

Transportation and Employment

Scott Liptak of 13343 Ibis Street, NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55304.

The Multiple Sclerosis society called our office to help a person with MS get some help getting transportation to his employer. He has Multiple Sclerosis and has been unemployed for about 3 years. He called Metro Mobility and they saw no problem getting him from his home in Andover to his employer in Ham Lake. However, the Anoka County Traveler that runs that portion of the Metro Mobility link was unable to provide him transportation to and from his destinations. He was outside the pick up range at his home by 3 blocks and outside the drop off range at his employer by 7 blocks. They could pick him up in the city of Coon Rapids; he would have to drive his scooter the three blocks into Coon Rapids. They would also drop him off in Blaine; he then would have to drive his scooter 7 blocks through some very busy intersections to get to work. He had already purchased his Metro Mobility tickets before he found out about the inadequate service that he could get.

This is when he contacted the MS Society which in turn contacted us to see if there were any other services that could provide him transportation. The Minnesota State Council on Disability contacted the Metro Mobility Manager, who said that the service was outside the guidelines, but if the client would take the ride (with riding his scooter almost a mile each day) he could talk to the bus driver to see if he had time each day to go the extra distance to pick him up and drop him off.

Well, that didn't seem reasonable, so we looked into some other options. He contacted RISE, but they would only provide transportation to him if he was going to their facility for rehabilitation. Not to a real employer. He contacted Vocational Rehabilitation in Blaine to see if they would provide him the transportation that he needed, again he struck out, because he did not need rehabilitation services. He is a degreed mechanical engineer, who had received a job offer to go back to work part-time within his field. He did not want to go to RISE or another Vocational Rehabilitation Center. He didn't need those services.

He also checked on CADI waivers to see if he could qualify for a CADI waiver to help provide transportation to work. No luck! He also checked on using the Ticket to Work that he received from Social Security. AGAIN NO LUCK! THEY DO NOT PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.

By luck, one of the MSCOD staff was working on another transportation issue and talked to a few people about the issue that this person was facing to get transportation to work. Linwood Township Senior Traveler was suggested as a service that might be able to help.

Of course after all of the hopes and almost opportunities to get rides, the engineer was hesitant to call Linwood Township for help. He felt that it would be another dead-end.

However, it did work out! Scott is now employed three days a week working in his field and being picked up at his home and dropped off at his employer. Why does it have to be so difficult to get people with disabilities who want to work – to work?