

East Dakota Public Transit Passenger Handbook



Managed by:
Rural Office of Community Services, Inc.
PO Box 547
Wagner, SD 57380

Contact Information:

Rural Office of Community Services, Inc.

Office: 605-384-3883

ROCS Office hours

Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30PM

Executive Director email:

psmith@rocsinc.org

Transit Program Director email:

sfinck@rocsinc.org

East Dakota Transit Website:

www.eastdakotatransit.com

ROCS Website: www.rocsinc.org



Dial 711 for Relay

No one shall be denied a ride based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, political affiliation, or belief in any other consideration prohibited by law.

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in the transit system should contact the ROCS EEO Officer during the hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at (605) 384-3883 or by mail at PO Box 547, Wagner, SD 57380.

Intent of Passenger Handbook

Rural office of Community Services, Inc. is pleased to serve the Counties of Aurora, Bon Homme, Brule, Charles Mix, Douglas, Gregory, Hutchinson, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Miner, Minnehaha, Moody, Tripp, and Turner.

Our passengers are the most important part of our transit program and keeping them safe is our number one goal.

This booklet provides a reference pertaining to passenger responsibilities for our demand response service. These policies serve as a guide in making decisions that affect passenger responsibility and safety.

All policies will be enforced in a consistent, fair manner. If you feel you have been treated unfairly, an appeals process and telephone comment numbers are included in this booklet.

Service Hours & Fares

East Dakota Transit hours

Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sunday hours: 8:00 am - Noon

**Fare is \$2 per ride, \$4 round trip
20 fare tickets available for \$40**

Fare structure is subject to change as necessary. There is a suggested donation for passengers age 60 and older for in-town rides.

ROCS Transits is a Medicaid Provider.

Holidays in which service may be limited or suspended include:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day
Presidents Day	Memorial Day
Independence Day	Labor Day
Pioneer/Native American Day (Columbus Day)	
Veterans Day	Thanksgiving Day
Friday after Thanksgiving	Christmas Day

Service hours, fares and holiday schedules are subject to change.

Scheduling Rides

Scheduling a ride is made by calling at least the day before a ride is needed. When scheduling your ride please provide the driver with your first and last name, your appointment time, number of passengers, your destination, and if wheelchair assessable van is needed.

To Schedule a Ride With East Dakota Transit:

Call Monday-Friday

EDT Dispatcher Hours: 7:30 am – 11:30 am

EDT Dispatcher Office Phone: 605-256-5810

EDT Email Address: edtbusbarn@rocsinc.org

If you need to make changes to an existing ride that day and it is after dispatcher hours, you must contact the drivers.

EDT Bus Cell Phone numbers:

605-480-1634 or 605-480-1766

Please do not schedule your rides for more than 30 days in advance. Passengers who require a regular ride (work, therapy, school, etc.) may create a standing reservation. It is the rider's responsibility to notify driver of changes or cancellations to a standing schedule.

Please Note: If you need to schedule a ride or make changes to an existing ride, you must contact the dispatcher/driver.

Managed by ROCS Transit:

Brandon City Transit: 605-582-3553

East Dakota Transit (Madison/Lake County)

ROCS Public Transits:

Alcester Transit: 605-481-8838

Beresford Transit: 605-366-7360

Canton Transit: 605-201-6744 or 605-201-0286

Chamberlain Transit: 605-730-1436

Chamberlain Head Start: 605-730-1437

Gregory City Transit: 605-830-7216

Gregory County Special Trips: 605-830-5777

Hartford Area Transit: 605-906-1483

Howard/Miner County Transit: 605-480-4194

Kimball/White Lake Transit: 605-770-6026

Kingsbury County Area Transit: 605-830-1676

Flandreau/Moody County Transit: 605-864-1499

Parker Transit: 605-360-4974

Parkston Transit: 605-481-8829

ROCS Transit: (Bon Homme/Charles

Mix/Douglas/Hutchinson): 605-481-8548

Southern Union County/ Elk Point/N. Sioux City Transit:

605-481-0017

Viborg /Centerville/Wakonda Transit: 605-366-7361

Wagner Transit: 605-481-8548

Wessington Springs Transit: 605-539-1945

Winner Transit: 605-842-5633

Refusal of Service

Transit services reserve the right to refuse service to any passenger who:

- is intoxicated or belligerent towards drivers or other passengers;
- poses a safety or health threat to themselves or others;
- has unreasonable personal hygiene, open wounds or highly contagious diseases;
- when transporting pets without a designated carrier, other than service animals. Transportation of pets must be declared to the driver at the time the ride is scheduled.

Pick Up or Arrival Times

20 Minute Window

Transits make every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick up time as possible. Due to demand of services, arrival times could vary. A 20 minute window has been established for everyone's benefit. If the bus arrives early, please be waiting and ready to leave so the transit service can stay on schedule for all of our passengers.

All passengers should anticipate arrival up to 10 minutes before or 10 minutes after their scheduled pickup time.

Example: If you schedule a 9:00 am pickup, the bus may arrive as early as 8:50 am or as late as 9:10 am. Be prepared to leave at any time within this 20 minute window and schedule your rides accordingly. If you've waited more than 10 minutes after your scheduled pick up time, please contact dispatcher/driver to inquire.

5 Minute Rule

Drivers will wait for 5 minutes after they have arrived at a pickup location before leaving and listing the passenger as a “no show.”

If you anticipate being late for your scheduled ride, please call driver to see if we may be able to accommodate you at a later time.

We have this 5 minute rule to keep our buses on schedule and to get our riders to their destinations on time.

Return Trips

Passengers are required to schedule a return trip pick up time for transportation. A scheduled pick up requires the passenger to be ready at the set time.

If you have scheduled a trip to a medical appointment, you may schedule a ‘will call’ for your return trip. ‘Will call’ rides require the passenger to call driver for their return ride. We make every effort to pick up our ‘will call’ passengers in a timely manner. If a bus does not arrive after 15 minutes please call driver for information on that ride.

Passengers are transported to the destination scheduled with the driver. Drivers will not make any unscheduled stops.

Cancelling Rides

Passengers who are cancelling their ride should call in at least an hour prior to their scheduled pick up time. If there are repeated ‘no shows’ due to passengers not cancelling rides, refusal of service may apply.

Curb to Curb Service

EDT and ROCS Transit provides curb to curb service. However ROCS will follow guidelines meeting ADA requirements for those riders needing assistance.

- **Reasonable Accommodations** will be made to assist passengers with specific needs on a case by case basis.
- **Private homes:** Our drivers are instructed not to enter past the first door of a private home.
- **Businesses/Medical Facilities/Public Buildings:** When picking up passengers from a business/medical facility/public building, drivers may go to the lobby area. Drivers will not go past the lobby to drop off or pick up passengers. Drivers must be able to maintain “*line of sight*” with the bus.
- **Apartment Buildings:** Drivers’ schedules do not permit them to enter a building to look for passengers who have scheduled a ride.

Lift Capability and Services

Transit vehicles are equipped with lifts and are for use by anyone. An occupied wheelchair cannot exceed 33 X 51 inches and cannot weigh more than 800 pounds. Transportation cannot be provided for wheelchairs that do not meet these criteria.

Training on how to board and disembark a vehicle with a mobility device will be provided on an as needed basis. Please call driver to schedule training prior to your ride.

The bus and all equipment are to be operated by trained staff only. For safety reasons, passengers or escorts are NOT ALLOWED to assist with operating lift procedures, or any other operating functions of the transit vehicles.

Escorts/Guests

An escort is a person who is directly involved in assisting the passenger and may ride free of charge. Any person other than an escort who is riding with the passenger is considered a guest and will be required to pay the regular fare. Escorts are mandatory for out-of-town transportation for anyone requiring assistance with mobility, medication, meals, or other personal or medical needs. This includes, but is not limited to, nursing home and assisted living residents.

The escort must be picked up from the same location as the passenger and returned to the same location as the passenger.

Our drivers are unable to assist passengers with transfers, stairs, etc. Because of this, we encourage passengers who need assistance to use an escort.

Vehicle Backing Policy

Transit drivers have been instructed to avoid backing up transit vehicles. Drivers will not pull in residential driveways or put themselves in a position to which requires backing up.

Items on the Bus

Walkers and Oxygen tanks must be secured properly before driver is allowed to dispatch the vehicle. If needed, ask driver for assistance.

Transit drivers will assist with up to 5 packages per person. The packages cannot take up more than one seat in the vehicle. We do not transport furniture or larger items. All articles brought onto the vehicle must be stowed properly.

The transit system is not responsible for lost or stolen items!

Seat Belt/ Riding Policy

For passenger safety, all passengers are strongly encouraged to wear a seat belt.

Passengers must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before leaving their seat.

Passengers must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion and be prepared for sudden stops.

Food and Drinks

There is **NO** eating allowed on transit vehicles. Drinks can be transported but must remain closed with a tightly secured lid.

There is **NO SMOKING** allowed on transit vehicle

Medicaid Recipients

This public transit is a Medicaid provider. We will need to verify that travel expenses are covered. If there has been a change in your Medicaid coverage, it is your responsibility to notify the driver. All transportation not covered by Medicaid is the passenger's responsibility.

Medical Emergencies

The transit system is not an ambulance service. If you require emergency medical attention, please call 911.

If a medical emergency occurs while driver is transporting a passenger, the driver will call 911 so medical personnel may be notified.

If you have a medical condition you feel we should be aware of, please let driver know prior to scheduling services.

Transportation for ages 0-18

- Children under 3 must be accompanied by an adult.
- No child will be transported unless an Emergency Contact Form is completed. This applies to all children riding the bus regardless of the number of times a child will be riding.
- Unattended Children are required to wear a seatbelt.
- It is your responsibility to contact us regarding changes in your child's schedule. For safety reasons, we cannot take information regarding transportation changes from your child or daycare.
- Have children ready to go for morning preschool pickups to ensure all children make it to school in a timely fashion. Buses will arrive at the schools at dismissal time and depart seven minutes later.
- A wave or some other type of acknowledgement from your daycare provider, babysitter, or from a parent indicating someone is present, is needed and appreciated for your child's safety.
- Negative behavior issues, including bullying, will not be tolerated. A child's bus ride should be a positive experience. Drivers have a great responsibility and behavioral issues jeopardize everyone's safety.
- Routes are determined based on the quickest route for all children – there are no guarantees on pick up or drop off times.
- Please contact EDT dispatcher, driver, or ROCS office if your child has not reached their destination within 45 minutes of pickup time.

Weather

Weather related access to private homes

For your safety and the safety of our transit staff, it is your responsibility to ensure sidewalks and driveways are accessible.

Weather related service cancellations or suspensions

Transit staff will make every effort to provide service whenever scheduled. In the event extreme weather conditions exist making travel unsafe, the transit system reserves the right to suspend service until conditions are favorable. If service is temporarily suspended, all rides, regardless of trip purposes will be cancelled.

Winter Riding Tips

- Keep abreast of weather conditions, which may affect services.
- If streets are icy, allow additional travel time.
- Avoid delay by having the correct fare and being on time.
- Prior to entering the bus, clean footwear of snow and slush so it doesn't gather on the steps or on the floor of the bus, potentially posing a hazard.
- Watch your step at all times, wear your seat belt, and wear appropriate winter clothing.
- Assess your needs to travel and call to reschedule as needed.

Severe Weather Guidelines

Severe weather may affect transit service. The buses will run slower to be safe in adverse weather. The following service changes may occur at any time hazardous road conditions exist.

- Timed pick up intervals may increase
- Non-essential trips may not be provided
- Bus service on less traveled streets, especially those not plowed, may not be provided
- Alley travel will only be allowed when absolutely necessary for pickup. NO backing up. Drivers will determine if have safe clearance of overhead electrical lines, tree branches & proper snow removal.
- In cases of severe weather changes, passengers on buses will be taken home immediately or to the nearest shelter, as deemed necessary

Proper and adequate clothing

Passengers and care providers are responsible for ensuring that passengers are dressed properly for their ride. Drivers will not assist passengers with their clothing. Winter attire should include proper coats, hats, gloves, and footwear.

Donations

East Dakota Transit is a non-profit organization. All donations are appreciated and can be made in person, by mail, over the phone, or on our website: <http://www.eastdakotatransit.com>. Your support through donations, memorials, estate planning, etc. are humbly appreciated and accepted.

Appeals Process

If you think that you have been discriminated against by the transit service, a written appeals process can be initiated by writing to:

Rural Office of Community. Inc.
106 West Ave SW
PO Box 547
Wagner, SD 57380

Appeals may also be presented in person at the above address. Please call the office in advance if special accommodations or requirements will be needed. Questions concerning the appeals process can be answered by the ROCS EEO at 605-384-3883. ROCS is committed to providing non-discriminatory service.

General Complaints

General Complaints will be thoroughly investigated and addressed by calling Transit Program Director Scott Fink, 605-481-0008, or emailing him at sfinck@rocsinc.org or ROCS Executor Director Peter Smith at 605-384-3883, or emailing him at psmith@rocsinc.org.

ROCS is an equal opportunity provided and employer.



Rural Office of Community Services, Inc.

Mission Statement

Through resources, opportunities and advocacy, we endeavor to assist families and individuals to improve the quality of their lives by minimizing the effects of poverty and promoting positive change.