



PARATRANSIT SERVICE POLICIES AND RIDERS GUIDE

MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA

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Approved/Signed:

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Date:

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Meeting Our Customers' Travel Needs

This Rider's Guide provides brief information about the Minot City Transit's 100% accessible Fixed Route service as well as more detailed information about MCT's Paratransit service – how to become eligible to use the service, where it operates, the calendar days and hours of service, how to request a ride, fares, and other important information.

Improving Fixed Route Bus Service

Minot City Transit (MCT) is committed to providing transportation services that can be used by all of our customers. All "fixed route buses" (larger vehicles that operate on set routes) have lifts or are low-floor with a kneeling feature to better serve riders who use wheelchairs or have difficulty getting up and down the vehicle steps. Our fixed route vehicles are 100% accessible.

For everyone's benefit and to comply with Federal requirements, Minot City Transit buses have an automated voice announcement system that announces major stops, intersections, and transfer points to help riders recognize their bus stop or point of transfer. Drivers will announce any stop at the request of a rider. A limited number of seats are usually available near the entrance of the bus for persons who have difficulty on a vehicle. Reserved spaces with tie-down straps and driver assistance are available for riders who use wheelchairs to provide a safe securement location.

For route and schedule information, or any questions you may have about using the MCT fixed route bus services, call 701-857-4148 or visit our website at www.minotnd.gov.

Paratransit Service

For eligible riders who have a disability that prevents them from making some or all of their trips on a fixed route system, MCT offers a shared-ride, curb-to-curb, origin to destination service called Paratransit. This service is sometimes called "ADA Paratransit Service" because it is provided to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (or ADA) and insure all individuals have the opportunity to use public transportation services.

Paratransit service shall schedule and provide service to ADA paratransit eligible persons at any requested time on a particular day in response to a request for service made the previous day. The service is provided with ramp-equipped minivans or lift-equipped vehicles.

Paratransit service operates in the same areas and during the same calendar days and hours as the fixed route bus services from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM Monday – Friday. The service is not available on any Federal Holidays with the exception of Columbus Day, Martin Luther King Day, and Presidents Day. The service can be used for any trip purpose. If you have any questions after reading this Rider's Guide, you can call the MCT office at 701-857-4148 or through our website, www.minotnd.gov.

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Section 1.1 - Background

The City of Minot is located in the north central part of North Dakota and is a part of the Central Dakota Metropolitan Planning Area. The MPO's current population stands at 50,977.

Minot City Transit operates a fixed route; flag stop system, meaning that riders may flag a driver at any intersection along a route, but there are no designated stops. There are eight routes that operate Monday through Friday between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM and connect at the Minot City Transit Transfer Center at 205 1st St. SW. All routes are 30-minute loops and operate every 60 minutes with four routes operating on the hour and the other four routes operating on the half hour requiring four buses to be used. During the peak ridership periods of 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM on days when schools are in session three more buses are added to six of the existing routes to accommodate the additional passenger load.

The current transit fleet is 100% ADA accessible. Minot City Transit owns six Eldorado National low floor buses with ramps, five International buses equipped with wheel chair lifts, and four ramp equipped minivans.

The City of Minot owns 11 buses and 4 paratransit vans. That makes 100% of the total fleet accessible for paratransit use.

Section 1.2 - Minot City Transit Operation

The greatest expenditures for the City Bus are salaries, fuel, insurance, and vehicle maintenance. Continued operation assistance is needed to prevent the local tax levy from becoming unbearable.

Minot City Transit is currently staffed with eleven full time and three part-time employees and falls under the direct supervision of the City of Minot Public Works Operations Department. Transit management consists of a Superintendent and a Foreman/Mechanic. There are seven full time drivers, three part-time drivers, one mechanic, and an administrative clerk. The mechanics and administrative clerk are also required to possess a Commercial Driver's License with passenger endorsements and are used as bus drivers when needed.

Section 1.3 - Midday Operation

The regular daily operation consists of four buses operating on an eight-route system. All routes are 25-minute headways with a five-minute wait at the Minot Transfer Center. One bus alternates between the North West Route and the South #1 Route. One bus operates the North Central and South East routes. One bus operates the South West and North routes and one bus operates the East and West Routes.

The reason for setting the schedule in this manner is to accommodate the most riders possible. This determination was made on ridership figures from the past.

Section 1.4 - Bus Income

Money to operate the system comes from several different sources as itemized in the 2025 Budget. These sources include operating revenue (fare income), a FTA Section 5307 Federal Grant, a state grant for student ridership, a state grant for operations, city tax mill levy and advertising income.

Section 1.5 - Fare Structure

The cash fare to ride the MCT bus is \$1.50. Bus tickets for adults are 10 rides for \$10.00 or a 31-day period pass with unlimited rides for \$36.00. Student, senior citizen, and disabled passengers can purchase a 31-day period pass with unlimited rides for \$28.00 or a 10 ride ticket for \$8.00. The 31-day period passes are good for 31 consecutive days from the first time the pass is used on a bus. A daily ride pass is also available for \$5.00 per day. Transfers are free and are good only at the Minot City Auditorium boarding area and period passes do not require transfers. Children under the age of six accompanied by an adult ride free.

Section 1.6 - City Bus Boarding

A person can board the City Bus on any street corner or fire hydrant on a long block. There are four passenger waiting shelters positioned throughout the city for convenient waiting and boarding points

The City Bus System has 11 buses available to run its eight regular routes, with a maximum of seven buses on the road simultaneously.

Section 1.7 - City Bus Services

There are no private transit operators in our service area other than taxi companies.

Minot City Transit provides ADA Paratransit service to eligible individuals through Souris Basin Transportation. Minot City Transit provides Souris Basin with three ADA handicap accessible vans to use for this service.

The Minot Public School System owns a handicapped accessible vehicle that is used for the transport of disabled children to and from school activities.

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

Section 2.1 – Purpose

This document outlines the operational guidelines for the City of Minot's Paratransit Service, for individuals with disabilities whose transportation needs cannot be met by the Fixed Route Bus System (also known as Minot City Transit or MCT). For those individuals able to use or access a city bus Minot City Transit provides fully accessible fixed route transit services throughout the City of Minot. For those unable to use a city bus, Paratransit service is provided by Souris Basin Public Transportation for riders who are eligible to use this service.

Section 2.2 – References to Federal Regulations

The MCT Paratransit Service is funded in part through federal, state, and local governments. Operational guidelines comply with federal, state and local regulations and conform to the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Regulation 49 CFR Parts 37.

References will be made throughout this document to specific regulations to assist the City of Minot in updating guidelines as regulations are modified.

Section 2.3 – Statement of Non-Discrimination and Title VI Compliance

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.5]

The City of Minot is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and statutes. The City assures that no person or group(s) of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities administered by the City of Minot, regardless of whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. In addition to Title VI, there are other nondiscrimination statutes which include sex, age, and disability. These requirements define an over-arching Title VI/Nondiscrimination and ADA Program.

The City of Minot also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the City will provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency for language assistance free of charge to the person upon request. In the event the LPA distributes federal-aid funds to a sub recipient, the LPA will include Title VI language in all written agreements and will monitor for compliance.

Section 2.4 – Accessible Formats

The information contained in this booklet, information concerning the eligibility determination process, application materials, and determinations concerning eligibility are available upon request by contacting the Minot City Transit office at (701) 857-4148 or the Souris Basin Public Transportation office at (701) 852-8008.

Section 2.5 – Application Process

Paratransit service is available to all City of Minot residents eligible for the service (ADA eligible out-of-town riders see Section 4.3 Visitors).

To obtain a Paratransit Certification, the applicant must secure an application from one of the following sources:

Minot City Transit	857-4140
Souris Basin Public Transportation	852-8008 or 839-7433

Applications can also be mailed to you by calling 857-4140 or visit our website at www.minotnd.gov.

The application is a document to be completed in its entirety by the applicant . The application form must be completed and signed, returned by mail to:

Minot City Transit
PO Box 5006
Minot, ND 58701

Each applicant's eligibility will be determined according to Section 4 of these guidelines. In case of temporary disabling condition, the applicant must clearly state the duration of the temporary disability. The paratransit certification will be temporary for the duration of the temporary disability.

SECTION 3.0 TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Section 3.1 – Service Description [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.129]

All fixed route transit buses are accessible providing vehicle access via lifts or ramps (low floor buses). MCT Paratransit provides curb to curb with origin to destination service for those individuals who need it, on a reservation basis for individuals with disabilities who are ADA Paratransit eligible and unable to utilize MCT Fixed Route Bus service independently (refer to Section 4.1-Eligibility Criteria). MCT Paratransit provides this service through Souris Basin Public Transportation. Souris Basin Public Transportation features accessible vans and/or buses with lifts.

Section 3.2 – Service Hours [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.131 (e)]

MCT Paratransit is available and operates during the same hours as the MCT Fixed Route System:

Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

All trips scheduled must be completed with passengers delivered to their destination by end of service hours. There is no service on Saturdays, Sundays or federal holidays with the exception of Columbus Day, Martin Luther King Day, and Presidents Day.

Section 3.3 – Service Area [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.131 (a)]

MCT Paratransit operates complementary paratransit service to origins and destinations within corridors with a width of three-fourths of a mile on each side of each fixed route. The corridor shall include an area with a three-fourths of a mile radius at the ends of each fixed route.

Section 3.4 – Trip Purpose [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.131 (d)]

No restrictions or priorities are imposed based on trip purpose for rides given by MCT Paratransit, with the exception of subscription rides (See Section 5.7). MCT Paratransit is not an

ambulance service and does not provide emergency medical transportation. Operators are prohibited from providing delivery services.

Section 3.5 – Passenger Fares [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.131 (c)]

Each fare is applicable to one complete trip. Once a passenger disembarks from the vehicle or arrives at a destination, a trip is completed. Each trip is comparable to the Fixed Route Bus System. Upon entering the same vehicle again, a new trip commences and the passenger will be required to pay a new fare. Riders are required to pay the fare prior to the beginning of the trip. **Your driver cannot make change.** Please have the exact fare ready in cash. Drivers are not permitted to access a passenger's personal wallet, purse, or backpack, nor write and/or fill in any information on a passenger's personal check. The fare for each one-way trip is at the current prevailing rate. Exact fare is required; **drivers do not have change.** The fare structure applies to both the eligible individual and their guests. Personal care attendants ride free (refer to section 6.3 – Personal Care Attendants). Preschool children (under 6) ride free when accompanied by an eligible adult passenger. Eligible passengers are allowed one companion with additional companions on a space available basis. Companions are charged at the current prevailing rate, the same as an eligible passenger. Personal Care Attendants (PCA) and transportation trainers ride for free. The fixed route transit cash fare for riders with disabilities is \$1.50 or \$8.00 for a ten ride ticket. Monthly passes may also be purchased for \$28.00. Fares cannot be paid in advance (except through the purchase of tickets or a monthly pass) or billed at a later date. **ALL FARES SUBJECT TO CHANGE.** Souris Basin Transportation fare is \$3.00 for a one way ride.

Section 3.6 – Rider Courtesy and Conduct

Minot City Transit has a list of common-sense rules to ensure the safety of all riders and drivers. We ask that all riders observe the following Rule of Conduct:

- No smoking, vaping, eating, or drinking in vehicles
- No playing of any audio devices
- No cursing, swearing or disruptive behavior
- No littering
- No hazardous materials, such as gasoline cans or car batteries
- All strollers must be folded
- Do not open windows while climate control systems are in operation
- Do not stick hands, arms, or heads out open windows.
- Standing forward of the standee line is not permitted
- No pets with the exception of service animals

Passengers who willfully become destructive, unruly or abusive to a bus driver or other passengers will not be allowed to ride Minot City Transit until a parent, guardian of a minor or the adult involved contacts the Minot City Transit Superintendent or the Public Works Operations Director.

Riders, their personal care attendant or companions traveling with riders, who engage in physical abuse or cause physical injury to another rider or driver, or who engage in other illegal activities, may be subject to **immediate suspension** from receiving Paratransit service. They may also be subject to possible criminal prosecution, which may include fines.

Riders who engage in an activity that disrupts the safe or effective operation of Paratransit services, may also be subject to a suspension of service. If a rider is disruptive to MCT service, MCT reserves the right to require that a personal care attendant travel with the rider as an option instead of service suspension.

Any rider, who is suspended from service will be notified in writing and will be given an opportunity to appeal the suspension.

Section 3.7 – Driver Responsibilities

Minot City Transit has a list of common-sense rules to ensure the safety of all drivers and riders. Drivers will adhere to the same standards of common courtesy and personal hygiene as those required of the riders.

- Treat riders with courtesy
- Be uniformed appropriately
- Stay within 15 feet of their vehicle, provided line of site is maintained
- Maintain the assigned service schedule for the convenience of all riders
- With permission, assist riders when entering or leaving the vehicle
- Provide passenger assistance when instructed by the dispatcher
- On request, the driver will assist passengers between the vehicle and up to the entrance of a house, apartment building, or other building (Paratransit Service Only)
- Drivers are allowed to carry **no more than two packages** per Paratransit eligible passenger (maximum total weight of 25 pounds)
- Assure seat belts and mobility devices are properly secured
- Follow the schedule for pick-ups and drop-offs.
- Maintain radio contact with dispatcher
- Collect fares for your trips as appropriate

Drivers are **NOT** permitted to:

- Enter a rider's residence or other buildings
- Access a passenger's personal wallet, purse, or backpack nor write and/or fill-in any information on a passenger's personal check.
- Perform any personal care assistance for riders
- Lift or carry riders or wheelchairs up or down steps
- Accept any tips or gratuities, or any special treatment of any kind
- Call passenger's to pick them up earlier or later than scheduled (All drivers must only use the dispatcher to communicate with the passenger(s).)

SECTION 4.0: ELIGIBILITY

Section 4.1 – ADA Paratransit Eligibility Criteria

MCT paratransit service is intended to provide transportation services to individuals with disabilities who are unable to independently use the fixed route transit service. To be eligible to use MCT Paratransit, you must be considered “ADA Paratransit Eligible” as defined by the ADA.

ADA Paratransit Eligibility is based on “functional” criteria, not on type of disability or mobility aid(s) used. Persons are not qualified or disqualified on the basis of a specific diagnosis or disability. An individual will be certified as ADA Paratransit Eligible if there is any part of the MCT Fixed Route System in the designated service area which cannot be used or navigated by that individual because of a disability. In operation, eligibility will be based on whether the rider has the functional ability to use the MCT Fixed Route System. Eligibility may be unconditional, temporary, or seasonal conditional.

If the applicant is considered conditionally eligible, the dispatcher will review each trip requested to see if that trip meets the conditions that were established when eligibility was determined. An individual may appeal a denied trip in the same manner as they appeal a denial of eligibility (refer to Section 4.6 – Eligibility Appeals Process).

The three categories of ADA Paratransit Eligibility established by the federal government are listed below.

Category 1 Eligibility

Persons unable to board, ride, or disembark fully accessible fixed route services:

Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or Mental Impairment (including a vision impairment) and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR §37.123(e) (1)]

Examples of eligibility under this category include: persons with a mental disability or vision impairment who cannot “navigate the system” or otherwise cannot independently use fixed route services. This would include people with physical disabilities who cannot stand on a bus, get on or off the lift, or to proceed from the wheel chair securement area without assistance except as provided by the driver or other employee of the service.

Category 2 Eligibility

Persons unable to board, ride, and disembark even if the vehicle is accessible (Equipped with boarding device such as a lift or ramp).

Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle that is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route. [ADA Regulation 49 CFR §37.123(e) (2)]

Eligibility under this category depends on the accessibility of vehicles and routes. A person is eligible for paratransit service if the fixed route on which they want to travel is not yet accessible.

- An individual is eligible for paratransit if a vehicle's lift or boarding device could not be deployed at the stop which they want to use;
- An individual is eligible if they use a "common wheelchair" but cannot be served by the fixed route system because the lift on the vehicle they need to use fails to work.
- All Minot City Transit vehicles are 100% accessible.

Category 3 Eligibility

Persons unable to travel to the boarding location or from the disembarking location.

Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system. [ADA Regulation 49 CFR §37.123(e) (3)] Environmental conditions and architectural barriers not under control of the public entity, do not, when considered alone, confer eligibility. If, however, travel to or from a boarding location is prevented when these factors are combined with the person's specific impairment-related condition, paratransit service must be provided. Examples of architectural and environmental factors that, in combination with certain disabilities, could prevent travel include: lack of curb cuts, the distance from the stop to the trip origin or destination, snow or ice, temperature extremes, major intersections, or temporary construction projects.

Section 4.2 – Fixed Route Fares

All passengers must pay the applicable fare rates when riding the Fixed Route system. 10-ride tickets or 31-day period passes may be purchased at a somewhat reduced rate.

Section 4.3 – Visitors [ADA Regulation 49 CFR §37.127]

Paratransit services are provided for all eligible visitors for up to 21 calendar days in a 365-calendar day period. Individuals not certified as eligible by another public entity but claim to be

“ADA eligible,” are presumed to be eligible and will be similarly provided service for up to 21 calendar days. Individuals are only considered “visitors” if they reside outside of the transit agencies service jurisdictions. Visitors claiming “presumptive eligibility” can be requested to provide certain documentation such as their place of residence and the nature of their disability. If service is needed beyond 21 calendar days, the individual will be required to apply for Paratransit eligibility. Any limitation/condition placed upon a certification by another public entity will be honored for Paratransit services. Persons using Paratransit service more than 21 calendar days in a 365-day period are required to apply for eligibility.

Section 4.4 – Temporary Disabilities

Persons who are temporarily unable to use the fixed route transit service and meet the eligibility criteria as listed above, including, for example, someone with a broken leg.

Section 4.5 – Eligibility Process [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.125]

For the purpose of determining eligibility for paratransit services, the Minot City Transit utilizes a process of self-certification. All applications are reviewed by the Mobility Manager.

- a. Individuals must submit a completed, written application to the Minot City Transit.
Minot City Transit
Attn: Paratransit
PO Box 5006
Minot, ND 58206-5006

For questions please call: (701)857-4148

- b. The Minot City Transit Superintendent along with the Mobility Manager will be responsible for reviewing applications and determining eligibility. A written response stating the determination of eligibility will be mailed to the applicant within 21 calendar days of receipt of a completed application. Determination of ineligibility will include reasons for the finding and inform the applicant of the appeals process.
- c. If a determination is not made within 21 calendar days, the applicant will be given presumptive eligibility, until such time as the Transit Superintendent makes the determination of eligibility.
- d. Eligible individuals will be Paratransit Certified stating they are eligible for MCT Paratransit and whether they are “ADA Paratransit Eligible.” These individuals will be listed in the dispatch program as paratransit eligible.
- e. Eligible individuals must recertify eligibility every four (4) years.

Section 4.6 – Eligibility Appeal Process [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.125 (g)]

The purpose of the appeals is to afford all individuals determined to be ineligible or conditionally eligible for paratransit service the opportunity to present issues and arguments to reverse the decision.

The following appeal process is established:

- a. All individuals determined to be ineligible or conditionally eligible for complementary paratransit service may appeal a determination decision within 60 calendar days of the denial or a limiting decision. All hearings shall be conducted in a manner to provide "due process" to appellants.
- b. All individuals determined to be ineligible or conditionally eligible for complementary paratransit shall receive written notification of the determination by mail. The notification shall state the reasons for the determination decision. All notifications shall be in standard format or alternative formats as requested during the application process. All notifications shall request from the applicant reasons for the appeal and identification of any special accommodations needed for the hearing.
- c. All appeal hearings shall be conducted by the City Manager for the City of Minot or his designee. Any person having involvement in the initial determination of ineligibility or the limiting of eligibility shall be barred from being the City Managers designee. Individuals involved in the initial decision will be at the hearing and may be requested to testify.
- d. A hearing before the Appeals Authority shall be scheduled at a time convenient to the appellant with such accommodations as requested. All hearings shall be scheduled within 30 calendar days of the appeal receipt except for extenuating circumstances including but not limited to the inability of the appellant to appear, unavailability of an Appeals Hearing Officer, or the inability of initial decision maker(s) to appear.
- e. Decisions of the Appeals Authority shall ensure that the existing policy was followed. Consideration should be given judgments made during the initial determination, information provided in the original application, information received prior to the hearing, and information presented at the hearing.
- f. An appeals decision shall be made by the Appeals Authority within 10 calendar days of the hearing. A written appeals decision upholding or reversing the original decision shall relate to the information provided in the original application and submitted during the appeals process

If the applicant wishes to appeal the eligibility determination, the following process shall be followed:

- a. A written appeal must be filed within 60 calendar days of the date of the letter notifying an individual that they have been determined to be ineligible for ADA Paratransit service.
- b. Written appeals shall be delivered to Minot City Transit, Attn: Paratransit, PO Box 5006, Minot, ND 58702-5006, for consideration.
- c. The applicant, or a representative of their choice, shall have the opportunity to be heard and present information and arguments in support of his/her position to the Appeals Authority.

d. A written determination of the decision on the appeal, including the reasons for such decision, shall be forwarded to the applicant within 30 calendar days of the completion of the appeals process. If a decision is not made within 30 calendar days, the applicant will be determined eligible until such time as the decision regarding the appeal is made by the authority.

Section 4.7 – Recertification of ADA Paratransit Eligibility

All ADA Eligible paratransit customers shall be required to reapply for ADA eligibility every four (4) years. Recertification shall take place in the month of their birthday. Any individual, regardless of established procedures, may request a new determination if they believe that there has been a change in their situation.

Section 4.8 – Application Form

The following listed documentation will be utilized by the City of Minot in determining and notifying individuals of eligibility for MCT ADA Paratransit Eligibility.

- Application Form
- Authorization Form
- Users Guide

SECTION 5.0 TRIP RESERVATION PROCEDURES

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.131 (b)]

Section 5.1 – Reservations

The following telephone number may be called to reserve a ride:

Souris Basin Public Transportation (701) 852-8008

Individuals who utilize a text telephone or TDD should call the same number.

Section 5.2 – Advance Notice Requirement

Reservations may be made no more than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to when the individual wishes to ride. Reservations should be made at least one day in advance of when the individual wishes to ride for next service.

Return reservations can be made at the same time you make your reservation to be picked up; for medical trips, you call when you are ready to return. The dispatcher will provide you with the time estimate of when the vehicle will arrive for a return trip based on the vehicles and time available when you call.

Medical Delays: If your return ride is from a medical appointment, and you will be delayed past your scheduled ride time due to unforeseen circumstances, call the Dispatcher and we will attempt to reschedule your trip and accommodate you on a space available basis.

Section 5.3 – Same Day Reservations

To accommodate last minute trip needs, reservations may be made for same-day service as space allows. However, MCT Paratransit does not provide emergency medical services nor do we operate like a taxi service.

Section 5.4 – Office Hours

Reservations can be scheduled between 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Due to scheduling and confirmation calls, all reservations for the next day service must be in by 2:00 p.m. **If you do not leave a phone number for us to contact you, you must contact us to confirm the ride times.** Reservations are taken on Fridays for Monday's service by calling the SBT office. Reservations will be taken for certain Holidays on the prior working day.

Section 5.5 Reservation Procedures

Paratransit trips will be coordinated to carry as many passengers as possible.

When a reservation call is made, the dispatcher will negotiate pick-up time with the passenger. Under the ADA regulations, SBT is allowed to negotiate pickup times with you and you cannot be asked to travel more than one hour before or after your desired time.

The following information will be discussed or requested by the dispatcher when you make the reservation:

- Name of each eligible passenger
- If a companion will be accompanying the passenger
- If a personal care attendant (PCA) will be accompanying the passenger
- Is passenger assistance by driver needed (What type of assistance)
- Pickup address (Specify which entrance)
- Time you need to arrive at the destination
- Pick-up time (as negotiated with dispatcher)
- Return time (if applicable)
- Trip purpose (only for subscription rides)
- Name of person making reservation (if other than eligible passenger) and phone number

Penalties are imposed for late cancellations and no shows (Refer to Sections 7.1 and 7.2)

Section 5.6 Reservation Cancellation

A rider up to two hours, prior to the scheduled pickup time, may cancel reservations. Records are kept, and if a rider consistently cancels their scheduled pickup time, the rider would be considered misusing the service, and is subject to the same penalties as a "no show." Refer to Section 7.2.

Section 5.7 – Subscription Service [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.133]

If an individual wishes to ride at the same time and to the same destination on a regular basis, they may make a subscription reservation. Subscription service may not absorb more than fifty percent of the number of trips available at any given time of the day, unless there is a non-subscription capacity.

Subscription reservations are restricted during all weekday peak demand operating hours to the following trip purposes: work (including volunteer), school, medical/counseling services, meals, programs, etc. Waiting lists for specific time slots will be established upon request. The dispatcher may reschedule or rearrange subscription reservations as needed for efficient use of vehicles. The change will be negotiated with the passenger with at least one-week advance notice, when possible.

Examples:

1. No more than 50 percent of the total trips available during a given day will be scheduled as subscription rides, unless there is non-subscription capacity.

Section 5.8 – Same Day Requests for Early Pickups

Requests to change your return pick-up time because you are ready early will not be accepted. The only exception to this will be return trips from medical appointments. Every effort will be made to adjust your return trip pick-up time and assign another vehicle to pick you up at a later time. Because schedules are set the day before, there may be a delay of an hour or more before another vehicle is available to accommodate your trip.

SECTION 6.0 PICKUP AND TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Section 6.1 – Pick-up Procedures

The rider will be provided with a scheduled pick-up time. All passengers should be ready 15 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time and allow 15 minutes to pass beyond their pick-up time before calling the dispatcher at 701-857-4148 to inquire about their ride. The driver will wait five (5) minutes for the passenger to appear. If the passenger does not appear within the five minutes, they shall be considered a “no show” (refer to Section 7.2 – Penalties Imposed for “No Shows”).

If the vehicle arrives earlier than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time, they will beep the horn, unless the dispatcher has been notified otherwise. If the passenger is not yet ready, the driver will wait until scheduled pick-up time before again sounding the horn and beginning to count the five minutes allowed for the passenger to appear.

If the Paratransit vehicle arrives more than 15 minutes later than the scheduled time, this will be considered a “missed trip” rather than a “no show” and the passenger is not obligated to pay the fare.

If the vehicle is running late, more than 10 minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time, the dispatcher will attempt to contact the passenger to offer them a revised pick-up time. The passenger may at that time choose to cancel the trip without obligation to pay the fare.

The entrance to the building where you are picked up will be the same entrance that you are brought back to unless you notify the dispatcher differently at the time you book your ride.

Section 6.2 – Companions [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.123 (f)]

Eligible passengers may take one (1) companion with them. The beginning and ending destination of this companion must be the same as the eligible individual. Companions must pay for their ride (refer to Section 3.5 – Passenger Fares). Additional companions may be accommodated on a space available basis. Personal Care Attendants are not counted as companions.

Section 6.3 – Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.123 (f) and 37.131 (c) (3)]

The Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is defined as someone designated or employed specifically to help the eligible individual meet his or her personal needs. A personal care attendant is allowed to ride free. If you require a personal care attendant, you must indicate this on the application for eligibility form or resubmit an application at such time the need is determined. Personal care attendants must have the same origin to destination as the eligible individual.

Personal care attendants shall remain with the passenger during the complete trip.

Section 6.4 – Origin to Destination Service [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.129]

On request, the driver will assist passengers between the vehicle and entrance of a house, apartment building or other building. Such assistance must be requested in advance by notifying the dispatcher when you make your reservation. If the passenger has indicated on their application that they require **driver assistance regularly**, the dispatcher shall indicate this on the driver's schedule for all future trips.

Driver assistance ends when the driver has assisted the passenger in getting to the main door of the building. If the passenger needs additional assistance beyond the main door, they should have someone meet them at the door or have a PCA (and/or companion) ride along. The driver will not assist individuals in wheelchairs into buildings that are not accessible (other than opening doors), nor will drivers push wheelchairs through areas that have not been cleared of snow. Assistance will be provided up/down curbs.

If the destination building is locked, a PCA is not along and no one is available to meet the individual, the driver, after first receiving approval from the dispatcher, may return the individual to the place of origin at the next available trip. For the safety of the passenger, consistent occurrences of disruptions to the service may result in requiring a PCA to accompany the passenger to mitigate the behavior.

Transporting packages – Because the vehicle will be shared, riders should limit their parcels to one armload or the equivalent of two (2) grocery bags. Packages must be transported on your lap or under the seat. Drivers must adhere to a schedule and cannot assist with packages. For the safety of all riders, you may not transport explosives, acids, flammable liquids or other hazardous materials.

Drivers are allowed to carry no more than two packages per paratransit eligible passenger (maximum total weight of 25 pounds). For grocery trips, the number of packages is limited to two (2). Small personal grocery carts may be brought on to the vehicle; however, they must be placed behind a seat out of the aisle. **A limit on the number of packages is established due to available space and time.** Packages may be placed on the floor, as long as they do not interfere with wheelchair securement.

During winter months, it is the riders' responsibility to ensure that all sidewalks and pathways are clear of snow at their residence. If a passenger cannot be accommodated because of impossible boarding conditions, then the trip is considered cancelled.

Section 6.5 – Use of Ramp/Lift and Securement Inside the Vehicle

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.165]

The driver will operate the ramp or lift at all times during such operation. The driver will assist on and off the ramp/lift passengers who use a ramp/lift.

For those riding in wheelchairs, the driver will secure the wheelchair using the vehicle's securement system. Wheelchairs must be secured during transport. Refusal by the rider to allow the securement devices to be used will result in denial of service.

It is recommended for safety reasons, electrically powered wheelchairs must have the main power switch placed in the "off" position at all times while the vehicle is in motion.

All wheelchairs and their users will be transported. Individuals whose wheelchairs or other mobility devices do not meet the definition of "wheelchair" will be denied service.

A "wheelchair" means a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

Drivers and passengers shall use seat belts at all times. Drivers shall instruct each passenger to use the belt. Before pulling away from a stop, drivers shall make sure that passengers are seated with seat belts properly secured. Children under the age of seven, who weigh less than 80 pounds and are 4'9" (57-inches) tall shall use approved child restraint system at all times. Failure to use the seat belt and/or child restraint system shall result in denial of transportation service to the client for that trip. On MCT fixed route service seat belts are available for wheelchair secured passengers but not required.

Exceptions to the mandatory seat belt requirements will be made for medical reasons, upon receipt of a written statement from a physician, stating that the individual cannot be safely transported using seat belts because of a medical condition, body size or physical disability.

Section 6.6 – Capacity Constraints Equipment [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.131(f)]

Minot City Transit will monitor service levels to determine the need to increase or reduce service to meet the transportation needs of passengers. Therefore, records will be kept and reviewed monthly of untimely pickups, trip denials, missed trips, and excessively long trips (see definitions below) in order to consider the need for additional vehicles to meet capacity. There must be a consistent pattern, and problems must be considered substantial in order to identify capacity constraints. If a significant capacity constraint is identified, additional vehicles may be placed into service to meet the demand.

Untimely pickups: Pickups that are 15 minutes later than the scheduled time will be considered untimely pickups.

Trip Denials: Regulations permit pickups to be scheduled up to an hour before or after the requested time. If the dispatcher offers the individual a time beyond one hour before or after the requested time, and the offered time is unacceptable to the individual, the trip will be considered “denied.” **Requests for same day service do not apply.**

Missed Trip: Trips that are not completed because the vehicle arrived more than 15 minutes later than the scheduled time and the passenger either refused service or did not show will be considered a “missed trip.”

Excessively long trips: Travel time between pickup and drop off of more than one hour will be considered an “excessively long trip.”

Minot City Transit is not responsible for operational problems caused by circumstances beyond our control, such as unanticipated weather or traffic problems (trains, accident, etc.). Such problems will not be considered in establishing whether or not patterns that limit the availability of service exist.

The Dial-A-Ride driver cannot change a route (pickup or destination points) or make detours upon a passenger request without first informing the dispatcher and receiving authorization.

Section 6.7 – Service Animals and Life Support Equipment [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.167(d)(h)]

ADA paratransit eligible riders may travel with service animals trained to assist them. Service animals include guide dogs used by persons with vision or hearing impairments, and dogs that provide aid to persons with mobility problems. You should tell the dispatcher when you reserve trips that you will be traveling with a service animal. Eligible riders may travel with portable life support equipment such as respirators and portable oxygen.

Service Animals: A service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to,

guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items. Animals that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability, including animals that are used purely for emotional support, are not service animals. The final rule also clarifies that individuals with mental disabilities who use service animals that are trained to perform a specific task are protected by the ADA. The rule permits the use of trained miniature horses as alternatives to dogs, subject to certain limitations. To allow flexibility in situations where using a horse would not be appropriate, the final rule does not include miniature horses in the definition of "service animal."

If they meet the above definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. Transit operators may ask the rider what kind of assistance or service the animal performs, but not ask for proof of service certificate.

The Department of Justice states: You may exclude any animal, including a service animal, from your facility when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, any service animal that displays vicious behavior towards other passengers or the driver may be excluded. You may not make assumptions, however, about how a particular animal is likely to behave based on your past experience with other animals. Each situation must be considered individually.

Section 6.8 – Prohibited Activities

Smoking, drinking, or eating is not permitted in vehicles.

Section 6.9 – Animals

Non-service animals will not be permitted on revenue service vehicles.

Section 6.10 – Children

ADA eligible children under age eight (8) are encouraged to be accompanied by a fare-paying adult. If special equipment is needed to transport an infant or toddler, the family shall arrange to provide the equipment.

SECTION 7.0: TRIP CANCELLATIONS AND DENIALS

Section 7.1 – Cancellation Procedures

Rides must be cancelled at least two hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time, otherwise the ride will be considered a "no show" and be subject to the penalties (refer to Section 7.2 – Penalties Imposed for "No Shows"). Minot City Transit requests that cancellations be called in as soon as possible as a courtesy to others needing a ride.

The individual may call to reschedule the return trip if still needed; however, that return trip is subject to availability.

The dispatcher's clock is the correct time for determining lateness of cancellations. To take differences in clocks into consideration, an individual may cancel up to five (5) minutes late (1 hour and 55 minutes before their scheduled ride) and still be considered on time.

If you need to cancel a ride scheduled before/after office hours (7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), you may do so by leaving a message on the answering machine.

Section 7.2 – Penalties Imposed for “No Shows” [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.125 (h)]

If a rider does not appear for a scheduled trip or did not cancel the ride at least two hours prior to the scheduled trip, that rider is considered a “no show.”

“No Shows” take up a trip that might have been filled by another passenger and may reduce the number of passengers that can be provided service. Therefore, no shows are considered to be detrimental to transit service and penalties are imposed as follows:

Records will be kept by passenger name, date, and time of the “no show.” If the passenger receives more than four “no shows” within a 30-calendar day period, they are subject to suspension from service. The first offense, suspension shall be for a period of one week. The second offense, suspension shall be for a period of two weeks. Each additional suspension period shall progress by one week, with a maximum of not more than 10 weeks.

Written notice shall be supplied to the passenger two weeks in advance of suspension documenting:

- 1) The reason for suspension
- 2) The exact calendar days the suspension will be in effect
- 3) The appeals process for service suspension. (Refer to Section 7.3 – Appeals Process for Service Suspension)

After the suspension is completed, the record is cleared and the accumulation of no shows, for the next one-month period, starts again at zero.

If the reason for the “no show” is due to the individual’s disability and beyond their control, the ride shall be excused or discounted in the calculation of “no shows” for that month and payment for that ride will not be required. The passenger must notify the dispatcher that this exclusion applies.

A “no show” that is due to the driver being more than 15 minutes later than the scheduled ride time will not be considered a “no show” but rather will be counted as a missed trip made by Paratransit. The passenger will not be penalized nor must they pay for the missed ride. Refer to Section 6.6 – Capacity Constraints for more information on missed trips.

Section 7.3 – Service Suspension Appeals Process

The purpose of the appeals process is to afford all individuals suspended of Paratransit service the opportunity to present issues and arguments to reverse the decision. A written appeal must be filed prior to the date suspension is to begin. The following administrative appeals process is established:

- 1) Appellant submits a written or in person or on tape an appeal to the MCT Paratransit office.
- 2) Suspension of service does not begin until after the appeals hearing.
- 3) Within five calendar days, appellant will be notified of receipt of appeal and Appeals Committee documentation.
- 4) Appeals Committee conducts independent review of appeal and supporting documentation. Reviews are performed bi-weekly with appellant given opportunity to appear before the Appeals Committee with representation, if desired.
- 5) The Appeals Committee renders a decision and reasons for it, based solely on the circumstances surrounding the suspension.
- 6) The decision of the Committee will be made within 60 calendar days and is final.

Section 7.4 – Refusal of Service [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.5 (h)]

Service may be refused to anyone who is seriously disruptive or commits an illegal or violent act in violation of an established regulation or law. An example would be a passenger that refuses to use a seat belt during travel.

Seriously disruptive behavior does not include conduct related to a person's disability that may be disruptive or annoying to other passengers. An example of this is a person with Tourette's syndrome who may periodically utter involuntary profane statements. Also, disruptive behavior does not include an unfounded fear of a condition by other passengers. For example, an HIV positive passenger cannot be refused service to a fear of other passengers.

MCT reserves the right to deny entrance into a vehicle if the passenger appears disorderly or leads the driver to conclude that the passenger will exhibit disruptive behavior that would pose a safety threat not only to the driver but also the other passengers, including, but not limited to, intoxication and use of illegal drugs. The decision to refuse service is based on actual reported conduct.

The use of offensive language when addressing the dispatcher, driver or other passengers is not allowed. Refusal to discontinue usage upon request may result in trip denial.

Denials of service shall be recorded. If denial of service is made for reasons other than the time requested was not available, the reason will be documented and a copy provided to the passenger or their guardian.

Section 7.5 – Condition of Service

MCT reserves the right to require a personal care attendant when transporting a passenger that has a documented medical or behavioral condition that could pose an unsafe situation for the individual, driver, or other passengers. MCT Paratransit may suspend eligibility or permanently revoke riding privileges if our records indicate that the passenger has threatened or abused a driver or other passenger.

SECTION 8: OTHER INFORMATION

Section 8.1 – Travel Training

Information about travel training may be obtained by calling Minot City Transit at (701) 857-4148 or Souris Basin Transportation at (701) 852-8008.

Section 8.2 – Communication [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.167 (f)]

Individuals who may utilize a (text) TDD phone should call the main dispatch phone at SBT, (701) 852-8008, as it is TDD equipped for the hearing impaired

Section 8.3 – Public Information [ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.167 (f)]

For information on how to obtain large print copies of these guidelines, please contact the Transit Superintendents office at (701) 857-4148 or Souris Basin Transportation at (701) 852-8008. Copies may be obtained from Minot City Transit, PO Box 5006, Minot, ND 58701. Copies are also available on our website at: www.minotnd.gov

Section 8.4 – Privacy Regarding Medical Information

The medical information that may be gathered as part of the eligibility determination process will not be shared with any other party. Minot City Transit, however, shares information regarding the functional ability of an individual to utilize transit services with another transit system, if this is required to determine eligibility in that system.

Section 8.5 – Complaints/Compliments

Minot City Transit would like to hear your suggestions, compliments, or complaints. Comments should be forwarded to the Transit Superintendent by calling (701) 857-4148 or in writing to:

Minot City Transit

Attn: Paratransit

PO Box 5006

Minot, ND 58701

Section 8.6 – Driver Training

Drivers are trained to provide service to seniors and people with disabilities. In addition, all drivers received defensive driver training and sensitivity training.

Section 8.7 – Vehicles

Paratransit providers are required to provide suitable vehicles and regularly service and maintain them to specified standards. If you feel that some aspect of the vehicle may not have been properly maintained, please call the Minot City Transit office at (701) 857-4148, or notify in writing.

Section 8.8 – Reporting Abuse

Drivers are to report any suspicion or knowledge that a vulnerable adult passenger you are transporting has been abused, neglected, or exploited as soon as possible. Inform them that

you are making an “Adult Protection Report” and be prepared to give as much detail as possible of a passenger, please call the Transit Superintendent’s office at (701) 857-4148.

