

## Senior Services FAQ

Where are you located?

311 Falls Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779

What are your hours of operation?

The Senior Center is open 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Except for staff members, no one is to be in the building, including the lobby, prior to 8:30 am or after 4:30 p. without permission from the Senior Center Coordinator or the Parks and Recreation Department.

Am I eligible to use the Senior Center?

The center serves participants age 55 and better or disabled individuals under 55. Participants need to be able to care for themselves including, but not limited to the ability to feed and toilet independently, and navigate through the center unassisted. Those who need extra assistance are required to have a caregiver attend with them. The Senior Center Coordinator, in consultation with other staff, reserves the right to assess a person's potential participation in Center activities. This is to ensure the safety, health and well-being of the individual and all attendees.

How much does it cost to use the Senior Center?

Currently, there are no membership dues; however, monetary donations and in-kind donations are accepted. If there is a fee associated with a special event at the center, only those who sign up and pay the requested fee in advance will be able to attend the program.

Are there any forms I need to fill out to join?

All participants must complete the Member Data sheet. We also strongly encourage participants to complete the confidential Medical Release form that only is used in case of a medical emergency. Bus riders must complete a Transportation Services Application (see Bus section for more information).

Can I bring a guest with me?

Guests are welcome at the center if they are 55 years of age or better. Please do not bring your grandchildren or any other children unless there is an event for which they are specifically invited.

Is there assigned seating?

There are no assigned seats. At the center, please feel free to seat as many people as you want per table, as long as you do not block the center aisle. Choose the chairs that do not have arms when you are placing additional chairs at each table.

If participants move additional chairs to one table, please return the chairs to their original place when you leave. The original four chairs (with arms) should be remaining when participants are finished at the table.

Seating is first-come, first-served. Please do not tell someone they may not sit in an unoccupied seat. And, no one may ask another person to get out of a seat in which they already are seated. There are no assigned seats.

**Do I need to sign in or make reservations to come?**

**Sign-In, Reservations & RSVPs** Participants must sign in when entering the building and indicate which activities they are attending that day. The sign in sheet is located at the top of the stairs. Advance sign up for all special events is required. Participants who have not signed up in advance for special events will be admitted if seating permits, and at the discretion of the Senior Center Coordinator. Programs offering food require advance sign ups, no exceptions. Programs requiring a fee are limited to those who paid and signed up in advance, no exceptions. We adhere to all fire codes.

**What is Appropriate Attire?**

Any clothing that is considered inappropriate or offensive to others will be evaluated by the center's staff. Any clothing with lewd, vulgar or offensive messages, language or graphics is not allowed. Participants will be asked to leave the center and return with appropriate attire. Participants may be required to leave the senior center if their personal hygiene prevents others from enjoying the facility. Clothing with excessive dirt or soil is not allowed. Participants with incontinence must wear appropriate incontinence products to avoid soiling their clothing or furniture at the center.

**What are the lunch policies?**

**Lunch Policies (as set forth by Meals on Wheels)** Only individuals eating Meals-on-Wheels meal may be in the dining area between 11:30 and 12:30. Individuals eating a lunch prepared off site (home, restaurant, etc.) may not eat in the dining area during the one-hour lunch period. Those individuals are welcome to eat lunch downstairs in the cardroom or in the coffee-bar section of the Main Room. The room partition is closed at 11:30 and reopened at 12:30.

Age 60 and older can eat meals.

The suggested donation is \$3.00.

If someone age 60 is eating the meal, their spouse (under age 60) can eat the meal and both pay the suggested donation of \$3.00.

Anyone under age 60 can eat meals but must pay \$6.25 to the site manager directly.

Disabled individuals under age 60 must pay \$6.25 to the site manager directly.

Paid Aides (any age) cannot buy meal. They can bring a lunch and eat in the lunchroom with their clients.

Non- Paid Aides (family member or acquaintance) wanting to eat lunch must receive permission from Lisa LaBonte, Senior Nutrition Services, re: eligibility and cost for meals.

No food is to be taken from the dining area with the exception of fresh fruit, cookies and milk.

Can I use the senior mini bus for transportation?

Bus Riders must be at least 60 years old (or under 60 and disabled) and residents of Watertown/Oakville. Riders must complete and return a Bus Application in order to ride the bus. These forms are available from the Bus Dispatcher or the Bus Driver.

How do I make reservations to use the senior mini bus?

Call the dispatcher the morning before you need transportation. The dispatcher takes reservations ONLY between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and between 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Friday. Speak with the dispatcher when calling for a reservation. We do not accept bus reservations left on the center's voice mail. Call 860-945-5250 to make a reservation.

What are the rules for using the senior mini bus?

Priority is given to individuals traveling to and from doctor appointments.

Riders must enter and exit the bus without assistance from the bus driver. If you require assistance, you must travel with an aide who is 18 years of age or older. The bus driver does not leave the bus to assist riders. Exception: To operate the lift for a passenger.

If a passenger cannot enter the bus via the stairs, the passenger may ride the lift into the bus. The preferred manner in which to ride on the lift is to be in a wheelchair or while using a walker. However, if a passenger who is not using a wheelchair or a walker requires the use of the lift, the passenger must securely hold onto the lift's handrails. All passengers riding the lift must have the safety belt secured behind him/her. If a person feels the need to use the lift to enter the bus, please tell the dispatcher when making the bus reservation.

If the bus cannot turn around in your driveway, your address will receive curbside service only. Residents may ask for an assessment from the Town of Watertown Engineer and/or the Watertown Police Department to determine if the bus can back into the street safely from your driveway.

The senior bus does not wait while you are at your appointment or while you shop. The bus will return for your ride home at a convenient time for the bus and the senior. However, exact times cannot be given due to other stops the bus must make. Multiple reservations are not taken for the same day. Drivers are allowed to

take you only to the destination you requested when you made your reservation. Do not ask the driver to transport you elsewhere.

Riders are responsible for carrying personal items and shopping bags on and off the bus. The bus driver does not carry bags from the store or into your home. Please be ready for your scheduled pick up. The bus driver will not wait if you are not ready when the bus arrives. If your plans change and you do not plan to take the bus, call the center to cancel your reservation. Three “no shows” will result in a one-week suspension from bus service. A fourth “no show” will result in a one-month suspension.

**What time does the senior mini Bus run?**

Monday - In town/Doctor appointments in Waterbury

Tuesday - Bus Trips

Wednesday - Doctor appoints in Waterbury in the morning/In town in the afternoon

Thursday - All day in town

The bus runs between 9:00 am and 3:30 pm Monday – Friday. The bus must return to the bus parking lot no later than 4:00 pm, so please schedule your appointments accordingly. If an appointment is expected to run later than 3:30 (including if the doctor is late in seeing you), riders are to make other arrangements for return transportation.

The bus goes to Waterbury for doctor appointments on Monday morning and afternoon and on Wednesday morning ONLY. The bus provides rides in Watertown-Oakville on Monday morning and afternoon, Wednesday morning and afternoon, Thursday morning and afternoon, Friday morning and afternoon. On Tuesday, the bus transports seniors, as a group, to a predetermined location for shopping or dining and is not available for individual rides to appointments or shopping. To find out the location of the Tuesday group bus trip, please refer to the bus schedule in the senior center newsletter. Please note that on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the bus transports seniors to and from the senior center for the lunchtime meal, which begins at 11:30 am and ends at approximately 12:30 pm. If someone is delayed at a doctor’s appointment by more than a grace period of 15 minutes, contact the senior center at 860-945-5250.

**What if it snows and I’m scheduled to use the senior mini bus?**

If Watertown-Oakville schools are closed due to bad weather, the center is closed and the bus does not run. Local radio and television stations, including WATR, will post listings of school closings and delays.

**How much does it cost to use the senior mini bus?**

The suggested donation for transportation is: Individual tickets – 50 cents for each ride (round trip is considered to be two rides) or \$5.00 for a book of 20 rides.

### How do I go about using Dial-A-Ride?

Dial-a-Ride, which is administered by the Greater Waterbury Transit District, is available, free of charge, on Tuesdays to Watertown/Oakville residents who are 60 years of age or better or persons with disabilities. The bus will take riders to locations in Watertown/Oakville, Middlebury, Cheshire, Naugatuck, Prospect, Thomaston, Waterbury and Wolcott. Riders need to fill out an application, which is available from the senior center, and return it to the senior center. Riders are issued an identification number. Dial-a-Ride reservations may be made up to two weeks in advance of the Tuesday on which you are requesting transportation. To make a Dial-a-Ride reservation call the senior center at 860-945-5250 Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. You will be asked for your Dial-a-Ride Identification Number when calling. You also will be asked for your address and phone number along with the address and phone number of the location to which you are being driven. Reservations are faxed to The Greater Waterbury Transit District by 10:00 a.m. each Friday. If you want to make a reservation or cancel a reservation after 10:00 a.m. for the following Tuesday, you must call the transit district directly at 203-756-5550.

### Are cell phones allowed at the center?

Cell phones must be silenced during all special presentations at the center as well as during weekly programs such as Exercise Class, Bible Study, Bingo, Pokeno, the monthly breakfast and daily lunch. Individuals needing to take a call must leave the area to avoid disturbing others.

### What is the Senior Centers Code of Conduct?

We encourage an inviting atmosphere that is warm, tolerant and kind to others. Participants are expected to behave in a manner that does not cause others to feel uncomfortable or unwelcome through negative comments, sexual harassment, being argumentative and/or belligerent behavior towards other. We welcome all persons whatever their race, religious affiliations, socio- economic status, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation or mental/physical ability.

All participants shall treat others with respect and consideration. Offensive behavior toward other participants or the staff will NOT be tolerated. This includes – but is not limited to – the use of profanity, yelling, excessive noise, bullying, angry tirades, sexual harassment, inappropriate talk or behavior, threats, intimidation and exploitation of others.

The decision to remove an unruly individual immediately from the building is up to the discretion of the center's staff. The staff reserves the right to immediately expel anyone who has violent or disruptive behavior towards staff and/or other participants. Refusal to leave will result in a 9 1 1 call and a one-month expulsion or longer depending on the severity of the action.

In general, the first Code of Conduct violation will result in verbal warning; the second offense will result in a written warning plus a one-week suspension from the center. The third violation will result in a person being expelled from the center indefinitely if not permanently.

No weapons of any kind.

No soliciting.

No defacing of property.

No posting of materials without permission from staff.

Misuse and abuse of Senior Center resources including food, office supplies, copier machine and other materials is not allowed.

Alcohol and drugs are not allowed in the building or on the Senior Center grounds.

No smoking including E-cigarettes. Smoking is allowed in designated areas outside the building and cigarette and cigar butts must be disposed of in designated containers.

No pets are allowed except service dogs or animals that are part of a presentation.

Adherence to all Senior Center policies and procedures is required.

Are there any food policies?

With the exception of bread and pastry donated from local merchants and placed on the tables in the Main Room, food served at the center is not to be taken out of the center. This is in compliance with Food Safety Regulations.

Where can I park when I go to the Senior Center?

The senior center has four-handicap designated parking spaces and limited general parking. Participants are asked to park within the lines of the parking spaces. There is no parking in the front of the building's entrance. Exception: When the handicapped parking spaces are full, participants with the proper handicap designation displayed in their automobiles may park across from the building's entrance. Also, if all parking spaces are full, participants may park in front of the building until a general parking space becomes available, at which time, the participant will be expected to move his/her car into an open parking space. If you do not have a handicap sticker for your vehicle and there are empty parking spaces, you may not park in front of the entrance. Please be aware that this is a fire lane and the fire department will take appropriate action if they cannot respond to an emergency call at the center because the fire lane is blocked.

What if it snows?

When the Watertown schools are closed due to bad weather, the center also is closed and our bus does not run that day. When schools and the center are closed due to bad weather, riders still may call the center in the morning to make bus reservations for the following day. If town offices are closed due to inclement weather, please call the center when town offices reopen. When the schools have a delayed opening, we have the same delayed opening, which means that seniors should not enter the center before that delayed opening time. For example, if the schools and the center have a 90 minute delay, seniors should not arrive before 10:00. To find out if we are closed or have a delayed opening, please listen to WATR Radio or tune to local television stations to see the list of closings or delays.