix of geographic destinations, activity levels, and price points appealing to a wide range of participants.
- Seasonal timing and vendor availability.

In conjunction with trip selection, staff collaborate to determine which employee will host each trip. Host assignments are based on availability, interest, and workload balance, with the goal of providing equitable opportunities among staff members. In a typical year:

- Each full-time staff member hosts one overnight bus trip and one overnight flying trip.
- Day trips are divided among the team to ensure appropriate coverage and representation from the Senior Services Department.
- Any exceptions to this rotation or adjustments due to scheduling, workload, or personal circumstances will be determined collaboratively by the staff team and approved by the Director of Senior Services and Senior Services Commission.

Day Trips

- Day trips require a staff host to lead the group. The costs associated with one paid Travel Host are included in the pricing of the trip, offset by paying travelers.
- No secondary comped host or companion will be permitted on day trips.
- The host is expected to accompany travelers throughout each component of a day trip.

Overnight Bus Trips

- Overnight Bus Trips require a staff host to lead the group. Should an overnight bus trip not receive enough paid traveler registration to earn one complimentary travel host by the final payment deadline, the trip will be canceled due to insufficient participation.
- When the first complimentary spot for a trip is earned, that spot will be assigned to a Senior Services employee to serve as staff host.
- When a second complimentary spot is earned, that spot will be filled by a volunteer travel companion chosen by the staff host and approved by the Director of Senior Services and the Senior Services Commission.
- The volunteer travel companion will share a room with the staff host and assist as needed throughout the trip in accordance with their volunteer role description.

Overnight Flying Trips

- Overnight Flying Trips do not require a staff host to lead the group, but staff hosts add value and engagement to the group. Should an overnight flying trip not receive enough paid travelers to earn one complimentary host spot, the group will proceed without a staff host.
- When the first complimentary spot for a trip is earned, that spot will be assigned to a Senior Services employee to serve as staff host.
- When a second complimentary spot is earned, that spot will be filled by a volunteer travel companion chosen by the staff host and approved by the Director of Senior Services and the Senior Services Commission.
- The volunteer travel companion will share a room with the staff host and assist as needed throughout the trip in accordance with their volunteer role description.
- Should the travel vendor offer travel credit, this can be applied to volunteer travel companions when a secondary comp cannot be earned. For example, smaller tours might limit registrations to just below the threshold to earn a second comp due to bus or hotel capacity, but a second travel host is still valuable to the group.

Sales Leader Trips

- Occasionally, Uptown Social might qualify for special private trips only for sales leaders. City employees and volunteer travel companions are not permitted to accept these offers; they must be forfeited.

Emergencies

Staff Hosts and Travel Companions shall maintain emergency contact information for all travel participants and shall follow all applicable emergency/incident policies. Medical needs beyond basic first aid should be timely referred to an appropriate medical provider. For international trips, the Staff Host and Travel Companion should register with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to assist travelers in situations of political unrest, natural disasters, or other crises. The registration link is: <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/step>.

Itinerary and Participation

Staff Hosts and Travel Companions are expected to participate in all scheduled events on a trip itinerary and all provided or coordinated means of transportation. Where “free time” is built into an itinerary, Staff Hosts and Travel Companions are expected to remain available to trip participants should assistance be necessary.

Visas, Identification, Vaccinations and Insurance

Visas, passports or real IDs may be required in connection with a trip. Staff Hosts and Travel Companions are responsible for ensuring these documents are timely available for each trip. Vaccinations may be recommended and are Staff Host and Travel Companion responsibilities. The City will not reimburse Travel Companions for expenses related thereto. Staff Host reimbursement may be available but is not guaranteed. In cases where the Staff Host or Volunteer Companion have received advanced, written permission to extend a trip beyond the itinerary for personal reasons, the City’s insurance coverage ends after the trip obligations are fulfilled.

Behavioral Expectations

Staff Hosts and Travel Companions are expected to follow the City’s policies for employee conduct and shall refrain from alcohol consumption during business hours and while “on the clock.” While they may indulge after a day’s itinerary is complete, they are encouraged to keep such consumption to a minimum to ensure they can appropriately assist travelers. Regardless of local regulations, consuming illicit substances during work time is prohibited.

Volunteer Travel Companion Role Description

Position Summary

The Volunteer Travel Companion assist the Senior Services staff Travel Host in supporting the safety, comfort, and enjoyment of all travelers during overnight trips. This volunteer role enhances the travel experience by providing logistical assistance, traveler support, and companionship to group participants.

Responsibilities

Under the direction of the staff host, the volunteer travel companion will:

- Assist with loading and unloading luggage on and off motorcoaches or other transportation.
- Help distribute tickets, hotel keys, itineraries, and other materials as directed.
- Accompany travelers who require assistance or who become separated from the group, ensuring the safety of all participants.
- Assist with emergencies, including accompanying an injured travel for medical care or staying with the group while the staff host does so.
- Monitor group members' safety, particularly in crowded areas, busy streets, and uneven terrain.
- Help distribute beverages, snacks, or supplies as needed.
- Maintain a friendly, inclusive atmosphere by engaging with travelers during meals, tours, and group activities.
- Exercise discretion, patience, and professionalism in all interactions.
- Follow all directions from the staff host and adhere to departmental policies and procedures.

Qualifications

- Friendly, dependable, and able to assist individuals with varying mobility levels.
- Good communication and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to lift and carry moderate weight (up to 40 pounds) as needed for luggage handling.
- Must be available for all scheduled travel dates.
- Successful completion of volunteer application and background check.

Commitment & Supervision

- Reports directly to the Senior Services travel host.
- Serves on a per-trip basis, with travel expenses covered in accordance with the trip's earned complimentary spots.
- Must adhere to all Senior Services volunteer policies and code of conduct.

Uptown Social Volunteer Travel Companion Application

Contact Information

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Person to Notify in Case of Emergency

Name _____ Relationship _____

Home/Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____

References

Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Additional Information

Do you have a medical condition or physical limitation we should be aware of?

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please explain:

Confidentiality

- Uptown Social is committed to ensuring the confidentiality of all information provided to or received from its members, employees, volunteers, donors, consultants and board members.
- I agree to keep all information regarding Uptown Social and its members, tenants and participants, in strict confidence.
- I agree to uphold and abide by the policies and procedures of Uptown Social.
- I authorize Uptown Social to conduct a background check on me which may or may not include, but not be limited by, contacting my references regarding my conduct and character.
- I may terminate my relationship with Uptown Social at any time for any reason, just as Uptown Social expressly reserves the right to terminate any volunteer at its sole discretion.

CITY OF SHEBOYGAN UPTOWN SOCIAL
VOLUNTEER WAIVER AND RELEASE FOR TRAVEL EXCURSIONS

Please read carefully. This is a legal document that affects your legal rights. Read this entire document before signing. By signing this document, you will be giving up legal rights that you might otherwise have if an incident resulting in injury or property loss happens while on an Uptown Social Travel Excursions. If you do not understand anything in this document, you should not sign it and you may seek advice from a lawyer. Requests for modifications may be directed to the City Attorney's Office at (920) 459-3917.

_____ As a volunteer companion for Uptown Social travel excursions, I understand that I will be participating in travel activities that carry risk of injury, illness, death, or property loss. Some of the activities I may be able to engage in include but are not limited to: air/bus/boat travel, hiking, cooking, walking, and tours. I understand that the City of Sheboygan or the participating travel agency cannot prevent all risks. I expressly assume the risk of injury or harm.

_____ I hereby release and forever discharge the City of Sheboygan from any liability or claim that I may have against the City with respect to any bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result while I am volunteering as a travel companion, whether caused by myself or by the negligence of the City, its officers, directors, employees, agents, or otherwise. I understand that this liability waiver and release does not apply to harm caused by the City's intentional or reckless conduct.

_____ I understand that the City does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide financial assistance or other assistance, including, but not limited to medical, health, or disability insurance in the event of injury or illness while volunteering. I understand that the City does not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance coverage for any volunteer. I understand that I am provided with liability insurance coverage under the provisions of the City's liability insurance policy. Each volunteer should obtain his/her own medical or health insurance coverage.

_____ I have read this Waiver and Release of Liability thoroughly and fully understand and enter into it on behalf of myself, my heirs, next of kin, assigns, and personal representatives. No one has made any representations, statements, or inducements that change or modify anything written in this document.

_____ I understand that this Waiver and Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by Wisconsin law and that this document shall be governed by Wisconsin law. I understand that if any provision of this document is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such invalidity shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions.

_____ I hereby grant and convey unto the City of Sheboygan all right, title, and interest in any and all photographic images and video or audio recordings made by the City during the Uptown Social Travel Excursion, including, but not limited to, any royalties, proceeds, or other benefits derived from such photographs or recordings.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ Type (circle one) Cell Home Work



APPLICANT CONSENT FOR BACKGROUND CHECK

How are you protected?

Indicating you have an arrest or conviction record does not automatically disqualify you from consideration for a job. Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law, s. 111.31-111.395, Wis. Stats., prohibits discrimination based on an arrest or conviction record. It is not discrimination, however, to decline to hire a person based on the person's arrest record, a pending charge, or conviction record if deemed substantially related to the circumstances of the particular job. Information gathered in the Criminal Background Check will enable us to determine if the arrest or conviction record is substantially related to the job.

The information you provide on this form will be retained in a **confidential** manner.

What do you need to do now?

Applicants are required to complete, sign and return the attached form in order to remain under consideration for serving as a Senior Services Volunteer Travel Companion. Submit completed forms to Emily Rendall-Araujo, City of Sheboygan Senior Services Director.

This form must be completed and returned at least three weeks prior to the anticipated travel departure date.

Definition of terms used on this form:

Arrest Record: "Includes, but is not limited to, information indicating that an individual has been questioned, apprehended, taken into custody or detention, held for investigation, arrested, charged with, indicted or tried for any felony, misdemeanor or other offense pursuant to any law enforcement or military authority." s. 111.32(1), Wis. Stats.

Conviction Record: "Includes, but is not limited to, information indicating that an individual has been convicted of any felony, misdemeanor or other offense, has been adjudicated delinquent, has been less than honorably discharged, or has been placed on probation, fined, imprisoned, placed on extended supervision or paroled pursuant to any law enforcement or military authority." s. 111.32(3), Wis. Stats.

Criminal Charge: A criminal complaint, information, or indictment filed in a state, federal, tribal or international court of law.

- Prior to completing this form, it may be beneficial to review the Wisconsin Circuit Court records pertaining to you at <http://wcca.wicourts.gov> and obtain a copy of your driver license abstract at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/drivers/request-record.htm>.
- Please remember not all fines/convictions may appear on the Wisconsin Circuit Court site. To obtain your complete record visit <http://www.doj.state.wi.us>

Failure to report a fine and/or conviction may result in not being considered for this position.

Questions about this form may be directed to Emily Rendall-Araujo, Director of Senior Services.

APPLICANT CONSENT FOR BACKGROUND CHECK

OFFICE USE ONLY

Position Type: Volunteer

This position does not have a fleet requirement.

In order to be considered for the position, for which you applied, we must complete a Criminal Background Check. As part of the Criminal Background Check the City may obtain a consumer report that includes, but is not limited to, creditworthiness or similar characteristics, employment and education verifications, social security verification, criminal and civil history, reference checks, DMV records, any other public records and any other information bearing on your credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics and trustworthiness.

Failure to provide all requested information below, including your Social Security Number, will prevent the City from completing the required background check, and will result in your disqualification from consideration.

Name (Last, First, Middle)	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	Race
Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year)	Social Security Number	
Street Address	City, State, Zip Code	
Email Address	Day Phone: Evening Phone:	
Former Name(s)Aliases (First, Middle, Last) (Including Maiden Name)		

Have you always lived in Wisconsin Yes No

If **No**, provide place(s) of residence (State/County) and time period(s)

Place(s) of residence outside of Wisconsin and time period(s) for the last 7 years. Attach additional pages if needed.

Do you have criminal charges pending against you? Yes No

Have you been convicted of any crime anywhere, including in federal, state, local, military and tribal courts?

Yes No

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, please indicate: (Attach additional pages if necessary to include the same information for each pending charge or convicted crime).

The nature of the offense

Date of the offense	Date of conviction
County and State or territory where criminal charges(s) is/are pending against you.	
Name, location, address of court	
Please discuss the details of the incident and the disposition/outcome (sentence, fine, probation, Huber, suspension etc.).	

Notice: By my signature below I hereby authorize and consent to the State of Wisconsin's procurement of such a report. This information will be retained in my application file, which is confidential. Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law, s. 111.31-111.395, Wis. Stats., prohibits discrimination because of a criminal record or pending charge: however, it is not discrimination to decline to hire a person based on the person's arrest or conviction record if the arrest or conviction is substantially related to the circumstances of the particular job. Failure of any applicant (current or potential employee) to disclose any requested information, including but not limited to: criminal or ordinance violations, convictions, fines, forfeitures, pending charges (including traffic and DNR charges) or expunged offenses, will make you ineligible. This includes all adult fines and/or convictions regardless of how many years have elapsed.

I affirm that all the information on this document is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and I understand that any falsification or omission of information will disqualify me for this position. I authorize the City of Sheboygan to conduct a background check and verify the information provided above and to procure a consumer credit report if applicable.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED
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HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE USE ONLY			
Processed by:	Date Processed:	Requested by:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible