

***Dear Care-A-Van Passenger:***

Welcome to Swan Lake Senior Center's Care-A-Van! This booklet will introduce you to Care-A-Van and provide the basic information you need for safe, dependable transportation.

Care-A-Van is a transportation service operated by Southeast Senior Services, a program of Catholic Community Service. The service is designed for people with disabilities and senior citizens as a means of providing access to the community and encouraging independent living. Operating through the senior center since 1974, Care-A-Van provides door-to-door transportation, Monday through Friday 6:30 am-7:30 pm.

Our goal is to offer you safe, convenient and reliable transportation. If, after reading this booklet, you have questions regarding Care-A-Van service, please phone the Swan Lake Senior Center at 747-8617.

We are pleased to provide this quality service for you.

***Southeast Senior Services***



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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| Section                             | Page  |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| What is Care-A-Van?                 | 3     |
| Eligibility Information             | 3-5   |
| Hours of Operation and Service Area | 5     |
| Care-A-Van Fares                    | 6     |
| Scheduling a Trip                   | 7-9   |
| Subscription Service                | 9-10  |
| Drivers and Operations              | 11    |
| Rider Responsibilities              | 12-14 |
| Your Comments are Welcome           | 14-15 |
| Rider Suspension Policy             | 15-16 |

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## WHAT IS CARE-A-VAN?

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Care-A-Van's service provides door-to-door transportation throughout Sitka. Care-A-Van is designed for senior citizens and persons who are unable to ride Community Ride's bus because of their disabilities. Courteous drivers will assist you from the door to the lobby of your home and destination.

Care-A-Van has a fleet of three clean vans, all of which are wheelchair accessible. Trips may be requested for any purpose.

## ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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### Who can ride Care-A-Van?

Care-A-Van is designed to provide transportation for senior citizens and persons whose disabilities prevent them from riding Community Ride buses.

In order to qualify for Care-A-Van service, you must have at least one of the following conditions:

- You require a wheelchair to perform normal daily tasks.
- You are unable to get on and off a Community Ride bus.
- You are unable to walk to and from the bus stop.
- You are physically unable to wait outside, without support for more than 10 minutes.
- You are unable to understand and follow transit

directions, or understand information signs for reasons other than language or literacy.

- You have a significant visual disability.  
or
- You are 60 years of age, or older.

Eligible children will be transported when accompanied by an adult. A child safety seat must be provided by the accompanying adult as required by law.

Companions may also ride with an eligible rider on a space available basis. Companions must get on and off at the same locations as the eligible rider; no additional stops are allowed.

Care-A-Van will transport small pets traveling with their owners. Pets must be in a suitable pet carrier.

### What about a personal care attendant?

A personal care attendant is someone who travels with and helps a Care-A-Van rider because that rider is unable to travel alone. Please note that Care-A-Van does not supply attendants—you must obtain your own. If you need an attendant, be sure to have your doctor indicate that on their letter of referral which they sign. Attendants ride free.

All service animals are welcome to ride Care-A-Van.

### How do I become certified to ride Care-A-Van?

Persons qualifying on the basis of their disability must

provide a doctor's letter which explains why they are unable to ride the Community Ride bus. The letter may be faxed to 747-6878 or mailed to Swan Lake Senior Center, 402 Lake Street, Sitka, AK 99835.

## **HOURS AND SERVICE AREA**

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### **Where can I go on Care-A-Van?**

Care-A-Van operates throughout Sitka.

### **When does Care-A-Van operate?**

Care-A-Van operates Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 7:30 pm by reservation only. Reservations need to be made by 4:00 pm Friday. There is no service on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

### **What kind of trip can I make on Care-A-Van?**

Trips can be made for any purpose. **If you have a medical emergency, do NOT call Care-A-Van, call 911. Care-A-Van drivers are not paramedics.**

## **CARE-A-VAN FARES**

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### **What does it cost to ride the Care-A-Van?**

The fare for passengers under the age of 60 is \$2.00 per ride. There is no fare required for persons over 60 to ride the Care-A-Van, however, operations depend on passenger donations. The suggested donation for seniors for a one-way trip is \$1.00.

For your convenience ticket books are sold. These books each contain ten tickets—the suggested donation for seniors is \$10.00 per book, while persons under 60 pay \$20 per book. Instead of having to carry money, you can use the tickets. Just put your ticket in the donation box each time you board the Care-A-Van. Attendants ride free. Companions are asked to make the same donation as eligible Care-A-Van riders.

Please note that Care-A-Van drivers do not handle cash or sell tickets. Ticket books are available from the Swan Lake Senior Center.

### **Should I tip the driver?**

**NO. TIPPING IS NOT PERMITTED.** All Care-A-Van drivers are paid and do not accept gratuities.

## SCHEDULING A TRIP

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### How do I schedule a trip on Care-A-Van?

Call the Swan Lake Senior Center at 747-8617 to schedule your trips. Trips should be made the day before, if at all possible.

Make all your reservations with the senior center office staff. The drivers are busy driving and do not know what time slots are available.

Sometimes the day or time you request may already be full. Be prepared with an alternate day or time, if possible. Trip reservations can be made Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. On Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays, the message machine will be checked to arrange rides for the following day.

You can leave a message on the recorder at any time. You will receive a response during the times listed above.

When you schedule a trip for the first few times, be ready to give the office staff the following information:

- Your name.
- The date of your planned trip.
- The time of your planned trip, including your desired arrival time.
- Your address, including apartment number.
- The address of your destination.
- Your phone number.

- Whether you have any special needs, such as requiring a wheelchair-accessible vehicle, etc.
- Whether an attendant or companions will be riding with you.
- All the above information for your return trip.

Ask that your reservations be repeated to you to assure that all information is correct.

- **Be flexible about the times your request.** There are times when Care-A-Van may be able to take you earlier or later than the time you request. If you can be flexible, Care-A-Van will be better able to provide the rides you need.

### How many trip reservations can I make?

You may request as many trips as you need. There is no limit to how many times you can travel in a day, or how many reservations you make at one time. Please only make reservations for the trips you are going to take. Some people make many reservations just in case they might need them. Then they cancel at the last minute. By that time, it's too late for Care-A-Van to give that time slot to another person. If your plans change, call the Swan Lake Senior Center office at 747-8617 to cancel or reschedule your trip as soon as you know you need to. That way someone else can ride.

### How can I cancel a ride?

Call the office to cancel as soon as you know you will not

be making the trip. If you need to cancel more than one trip, be sure to tell the office which trips to cancel. The Care-A-Van driver cannot reserve or cancel trips for you. Call the Care-A-Van office yourself.

Please be considerate of other riders. When you call to cancel your ride, instead of just not being there when Care-A-Van arrives, you give someone else the opportunity to travel. Passengers who consistently fail to cancel rides or cancel on short notice may face suspension of service for varying lengths of time (from one week to a month or more).

### **How do I reach someone when the office is closed?**

The after-hours phone number for the Care-A-Van is 738-1333.

## **SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE**

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### **What is subscription service?**

Subscription service is transportation provided on a regular basis to and from the same locations, at the same times, one or more days each week. Subscription rides may be arranged with one phone call. It is not necessary to call for each trip individually. Once a subscription ride destination has been set, it cannot be changed for a one-time purpose.

If you are unable to book your subscription trip at first, keep trying. Vacancies do occur.

### **What if I'm sick or out of town? Do I need to let Care-A-Van know?**

**Yes!** Subscription rides can be placed on hold for up to two weeks. Call the Care-A-Van office at 747-8617 and place your subscription on hold. Be sure to give the office staff the date you want the subscription service reactivated.

### **What happens if I don't place my subscription on hold?**

If you don't place your subscription on hold, your subscription will be canceled and you will have to request a new subscription.

## DRIVERS AND OPERATIONS

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### What are the qualifications of Care-A-Van drivers?

Care-A-Van makes every effort to hire friendly, responsible people who have excellent driving records. Care-A-Van drivers receive training in defensive driving, CPR, and passenger assistance training which helps them understand and respond to the special needs of Care-A-Van customers.

What can I expect from Care-A-Van drivers and service? You have the right to expect certain qualities from Care-A-Van service:

- Punctual, safe transportation
- Courteous, professional drivers and dispatchers
- Clean, well-maintained vehicles
- Prompt, thoughtful responses to your questions and concerns
- Drivers who will assist you between the Care-A-Van vehicle and front door of your trip origin or destination.

A special note to passengers in wheelchairs: **Care-A-Van drivers will not transport a passenger in a wheelchair up or down more than one step.** If you have more than one step to negotiate, please arrange for someone other than the driver to assist you.

## RIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

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### What are my responsibilities as a rider?

It is Care-A-Van's policy and responsibility to ensure safe, timely, and effective transportation for all Care-A-Van passengers. As a rider, you are responsible to ensure that everyone, including yourself, receives the safest and best ride possible. The following is a list of rider responsibilities. It is not meant to be all inclusive. Care-A-Van reserves the right to deny service when a rider does not comply with any of these responsibilities.

1. Make your reservations the day before if at all possible.
2. You should be ready at least 10 minutes before your scheduled trip. Watch for your Care-A-Van vehicle. If Care-A-Van arrives before your scheduled pick-up time, go early if you are ready. If you are not ready, ask the driver to return at your scheduled pick-up time. If Care-A-Van arrives at your scheduled pick-up time and you are not ready, the driver will wait **five minutes** and then leave without you. You will have missed your trip.
3. If you have more than one trip scheduled in a day and you cannot ride Care-A-Van for any one of the trips, tell the Care-A-Van office by 4:30 pm on the day before. To insure that you keep the rides you want, call as far ahead as possible to cancel your

ride. Be sure to tell the office staff which rides you still want to keep.

4. **If you are being picked up in a large building, wait at the entrance that you and the office staff have agreed upon.** Normally, Care-A-Van will pick you up at the main entrance or lobby to a building.
5. If you use a wheelchair, and you have more than one step to negotiate at either your home or your destination, **it is your responsibility to provide someone to help you.**
6. **You are expected to behave in a considerate manner.** All passengers are expected to use appropriate social behavior while riding Care-A-Van and when interacting with other passengers or Care-A-Van employees. All passengers have the right to travel on Care-A-Van with the maximum of personal comfort and without the threat of physical or verbal abuse.
7. **All riders must comply with Care-A-Van safety rules which include not smoking, eating, or drinking in Care-A-Van vehicles; not riding Care-A-Van if you are drunk and disorderly; and not playing radios or other noise-generating equipment on Care-A-Van vehicles.**
8. **All riders must wear seatbelts.** Wheelchair passengers must be secured in their chairs and have

their chairs secured. Mobility aids or wheelchairs which cannot be safely secured by Care-A-Van tie-downs, or which cannot be safely carried on the lift, will not be allowed on Care-A-Van.

9. Care-A-Van drivers are fully trained in the safe operation of Care-A-Van vehicles. **Please cooperate with the drivers and follow their instructions.**
10. **Children weighing 40 pounds or less must travel in an approved infant seat supplied by the attending adult.** Children may not ride on a passenger's lap. The attending adult is responsible for securing the infant seat.

## **YOUR COMMENTS ARE WELCOME**

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### **How do I make my comments known?**

The staff at the Swan Lake Senior Center want to know how you feel about Care-A-Van service. Each compliment is shared with the employees involved. Each suggestion or complaint is investigated and discussed with the appropriate employees. Remember, the Care-A-Van can only address those issues we know about. Call the senior center site manager at 747-8617 with your comments. Please be as specific as possible and include the following information:

- Your name, address, and phone number
- The date and time of the incident

- The Care-A-Van vehicle number and/or the driver's name
- Your compliment, suggestion, or complaint.

Care-A-Van is a service of Southeast Senior Services. If you have an unresolved problem or question contact:

Marianne Mills, SESS Program Director  
 Southeast Senior Services  
 1803 Glacier Highway  
 Juneau, Alaska 99801  
 (907) 463-6154

## RIDER SUSPENSION POLICY

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Care-A-Van has made a commitment to provide quality public transportation services to senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Care-A-Van will make every reasonable effort to accommodate their various conditions. However, there are rare occasions where the service is abused by individual riders. When this occurs on a repeated basis, it may be necessary to deny service to those individuals.

### Criteria for the suspension of service:

- **Verbal or physical abuse** toward a Care-A-Van employee or passenger.
- **Behavior** which presents a clear and present danger to an individual's health or safety, or of others within the vehicle. Such behavior includes conduct which is violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal.

### Procedure:

The following procedure will be followed before denying any transportation for any individual. All communications to the individual will be in an appropriate accessible format.

11. Care-A-Van staff may immediately refuse service to an individual when necessary to protect the health and safety of other passengers or Care-A-Van employees.
12. Incidents will be carefully and completely documented.
13. Care-A-Van staff will provide written notice of each infraction. This notice will include an explanation of the policy which the passenger failed to follow. Notice will be provided of any proposed action, or suspension of service resulting from the infraction. The passenger will be invited to respond either verbally, or in writing to the notice if there is disagreement.

## CIVIL RIGHTS TITLE VI

### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Catholic Community Service, Southeast Senior Services, and Swan Lake Senior Center operate its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. To find out more about our nondiscrimination obligations, to file a complaint, or to request this information in another language, please contact us at (907) 463-6154.