

Cedar County Transit Passenger Handbook

CEDAR COUNTY TRANSIT MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Cedar County Transit to provide safe, efficient, affordable public transportation to area residents in accordance with Local, State and Federal guidelines.

GOALS OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK

Cedar County Transit is a transportation provider for **Cedar County**. This service has a set of policies and procedures that passengers are required to follow. It is to the benefit of all passengers that all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are followed.

All policies will be enforced in a consistent and fair manner. If passengers perceive they have been treated unfairly, they have the option of filing an appeals complaint with **Cedar County Transit** as outlined on Page 8.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The **Cedar County Transit** complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal equal opportunity laws. **Cedar County Transit** serves a diverse population of individuals with varying ages, physical challenges, economic status, and ethnic backgrounds. **Cedar County Transit** shall ensure that no person shall be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity undertaken by **Cedar County Transit System** solely based on his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Title VI complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies of **Cedar County Transit** may be directed to **Ashley Gowery, Transit Manager** call **402-640-6943**. Complaint forms are available inside vehicles from drivers, from Manager Ashley Gowery or at the Cedar County Courthouse.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

The **Cedar County Transit** provides the following public transportation services to residents of **Cedar County, NE**.

SERVICE AREA

The **Cedar County Transit** provides public transportation services in the following areas:

Cedar County, NE : Aten, Belden, Bow Valley, Brooky Bottom, Coleridge, Fordyce, Hartington, Laurel, Magnet, Menominee, Obert, Randolph, Saint James, Saint Helena, Wynot

Knox County, NE: Crofton, Bloomfield & Wausa residents within 30 miles of Transit office.

DAYS AND HOURS OF SERVICE

Cedar County Transit driving hours are 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday.

Holiday Closings: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

SERVICE TYPE

Demand Response:

A flexible transport service where vehicles alter their routes based on particular transport demand rather than using a fixed route or timetable.

SCHEDULING RIDES

Contact **Katie Pinkelman, Transit Scheduler** to schedule your ride at **402-640-6147** or **402-254-9147** Monday through Friday between 8 am and 430 pm. Drivers do not schedule rides themselves; passengers are required to contact the scheduler. The scheduler may require the following information:

1. Passenger Name
2. Date of Birth for all minors
3. Home address and directions to residence
4. Phone Number: home and cell
5. Special needs: i.e. wheelchair, walker, cane, oxygen machine, personal helper
6. Destination Name & Address
7. Expected Arrival Time and visit length
8. Medicaid number and rider date of birth and demographics
9. Third party payee information

Cedar County Transit Fares:

Fares are to be paid directly to the transit driver, cash or checks are accepted. The prices are based on mileage starting from Hartington. Gift cards are available to purchase for prepaid rides. We also accept prepayment for rides and will set up an EPASS account to track credit/debit balances.

Cedar County Transit accepts all Nebraska Medicaid companies United Healthcare, Nebraska Total Care and Molina Healthcare. Nebraska Medicaid covers transportation for trips necessary to obtain medical treatment or medical care when the client has no other transportation. Medicaid may cover transportation services for a parent/caretaker/attendant for travel to escort someone to and from medical treatment or medical care when necessary. Medicaid may also cover travel to a pharmacy. Riders must contact Medicaid Customer Service to schedule a ride and Medicaid will contact Cedar County Transit with the ride information.

Cedar County Transit contracts with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to provide transportation for Aged and Disabled (AD) services and Developmental Disabilities (DD) waivers.

Fares for third party payees or fares sponsored by an agency that Cedar County Transit will invoice are billed per roundtrip mile and will be calculated with the current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standard business mileage reimbursement rate. Mileage will be tracked by driver and start and end with Hartington Transit office location.

For any other form of payment assistance please need to contact Manager Ashley Gowery to make payment arrangements in advance at 402-640-6147.

Cedar County Transit Fares

**see attached Cedar & Knox County fares, all prices are based on mileage starting from Hartington*

***All transit services are available to the general public, including persons with disabilities.*

DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICE

Cedar County Transit provides “door to door” service. The following policies further define this service:

1. Private Homes:

- Passengers must enter and depart the transit vehicle at the designated pick-up and drop-off points.
- Drivers will not enter private homes for any reason.
- Drivers may assist passengers to and from individual's door to the transit vehicle.
- Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.
- Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs.
- Passengers must be ready to be picked up 15 mins early, drivers are on a time schedule please follow the cancellation policy if needed.

2. Business/Medical Facilities/Public Buildings:

- Dropping off passengers, drivers may assist to the office door or to the customer service desk if help is required. Then Drivers are to return to their vehicle.
- When picking up passengers, drivers may assist from the building door or the designated meeting place inside the building.
- It is the individual's personal care attendants' responsibility to assist the riders with their needs and to ensure that passengers are waiting and ready for their ride.
- Passengers must be waiting at the designated pickup point at least 15 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time.
- Drivers are not able to accompany passengers into appointments or to assist them with their shopping needs. If medically necessary passengers can bring a helper along at no charge to assist them with their needs.

CANCELLATION POLICY AND NO SHOWS

Passengers are encouraged to cancel scheduled pick-ups in a timely manner. Cancellations can be made by contacting the transit office at **402-640-6147** or **402-254-9147** between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday thru Friday. If the cancellation notice is required to be given same day before or after office hours passengers are to directly contact the driver, all drivers identify themselves and confirm rides the day/evening before the schedules ride. Driver's phone numbers are located on our business cards.

Cancellations should be made 24 hours in advance or as early as possible. Cancellations will be accepted up to one hour prior to scheduled pick-up times without penalty. Any cancellation received later than one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up will be considered a late cancellation and will be noted as such by the dispatcher in the passenger's record. Three or more late cancellations in a 90-day period will be considered excessive and the passenger will receive written notification of such via the U.S. Postal Service. Passengers having additional late cancellations during the next 90-day period will be assessed a \$5.00 late cancellation fee, payable at the next boarding call.

A no show is defined as any instance in which a passenger does not keep their scheduled ride and fails to notify the **Cedar County Transit** at least one hour prior to scheduled pick-up time. Upon arrival at the scheduled pick-up point, the transit driver will wait for the passenger for five minutes. After five minutes, the driver will continue on his/her route and the ride will be marked as a no show.

PASSENGER READINESS

Passengers should be prepared for transit vehicles to arrive 15 minutes before or after your scheduled pick-up time. Schedule rides accordingly to arrive at your destination for appointments.

TRANSPORTING SERVICE ANIMALS & ACCOMODATION OF OTHER ANIMALS

Cedar County Transit allows service animals to accompany owners as per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. ADA's revised regulations define a "service animal" as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. Where reasonable, miniature horses are also allowed as service animals.

The task(s) performed by the service animal must be directly related to the person's disability. Under the ADA, "comfort," "therapy" or "emotional support animals" do not meet the definition of a service animal.

For more information about the rules and regulations regarding service animals, go to ADA's website [here](#).

Animals other than service animals as described above are allowed to ride the transit vehicle only in a secured pet travel carrier.

PERSONAL ASSISTANTS/GUESTS

Personal care attendants are persons who are directly involved in the mobility assistance of the attendee and will be allowed to ride free of charge while accompanying their attendee. Generally, the following conditions would warrant a fare free attendant; immobility, disorientation, noncomprehension, and communication impairment. Any other person riding with a passenger will be considered a guest and will be required to pay full fare.

Personal care attendants are required to specifically assist the passenger. This assistance includes, but is not limited to, the following duties:

- Assisting the passenger from his/her door to the bus and back
- Opening doors
- Pushing wheelchairs to and from the vehicle
- Transfer assistance from mobility device to a seat
- Assisting in shopping needs and carrying packages
- Communicating with the driver (if passenger is unable)

PASSENGER SAFETY AND SECURITY

It is required that all passengers wear an approved safety device while riding on the bus. Passengers utilizing mobility devices will be required to have their mobility device properly secured.

A passenger who cannot enter the vehicle using the stairs or ramp, but who does not use a wheelchair, will be allowed to enter the vehicle using the lift (on buses only).

Drivers have the discretion to assign seats and determine wheelchair placement when necessary for the efficiency and/or safety of the passengers.

The driver may recommend that a passenger transfer from his or her mobility device into a vehicle seat. In this instance, the passenger has the final decision as to whether a transfer is appropriate.

State laws apply toward child passengers. Car seats are **NOT** provided.

GENERAL PASSENGER RULES

The general rules listed below are not intended to be all-inclusive but are considered a guideline for proper passenger behavior.

1. Riders shall wait until the transit vehicle has come to a complete stop before attempting to board or disembark. All riders shall stay seated until the vehicle stops.
2. No roller skates, roller blades, ice skates, etc., are to be worn in transit vehicles.
3. All passengers are to be clothed and wearing some form of protective footwear.
4. While waiting for the transit vehicle at the designated pick-up point, riders shall stay off the traveled roadway at all times. Riders shall not walk along the side, directly in front of or behind the bus for any reason.
5. All passengers will remain seated while the vehicle is in motion and for the duration of their ride.
6. Riders shall be considerate of others at all times. Threats, hitting, tripping, shoving, kicking, spitting, foul language, horseplay, teasing or any other improper or disruptive behavior towards anyone or themselves will not be tolerated.
7. Devices such as radios or I-Pods can only be used with headphones.
8. Passengers carrying or using alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances will not be permitted in the transit vehicle
9. Riders shall keep hand(s), head or any other body part inside the vehicle and within their seated area at all times.
10. Riders shall obey the driver willingly and report any problems to the bus driver or dispatcher promptly.
11. Riders shall assist in keeping the transit vehicle clean by using sanitary practices. Any offensive odors to others or any type of unsanitary practices are to be avoided.
12. Riders are strictly prohibited from drinking any alcoholic beverages while riding in a transit vehicle. If a rider is seen drinking an alcoholic beverage the driver will immediately ask the rider to stop and dispose of it. The transit manager, Ashley Gowery will be notified and will contact the rider giving them a one-time verbal warning. The incident will be documented in office between transit driver and manger. If the same rider is seen consuming an alcoholic beverage there after they will be permanently banned from riding with Cedar County Transit.
13. Use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited in a transit vehicle.
14. Lighting matches, lighters, or any other type of flammable material is not permitted on the vehicle.
15. Any items that the driver assumes may be explosive or any type of weapon is not permitted on the vehicle.

CHILD RIDER POLICY

Cedar County Transit has established rules, roles and responsibilities in the transportation of children under the age of 18. Therefore, the following policies will be followed:

1. All children must follow the transit rules, regulations, and policies. Violations of these rules by either the child or parent may lead to service suspension.
2. No child under the age of twelve (12) is permitted to ride alone on **Cedar County Transit**.
3. Children under the age of twelve (12) must be accompanied by an adult.
4. Children ages twelve to seventeen (12-17) will be transported only to the destination scheduled by the parent or guardian. Children are not allowed to change scheduled rides.
5. Parent or guardians must notify **Cedar County Transit** at the time of trip scheduling the child's age.
6. If the child requires a car seat the parent will be required to provide one and properly install it in the vehicle. Nebraska Department of Transportation state all children up to age eight must ride correctly in a federally-approved child safety seat. Children ride rear facing until up to age two or until they reach the upper weight or height limit allowed by car seat's manufacturer.

PACKAGES AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Passengers shall limit their carry-on packages to not more than the equivalent of five brown paper grocery sacks or ten plastic bags per person. An attendant may travel to assist with the loading/unloading of packages. Oversized packages will be refused for transport. No one package shall weigh more than 20 pounds.

An oxygen tank must be portable and secured in some fashion so it cannot fall or roll. Securement can be with a seat belt or tank holder on the wheelchair.

Drivers are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Passengers are responsible for snow removal so their driveways and sidewalks are accessible to transit vehicles. During winter driving all roads need to be plowed, and gravel road conditions need to be favorable for safe travel. Transit has the right to make decisions to not travel on unmaintained roads/driveways.

If extreme weather conditions make travel unsafe, services will be discontinued until conditions are more favorable. Passengers with scheduled trips will be notified as soon as possible by transit driver or manager.

Cedar County Transit follows Hartington schools regarding business closure on severe weather days.

Winter Riding Tips:

- Be aware of weather conditions which may affect transit services.
- Allow extra time to reach your destination.
- Be prepared for sudden stops while riding the bus.
- Wear appropriate winter clothing.

VIOLATIONS OF POLICY

Any violation of the policies, rules, and procedures outlined in this handbook will result in the following:

First Offense: A warning letter will be issued.

Second Offense: A second letter and final letter will be sent and rides will be discontinued indefinitely.

Cedar County Transit reserves the right to terminate services immediately.

COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

As a recipient of State and Federal funds administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads, **Cedar County Transit** hereby attests that it will abide by the eligibility guidelines and service priorities as stipulated by all applicable laws, rules and regulations. The process for submitting a Title VI complaint is outlined in the Nondiscrimination section of this handbook. For all other complaints, contact the following for additional information and a copy of the complaint form: **Ashley Gowery, Transit Manager 402-640-6943 or Jessica Schmit, Cedar County Clerk 402-254-7411.**

Upon receipt of the complaint, the **Cedar County Transit** representative will request written detail of the complaint or take an oral statement from the complainant. The complaint should include all details regarding the situation including date, time, driver, problem, etc. All complaints or statements should be signed or, if by telephone, the actual complainant should be the individual calling. Complaints received by telephone will be investigated and resolved prior to ending the call. A written response will not be required if complainant is satisfied with the resolution. Upon completion of the investigation, a decision regarding the complaint will be rendered and a written response issued to the complainant no later than 10 days after receipt of the complaint. A copy of the complaint and action taken will be forwarded to the Nebraska Department of Roads, Transit Section, and a copy will be kept on file at **Cedar County Courthouse County Clerk's office.**

Cedar County Transit Wheelchair Policy

Procedures for Loading Wheelchairs into Vehicles:

- A. Park the vehicle at a curb of flat surface where there is enough room to extend the ramp to the ground.
- B. Shut of the vehicle.
- C. Open van door and extend ramp to lay evenly on the ground
- D. ALWAYS explain to participants what you are doing while assisting them.
- E. Roll the wheelchair up the ramp with participant facing into the van, wheelchairs may also be loaded by pulling up the ramp if the passenger can securely stay in the chair. Or allow the rider to slowly drive their electric wheelchair up the van ramp, while you directly supervise or gently place hand on back/or armrest (not moving part) of chair to help guide them.
- F. Maneuver the wheelchair into the van so the wheelchair is facing forward. If necessary, the wheelchair may face sideways but only if unable to face the wheelchair forward. NEVER face a wheelchair backwards in a vehicle.
- G. Set the brakes or turn off power to the wheelchair.
- H. Place securements on designated areas on wheelchairs or on the wheelchair frame.
- I. Do not put the securement tie downs on any removable part of the wheelchair (e.g. arm rests, leg rests, wheels, etc.)
- J. After securements are attached to the wheelchair, place the seatbelt around the wheelchair, as close to the hips as possible. The seatbelt should go under any tray on the wheelchair and may be strung through armrests if necessary.

Procedures for Unloading Wheelchairs from Vehicles:

- A. Park the vehicle at a curb of flat surface where there is enough room to extend the ramp to the ground.
- B. Shut of the vehicle.
- C. Open van door and extend ramp to lay evenly on the ground
- D. ALWAYS explain to participants what you are doing while assisting them.
- E. Unlock the seatbelt from the participant.
- F. Unlatch the securements from the wheelchair. Be sure securements are retracted.
- G. Unlock the brake or turn on the power to the wheelchair.
- H. Turn wheelchair and slowly pull wheelchair down the ramp backwards. If passenger is secure in their chair you may roll the passenger slowly down the down forwards. For electric wheelchairs supervise them driving down ramp carefully.
- I. Fold up ramp and push back into upright position, and close van door.

Procedures for Using Handicapped Parking:

- A. It is important to follow all guidelines of Commercial Disability (handicap parking) certificates. Misuse may result in revocation of any certificates now or in the future by the State Driver and Vehicle Service Department.
- B. Handicap certificates are only kept in certain vehicles. If there is not one in a vehicle contact the Program Director.
- C. Commercial Disability certificates are to be used for individuals with physical limitations only.
- D. If parking in a handicap parking space, it is required to hang a handicap parking certificate from the rearview mirror so it is visible from the front and the rear of the vehicle.
- E. When displaying a handicap certificate, parking is allowed in handicap designated parking spaces and metered parking spaces without obligation to pay the meter fee.
- F. Employees should place the certificate in the glove compartment/ side door compartment/ or safe place when done using it. It is illegal to have the certificate on the mirror while driving.
- G. Commercial Disability certificates do not permit parking in "NO PARKING" spaces or in spaces designated for specific purposes or vehicles (e.g. emergency vehicles only, truck unloading areas).

CEDAR COUNTY TRANSIT PASSENGER INCIDENT/INJURY/ILLNESS

1. If a passenger becomes ill or has an onboard or boarding / unloading accident or incident, stop the van or bus (if in motion) and notify the dispatcher immediately. Request that an ambulance or the Rescue Squad be called, if necessary. When it is a minor incident, let dispatch or Manager know about the incident when returning from your route.
2. Make the passenger comfortable, but **DO NOT MOVE** him/her. Do not give them any foods, drinks, or medications. See if the passenger is wearing an emergency bracelet or ID.
3. Do not give any first aid unless you have been trained to do so.
4. Keep other passengers calm and out of the way while you await medical assistance.
5. As soon as possible after everything is under control, complete the ***Passenger Incident/Illness/Injury Form*** located in van binder and submit it to the Transit Manager for review and processing.
6. The Manager is to review form, contact County Clerk and Commissioner to make them aware of the situation. Contact County Insurance if need to report incidents requiring billing attention if the case is due to fault of the Transit. Contact passenger involved in the accident/incident to verify what occurred.
7. The Transit Manager needs to do all follow-ups, complete paperwork and file copy of ***Passenger Incident/Illness/Injury Form*** with Kari Ruse, the NDOT Transit Manager for all major occurrences.

Amendment #3

Cedar-Knox Transit expansion.

Cedar County Transit has an annual contract to provide transit services to part of Knox County, Nebraska. The Knox service area will be areas within 30 miles of the Transit Facility, 56253 Highway 84, Hartington. The mileage will be calculated using Google Maps per road driving directions.

All new riders will follow the same passenger guidelines as mentioned in the above handbook pages.