

Volunteer Driver Retention

Although recruitment, training, and management may be a challenge, the “once you’ve got them, you’ve got them” experience of program managers suggests that retention appears to be a given. Actually, there is evidence that retention is in fact “a given” for many volunteer drivers. A Beverly Foundation report on the responses of 714 volunteer drivers revealed that more than 50% reported more than 50 years of driving experience and more than 50% had been volunteering to drive for four or more years.

The volunteer drivers who responded to the survey selected the following three reasons they volunteered to drive: 1) to help others, 2) to give back to the community, and 3) to do something meaningful. In a follow-up question related to satisfaction, drivers selected four satisfiers: 1) helping people, 2) feeling needed, 3) getting to know riders, and 4) donating time rather than money. The results of the survey indicate that driver retention could be related to the realization of goals of volunteering to drive.

There are some reasons to believe that volunteer driver retention is a given. However, management of volunteer drivers is important and a good volunteer driver retention program requires three important activities: 1) supervision, 2) recognition, and 3) evaluation. These activities provide assurance to the volunteer driver program that the drivers are performing as requested and expected. They also provide important communication and feedback to the volunteer drivers. Such communication, information sharing, and feedback is critical to the development of a successful and dynamic volunteer driver program.

**Please see the Volunteer Driver Recruitment and Retention Handbook for more information. The handbook is located in the publications section of the TurnKey Kit.*