

Whiteside County Senior Center

**Senior Center Guidelines,
Policies and Procedures**

The Mission of the Whiteside County Senior Center is to develop and administer programs and activities that support Whiteside County older adults in their efforts to remain healthy, active and independent members of the community, and to provide, coordinate and advocate for services which promote the dignity and enrichment of life for Whiteside County seniors.

It gives me pleasure to welcome you to the Whiteside County Senior Center and the wide array of programs, activities and opportunities that we provide!

We have a commitment to offer activities and events that are appealing to each participant. The staff takes pride in our program offerings – from exercise classes and health and wellness activities to card games, day trips and daily meals. All activities are built around the needs and wishes of our participants but if there is something in which you are interested that is not offered, please let a member of the staff know and if there is a way we can make it happen, we will do our best to accommodate your request.

We want you to have a positive and enjoyable experience, which is one reason for the publication and distribution of this booklet. We don't want surprises, and we would like everyone to understand their responsibilities and the expectations associated with participation in senior center activities. If you have questions about an item contained in this booklet, please ask for clarification.

The staff joins me in wishing you well.

Susie Welch, Executive Director

Table of Contents

Guidelines For Participation	page 4
Inclement Weather	page 6
Transportation	page 7
Classes and Special Activities	page 8
Dining Program	page 10
Contributions	page 11
Day Trips and Tours	page 12
Center Emergencies	page 16
Agreement and Appeals	page 17
Patron Comments or Concerns	page 18
Closures	page 19
Senior Center location and contact information	page 19

Section 1: Guidelines For Participation

The Senior Center shall be defined as the actual facility, the property on which the facility sits, and/or any facility, property, or vehicle being used for a Senior Center sponsored event or activity. Failure to abide by these guidelines may result in immediate removal from a class, program or activity, and/or limitation or suspension of center privileges.

General Guidelines

Participants must:

1. Have a completed registration form on file as well as an assigned key tag with the senior center in order to take part in center activities and classes.
2. Provide the center receptionist with updated information any time there is a change of address, phone number, emergency contact, etc. All information should be reviewed for accuracy at least annually.
3. Understand their responsibility, and conform their behavior, to the rules of the center.
4. Be respectful of other participants' right to utilize shared equipment (computers, phone, games, television, etc). The Activities Manager may establish and post time limits or schedules to permit fair access to equipment. A participant who fails to abide by those limits or schedules may be limited or suspended from utilizing the same.
5. Address concerns and conflicts directly with the Activities Manager for resolution.
6. Abide by the senior centers non-solicitation and confidentiality policies.

Mobility and Cognitive Guidelines

Participants Must:

1. Function independently without one-to-one assistance or supervision from the staff.
2. Individuals who need assistance must have a companion or aide who:
 - a) escorts them at all times
 - b) provides all personal assistance
 - c) abides by the senior centers, policies and procedures
3. Move safely and independently (or use an assistive device independently) while at the center.
4. Provide and maintain personal assistive devices.

Behavior Guidelines

Participants Must:

1. Avoid engaging in any activity that is disruptive to the legitimate use of center facilities.
2. Avoid engaging in any activity that may present a danger to themselves or others.
3. Avoid using language or behavior that is obscene, abusive, loud or insulting to others as determined by the senior center staff on duty.
4. Avoid harassing or discriminating against staff, participants, or guest on the basis of race, gender, age, national origin, religion or disability.
5. Avoid participating in any activities while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
6. Not participate in any illegal activity while at the center.
7. Not carry a weapon in the senior center.
8. Avoid the destructions or theft of personal property (including money) in the senior center.

Health and Hygiene Guidelines

Participants Must:

1. Maintain a level of personal hygiene consistent with generally accepted standards of health and safety for themselves and others.
2. Not smoke or use other tobacco products and electronic smoking devices inside the senior center, including public areas and restrooms. A designated outdoor smoking area is available.

Section 2: Inclement Weather Policy

The senior center utilizes the Sterling Public Schools Inclement Weather Policy to determine its weather policy.

1. If schools are closed due to inclement weather, all meals, activities, classes, and transportation are cancelled.
2. If schools delay opening, the senior center will hold regular business hours which are 8am to 4pm, Monday through Friday. Transit buses will operate but may be delayed due to poor conditions.
3. If schools close early due to inclement weather, the senior center will close early as well to ensure our patrons safety.
4. If schools are not in session, please check the following resources to determine if the center is open:
 - Call our office and listen to the emergency voicemail at (815) 622-9230
 - Sign-up for Sauk Valley Text Alerts and select the Whiteside County Senior Center
 - Check our Facebook page
 - Watch channel 8 and 6 for closure listings

Section 3: Transportation Guidelines

Participants Must:

1. Ride on the vehicle independently and be able to embark and disembark with no assistance. If assistance is needed, an aide or caregiver must ride vehicle with the passenger.
2. Reserve transportation with dispatch.
3. Be ready when the van/bus arrives at their home. The driver cannot wait more than five (5) minutes for riders to board.
4. Avoid eating or drinking on the van/bus.
5. Use a seatbelt at all times the vehicle is in operation.
6. Select the first seat available unless the driver is notified in advance of a need for special accommodation.
7. Assure seats are available for other riders. All carry on items must be stored under the seat or held by the rider.
8. Abide by the instructions of driver and/or other staff. Any behavior that is determined by staff to be disruptive, distracting, or dangerous to passengers and/or the safe operation of the vehicle may result in immediate suspension or termination of riding privileges.
9. Understand all participant guidelines in this document apply while using Senior Center or contracted vehicles.

For a full listing of Transportation policies and procedures please refer to the Transportation Rider Handbook.

Section 4: Classes and Special Activities Policies and Procedures

The Senior Center Guidelines for Participation are applicable for all classes and special activities sponsored by or affiliated with the senior center. Participants must have a current, signed registration form on file.

Registration

1. Any senior center participant may register for classes and special activities.
2. Some classes may have pre-requisites to participate.
3. Class registration may be limited. Reservations must be paid in full if applicable, and are on a first come, first served basis. Reservations are not guaranteed until payment is made.
4. Reservations may be paid in-person, by mail, and online when available. A check is the preferred method of payment. Checks should be payable to *Whiteside County Senior Center*. Please note the class or activity name in the memo line. Credit cards are accepted for online registrations only.
5. Some classes may require that participants furnish additional supplies (paint, sketchbooks, yarn, fabric, etc) or equipment (hand weights, yoga mats, etc) at their own expense.

Refunds

1. Paid reservations are non-refundable, but are transferable to another participant prior to the first session. The participant is responsible for finding someone to take his/her place. There may be a wait list for the activity; please check with the receptionist for possible substitutes. Substitutions are not permitted after the first session.
2. If the class or activity is cancelled by the senior center due to low enrollment or other circumstances, registration fees will be refunded.

3. If a class or activity session is cancelled due to weather or other circumstance, every effort will be made to reschedule the session with ample notice.
4. Activities and classes that are rescheduled are not eligible for a refund.

Assistance & Special Accommodations

1. Individuals must be able to function independently without one-to-one assistance or supervision from staff. Individuals who need assistance may participate if accompanied by a companion or aide to escort them at all times. The companion must abide by all senior center policies and procedures. Companions and/or aides must be at least 18 years of age.
2. Individuals participating in a fitness class should check with a health care provider before beginning a new exercise program. A release from a health care provider may be required.
3. Participants who need special accommodation (wheelchair access, aisle seating, etc) must indicate such a need at time of registration. Although every effort will be made to accommodate the request, such accommodation is not guaranteed.

Electronic Sign-In Systems

The senior center utilizes an electronic sign-in system to collect daily attendance and program participation data.

1. Participants will be issued a personal key tag identification card to access the system.
2. The card should never be shared with, or used by, another participant.
3. A \$2.00 replacement fee will be charged for lost cards.

Section 5: Dining Program

Community members have the opportunity to enjoy a meal in the company of others in a community setting. Meals are planned one month in advance and are listed in the Golden Echo, on the monthly calendar in the senior center, and listed on the weekly meal calendar in the dining room.

Meal Times

Meals are offered Monday – Thursday from 11:30am to 12:30pm.

**Meals may not be available due to inclement weather and will not be available on holidays when the center is closed.*

Meal Costs

Meals are \$5.00 and include a main dish, side dish, and water, tea, juice, or coffee.

Meal Delivery to Table

1. In the event a diner is unable to obtain a meal on their own, they may sign-up to have their meal delivered to their table.
2. The diner must notify the staff person collecting lunch money no later than 11:15am of their need for assistance.
3. A staff member will deliver the diners meal to their table and clear their meal from the table as needed.

Meal Carry-Out

We are happy to provide our diners with carry-out meals. Diners wishing to obtain a carry-out meal should inform the staff person taking lunch money. Carry-out meals will be prepared once all diners eating within the kitchen have been served. This will ensure senior patrons are not standing for longer periods of time in the event there are several carry-out meals.

Section 6: Contributions

The Senior Center is a non-profit organization and provides an array of programs through contributions from individuals, organizations, federal and state grant funds, and grant funds from the United Way of Whiteside County. Individuals that wish to contribute to our organization can do so by:

Mail:

Mail checks made out to the *Whiteside County Senior Center*. If you would like for your contribution to go to a specific program, please write the program name in the memo. We would like to be able to thank you for your generous contribution, due to this, please include the following with your contribution: name, address, telephone number, and whether or not we are able to recognize your contribution publicly.

Contributions should be mailed to:

Whiteside County Senior Center
Attn: Susie Welch
1207 W 9th St
Sterling, IL 61081

In Person:

Cash or Check can be accepted when making a contribution in person. Checks should be made out to the *Whiteside County Senior Center*. If you would like for your contribution to go to a specific program, please write the program name in the memo. We would like to be able to thank you for your generous contribution, due to this, please complete our donation form. If you are contributing to our programs with cash and wish not to be thanked but wish for your donation to go to a specific program, please fill out the designation on the contribution form. All other fields on the contribution form may be left blank.

Section 7: Day Trip and Tour Policies and Procedures Participation Guidelines

1. Trips are open to any registered participant.
Unregistered participants must complete and submit a registration form prior to making trip reservations.
2. Participants must be able to function independently without one-to-one assistance or supervision, or provide a companion or aide to provide assistance. Companions travel at the same price as other passengers unless otherwise noted. Companions must be at least 18 years old.
3. Participants will abide by the information and instructions provided by staff while on any trip. Failure to meet at appointed locations and/or departure times, observe safety practices or other instructions could result in suspension from participation.
4. Participants under age 18 are not permitted unless the trip is specifically advertised to include children.
5. Participants who need special accommodation must indicate the need at time of registration. Although every effort will be made to accommodate the request, such accommodation is not guaranteed.
6. Some trip destinations involve extensive walking, physical exertion or limited accessibility due to the nature of the trip or facility visited. This information is included in the trip announcement and descriptions when known by the Activities Manager. Individuals must determine their ability to participate.

Registration Guidelines

1. Trip announcements and schedule flyers are posted in the senior centers, on the website and in the Golden Echo.
2. Trip announcements will be released approximately six months prior to the date registration opens in order to give all center participants equal opportunity to register. Long trips may be released up to one year in advance.
3. In person registrations will be accepted only during dates and times listed on the flyer.
4. Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis and must be paid in full in order to secure a seat.
5. A waitlist will be maintained after all available seats are reserved. Trip fees will not be collected in advance from people on the waitlist. Participant will only pay when/if a seat becomes available.

Registering for Trips

1. Reservations must be made in person at the senior center.
2. Participants must have a completed participant registration form on file prior to registering if they will be registering as a member.
3. Participant must complete a trip registration form.
4. Staff will check seat availability for all applicable rosters prior to accepting reservations and fees.
5. Trips must be paid in full at time of registration.
6. Cash or check are accepted for payment. Checks should be payable to *Whiteside County Senior Center*, with the notation Trips on the memo line.

Trip Cancellations by the Participant

Option 1

1. If unable to attend, the participant is responsible for finding someone to take the seat.
2. The substitute will pay the canceling person directly. Senior center staff will not accept or distribute payment between these individuals.
3. The cancelling participant must notify the Activities Manager in writing when the seat has been transferred.
4. The substitute must have a completed participant registration form on file, or complete and submit one at least two business days prior to the trip departure.
5. The substitute will abide by all trip policies and procedures as noted in this document.
6. No refund will be issued if a substitute is not available.

Option 2

1. The person cancelling will notify the Activities Manager in writing via letter, email or fax.
2. The Activities Manager or another staff person will secure a substitute from the waitlist, if a waitlist is available.
3. The substitute will pay the senior center directly.
4. The senior center will issue a check to refund the person cancelling, less a \$20.00 service fee.
5. No refund will be issued if a substitute is not available.
6. No refund will be issued if a participant cancels after the registration deadline. Emergency situations may allow for a refund at the approval of the Executive Director.

Trip Cancellation by the Senior Center

1. If the trip is cancelled due to low enrollment, the senior center will issue a full refund by check.
2. If the trip is cancelled due to weather or other uncontrollable circumstances, every effort will be made to reschedule the trip with ample notice to participants. No refund will be issued if the participant is unable to attend on the new date. The participant may use option 1 or 2 above to obtain a substitute.
3. If the trip can not be rescheduled, a full refund will be issued by check.

Day Trip and Tour Guidelines

Participants must:

Before Scheduled Trips:

1. Sign up for specific trip/tour and make payment with staff.
2. Complete the waiver form, including emergency contact information.
3. Complete registration form and inform the staff of any accommodations that may be needed.
4. Contact the reception staff with any contact changes before the trip to ensure all information is accurate.

The Day of the Scheduled Trip/Tour:

1. Arrive at the designated departure site, at least 15 minutes before scheduled departure time.
2. Sign in with staff.
3. Listen to staff instructions and updates prior to departure.
4. Make sure you have a copy of the staff contact information upon arrival at destination.
5. Notify trip staff, via contact information distributed, if the participant becomes separated from group, or had an emergency.
6. Meet at the designated time and location for return to arrival site in the Whiteside County area.
7. Understand staff and vehicles may not be able to wait for participants that are more than 10 minutes late to the designated meeting location due to time and parking constraints. Participants who miss the bus home are responsible for securing alternate transportation home at his or her expense.

Section 8: Center Emergencies

Senior Center staff and key volunteers are trained for emergency situations such as fire, severe weather and intruders.

Participants must:

1. Obey all instructions issued by authorized staff, to evacuate the building or to shelter in place.
2. Report to the designated meeting location during an evacuation to assure all participants have safely exited the building. Please do not leave the premises without notifying a staff person.
3. Remain in the room, or move to and remain in a designated location during a shelter in place situation, until a staff person or other authorized representative (i.e. Police Officer or Fire Fighter) gives an all clear announcement.
4. Be familiar with the location of posted information to identify the nearest exit and instructions for sheltering in place.
5. Assist other participants to obey instructions safely if able to do so without risk to themselves.
6. Report suspicious or unsafe situations to a staff person immediately.

Section 9: Agreement to Accept Guidelines and Appeal Process

Acceptance of Guidelines

By registering for and participating in Senior Center programs, activities and services, an individual agrees to abide by the guidelines set forth in the registration form and this document.

In summary, if a participant abuses or violates the guidelines and agreement of participation, the participant may be suspended. Notification will be provided in writing.

Service and participation will be discontinued immediately if the participant is engaged in illegal activity or presents a danger to self or others.

The senior center reserves the right to notify appropriate agencies for immediate intervention.

Appeals

1. Individuals who have addressed a concern directly with senior center staff without satisfactory resolution may submit the concern in writing to the Assistant Director.
2. Individuals may appeal temporary and permanent suspensions in writing to the Assistant Director.
3. The Assistant Director will respond to an appeal in writing within one week of receiving a written notice.
4. Individuals may appeal in writing, to the Executive Director, regarding the decision of the Assistant Director.
5. The Executive Director will respond to an appeal in writing within one week of receiving the notification. Decisions of the Executive Director are final.

Section 10: Patron Comments or Concerns

Comments or concerns can be addressed by writing your comment or concern down and placing it in the following locations:

- Kitchen Comment Box
- Reception Survey/Comment Box

Serious issues or concerns that need to be immediately addressed should be addressed with the department supervisor. If the department supervisor is unable to address your issue or concern adequately. The following steps should be taken:

- Schedule a time to meet with the Assistant Director
 - If the Assistant Director is unable to address your issue or concern, please see the next step.
- Put your issue or concern in writing and either place your written correspondence in a sealed envelope and hand deliver it to the receptionist or mail your correspondence to:

Susie Welch
WCSC
1207 W 9th
Sterling, IL 61081
- Ms. Welch will respond to your correspondence via US Mail within 7 business days.

Closures

The Senior Center Observes the following holidays and will be closed:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Veterans Day
President's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Good Friday	Friday after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day

If the holiday should fall on a Saturday, the holiday will be observed on the preceding Friday. If the holiday should fall on a Sunday, the holiday will be observed on the preceding Monday.

Senior Center Contact Information

Whiteside County Senior Center
1207 W 9th St
Sterling, IL 61081
(815) 622-9230
wc-seniorcenter.org

We look forward to working with you!



Whiteside County Senior Center
1207 W 9th St
Sterling, IL 61081
(815) 622-9230