



CHRIS CHRISTIE
GOVERNOR

KIM GUADAGNO
LT. GOVERNOR

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
PO BOX 726
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0726

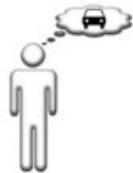
Jennifer Velez
COMMISSIONER

Dawn Apgar
Deputy Commissioner
TEL. (609) 631-2200

Health and Safety Alert

Issued August 2011

Leaving Individuals in Vehicles Unattended



In recent months, there were several incidents reported of individuals left in agency vehicles by staff for extended periods of time. In 2010, a 21 year old with developmental disabilities from Pennsylvania died after being locked and forgotten in a vehicle during warm temperature conditions.

Studies have shown that the temperature in a closed or 'cracked window' vehicle rises by 20-degrees in the first 10 minutes and up to 40-degrees in less than an hour. The danger and risk to an individual's health, welfare and safety is real. Caregivers must always be attentive to the individuals for whom they provide care.

The Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities is in effect. Leaving an unattended consumer in a vehicle is reckless, careless and negligent. Any and all staff found to be responsible can be banned from future public and private employment in the field of developmental disabilities.

REMEMBER

- Always take attendance of individuals when boarding the vehicle.
- Always insure that once your destination is reached that all individuals are accounted for and no one has been left in the vehicle.
- Under some circumstances, such as extreme weather conditions, it is inadvisable to leave any individual in a vehicle, even for just a few minutes.

DISCLAIMER

This material is being provided strictly to alert staff of DDD and DDD's providers, families, individuals, and the general public about leaving individuals in vehicles. At no time is this alert to substitute for training nor is it to suffice as training. Staffs that have been trained in how to address the issue of accountability are still required to implement their training.

Updated 08/4/11