



# South Orange Village Sensory Activation Vehicle

## Volunteer Guide

Thank you for giving your time to making our Village's events accessible to more members of our community! Here's a quick guide to our Sensory Activation Vehicle ("SAV") and how to use it for your event.

Please ask every volunteer to read this guide before their shift.

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*Please be aware of the SAV official rules and guidelines set out by the Village here:*  
<https://www.southorange.org/979/Sensory-Activation-Vehicle>.

*The section on Conditions for Private Use is included at the end of this guide.*

**Who is the SAV for?** The SAV is for people who experience sensory inputs like loud sounds, bright or flashing lights, strong smells, and crowded spaces in a way that may prevent them from being able to spend much time at a public event. The SAV gives them an opportunity to take a break from those sensations when they become overwhelming. The SAV can be used by children and adults.

**What's in the SAV?** The SAV has several calming features. It is built with sound dampening to provide a quiet space. It is dimly lit with calming colorful lights and has soft white noise playing. There are several kinds of seats including bean bag chairs that can provide reassuring sensory feedback, as well as visual and tactile features on the walls to engage a user's eyes and hands. There are also assorted items to hold and touch in the SAV for sensory input, and noise-canceling headphones. Not everyone who uses the SAV will have the same needs, so a variety of features and accommodations are provided. The SAV is built on a trailer platform, and has both a side door for typical use and a rear gate for wheelchair access. The SAV has air conditioning and air filtration.





**How do I help the public use the SAV?** You are there to educate, guide, and facilitate the use of the vehicle, and to keep everyone safe. You should remain close by the door of the SAV while volunteering.

Keep in mind the following guidelines:

- **Adult Supervision:** An adult who needs the space can use it alone. A child who needs the space should always be accompanied by an adult. A young child must be with an adult within the SAV, while an older child may use it by themselves while their adult stands outside. A teenager attending an event alone may be given access without an adult at your discretion, but a group of teens should generally not be permitted access together. Up to five children may use the SAV at once, or two children and two adults.
- **Quiet is Key:** You can remind users when they come to use the SAV that they are entering a calm and quiet space. Adults accompanying children should be encouraged to refrain from conversations with others while inside the SAV. Some users of the SAV may engage in stimming behavior that involves vocalizations or loud noises, and that's ok.
- **Length of Use:** The time a user is inside the SAV will vary, but a common use time is 10 to 15 minutes, with 20 minutes being at the outside limits of typical use. You should always err on the side of accommodating users and use your best discretion when monitoring use of the SAV. In the event that there are more users needing the SAV than there is capacity, you should let users in the SAV stay for the typical timeframe above before suggesting a rotation in users.
- **Doors:** The side door to the SAV can remain open when it is not actively in use, with the stairs positioned in front of the door. There is a latch behind the door that can be engaged to secure it open, and released to close the door. When a user enters the SAV, the door should typically be closed for best effect. The stairs may need to be moved aside to close the door. You may want to demonstrate how to open the door from the inside. The wheelchair accessible gate should be unlocked during use, using the lock code provided. The gate should remain closed when not actively in use. Be sure the gate area is not blocked by items that would prevent its use.



- **Curious Bystanders:** Many people, including children, will be interested to see inside the SAV, especially while it's new, and learn more about it. The SAV is not a play space, and needs to be protected for its intended users, but it is also not a secret space. We are proud to offer the SAV to the community, and we want to take advantage of opportunities to educate the public. If the SAV isn't being used, it's fine to let people briefly step inside, while you explain its purpose.

**What Do I Do When I'm Done?** At the end of your event, you should:

- Disconnect and roll up the extension cords, then place them in the SAV.
- Close the rear gate and lock it with the two supplied padlocks.
- Lock the side door:
  - Open the door.
  - Insert the key in the top lock cylinder.
  - Turn the key to the locked position, BUT don't close the door yet.
  - Place the keys in the SAV, on the floor.
  - Close the door. Confirm it is locked before leaving.

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## **Village of South Orange - Sensory Activation Vehicle - Conditions for Private Use**

- 4.1 The SAV may only be used for activities related to sensory stimulation, therapy, education for neurodivergent individuals. The SAV is not to be used for entertainment purposes.
- 4.2 Users must sign the application agreement with the municipality, acknowledging that they will be solely responsible for any damage or loss to the SAV and its equipment during the private use period.
- 4.3 The van's exterior, including any municipal branding or decals, must not be altered or defaced in any way during private use.
- 4.4 Private users must adhere to maximum occupancy requirements:
  - No more than 5 children at one time.
  - When adults are present in the van, no more than 2 children and 2 adults at one time.
- 4.5 SAV must be able to be parked within 100 ft. of electrical outlet for use.
- 4.6 SAV cannot be moved by any member of the public, delivery and parking of the SAV will be handled by SOPD or another municipal employee as designated by SOPD and approved by Village Administration.
- 4.7 SAV must be supervised at all times when open for use/event.
- 4.8 Minors must be accompanied by an adult to enter the SAV. Small children must have an adult parent or caregiver with them inside the SAV. Adults and caregivers of older children must remain at the van if not inside with the minor child.
- 4.9 The rear gate is for wheelchair access and must be closed at all times when not in use.
- 5.0 The responsible party must be available to meet SOPD upon delivery of the SAV for an overview of operations.