

## Give the gift of independence: Become a volunteer Rides for Health driver!

Imagine yourself as a Rides for Health driver: In providing an elder with a ride to a medical appointment or the pharmacy, you are making a difference in the life of the elder you're matched with and answering a critical need in our community.

Becoming a volunteer is simple. After completing the application process, you will attend a half-day of training.

Support is ongoing through regular meetings and communication with the Rides for Health program director.



*"I know people need this help because they don't have family to help them. It makes me feel good to help somebody."*

At LifePath, we listen first, and then help each person find the best options for their unique needs. We help elders and persons with disabilities maintain independence and quality of life in their own homes and communities. We help caregivers to find relief and help loved ones to choose the right path.

For over 40 years, we've been offering options for independence. We welcome all people regardless of race, physical appearance or ability, sex, age, nationality or ancestry, class, religious or political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

LifePath, a private, nonprofit corporation, serves Franklin County plus Athol, Petersham, Phillipston, and Royalston. Some of LifePath programs extend into Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester counties.

LifePath, Inc., is an Area Agency on Aging and Aging Services Access Point funded in part by the federal Older Americans Act, Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Massachusetts Council on Aging, MassHealth Office of Long-Term Care, United Way of Franklin County, and other sources both public and private. LifePath is operated by a local volunteer board of directors, a majority of whom are, by law, elders. As an AA/EOE employer, LifePath does not discriminate in program admissions, access, services, or employment practices.

*Updated November 2018*



## Rides for Health

*Neighbors helping neighbors*

**A Service of LifePath, Inc.**

101 Munson Street, Suite 201, Greenfield, MA 01301  
413-773-5555 | 978-544-2259 | 800-732-4636  
TDD 413-772-6566 | Fax 413-772-1084  
Elder Protective Services 24/7 Hotline: 800-922-2275  
info@LifePathMA.org | LifePathMA.org



Formerly Franklin County  
Home Care Corporation



## What is Rides for Health?

Screened and trained volunteers in the Rides for Health program offer door-through-door assisted transportation to qualifying elders and persons with disabilities who are enrolled in LifePath's Home Care program.

Transportation may be to and from medical and healthcare-related venues, such as an appointment with a specialist at hospital in Springfield or something closer to home, like a visit to the elder's local primary care physician or a trip to the pharmacy to fill a prescription.



*"I love to drive, I like to meet new people, and I've always enjoyed people of my age or older. Helping has been a theme in my career and life, and now I'm involved with Rides for Health. Give it a try!"*

## Why is this program needed?

In Franklin County and the North Quabbin, our rural landscape makes for a beautiful place to live, but access to reliable transportation that meets an older person's unique needs is a concern for elders. Public transportation options are limited and often difficult to access, and many do not have the support of family and friends.

In listening sessions with area elders and people with disabilities, we have heard many times that transportation is a critical, unmet need for the area. When asked if transportation to their doctor or healthcare provider was ever a problem, respondents said, "Yes." They report:

- Having to miss or cancel and reschedule appointments
- Delaying or forgoing medical procedures
- Being unable to pick up prescriptions from the pharmacy

Specific concerns also included the need for help getting from the front door and into the car, as well as out of the car and into the destination, and back again.



## How can Rides for Health help me with transportation?

To qualify for Rides for Health, you must first be enrolled in the Home Care program at LifePath. Contact your case manager if you are in need of transportation services.

Once matched with a client, volunteers work one-to-one, so a person using the service contacts the volunteer directly to arrange for transportation. Volunteers may also provide escort and assistance to the client who uses public transportation. Rides for Health volunteers are trained and authorized to provide physical assistance as needed and remain with the individual at the destination, so there is no calling or waiting for the return trip.

### Other transportation resources

Contact the Information & Caregiver Resource Center at LifePath or your local council on aging to inquire about other transportation resources in your town.

*"I am so grateful to have access to Rides for Health to take me to my medical and therapy appointments. The driver assigned to me is the most helpful, kind, and courteous person. We enjoy good conversation during our rides. Rides for Health is a godsend!"*