

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

INFORMATION HANDBOOK



Forster Office	Phone: 6554 5447	Fax: 6555 2800
Gloucester Office	Phone: 6558 2104	Fax: 6558 2777
Tea Gardens Office	Phone: 4997 2266	Fax: 4997 2633
Wingham Office	Phone: 6553 5860	Fax: 6553 0177

Manning Valley & Area Community Transport Group Inc. acknowledges the people of the Biripi and Worimi, Nations, the traditional custodians of the land we live and work on and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Mission Statement

MVACTG provides direct relief to enhance the quality of life, through improved passenger transport services and access, for persons who are disadvantaged, due to frailty, age, misfortune, poverty, disability, location, isolation or otherwise and in the process contributes to improved community capacity in the three Local Government areas of Lower Mid North Coast NSW.

Philosophy

M.V.A.C.T.G. believes in:

- ❖ the right of people to make choices in their own lives,
- ❖ the right of people to dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality,
- ❖ the right of people to be valued as individuals,
- ❖ the right of people to have mobility,
- ❖ the right of people to access services on a non-discriminatory basis,
- ❖ the right of the community to safe, comfortable and reliable services,
- ❖ the right of the community to accountable and responsive services.

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About Us

The purpose of Manning Valley and Area Community Transport is to provide services and undertake activities which alleviate transport disadvantaged within its operating area of Greater Taree, Gloucester and Great Lakes local government area:

- ❖ to provide, without discrimination, direct relief with transport services to people with disabilities and disadvantaged,
- ❖ to provide access to services and facilities for those without adequate private transport,
- ❖ to foster the development of public transport to suit the growing needs of the three Local Government areas,
- ❖ to assess both established and innovative means of providing transport to meet community demand and to test and monitor their feasibility,
- ❖ to make representations to Government authorities and to obtain adequate and continuing funding for appropriate and required public transport,
- ❖ to assist local operators to co-ordinate and publicise transport resources,
- ❖ to liaise and co-operate with other groups to promote and extend transport facilities according to demand.

Who Is Eligible

- ❖ Persons living in the communities of, Greater Taree, Great Lakes and Gloucester Local Government areas, who are at risk of premature or inappropriate long term residential care
- ❖ Frail and aged 65 and over (50 if you are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander)

- ❖ People with disabilities
- ❖ A Carers of the person who is Aged or has a Disability
- ❖ Isolated and unable to access public transport
- ❖ Such other classes of persons, as agreed upon by the Commonwealth Minister and the State Minister.

Funding

MVACTG receives funding from various Federal and State Government Bodies to assist the frail, aged and people with disabilities, living in our communities to remain in their homes. Once a person moves into assisted care like a hostel or nursing home, we are no longer able to transport them from these facilities.

Access and Inclusion

MVACTG is an inclusive organisation that believes in equality of service. We pride ourselves on providing high quality, accessible, culturally safe and appropriate services to our community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

We recognise many in the indigenous community experience difficulties in relation to transport and accessing our services. Here at MVACTG we employ an Aboriginal Transport Development Officer to assist you. If you would like to speak with our ATDO, please call the Forster office.

Carers

If you have a carer who needs to travel with you, then you need to let us know so we can book a seat in the vehicle with you or if you are taking someone with you to an appointment for support, they will also need to be booked in to our vehicle. There is no charge for a carer to travel with you to a medical appointment.

Disabilities

If you have a disability, we will record this information on your file and note any special needs you may have in relation to your transport. This information is kept private. Should your needs change; please notify the office so our records are kept up to date. This way we can continue to assist you.

Mobility Impairment

MVACTG has wheelchair buses in the fleet. These vehicles are in high demand, so please ensure you book early if you require the use of one of these vehicles.

Hearing or Speech Impairment

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact us through the NRS

To make a relay call through the NRS all you need to do is contact the NRS as shown below and ask for 0265545447

TTY users (Speak and Read , Type and Read , and Type and Listen)	
Standard and overseas calls	133 677
1800 calls	1800 555 677
Speak and Listen users	
Standard and overseas calls	1300 555 727
1800 calls	1800 555 727
Internet relay users	
All calls	internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au/
SMS relay users	
All calls	0423 677 767
Video relay users	
All calls	open Skype and contact nrs.videorelay
Captioned relay users	
All calls	captioned-relay.nrscall.gov.au/

For more information on the NRS visit their website at www.relayservice.gov.au

Vision Impaired

Assistance dogs are welcome in all our vehicles, please advise staff at time of booking if your assistance dog will be travelling with you.

Non English Speaking Background

If you are a non-English speaking person, there is a Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS) on 131450

How to Access MVA CTG

Before you can access our service, you will need to register with us. You can call your local office and arrange a form to be sent out to you. This is a 3 page form, all pages need to be completed and returned. Once it is received back at the office, a staff member will assess your eligibility and how we can help you. We recommend you register before you need transport, so you don't miss out.

Booking your Transport

All bookings must be made with at least 2 business day's notice. We need this time to coordinate your transport and allocate vehicles and drivers. If you call the day prior to your required travel, it is unlikely we will be able to assist you. We recommend you call as soon as you make an appointment to avoid disappointment. We can take your booking months in advance. Staff will call you the day before to confirm your booking, reminding you of your appointment.

Cut off times for Bookings

The table below sets out the cut off time for staff to accept booking.

Last chance to book	For Day of Travel
Thursday 12 noon	Following Monday
Friday 12 noon	Following Tuesday
Monday 12 noon	Same week Wednesday
Tuesday 12 noon	Same week Thursday
Wednesday 12 noon	Same week Friday

Unfortunately at this stage we are unable to take booking for weekends.

Sharing Vehicles

Due to the demand on our service, and the vast region we cover, you may be asked to share a vehicle on the day. This may mean you may have to leave earlier than you would normally do, or return later from your appointment. We will let you know in advance if this is going to happen so you can take lunch or even a book or knitting on the day. If sharing a vehicle on the day will cause you aggravation due to a medical reason, then please notify staff when making your booking.

What we cannot do

Unfortunately, we cannot assist if:

- ❖ You are living in an aged care facility,
- ❖ Receive transport through an Aged Care Package where transport is a component of this package,
- ❖ Are unable to get independently in or out of a vehicle, or
- ❖ Require emergency assistance.

If We Can't Help

If we cannot assist you, you may be eligible to call the NSW Health Transport Unit on 1800 660 361. They may be able to assist with medical related transport. Please note, they will not take a booking without 2 working days notice. Staff may also be able to refer you to another organisation that may be able to help on the day.

Waiting List

Due to the high demands for our services, occasionally we are unable to take on new clients and will have to place people on a waiting list. If you send in an application form and we are unable to assist you in time of your appointment we will notify you as soon as possible so you can make alternative arrangements.

Reviews & Reassessments

From time to time we will have to review your transport needs and reassess if you are still eligible for assistance from MVACTG. Your local office will call you and let you know if this is to happen and the process.

Our Services

Medical Transport

How to make a booking

When you call to make your booking, we will ask you the address of where you are going, what date and time your appointment is, if you have to go anywhere else such as, the chemist etc. We may also ask questions like, is anyone travelling with you on the day, are you being picked up from your home and returning to your home. How long you think your appointment will be and if you have any special needs.

On the day of travel

Our drivers try to pick you up at the arranged time, however, due to traffic conditions and the weather, sometimes they may be either a little late or early. Unfortunately this is unavoidable at times. Please be ready at least 15 minutes before the scheduled pick up time. If your driver is more than 15 minutes late, then please call your local office so we can look into it for you. We may be able to phone ahead and advise the relevant person(s) that you may be late.

Cancellations and changes

We understand appointments can be cancelled and changed at late notice. If this happens, please notify the office as soon as possible so we can cancel the vehicle and driver. If it's a change of appointment we will endeavour to get you to the new appointment. If you need to change or cancel an appointment and it is outside office hours, then please call the Forster Head Office on 6554 5447 and leave a message on the answering machine. It is always checked first thing every morning.

Safety

Not at home

If a driver arrives to pick you up and you are not at home, they will notify the office. It is our responsibility to try and contact the person who you have nominated as your emergency contact. If we cannot contact them, we will contact emergency services. This is why it is very important that you notify the office if you have changed your plans and no longer need transport.

Cost

MVACTG is a not for profit organisation. Although we receive funding, it does not cover the cost of the services we provide, therefore, we will need to ask you to make a contribution towards your transport even though your trip will still be largely subsidised. We aim to keep our service affordable to everyone. At the time of your booking and again when you receive your confirmation call the day before travel, you will be given the cost of your trip. The cost will vary depending on the distance travelled.

Please note that if you are experiencing financial hardship or feel you cannot afford the Service, then advise the office so we can work with you to ensure you still get the services you need. Contributions may be reduced or waived in certain circumstances.

Please make your contribution to the driver on the day – cash or cheque is acceptable.

Privacy and Confidentiality

As a Consumer it is your right to have confidentiality about your care and needs maintained. When seeking information and feedback about your service your privacy will be considered at all times. You have the right to access your file, decide what information you provide and to have that information protected and only released with your permission. Please note that the Funding Body (State & Federal Government) have the right to access your file, however, their Employees are bound by confidentiality agreements and will not release any information. The

only reason the Funding Body would look at your file would be to check that we are providing a quality service.

If you require any further information about the privacy act or your rights please contact the office or Contact Privacy:

Website: www.privacy.gov.au Enquiries: privacy@privacy.gov.au

Hotline: 1300 363 992

Mail: GPO Box 5218

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Your Rights and Responsibilities

Your Rights

- Every Consumer has the right to receive a service that encourages and fosters their independence.
- Every Consumer and/or (with the Consumer's permission) their carer, has access to all information about themselves held by MVACTION Inc.
- In cases where a Consumer has a legal guardian or advocate appointed to act on their behalf, the rights of the guardian or advocate are to be acknowledged and respected to the extent stipulated in the guardianship or advocacy arrangements.
- Consumers and/or (with the Consumer's permission) their carers, will be involved in decisions about their assessment and care plan. They will be made aware of all the options available and any fees to be charged.
- Consumers will be made aware of the standard of service which they can expect. Services will be provided in a safe manner which respects the dignity and independence of the Consumers, is responsive to the

social, cultural and physical needs of the Consumers and the needs of the carer.

- Consumers' access to services will be decided only on the basis of need and the capacity of MVACTIONG Inc. to meet that need.
 - Consumers have the right to refuse a service and refusal will not prejudice their future access to services.
 - Consumers have a right to complain about the Service they are receiving without fear of retribution.
 - Complaints by Consumers will be dealt with fairly, promptly and without retribution. The Consumer may involve an advocate of their choice to represent his/her interests.
 - Consumers' views will be taken into account in the planning and evaluation of the Service.
 - Consumers can nominate an Advocate to speak on their behalf.
- Consumers' rights to privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

Your Responsibilities

- A Consumer should let the agency know if he/she is not going to be at home when Team Members are due to visit.
- Consumers should act in a way which respects the rights of other Consumers and Team Members.
- Consumers need to take responsibility for the results of any decisions they make including the choice not to make a decision.
- Consumers must utilise seatbelts and other vehicle safety devices as directed by authorised Team Members.
- Consumer should respect the confidentiality of information about other Consumers and Team Members which they may obtain whilst using services.

- Consumers are to play their part in helping our Team Members to provide them with services.
- Consumers should inform MVACTG Inc. of any significant change in their circumstances.
- All effort will be made to ensure that a Consumer, family member or Carer does understand their Rights and Responsibilities. Where needed contracts will be developed to ensure a clear understanding. If a Consumer continually refuses to abide by their responsibilities they may be exited from the Service.

(Note R & R = Rights and Responsibilities)

Driver Assistance.

Our wonderful volunteer drivers and passenger attendants will assist you in and out of vehicles. However, they are drivers and attendants only and are unable to help you go into and out of your home or destination. If you need help to access buildings etc, you will need to take a carer with you on the day. The drivers and/or attendants will help you with your bags to your door but please don't make them too heavy or they will not be able to carry them for you. If you intend to buy a large item, it is best to check with your driver on the day before you make the purchase.

Seat Belts

Seat belts must be worn at all time while travelling with MVACTG. If you have a current medical exemption from your doctor you must have it with you on the trip and a copy must be held at your local office prior to your transport.

Scented Products

As many people suffer from allergies, we ask you not to wear strong deodorants or any perfumes on the day you are travelling with us. This includes strong smelling shampoos, body sprays, colognes etc. We also ask this of our volunteer drivers to make the trip pleasant for everyone.

Smoking

All our vehicles are non-smoking, there is no exception. If you visit one of our offices, we have designated smoking areas outside our buildings.

Eating in Vehicles

We do not allow eating in the vehicles. If you need to eat on a journey, we can arrange for the driver to stop for you. Please advise the office when booking your transport, that you may need an extra stop.

Alcohol

A driver is not expected to transport anyone who is under the influence of alcohol. We have a zero tolerance for alcohol being carried or ingested in our vehicles.

RMS Parking Permits

If you have a Mobility Parking Permit, then please bring it with you on the day. Our drivers cannot park in a Disability park without it.

Advocacy

Sometimes you may need help when you communicate with us, so you have the right to ask for an advocate. An advocate can be a friend or family member, or even an external person of your choice. We are

happy to have you do this. You will need to put it in writing that you have given this person permission to act on your behalf, and if you change your mind at any point and no longer wish this person contact us on your behalf, you will also need to put this in writing and send to us to keep our records up to date.

Advocacy support

Advocacy and information services perform a crucial role in the disability sector by helping people to make informed decisions about their lives and help them to choose how they wish to engage with their communities. - See more at:

http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/individuals/support/directing_my_own_life/advocacy_and_information_services

The National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) is a national program funded by the Australian Government under the *Aged Care Act 1997*. The NACAP aims to promote the rights of people receiving Australian Government funded aged care services.

<http://www.health.gov.au/agedcareadvocacy>

Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions

We aim to provide the best service available and always welcome any feedback from our consumers. Any suggestions or complaints, allows us to improve our services. Please feel free to talk to our Team.

Why not let us know what you think by making a note on a Quick Compliments & Suggestion Form. These forms are in each vehicle, just

ask our driver for one. If you have a more serious concern you can fill in a Complaints Record Form (which is also kept in the vehicles).

You may receive a survey from us. We send these out randomly approximately every 6 months and ask you to complete and return it to our office. These help us to address any issues that may have arisen in that time.

Donations

Manning Valley and Area Community Transport is a not for profit organisation and a registered charity, if you would like to make a donation to us, it is tax deductible. Any donations are appreciated.

Volunteers

Our drivers are volunteers, without them, we wouldn't be able to service the local communities. Please respect that they give up their own time to help people in the community.

Do you know someone who has a few spare hours a week and would like to become a volunteer? All they need to do is contact their local office and make an appointment to see one of our friendly staff for more information.

All Manning Valley & Area Community Transport Volunteer drivers and attendants are required to undergo a Police check, Working with Children check, Medical Assessment, as well as drivers providing us with current driving record and current licence. All our drivers are required to carry out a driving assessment with a qualified driving instructor.

Contact us by email at: mvactg@manningct.com or

Office	Address	P O BOX	Phone	Fax
Forster	4 Commerce Court Forster 2428	P O Box 4163 Forster 2428	65545447	6555 2800

Gloucester	86 King Street Gloucester 2422	P O Box 334 Gloucester 2422	6558 2104	6558 2777
Tea Gardens	2/24 Wanyah Rd Tea Gardens 2324	P O Box 116 Hawks Nest 2324	49972266	4997 2633
Wingham	Wingham Arcade 54 Bent Street 2429	P O Box 106 Wingham 2429	6553 5860	6553 0177