

## **Companion Providers Responsibilities and Training**

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

Approved by: Romwell M. Sabeniano, CEO-President

Review Date: Annually

### **Purpose:**

This policy establishes the responsibilities, boundaries, and operational procedures for companion providers/caregivers providing in-home or facilities-based care and assistance under the Ride Companion Platform. The goal is to ensure safe, ethical, and ADA-compliant care that respects the dignity, rights, and privacy of all clients. This also comply with CPUC accessibility standards, and company service communities.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to:

- \* All drivers/companion services providers currently using the Ride Platform who drives and or provides basic care to clients in the automobiles or working in client homes/licensed care facilities. The role of a companion is to primarily provide personal assistance and care to passengers/clients with disabilities before, during, and after transport, ensuring comfort, safety, and dignity.
- \* Companions and driver share the same responsibilities and roles. Drivers who doubles as a companion in particular, provides safe, timely, and ADA-compliant transportation for passengers, including boarding assistance, securing mobility devises, and ensuring equal service access.

### **Definition:**

- \* In California, a Companion provider or caregiver generally refers to an individual who provides non-medical support services to elderly or disabled individuals, often in their homes. Their roles are distinct from licensed medical professionals like nurses, or certified nursing assistants (CNA's).
- \* As defined under California's Home Care Services Consumer Protection Act (AB1217): A caregiver or companion. Is. A Home Care Aide. (HCA) - a person employed by a licensed organisation or hired directly by a client or private individual to provide non-medical services such as:
  - (1). Personal care (bathing, dressing, grooming).
  - (2). Meal preparation
  - (3). Light-Housekeeping

- (4). Medication reminder (NOT ADMINISTRATION).
- (5). Transportation and companionship.

**Note:** *(Companionship services do not include medical tasks like wound care or administering medications, which are limited to licensed professionals under the state law).*

- \* Companion or caregiver is a non-licensed but trained individual on ADA Guidelines on providing supported care assisting clients with their (ADL's) activities of daily living, but who is not licensed nurse or healthcare provider.
- \* ADL's (Activities of Daily Living) - Provides basic self-care tasks such as bathing, dressing, toileting, eating, and mobility.
- \* HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, protecting client health information.
- \* ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act, ensuring accessibility and non-discrimination.

#### **Additional Requirements:**

- \* All companion providers must register with the California Department of Social Services CDSS as an Home Care Aide (HCA ) including background check via LiveScan fingerprinting.
- \* Fill-up form HCS 100 and send it with \$35.00 Fee with the DCSS.
- \* Negative TB Test within 90-days of Registration.
- \* Must be 18 years of age.
- \* No license required, but must work under a licensed organisation or be enrolled in a state registry if independently contracted.
- \* **Exceptions:** (A)Privately-hired caregivers (not employed by an agency) are not required by law to complete the training, but is strongly recommended for legal and safety reasons. (B). Agencies providing live-in or hourly caregivers must ensure compliance with all Home Care Services Bureau Training Mandates.

#### **A. Companion provider Responsibilities:**

##### **(1). Passenger Assistance:**

- \* To escort or accompany passengers from door-to-door when requested.
- \* To offer steadying support (arm, hand, gait bely if trained).
- \* Assist with personal belongings, mobility devises, and adaptive equipment.
- \* Provide seating and seatbelt assistance.
- \* Monitor passenger comfort and safety during the ride.
- \* Respect passenger autonomy-always. Ask before assisting.

##### **(1). Primary Duties:**

- \* Assist clients with ADL's in accordance with care plans.
- \* Provide companionship and emotional support.
- \* Assist with mobility, transfers, and positioning using safe handling techniques.
- \* Support feeding and hydration as directed by the client.

- \* Maintain a clean, safe environment, (Companion support and not as helper-aid or housekeeper).
- \* Observe and report changes in client's condition to designated family member or representative.

**(2). *Prohibited Duties:***

- \* Administer prescription medications (unless state law and private agency policy specifically permit and the caregiver companion is trained for particular task or duty).
- \* Perform medical procedures (ie: wound care, injections, IV Therapy, catheter insertion, etc.... Mostly a responsibility of a duly licensed professional such as nurse).
- \* Make medical diagnosis or alter treatment plans.
- \* Make independent decisions about medication dosages.

**(3.) Professional Conduct and Boundaries:**

- \* Maintain professional relationship with the clients at all times.
- \* Avoid personal, financial, or intimate relationships with the clients.
- \* Follow the CODE of ETHICS for caregiving.
- \* Maintain cultural sensitivity and respect client's personal preferences.

**(4). Confidentiality and Documentation.**

- \* Follow HIPAA- Guidelines, never share identifiable client health information without authorization.
- \* When taking photographs for incident reports or condition documentation:
  - (1). Use HIPAA-safe practices (avoid facial identifiers, address numbers, or personal details in the frame of the photographs).
  - (2). Obtain written consent when applicable.
  - (3). Store all images in the secure company system, never on personal devices.
- \* Always keep written records accurate, dated, signed, and submitted as required.

**(5). ADA Compliance**

- \* Provide assistance without discrimination based on disability type.
- \* Understand and follow reasonable accommodation requirements.
- \* When transporting clients, ensure safe vehicle entry/exit, seatbelt use, and proper securing of mobility devices.
- \* Assist passengers with service animals without additional fees or restrictions.
- \* When transporting clients, ensure safe vehicle entry/exit, seatbelt use, and proper securing of mobility devices.
- \* "Clients/riders provide for their own-mobility aids and equipment. We only provide access to transportation providers/companion caregivers."
- \* Ensure all care provided accommodates the client's disability and functional needs.
- \* Use ADA-Compliant mobility aids and equipment.

**(6). Communication:**

- \* Speak directly to the passenger even if accompanied by a third party.
- \* Always communicate clearly, using plain respectful language or assistive communication devices when necessary.
- \* Use person-first, respectful language.
- \* Adapt communication methods for passengers with hearing, speech, or cognitive impairments.

**(7). Reporting and Incident Response:**

- \* Report safety hazards, suspected abuse/neglect, or any unusual incidents immediately to a supervisor or compliance unit for prompt response or intervention.
- \* In case of emergencies, call 911 immediately, then notify Ride companion Services Management.
- \* Complete and submit an incident report form within 24-hours from the time you have knowledge of the incident.

**(8). Training and Certification:**

- \* All companion Providers and drivers must complete Ride Companion Services Training before providing client services, including:
  - \* **Orientation:** 2 Hours (Roles and responsibilities) (Rights of Clients)
  - \* **Safety Training:** 3-Hours (Emergency Procedures) (Infection Control) (Body mechanics and lifting techniques).
  - \* **Continuing Education:** (Annual) (5-Hours/Year): (Dementia awareness), (communication and compassion), (Supporting ADL's) (Elder and adult Abuse),(Cultural sensitivity), (Privacy and confidentiality (HIPAA)).
- (a). ADA Passenger assistance techniques
- (b). HIPAA compliance.
- (c). CPR-First Aid certification.
- (d). Safe lifting, assisting, and transfer techniques.
- \* Annual refresher courses are mandatory for all drivers/companion providers.

**(9). Disciplinary Actions:**

- \* Non-Compliance with these policies may result in:
  - (a). Verbal or written Warning.
  - (b). Suspension or termination from the use of the Ride Platform.
  - (c). If the offence is remedial, driver/companion is required to participate in on-line training to address noted issues. A proof of participation such as certification/ acknowledgement of participation will be required in order to reinstate the use of the Ride Platform. Reporting to Regulatory authorities for ADA violations.

**10. Safety and Emergency Preparedness:**

- \* Know and follow passenger evacuation procedures.

- \* Be trained in mobility device handling and 4-point tie-down securing.
- \* Respond calmly to medical or mobility-related incidences.
- \* Never leave the passenger un-attended at any time specially in the event of an emergency. Always make sure that safety for everyone is observed.

## **B. Responsibilities as a Companion-Driver:**

- \* Transportation Service
  - (a). Operate vehicle safely, courteously, and on time.
  - (b). Park and position vehicles for safety boarding and exiting.
  - (c). Secure mobility devices using ADA-Approved tie-downs.
  - (d). Avoid sudden stops, sharp turns, and unsafe speeds.
  - (e). Maintain a comfortable riding experience.

## **12. ADA-Compliance:**

- \* Never refuse service due to disability, service animal, or assistive devices.
- \* Provide equal wait times, pricing, and booking options to passengers with disabilities.
- \* Assist with boarding and exiting when requested.
- \* Deploy ramps/lifts properly and ensure they are in working condition.

## **13. Service Animals:**

- \* Permit service animals at all times without extra charge.
- \* Only ask: (a). “Is the animal required. Because of a disability?” (b). “What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?”
- \* Unless the animal is aggressive and driver feels unsafe in the presence of actively aggressive service animal, driver may “Remind the passenger that the service animal is out of control and driver feels unsafe in the presence of the animal”, then driver must call supervisor or Compliance Unit and speak with the passenger, and when the issue is unreasonable and the passenger is unable to control the service animal, then driver may have the option to decline service to the passenger with aggressive service animal.
- \* Immediately file an incident report concerning driver refusal to accept an aggressive service animal.

## **14. Safety:**

- \* Driver must conduct daily vehicle inspections (ramps, lifts, securement straps etc...)
- \* Report mechanical issues immediately.
- \* Maintain current ADA and passenger assistance training certification.

## **15. Shared Responsibilities:**

- \* Maintain passenger privacy and comply with HIPAA-safe practices.
- \* File incident reports for any passenger injury, fall, personal issues, or any accessibility related complaint.
- \* Treat all passengers with dignity, patience, and respect at all times.

- \* Participate in annual ADA and sensitivity training.
- \*. Use company issued checklist and procedures for every ride.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_