



Saint Louis County

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NEWS RELEASE

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New transportation service coming for area veterans; volunteer drivers needed

For Northland veterans in need of medical services, finding transportation to a Veterans Affairs (VA) facility can be a challenge. Now, a new cooperative program involving multiple veterans' service organizations is in the works to make it easier for veterans to get to their appointments. But volunteer drivers are needed.

The Northeast Veterans Transportation Program will provide free rides to any veteran traveling to a VA scheduled appointment. The program is a partnership of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) of Minnesota; St. Louis, Lake, Carlton and Cook County Veteran Service Offices, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, Minneapolis VA Medical Center and area veteran service organizations. The goal is to have the program running later this summer.

Transportation will be offered daily from the Duluth area, with additional vehicles stationed in Virginia and Grand Marais to provide regular shuttle service for veterans who live outside the Duluth area. The DAV is in the process of hiring a full-time coordinator to assist veterans with scheduling and provide a single call service for the program areas.

Anyone interested in volunteering as a driver should contact the St. Louis County Veterans Service Office in Duluth at (218) 725-5285. Volunteers do not need to be veterans.

Transportation to local Community Based Outpatient Clinics is currently available two days a week, and will be increased as the program becomes more established and a sufficient number of volunteer drivers are available. Accommodations for same-day appointment transportation will be made whenever possible. If overnight visits are required, the coordinator will be available to assist in scheduling. Additional volunteer drivers are needed for this program, as well as assistant drivers to go along on trips to the Minneapolis VA.

St. Louis County's Veterans Service Office was established in 1946 to assist veterans and their eligible dependents in obtaining benefits and services accrued through military service. St. Louis County offers four Veterans Service Offices – in Duluth, Hibbing, Virginia and Ely. For more information about services for veterans or to schedule an appointment with a Veterans Service Officer, call (218) 725-5285 or visit stlouiscountymn.gov/veterans.

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