



SERVING PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

Tips for Transit Drivers
Serving People with
Dementia in Florida



[SafeMobilityFL.com](https://www.SafeMobilityFL.com)

Dementia-friendly Transportation goes beyond age-friendliness. It is a transportation service that considers the special needs of passengers with all stages of memory loss.

Passengers with dementia (such as Alzheimer’s disease) may have difficulty communicating clearly. They may be confused about the name of their destination, or forget they just asked a question seconds earlier.

It’s not always easy to identify persons living with dementia, signs may include:

SIGN	IDENTIFYING BEHAVIOR
Memory problems	Not remembering the time of their scheduled ride
Difficulty completing familiar tasks	Problems paying transit fare
Misplacing things and not being able to retrace their steps	Leaving their personal belongings behind
Confusion with location or passage of time	Anxious about missing their destination, e.g. “are we there yet?”
Challenges with vision	Not seeing how far their feet are from a step
Poor judgement or decision making	Attempting to move around while the vehicle is in motion

Tips for Supporting Passengers with Dementia

- ▶ Use friendly facial expressions and gestures.
 - Say hello and introduce yourself.
 - Explain why you’re there and where you’re taking them.
- ▶ Be patient. Use short sentences and allow enough time to respond.
- ▶ Keep a pen and paper in your cab so you can write a message down if the patient does not understand what you say.
- ▶ If the passenger becomes upset, **remain calm and professional**. Do not take their behavior personally or argue. Try one or more of the following:
 - Compliment the passenger on an item they are wearing or carrying for distraction.
 - Ask the passenger to tell you about their favorite food, person or activity.
 - Play music to their taste to help calm them.
 - Contact your dispatch representative for information that you can use to help them stay calm.
- ▶ Ask the passenger for permission to help them with a task or to enter their personal space.
- ▶ Only let the passenger exit at their scheduled destination.
- ▶ Notify the passenger when you have arrived at their destination since a passenger may not be able to read anymore or recognize it through a window. Clearly identify the destination as home, sister’s house, etc.

Safe Mobility for Life Resource Center

Florida's Safe Mobility for Life Coalition develops many other resources to help aging road users stay safe and mobile. Please contact the resource center to request outreach materials:

Visit:

safemobilityfl.com/ResourceCenter.htm

Email:

contact@safemobilityfl.com

Call:

833-930-2952

Partner Resource:

Reach.med.fsu.edu

connect.reach@med.fsu.edu



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