

GUIDELINES and POLICIES FOR REGISTERED TRANSPORTERS

Please read the following guidelines and policies to ensure your safety, as well as the safety and wellbeing of the wild animals you will be transporting. **By submitting your application through the Wildlife Center's website, you agree to abide by these guidelines.** Once we receive your application, a Front Desk Coordinator will email you to confirm that we have added you to our database.

Thank you so much for being willing to help with this vital piece of rescue work!

General Transport Guidelines:

1. The animal should already be in a secure, dark, ventilated box or holding container. **Please keep the transport container covered to reduce the animal's stress.**
2. **Do not offer ANY food to a wild animal.**
3. **Do not handle the animal after it has been placed in a box.** Remember, wild animals can carry a variety of diseases that can be transmitted to humans or domestic animals. Do not open the box to look at the animal or take photos. This not only stresses the animal, but also increases the risk of escape or injury to you.
4. **When you pick up the animal**, please be prepared to pass along any information or documentation from the original rescuer/finder of the animal. Front Desk staff will usually collect this information directly, but there are cases when that is not always possible.
5. **Place the box/container on the floor of the passenger seat or on the backseat.** Please do not drive with any animal, contained or uncontained, in your lap.
6. **Keep domestic pets out of the car while transporting any wildlife.**
7. **Do not leave animals locked in a parked car.**
8. Keep the animals and their containers **out of direct sunlight.**
9. Keep the **radio off** and keep talking to a minimum if traveling with a companion.
10. **Transport animals directly to the WCV** or to the arranged permitted rehabilitator.
11. If transporting very young animals with no fur or feathers yet, an external heat source should be provided. Hot water bottles or dry rice tied in a sock, then warmed in the microwave for 20 seconds should be placed alongside the young animals, but with a piece of fabric between the heat source and the animal so as not to burn the infant.
12. Please contact a WCV front desk coordinator if you have any questions. Please keep us informed of any changes to your personal contact information or if you would like to be removed from the volunteer transporter list.

When arriving at the Center: Please notify the Front Desk Coordinator that you are a volunteer transporter and fill in the WCV Volunteer Transporter Log to comply with our permit conditions. You may also be asked to fill out information on the patient that you are delivering. Volunteer Transporters can deduct mileage on income taxes for trips to and from the Center or for trips driven to permitted rehabilitators.

Arriving After-Hours: The Center is open from 9am-5pm seven days a week. If you are going to be arriving with the animal after 5:00 pm, special arrangements need to be made with the veterinarian, so someone can meet you at the Center. Please call 540-241-4045 after 5 pm and leave a message for the vet about your estimated time of arrival. Call at least ½ hour-45 minutes before you arrive afterhours so someone can meet you there.

Other information: Baby season typically begins mid-February and lasts through September. At this time, we may be trying to transfer orphaned animals from our facility to at-home rehabilitators around the state. If you are planning a trip across Virginia, please let our staff know; perhaps we can send some animals along with you! Please email wildlife@wildlifecenter.org to let us know your plans.

Social Media & Photography Policy: This policy provides guidance on how photographs, videos, and social media may be used by volunteer transporters for the Wildlife Center of Virginia (WCV).

Photographs and Videos: Rescue and transport can be very stressful for wild animals; it's best to minimize taking photos/videos, unless doing so in an official capacity for WCV [e.g., identification purposes, photos for outreach stories, etc]. The health and stress-level of these wild animals must never be compromised. Please do not increase interaction time with an animal simply for the sake of taking photos. Selfies with animals should never be taken; these do not reflect a professional way of interacting with wildlife.

Photos taken of rescue and transported patients are for personal use only, unless you have secured specific permission from the Director of Outreach to use such photos in another specific way. Please note that posting on your Facebook page, for example, is NOT personal use [see "Social Media" policy below].

Volunteer transporters are strongly encouraged to submit photos and videos to the Center's outreach department, for consideration in educational, fundraising, training, and marketing materials.

Social Media: Social media can be a fun way to share your experiences with family and friends. However, the use of social media carries great responsibility. Even with strict privacy settings, any content posted on social media has the potential to live indefinitely on the internet.

Social media includes all means of communicating/posting content of any sort on the internet, including personal websites/blogs, chat rooms, forums, and social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.

The Outreach Department carefully manages Wildlife Center information and stories posted on the Center's website and social media platforms, which include Facebook, X, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. The Center's online presence is a significant way in which supporters and the media keep up with the news and stories of the Wildlife Center.

Volunteers may not post photographs, videos, or breaking news about any of the animals in care at the WCV, which includes animals that are being transported and admitted to the Wildlife Center. It's not uncommon for patients at the Center to be under active investigation by law enforcement, which in many cases, may not begin until the patient is examined and initial diagnostics are performed. There are also many species that must be reported to state and federal agencies within a certain period of time by the Wildlife Center staff.

A "no posting" policy helps ensure that we are in compliance with the policies of permitting agencies of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other law-enforcement agencies.

Volunteers are encouraged to share and comment on content created by the WCV. However, only the Center's outreach staff are authorized to reply on behalf of the Wildlife Center to questions posed by the public.

Failure to comply with Wildlife Center policies concerning photos and social media may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from WCV transporter list.

Open 7 Days a Week

Phone: 9am-5pm, 540-942-9453

After-Hours Emergency Phone: 5pm-9am 540-241-4045

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