



HOLMES COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE
75 E. CLINTON ST SUITE 104
MILLERSBURG, OH 44654
Veterans Serving Veterans

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

As outlined in Section 5901.03 (H) of the Ohio Revised Code, the Holmes County Veterans Service Commission (HCVS) will provide transportation to and from Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers located in the Holmes County area. These locations will include the following:

- **Louis Stokes DVA Medical Center/Wade Park – Cleveland, Ohio**
- **DVA Outpatient Clinic – Parma, Ohio**
- **DVA Outpatient Clinic – Canton, Ohio**
- **DVA Outpatient Clinic – Akron, Ohio**
- **DVA Outpatient Clinic – Mansfield, Ohio**
- **DVA Outpatient Clinic – New Philadelphia, Ohio**
- **Clinics contracted through the Department of Veterans Affairs**
- **Compensation & Pension Exams scheduled by the Dept of Veterans Affairs**

(1) Transportation is for Veterans that permanently reside within Holmes County, Ohio only. A copy of the Veteran's DD 214 must be provided to the office, as well as proof of residence, before any transportation can be provided. A Veteran is defined by Ohio Revised Code as

(a) A former member of the armed forces of the United States who served on active military duty and received an honorable discharge or honorable separation, a member of the armed forces of the United States who died on active military duty, or a member of the armed forces of the United States missing in action more than ninety days.

Or,

(b) A person who served in the armed forces of the United States on active military duty and was discharged from the service under

honorable conditions, and who either served on active duty for reasons other than training or, while serving on active duty for training, incurred a disability recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Defense as service-connected

(2) All transportation scheduling will be on a “**first come, first serve basis.**”

(a) Veterans must contact the Holmes County Veteran Service Office at least **3 business days prior** to an appointment to request transportation scheduling. Failure to provide adequate notice may result in transportation being unavailable. Veterans should not schedule any appointments before 8:30 a.m. for Wade Park VAMC or after 2:00 p.m. for any medical facility. Exceptions must be approved through the Transportation Coordinator.

(b) When scheduling transportation, Veterans must inform the office if there are multiple appointments for that day (e.g. If you have appointments at 10:00, 1:00, and 2:00, you must tell us about ALL of the appointments, so that we can properly schedule the driver’s time.)

(c) Transportation service provided by HCVS is for VA appointments and VA contracted services only. Local transportation (to and from clinics, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc. within Holmes County) is not currently available.

(3) All Veterans requesting transportation must be able to walk/ambulate and be able to get into and out of the vehicle without assistance from another person. If a passenger requires assistance, it is the responsibility of the Veteran to provide an escort for this purpose.

(a) Wheelchair-bound Veterans, or Veterans with significantly impaired cognition, vision, or hearing **must** provide an escort to assist them during their appointments. Driving staff are employed only to drive. They cannot provide assistance during entry or exit of the vehicle, and passengers must not rely upon drivers for medical care or escort services of any type. Drivers will ensure that wheelchairs are safely secured using the harness system provided in the handicap-accessible vehicle.

(b) Drivers **may not** sign-in or sign-out patients from a medical facility, and cannot act as escorts for patients that require a “plus one” for a medical procedure. (If you are going through a procedure that requires anesthesia, **you must bring a medical escort.** Veterans with these types of appointments will not be transported without their escort. This is for the safety and health of the Veteran.)

(4) All Veterans using the transportation services of Holmes County Veteran Services are expected to be courteous to other passengers, drivers, and office staff. Abusive, offensive, lewd behavior or harassing language will not be tolerated.

(5) Veterans will meet at a centralized pick-up and drop-off point at or near the Holmes County Veteran Services Office to maximize transportation capabilities for as many Veterans as possible.

(a) Veterans who are wheelchair-bound, blind, or have other valid ***medical conditions*** that prevent them from driving may be picked-up and dropped off at their residences upon prior request and approval from the Holmes County Veteran Services Office. Approval must be coordinated through a Service-Officer or the Transportation Coordinator.

(b) Veterans **MAY** bring a spouse, adult child, or companion, even if not medically necessary, **IF** there is room on the van for an additional passenger. We understand that it is often helpful to have a support person with you during certain evaluations or appointments. Please coordinate this request prior to bringing an additional person with you.

(c) Veterans may **NOT** bring pets or young children with them during transportation. Professionally trained service animals are always welcome with proper documentation of medical need. Drivers will not provide supervision for Veteran spouses with special needs, animals or children.

(d) Veterans will wear a seatbelt regardless of where they are seated in the vehicle.

(e) There is absolutely no smoking, vaping, or use of tobacco products in the HCVS vehicles.

(f) The HCVS cannot guarantee that a Veteran will be the only passenger on a trip to a VA facility. It is often necessary to combine multiple passengers into one vehicle going to the same, or close locations, especially if appointment times are within an hour of each other. Whenever possible, the HCVS will not group passengers into one van if their appointments times are separated by more than three hours.

(6) Holmes County Veterans transportation services are not “ambulette” services, nor a substitute for an ambulance, or other emergency or medical transport.

(a) Holmes County Veteran Services will not transport patients to the Emergency Room at Wade Park. **Transport services are for scheduled appointments only.** If you are having a medical emergency, or need immediate medical attention, please dial 911.

(b) Holmes County Veterans Services does not have the proper resources or medical personnel to transport patients as a “medical transfer” between facilities. (e.g. if you are being transferred from one hospital to another for care)

(c) HCVS does not provide wheelchairs, oxygen, heart/respiratory monitors, naloxone, epi-pens, IV services, canes, or walkers for use during transport.

(d) HCVS drivers are **not** medical providers, nor are they authorized to accept medical responsibility for any passenger, even briefly.

(7) Drivers do not stop for food, snacks, drinks, meals, or errands. Veterans should not ask for special stops, home delivery, or any activity outside of transportation to and from VA authorized facilities.

(a) Veterans who have medical needs (diabetics, etc.) for snacks or continual hydration may have those items. No other food or drinks should be consumed in the vehicles.

(b) Drivers may stop at their discretion, for bathroom breaks for themselves and passengers.

(8) Veterans are expected to be free of dirt, debris and grass when entering vehicles. After transport, please remove all belongings and trash from vehicles. The HCVS is not responsible for personal items.

(9) During inclement weather, **drivers** are the **final authority** on determining whether road conditions permit safe operation and transport of passengers. Veterans must ensure that their contact information is current in case of transport cancellation.

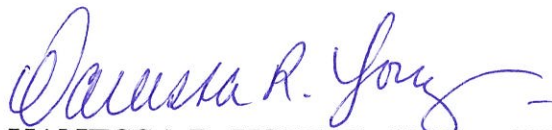
(10) Veterans who have a highly infectious/communicable disease or condition (COVID, viral stomach infections, pink-eye, bedbugs, etc.) will not be permitted on the HCVSC vans. The HCVSC follows all federal/state mandates in regard to mouth/face coverings in times of a pandemic. The safety and health of all Veterans and employees are always the top priorities.

(11) Veterans will not be transported if they are under the influence of drugs, intoxicated, or if they are behaving in an erratic manner. Because some medical conditions can mimic intoxication, passengers are advised to bring a medical escort if any safety or coherency issues exist. Drivers have full authority to deny passenger transport if they believe a Veteran is a danger to themselves or others. Emergency services will be contacted in such a circumstance.

(12) Only HCVSC employees are authorized to operate the county vehicles. At no time should any passenger operate the vehicle. Emergency services should be contacted should the driver fall ill or have another situation that prevents safe operation of the vehicle.

(13) Failure to follow this policy can result in temporary or permanent suspension of passenger privileges.

(14) Any exclusions or exceptions to this policy must be coordinated through the Holmes County Veteran Service Office.



VANESSA R. YOUNG, SMSgt, USAF, (retired)
Director, Holmes County Veteran Service