



AUSTRALIAN REFUGEE VOLUNTEERS

DRIVING POLICY & PROCEDURE

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy applies to: volunteers with Australian Refugee Volunteers (ARV) who have offered to be a driver or a passenger for programs and/or camps with clients.

Purpose: ARV relies on our valued volunteers to pick up the clients from their homes with their own vehicles, and take the clients to programs. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of volunteers and clients, as well as to clarify the liability of ARV in the event of an accident. ARV reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion, and will notify volunteers of amendments.

POLICY

General Requirements:

Drivers are required to have another volunteer with them as a passenger, in order to ensure compliance with ARV's "*Two's Policy*" at all times. The Passenger must be picked up first, before the clients, and under no circumstances is the Driver to pick up clients without having another volunteer in the vehicle as a passenger.

All Drivers are required to hold a current and valid Driver Licence. ARV does not restrict provisional licence holders from driving with ARV.

All vehicles used by Drivers for ARV must be registered and hold Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance. It is the responsibility of the Driver to ensure their vehicles registration and CTP insurance is current. If a Driver no longer has access to a registered and insured vehicle, it is their responsibility to inform ARV, and during that time they will not be permitted to be a Driver for ARV.

Drivers must inform ARV of any relevant criminal record they hold, including criminal driving offences such as drink driving or dangerous driving. In the interests of safety, Drivers with serious records will not be permitted to drive for ARV's programs, and this decision will be made by the ARV Presidents. Drivers who do have a criminal driving offence on their record, and who neglect to inform ARV and act as a driver for a program, will be removed from all ARV programs. ARV reserves the right to remove driving privileges should any matters of concern arise whilst Drivers are driving for ARV.

Reimbursements:

As a general rule, ARV does not reimburse for fuel, however in extenuating circumstances allowances may be made.

Parking required for the program can be reimbursed with a receipt, so long as there were no other parking options available. Program Managers will generally advise Drivers of appropriate parking options prior to the Program day.

Liability and property damage:



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ARV does not hold responsibility or liability for any property damage sustained to any vehicles being driven for ARV. ARV is also not liable for any other property damage or personal injury caused by its Drivers whilst they are driving for ARV.

If Drivers hold comprehensive insurance for their vehicle and an excess is payable for damage sustained while driving for ARV, ARV *may* be able to offer reimbursement for the excess payable, depending on the insurance cover ARV has at the time. Excess reimbursement should not be assumed, and if sought, Drivers should contact the ARV Presidents for more information.

In the unlikely event that a volunteer's personal property is damaged by a client, the volunteer should contact the ARV Secretary or Presidents as soon as possible.

Child Restraints and Booster Seats:

Drivers responsible for transporting any particularly small or young children, must comply with the relevant Child Restraint Laws, which (relevantly to ARV) require that:¹

- Children under seven years old must be secured in a forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness or an approved booster seat. They also must not travel in the front seat of a vehicle, unless all other back seats are occupied by children younger than seven years in an approved child restraint or booster seat [however note that this should never be the case with ARV, since the Passenger should sit in the front seat].
- Children aged between seven and 16 years old who are too small to be restrained by a seatbelt properly adjusted and fastened are strongly recommended to use an approved booster seat. This is suggested for children who are less than 145cm tall.
- Children in booster seats must be restrained by a suitable lap and sash type approved seatbelt that is properly adjusted and fastened, or by a suitable approved child safety harness that is properly adjusted and fastened.

Any Driver who fails to comply with the Child Restraint Laws (and other relevant Road Safety Laws) and this Policy will be putting children at risk, and it will be the Driver and not ARV who will be solely responsible for any ramifications.

Driver Agreement

All volunteers who drive for ARV will be required to sign the ARV Driver's Agreement, to confirm that they have read, understood and agree to this Policy. Volunteers who have signed the Driver Agreement are under no obligation to drive for ARV. However, where a Driver offers to drive for a specific program date or camp, they are expected to remain available to do so and uphold that commitment unless unexpected circumstances arise which should be notified to the program/camp's Volunteer Manager.

¹ For more information, refer to: <http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/childcarseats/>.



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PROCEDURE FOR DRIVERS & PASSENGERS

Transport lists and pre-program procedures:

When volunteers are sent an SMS about an upcoming program, they will be asked to reply with 'I/D/P' to indicate if they will be an independent traveller, driver, or passenger to the program/camp. Once you have replied to that message, you are expected to uphold your offer and commitment to whichever role you have selected and to remain available to do so, even if you do not hear from the program/camp team for a couple of weeks.

For all volunteers, but particularly if you had offered to be a Driver or Passenger for a specific program or camp (i.e. replying with D or P to the SMS), you must notify the program/camp's Volunteer Manager *as soon as possible* of any change in your ability or availability to do so. A significant amount of time is spent organising Transport Lists so it is important for all details to be up to date, and it is best if you do not wait until after Transport Lists have already been sent to notify of changes.

Generally by the Monday before the event, the program admin team will contact volunteers attending the program with a Transport List, outlining the passenger and clients that are allocated to each Driver for transport on the program day.

If you have not received the Transport List within one week of the event, please contact the program admin team as you may have been mistakenly left off the list. The program admin teams always try their very best to keep drivers, passengers and clients within the closest distance to each other as possible, to minimise travelling time for the driver, however with clients and volunteers spread out geographically, this can be difficult. If you feel unsure about your travel for the day, please contact the admin team and they can help you with any queries.

At the time of sending the Transport List, the admin team will request for drivers to send through copies of their Driver Licences if they have not done so already. **First time Drivers** for ARV will need to send the admin team a scan/photo of their Driver Licence, so they can confirm that you have a valid, current Driver Licence.

Once the Transport Lists have been sent, it is the **responsibility of all Passengers** to contact their Drivers in order to make arrangements on where to meet. If the Passenger lives in a convenient location for the Driver's trip, the Driver may well be able to pick the Passenger up from their home, however the Driver is under no obligation to do so. A good option for passenger pick-ups is to have the Passenger travel to a train station which is along the way for the Driver, so they can be picked up from there.

Once the passenger pick up location is confirmed, **the Driver** can work out their itinerary for the morning by working backwards, ie you need to be at the program location for 10am, one of the clients lives 10 minutes from there, another one 20 minutes etc. It is a good idea to allow an extra 15 minutes or so for each leg of your trip; this is to allow for getting lost, traffic, or the clients not being ready when you arrive to pick them up.



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Once the timing has been confirmed, **Drivers** should contact the Passenger and clients to let them know what time you will be there to pick them up on program day. This is to be done as soon as possible after receiving the Transport List. When speaking with the clients (or their family), be sure to tell them any pertinent information for the program, ie *'we are going swimming, so bring your swimmers and towel, and wear sunscreen'*, or *'we are going bushwalking, be sure to wear closed toed shoes'*.

If a passenger or client advises they can no longer attend the program day, you must immediately inform the admin team. Always try to obtain a reason for non-attendance, so repeated issues can be flagged.

On Program Day:

Picking up clients:

When picking up the clients, both Driver and Passenger are to go to the home to collect the client. If the client's parents request pick up from an alternate location, you should contact the program Client Manager or IC to confirm whether this is acceptable.

Remember to check that each client has any relevant items e.g. swimwear and towel, closed toed shoes etc. It's ideal to have an idea of when you will be dropping the client home again, so you can inform the family and they can make sure they are home.

Ensure the parent/caregiver has contact details for the appropriate ARV contact person present on program day (i.e. the Client Manager and/or program IC), and advise them if your program has any rules whereby mobile phones can be confiscated.

Drivers should also confirm whether any child restraints or booster seats are required in accordance with the Child Restraint Laws (refer to Policy section above), and if required, they must be used. If any child restraint or booster seat is legally required, the client's family should supply it. If the client's parents indicate that they do not have one available on the day, the Driver is not to transport their children without it. In such circumstances, the Driver must contact the Client Manager or, if unavailable, the Program IC to determine whether there is a spare available and/or whether any alternative arrangements can be made.

In the car:

Once in the car, ensure the Passenger and clients are wearing seatbelts.

Under no circumstances can the Driver or Passenger smoke in the vehicle (or at any other point of the program).

Please be mindful that you are transporting children, so removing expensive items or items that can be easily damaged from your car is advised, as is enforcing a rule that there is no food & drink in your vehicle.

The role of the Passenger is to act as a support person to the Driver, including entertaining the clients so they don't distract the Driver, helping with directions, keeping an eye on any issues with clients etc.



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Should you need to stop off for petrol, or to pick up other items required for the day, the Passenger and all clients must come inside the petrol station or shop – the Passenger and clients are not to be left in the car. However, it is recommended that you fill up on petrol and have all items you need before program day, so that no stops are needed on the day. Clients may request that you make stops to pick up snacks or drinks for them – if so, you should simply advise them that ARV provides drinks and food at the program days. This is because:

- a) it is unfair if some clients are given treats on their trip, and others are not;
- b) ARV provides healthy food & drinks, and often clients will request unhealthy items at unplanned stops;
- c) ARV is informed of all dietary needs of the clients, and provide food accordingly, which the Driver or Passenger may not be aware of, and the client may neglect to mention; and
- d) ARV does not want volunteers to feel pressured to spend their own money when ARV has money in the budget for food & drinks for clients.

Returning clients to their homes:

When dropping clients back home, Drivers and Passengers must always see them to the door and wait for their parent/caregiver. In some circumstances, parents or caregivers may have arranged with program admin team members to have their children dropped off at home without them present, or to be dropped at a neighbour's or friend's home. If this has not happened, and a client's parent/s are not at home when you arrive there, call them to determine when they will be home. If they will be home in a reasonable amount of time, wait with the client until they arrive. If you are unable to wait for the parent/s or are unable to contact them or if they advise you to leave the clients at home without them, you must contact an IC before leaving so they can advise on how to proceed.

Thank you!

If you are a driver for ARV programs, we thank you profusely! Getting our clients out to these wonderful program days is a huge part of what we do, and alleviates a large amount of pressure from the families. By taking on this responsibility, not only are you making a very important contribution to our organisation, but having some extra time to chat with the clients on the way to and from the program days can be one of the most rewarding and positive aspects of the day, too.



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VERSION HISTORY

Versions	Date	Drafted/reviewed by
Version 1	July 2015	Cassandra Braslin, co-Vice President
Version 2	September 2016	Kiri Libbesson, co-Vice President

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- ARV Driver's Agreement