



Safety Procedures When Providing In-Person Assistance

Staying Safe is priority for all Age Well Arrowhead staff, contractors and volunteers who assist clients and caregivers in a variety of settings, under a variety of circumstances, often alone in private dwellings. When providing assistance to clients and caregivers, Age Well Arrowhead staff, contractors and volunteers could encounter unpredictable conditions that could jeopardize their safety & security or that of clients.

Procedures

Safety Assessment and Risk Reduction

1. When making in-person visits:
 - Prior to travelling, check to see if there are any weather alerts that could pose travel risks and require rescheduling
 - Is a complete and exact address of the location available to avoid appearing or becoming lost?
 - Has specific visit location been provided to volunteer coordinator so whereabouts are known?
 - Does staff, contractor or volunteer have access to a mobile device to communicate with others if an issue develops?
 - Will the location be in a reduced reception area for mobile devices?
 - Are emergency numbers available?
 - Is the mobile device fully charged or is a car charger available?
2. Upon arrival for the visit, are any potential risks or threats such as:
 - Unleashed barking dog
 - Groups or individuals congregated in the path to the visit location
 - Location known as a high crime area
 - Ice covered entrance or walkway not shoveled
3. At the location where the visit will occur, get a general awareness of the client's living space. Are there:
 - Aggressive pets?
 - Other individuals present that were not expected or welcome?
 - Liquor bottles or illegal drugs displayed?
 - Weapons easily accessible?
 - Pests such as cockroaches, rats, or lice?
 - Difficulty getting into the location due to hoarding behavior?

In all situations, to help ensure a safe and secure experience for all: staff, contractors and volunteers **should not enter** working situations where they feel their safety and security could be compromised. A common sense approach should be adopted. This may include contacting Age Well Arrowhead for further instruction or law enforcement if necessary.

If a Risk to Safety and Security Prevents the In-Person Visit from Proceeding

If Age Well Arrowhead staff, contractors or volunteers determine there is a risk to safety and security that prevents the in-person visit from proceeding:

1. Contact the client as soon as possible to notify him/her of the reason for the cancellation. Cancellations should be discussed first with the Volunteer or Care Coordinator to ensure the issues cannot be addressed prior to the visit.
2. If the cancellation or postponement is due to an issue that could be resolved such as leashing an aggressive dog, using a different entrance, scheduling the appointment earlier in the day, etc., discuss it with the client.

3. If the cancellation or postponement is because services are required such as chore services, help removing pests or removal of rubbish from the home, the staff, contractor or volunteer should use professional discretion, consult with the Volunteer or Care Coordinator.
4. Clients who are found to be in an immediate need of help or intervention such as abusive or neglectful situations, no heat in winter, deteriorating health status, etc., The staff, contractor or volunteer should use professional discretion and consult with the Volunteer or Care Coordinator or call 911 if deemed necessary.

Transporting Clients

Age Well Staff, contractors or volunteers transporting clients to a medical appointment or running errands may encounter unexpected situations. Below are some examples and the preferred process to handle them.

1. Client doesn't answer the door when you arrive for the scheduled ride.
 - Knock or ring the doorbell repeatedly. The client may be hard of hearing or slow in the ability to get to the door.
 - If there is a back door or side entry, try to reach the client using the alternate door.
 - The client phone number should have been provided to you at the time of the scheduling. Try to phone the client. If no one answers the door or the phone, call the Age Well Arrowhead office as there may be an alternate phone number we can try.
 - If the client doesn't answer the door or the phone and you cannot visibly see them through a window, call the Age Well Arrowhead office for further instructions.
 - If you can see the client through a window and they are unable to move or otherwise respond to your knocking, please call 911 and then Age Well Arrowhead. Age Well staff will notify the emergency contact on record.
2. Client experiences a medical emergency during the transportation
 - Pull over and dial 911 immediately and then call Age Well Arrowhead. Age Well staff will notify the emergency contact on record.
 - If the transportation occurs after regular business hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm and there is a medical emergency, call 911 and then notify Age Well's Executive Director via cell phone at 218-428-4018 and she will notify the emergency contact on record.

Reporting

1. Age Well Arrowhead staff, contractors or volunteers should follow the procedures established by the agency for reporting violent or abusive incidents and/or any personal injury sustained.
2. Often others may provide assistance to the client. In order to alert other staff, contractor or volunteer to any safety issues or risks, summarize the issue(s) verbally to the Volunteer or Care Coordinator.

Important: This document is not intended to be a professional assessment tool to use with consumers. The intended use is to provide guidance to determine if potential threats or risks exist that may impact an in-person visit with the client. Some identified threats or risks may require intervention of other social service or law enforcement agencies such as Adult Protective Services. In all matters, professional discretion and consultation with the Volunteer or Care Coordinator should be used when making these decisions.

If you have any questions or situations you are not certain about, please call the Age Well Arrowhead Volunteer Coordinator at (218) 623-7805 or the Care Coordinator at (218) 623-7807.

I have read the Safety Procedures When Providing In-Person Assistance and will comply.

Volunteer Signature: _____ **Date:** _____