

## **FISH OF NEW FAIRFIELD COORDINATOR GUIDELINES**

**FISH of New Fairfield  
6 Bayview Terrace  
New Fairfield, CT 06812**

**website:** [www.fishofnf.org](http://www.fishofnf.org)  
**Email:** [fishofnf@gmail.com](mailto:fishofnf@gmail.com)  
**Phone:** [203-312-5627](tel:203-312-5627)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/FISHofNewFairfield](http://www.facebook.com/FISHofNewFairfield)

**FISH** (Friends in Service Here) is a network of dedicated volunteers in New Fairfield, CT who provide non-emergency transportation for New Fairfield residents who cannot drive themselves. **Drivers for FISH take these residents to medical and dental appointments in and around the New Fairfield, Danbury, Bethel, New Milford or Brookfield area.** We provide rides when family members, neighbors, the HART bus and other options are not available.

Depending on driver availability, we also provide rides to non-medical appointments strictly within New Fairfield to places such as the New Fairfield Food Bank, the Senior Center, the Library, the Post Office, grocery stores, etc.

**Volunteer drivers are contacted by the FISH coordinator via email when transportation is needed.**

**FISH clients either send an email or call the FISH number if they need a ride.**

When the client calls the FISH number to request a ride, the system converts their voicemail to a .wav file that is attached to an email and sent to the FISH email address.

FISH coordinators volunteer to monitor the FISH email on their chosen day. On your scheduled day, you must check the email a **minimum** of 4 times between the hours of 9AM and 6PM.

Those needing a ride are given the following instructions:

- e-mail your request to [fishofnf@gmail.com](mailto:fishofnf@gmail.com) or call 203-312-5627 a minimum of 3 **business days** prior to your appointment.
- Give your name and phone number along with the address, date, time and place of your appointment as well as its projected length of time.

### **Requirements for the FISH Coordinator:**

1. The **minimum** requirement for the FISH coordinator is to check the FISH email 4 times between the hours of 9AM and 6PM. At a minimum: 9AM, noon, 3PM, and 6PM. However, you are encouraged to check as often as your schedule allows. Often our riders need to cancel a ride because they are not feeling well, and we make every effort to save our drivers a trip to the client when that is not necessary.

2. When you first check the FISH email in the morning, read the status email from the previous day's FISH coordinator. The status email will have information related to the previous day's ride requests.
3. Often the client does not provide all the required pieces of information. If that is the case, you must call the client and ask for the missing information. The following information is required:

Name of client \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Appointment date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Appointment location \_\_\_\_\_  
Expected duration of appointment \_\_\_\_\_  
Any mobility/medical equipment needed \_\_\_\_\_  
Client's independent mobility status: \_\_\_\_\_

**If the client requires assistance to safely enter or exit the car, an aide must accompany them.** The FISH driver is not responsible for assisting the client with entering or exiting the car. The FISH driver is a driver only. Medical training is not required to be a driver. If medical assistance is required during one of your trips, call 911 immediately.

4. Once all the required information is obtained, send an email to all the FISH drivers. The email should have the subject = 'Driver needed for day, date'. For example: Driver needed for Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>  
In the email write something like this:  
John Doe needs a ride on Thursday, September 7 for an appointment at 123 Hospital Avenue. The appointment is at 10:00 AM and should last approximately 1 hour.  
Please use Reply All if you are available to accept this assignment.
5. After sending the email, use red text to update the Google Sheet with the information related to the ride request. As a FISH Coordinator, you will be given editor access to the document.
6. Once a driver volunteers to take the assignment, add his or her name to the Google Sheet. Copy the link to the Google Sheet and compose a response email to the driver. In the response email, give the driver the client's address and phone number. Ask the driver to call the client the day before the appointment to confirm pickup time. Also remind them to add their hours to the Google Sheet after the ride is complete. Paste the link that you copied into the email.
7. Call the client. Tell them the name of their driver. Encourage them to write the driver's name down in their book or calendar. Explain that the driver will call them the day before their appointment to introduce themselves and work out a pickup time. Change the 'Notified Client' from 'N' to 'Y' on the Google calendar. Change the text from red to black at this time.
8. After 6PM and your last check of the FISH email, you should send a status email from your personal email to the FISH email. The person who monitors the email the next day will read your status email first thing in the morning and be up-to-date. Do not wait

until the next day to send out your update. Include ride requests that you received and whether a driver was assigned or not. Include information related to any emails you received that you were not sure how to respond to. If there were no ride requests received, write that information in your email. If you have not handled a ride request, please mark the gmail MP3 request as unread. This way, the next day's coordinator will know to handle it.

9. If there is an unclaimed ride request for 3 – 4 days out, send another email to all the drivers.
10. If there is a ride request for 2 days out where a driver is still needed, send an email to the emergency driver(s) listed on the Google Sheet around noon. Forward the original email to the emergency driver and copy all the other drivers. If at 4PM, a driver still has not volunteered, call the client. Tell them that a driver has not been found yet, but we will continue searching.
11. If it is the day before the client's appointment, and a driver has still NOT volunteered, call the client around 11 AM to tell them that we do not have any volunteer drivers available for their appointment.
12. If for any reason you cannot cover the FISH email on your scheduled day, please notify Reggie and Karen via text as soon as possible. **DO NOT CALL the FISH NUMBER!**

**NOTES: - If you read an e-mail that is not meant for you but for another FISH coordinator or Board member, please read it and then mark it as unread and send a text to that person to let them know that there is a message in the e-mail that she should check.**

- Please check the Info tab on the calendar for additional information.

**Since we are now able to loan out medical equipment on a temporary basis (and in some cases for an extended period of time), listen to the mp3 file or read the contact mail that arrives in our gmail inbox, note the name of the person requesting the specific equipment and his or her phone number. Either send a text to Reggie with that information or call her on her cellphone. She will call the person and arrange for the equipment pickup and delivery. Reggie maintains the equipment inventory and will know what is available at all times. She will be the one to pick the equipment up from storage in Sherman and will deliver it to the Senior Center where it can be picked up at the client's convenience, or we can put out a message to the drivers asking for a volunteer to go to the Senior Center, pick up the equipment and drive it to the person's house. \*\* The client will be required to sign a waiver in order to use the equipment (this is for insurance purposes). The waivers are kept at the Senior Center.**

Last Updated: May 2025