

world relief[®]

Community Orientation & Resources

Learning the community that they live in now, is a process that all new clients must go through. It is more fun to have the help of a volunteer to do those things. Learn about ways you can show your partnered family around their new home. You never know, you may learn a new thing or two!

Bus Training

The bus system is the primary way that the majority of newcomers travel around. However, refugees have no knowledge of how to ride the bus, where to ride the bus, or on which bus to ride. It is important for newcomers to learn the system early on in their time in the U.S. so that they can travel to medical appointments, social services, the grocery store, the public library, etc. It is crucial that newcomers learn how to navigate the bus system independently, otherwise they will be continually dependent on someone else to transport them.

High Point residents use the [Hi-tran](#) (High Point Transit) system.

Winston-Salem residents use the [WSTA](#) (Winston-Salem Transit Authority).

Volunteers' role: Outside of WR Triad's bus transportation classes, refugees often need additional help in understanding the public transportation system.

Volunteers can assist refugees with their transportation needs in the following ways:

1. Teaching the bus system: Many volunteers are hesitant about teaching a newcomer the bus system because they themselves are unfamiliar with the system. In an effort to create mutually beneficial relationships, volunteers can learn the bus systems with their partnered newcomers; this way, there will not be any kind of superiority complex, as you will both be learning something new together.

2. Avoid driving newcomers in your car: When running errands with newcomers to the bank, the grocery store, medical appointments, try to avoid driving them in your car. In general, refugees do not have access to cars, especially in their first few months in the U.S. If volunteers create a habit of driving refugees, they will become dependent on volunteers and their cars rather than on public transportation. However, as you are building a friendship with refugees, there will be times when driving them in your car is appropriate and healthy, that does not lead to dependency.

3. Extra appointments/exceptions: Although we encourage newcomers to rely on the bus system and not volunteers' cars, there are some situations where it is more plausible for a volunteer to transport a client in his/ her car. Surgeries, various registrations or important medical appointments would be an example of this.

4. Bicycles: Many refugees enjoy biking around High Point, to and from work, to meet friends, etc. This is a much cheaper option than the bus. Volunteers can consider **donating a bicycle** to refugees in order to provide them with transportation to work.

Carpooling

Monthly Bus Pass: A 30-day bus pass costs \$30 in Winston-Salem. World Relief provides one 30-day bus pass to clients who enroll in employment services. After that, clients are responsible for purchasing their own pass.

The bus has limited hours and does not provide transportation to most places of employment. Therefore, carpool transportation is necessary in many cases until clients are able to save enough money to purchase their own vehicle.

Carpool: World Relief can assist clients with arranging rides to work. If a client who does not have a car receives a ride to work with someone, there is an expectation that the client pay for his or her ride.

Depending on the client's proximity to the driver and place of employment, transportation costs can vary from \$100-\$160 per month per person. This fee is not dependent upon the number of paying riders in the car. The cost goes to help pay for gasoline, insurance, routine maintenance, and vehicle repairs. This cost is an approximation and is at the driver's discretion.

Some drivers expect payment once per day, some once per week, and others once per month. This is also at the driver's discretion.

Since the driver is holding a spot for each rider they may be expected to pay regardless of days they are absent for appointments or sickness. For example, daycares charge a flat monthly fee regardless of how many days the child attends. This is a common practice among many drivers who bring people to work.

Many of the people who drive World Relief clients are also clients of World Relief. They often have older or donated cars that could have more frequent problems and more expensive repairs than a newer vehicle.

World Relief is not responsible for ensuring payment or reception of payment for transportation services but will assist in connecting clients who need rides with people who can provide them.

Medicaid Transportation Services

Some medical appointments are in locations that are not close to bus stops and some refugees have difficulty using the bus system if they are disabled. Once a refugee has Medicaid, they are usually eligible for county transportation services at no cost.

The refugee, US tie, or volunteer should call several days to a week ahead of the appointment and arrange transportation. Required information includes refugee's name, exact address, exact address of where they will be going, time of appointment, and Medicaid information. There are usually 30-45 minute windows around pick-up times. If a refugee's appointment is at 2:00, they should arrive at clinic before 1:30. If they live 30 minutes away from the clinic, then the pick-up time might be as early as noon. They must be ready by the pick-up time that the Transportation office gives them because the bus will not wait. Once the appointment is over, the newcomer will call the transportation office and then wait for pick-up to go back home. There is no cost for the service, but it can be a long day. Make sure that newcomers know that they will have to be ready early, and might have to wait quite a while for pick-up to go home.

GUILFORD COUNTY: 336.641.4848

Monday-Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

Refugees must undergo assessment and be approved. The assessment is usually handled over the phone. Volunteers will have the refugee call/visit when an interpreter is with them to assist with the interview. The refugee must have photo ID, Medicaid card, their address, and the date, time, and address of the medical appointment. Reservations must be made by 12 noon on the working day before your trip.

Trans-Aid

Refugees in the Winston-Salem area that are elderly or disabled may be eligible for transportation through Trans-Aid.

You can find more information on the Trans-Aid of Winston-Salem [website](#).