

## **Dare County Transportation System – Policy & Procedure**

### **Section 7**

#### **Title: DCTS Passenger Guidelines**

#### **Hours of Operation**

Dare County Transportation's office hours of operation are 8:30am – 5:00pm Monday through Friday. DCTS vans begin operating as early as 6:00am depending on the daily schedule. Transportation outside of these time frames can be scheduled *if* approved by the Transportation Director.

Transportation will not be provided on holidays that are recognized by Dare County Government.

#### **Scheduling Transportation**

Clients and agencies wishing to schedule transportation may do so by calling the DCTS at **252-475-5640** during office hours. Any transportation requests made outside of these hours may be denied. When scheduling transportation the following information will be needed in order for the staff to properly enter the request.

1. The name of the person(s) needing transportation.
2. Sponsoring agency (if any) that the trip is to be invoiced. If the individual is a Rural General Public client, the transportation office will advise the individual how much (if any) the fare will be for that particular trip.
3. Address of the pick up location
4. Name and address of the destination
5. Phone number or contact numbers in case the driver has trouble locating the passenger.
6. Time of the individual's appointment.
7. Whether or not an attendant or service animal is accompanying the passenger. There is no additional charge for attendants, but notify the office when the transportation is scheduled so that seating is made available.
8. Any type of mobility device the passenger may be using. This will ensure that a suitable vehicle is sent.
9. Please tell the office staff if the passenger is on oxygen. There are safety procedures that the passenger will need to be made aware.

#### **Passenger's Ridership Responsibilities**

1. The rider must be prepared to be picked up 15 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time.

2. It is the passengers responsibility to be ready and waiting when the DCTS vehicle arrives.
3. Passengers should wait at a main entrance or curbside if they are capable and weather permits.
4. DCTS drivers will only wait a maximum of 5 minutes for a client to board a vehicle. Drivers will attempt to contact the passenger upon arrival by calling the contact number supplied by the passenger. If a passenger does not attempt to board the vehicle during this time allotment, a no show notice will be documented on the drivers log sheet. The driver will contact the DCTS office and the appropriate sponsoring agency will be notified. DCTS will submit an invoice charging the passenger or sponsoring agency for each no show in the amount of \$10.00. Upon receiving the invoice, the passenger or sponsoring agency must submit payment to the DCTS. If a passenger or sponsoring agency accrues a balance of \$50.00 of unpaid invoices, DCTS will suspend services until the balance is paid in full.
5. Cancellations for transportation services must be made at least 2 hours before the scheduled pick up time or a no show may be logged.

### **Dare County Transportation Passenger Behavior Guidelines**

- Seat belts ***must*** be worn at all times. Drivers have been instructed not to move the transit vehicle until all passengers are properly seat belted or secured. Passengers who refuse to be properly secured will have their transportation services denied and be asked to exit the transit vehicle.
- Parents must provide proper child restraint devices for their children under the age of eight and / or under 80 pounds, to conform with G.S. 20-137.1 NC Child Passenger Safety Law. DCTS does not provide child restraint devices, and children who do not have the proper restraint device will have transportation services denied.
- Parents or guardians must accompany children under the age of sixteen. If a parent or guardian is not available, transportation will be denied.
- Clients and passengers need to be aware that DCTS operates a curb-to-curb transportation system. Drivers are not allowed to leave their vehicles to bring passengers out to the vehicle. Unless otherwise scheduled, clients will be picked up at their place of residence for transportation services.
- Clients and passengers that are unable to make their appointments need to contact DCTS to cancel service no later that 2 hours before their scheduled pick up time. Any later cancellation may be considered a “no show”.
- No weapons of any kind, concealed or otherwise are allowed on transit vehicles unless the person carrying the weapon is a law enforcement official.
- Open containers of food and / or drinks, and the use of tobacco products are prohibited on all transit vehicles.
- Transportation services will be denied to anyone under the influence of illegal drugs and / or alcohol.
- No screaming, loud talking or music is allowed on transit vehicles.

- No standing or moving about the vehicle after being seated until he / she reach their destination.
- No profanity or vulgarity among the passengers or to the transit driver is allowed.
- No inappropriate display of affection or sexual activity to the driver or other passengers is permitted on transit vehicles.
- No release of human waste on the vehicle. This includes spitting. (Those who have problems with incontinence must be properly clothed before boarding the transit vehicle.)
- If a fare is collected, Rural General Public (RGP) passengers must have exact change at the time of boarding the vehicle. Drivers do not carry cash and cannot make change. Any RGP passenger who does not have the correct change upon first boarding the vehicle will not be transported.
- Passengers will be picked up from their appointments at the place they were dropped off. Once passengers have contacted the transportation driver or staff that they are ready to be picked up, the passenger is to be at the drop off point for pick up. Drivers will wait 5 minutes for passengers at their pick up location. Drivers will not leave the vehicle to search for passengers. Passengers who are not at their pick up location will be left. DCTS will not be responsible for returning passengers who missed their transportation home.
- Passengers who behave in a threatening manner or verbally threaten other passengers or the transit drivers will have transportation services terminated immediately and will be reported to the local law enforcement agency. (This includes if a passenger is on the vehicle en-route to a destination.)
- Because of safety and liability issues, passengers must limit the number of shopping bags to what they can fit directly under the seat and safely in their lap. Passengers should not expect drivers to help them carry their bags on or off the vehicle (some consideration may go to those who are wheelchair bound.)
- No open flames are allowed on transit vehicles.
- No horseplay on vehicles. Passengers are to remain seated after boarding until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.
- Passengers needing the use of oxygen should notify DCTS at the time they schedule their transportation. Passengers should bring their oxygen in the smallest tank possible.
- Please do not give the driver appointments you need to schedule. Passengers are responsible for calling the transportation office and scheduling their transportation themselves.
- DCTS will allow service animals to board transit vehicles provided that DCTS is notified when the trip is scheduled. Service animals are to be under the control of the handler at all times and must be on a leash or in a carrier. Any service animal that poses a threat to other passengers or the driver will be denied services. Any owner / handler that cannot or will not control their service animal will have their transportation denied and will be reported to the proper animal control board.

*Any DCTS passenger who violates any of the above behavior rules will have their transportation privileges suspended for a time period at the DCTS Directors discretion.*

**Dare County Transportation System – Policy & Procedure**  
**Section 8**  
**Title: DCTS Passenger Suspension Policy**

**DCTS Passenger Suspension Policy**

When a DCTS passenger breaks one of the DCTS guidelines, the following procedure will be followed:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – The passenger will receive a written warning from the Transportation Director or designee. If the passenger receives transportation services through a human services agency or from an agency that contracts with DCTS for transportation, that agency will also be notified.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – The passenger will be suspended for a period of seven days. The passenger will be notified in writing by the Transportation Director or designee. If the passenger receives transportation services through a human services agency or from an agency that contracts with DCTS for transportation, that agency will also be notified.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense - The passenger will be suspended for a period of fourteen days. The passenger will be notified in writing by the Transportation Director or designee. If the passenger receives transportation services through a human services agency or from an agency that contracts with DCTS for transportation, that agency will also be notified.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense - The passenger will be suspended for a period of thirty days. The passenger will be notified in writing by the Transportation Director or designee. If the passenger receives transportation services through a human services agency or from an agency that contracts with DCTS for transportation, that agency will also be notified.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Offense - The passenger will be suspended indefinitely. The passenger will be notified in writing by the Transportation Director or designee. If the passenger receives transportation services through a human services agency or from an agency that contracts with DCTS for transportation, that agency will also be notified.

*Depending on the severity of the passenger's actions, DCTS reserves the right to suspend passengers for a time period at its discretion voiding the above procedures.*

**Dare County Transportation System – Policy & Procedure**  
**Section 9**  
**Title: DCTS Complaint / Compliment Policy**

**It is the intent of the Dare County Transportation System that all employees treat all passengers with respect and courtesy.**

- I. **POLICY** – Dare County Transportation System is dedicated to providing the highest quality service available to the citizens of Dare County. The most effective and efficient manner to accomplish this is by seeking customer feedback by direct customer contact verbally i.e. one on one, telephone calls and through written statements.
- II. **PURPOSE** – To ensure the highest level of customer satisfaction by maintaining confidentiality, professionalism, and impartiality for all complaints and / or compliments made to the DCTS. A customer may be defined as anyone who is affiliated with an agency as a client / passenger and their families and / or aides being transported, or as a passenger and their families and / or aides being transported under DCTS' Rural General Public Program.
- III. **PHILOSOPHY** – Customers / clients who provide feedback to DCTS are invaluable to the continuous improvement and growth of services provided. Every complaint / compliment will be handled individually and with the consideration for investigation and possible implementation it deserves. DCTS encourages customer / client feedback and strives to respond within 24 hours of their concern.
- IV. **PROCEDURE** – All complaints should be documented on the Service Inquiry Form. The Service Inquiry Form should be completed by the person receiving the complaint / compliment. Forms are to be available at the DCTS office and at contracted agency locations. All complaints / compliments should be taken in a professional, courteous and non-judgmental manner.

Steps to follow:

1. Complete in full, the Service Inquiry Form being specific as to what the client / customer states. Encourage client / customer to give name, but acknowledge on form when individual does not disclose identity. Information on the Service Inquiry Form is completed regardless of anonymity.
2. The completed Service Inquiry Form is to be submitted to the Transportation Director for review and signature. If a corrective plan can be initiated or if a solution can be appropriately handled at the time of the complaint / compliment is made, it should be documented as such on the form.
3. The Transportation Director will then investigate any complaints, and document findings on the form including findings from drivers, witnesses, etc.
4. The Transportation Director will, if possible contact the individual issuing the complaint within 24 hours with the resolution.
5. Completed Service Inquiry Forms will not be filed in a personnel file or a client / customer file, but shall be stored in a secure area of the DCTS office.