



(402) 362-7626

Passenger Handbook

2023

This booklet provides information regarding our policies and procedures and outline passenger responsibilities which are critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of our service.

All policies will be enforced in a consistent and fair manner. If a passenger feels they have been dealt with unfairly, they may use our complaint process which is outlined starting on page 18.

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DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

York County Public Transportation (YCPT) is a demand-response, curb-to-curb public transportation service which serves a large diverse population of individuals with varying ages (children, teenagers, adults and elderly), physical challenges, economic and financial status, and ethnic backgrounds.

Demand-response means that passengers call in advance to schedule their ride rather than waiting at a bus stop.

Passengers are transported on a first come first serve basis. Door-to-door assistance and a lift equipped vehicle is available upon request for individuals needing an accommodation.

Passengers can use YCPT to visit friends or family, get groceries, go to work or school- anywhere that they would drive themselves. However, YCPT does **not** provide rides to the emergency room. If a passenger is experiencing a medical crisis, call 911.

DAYS & HOURS OF SERVICE:

In City Limits: available Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Limited services may be available on Saturdays and many holidays, but require one working days' notice.

In County: available Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., and requires one working days' notice.

Out of County (Thursdays): Service to Lincoln or Grand Island provided on Thursdays and requires one working days' notice. Please contact our office for current schedule.

Out-of-County (Expanded): Service to locations in Nebraska within a 120-mile radius of the City of York may be provided M-F

based on driver/vehicle availability and requires a minimum of one working days' notice.

Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. The office is closed on **all** holidays.

HOLIDAYS:

The following holidays will be observed with limited service:

- ☒ Martin Luther King Day
- ☒ Juneteenth
- ☒ Columbus Day
- ☒ President's Day
- ☒ Arbor Day
- ☒ Veteran's Day
- ☒ Saturday after Thanksgiving

No service will be provided on:

- ☒ New Year's Day
- ☒ Independence Day
- ☒ Thanksgiving Day & Day After
- ☒ Memorial Day
- ☒ Labor Day
- ☒ Christmas Day

PASSENGER REGISTRATION:

New passengers will be asked to complete a *Transit Rider Intake* to register with the YCPT system. This may be initiated over the phone, when scheduling their first ride, or may be given to the passenger by the driver on their first ride.

FARES:

Fare payment is **required** when **boarding the vehicle**.

- In-City Limits \$2.00 per boarding
- In-County \$4.00 per boarding
- Out-of-County (Thursdays) \$15 (one way or both ways)
- Out-of-County (Expanded) \$20 (First 60 miles) *
- Out-of-County (Expanded) \$40 (60 to 120 miles) *

*Out of County Expanded rides are the same price one way or both ways.

There is a \$2.00 fare per additional stop (including drive thru stops).

Passengers under the age of twelve ride for free if they are accompanied by an adult (18 or over).

Fares may be paid with cash or check, by using an *e-pass* account, or with a pre-paid *flexcard* (see below for additional information). Exact change is appreciated.

Reduced Rate Fares

Passengers may qualify for 50% or 75% fare rate on rides depending upon the income level reflected on their *Transit Rider Intake*. However, Out of County Expanded rides are not eligible for reduced rates.

E-Pass Accounts and Flexcards

These options offer the most convenient and flexible way for passengers to pay their fare.

To open an *e-pass* account the passenger provides a minimum of \$10 to cover future fares. Then each time they ride their fare is deducted from their account. Drivers will notify passengers when they need to add additional funds to their account.

When paying with a *e-pass* account, passengers will be charged based upon the income level reflected on their completed *Transit Rider Intake* form. Passengers who have not completed an intake form will be charged the full fare until a completed intake is received at our office.

Pre-paid *flexcards* have a preset number of local rides loaded onto the card. The fare is then deducted each time the passenger rides when the card is scanned by the driver's tablet after boarding.

Pre-paid *flexcards* are not redeemable for cash. YCPT is not responsible for lost or stolen cards.

E-pass accounts and pre-paid *flexcards* that are assigned to individual passengers **cannot** be used to pay for another individual's ride.

Please protect the square code on the *flexcards* from damage. This is how the fare is paid each time passengers rides.

In the event a card is damaged, lost or stolen, contact us by calling at 402-362-7626 so the card can be frozen.

Charge Accounts

Charge accounts will be provided only to those individuals whose rides are charged to an approved agency or facility with an agreement for services with YCPT. Individuals will not be allowed to charge rides. There is a \$2 administrative fee per boarding for charged rides.

Medicaid Reimbursed Transportation

YCPT may provide transportation services to Medicaid clients as approved through HHS. Additional medical transportation specific policies, procedures, and regulations will apply.

All fares for undefined service areas will be at the allowable Medicaid rate. Maximum allowable Medicaid rates will be accepted as determined by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services for exempt public transportation.

RESERVATIONS:

Rides must be scheduled through our office. Unscheduled stops are not allowed.

Rides may be requested by calling during 9 am and 4 pm each business day, by leaving a message on our answering machine or by using our online portal (sign up and director approval required). Rides will not be confirmed until scheduled into the system by the dispatcher. Those rides called in after 4 pm will be scheduled after 9:00 a.m. the next business day.

Information Needed to Schedule a Ride

- Rider's name, address and phone number
- Pick-up and drop-off address, including detailed pickup instructions (if applicable).
- Date and drop-off time needed
- Any additional stops (pharmacy, grocery store, etc.)
- Passenger assistance needs (mobility device, etc.)
- Additional riders, i.e., assistant, children or service animal.

With our dispatching software system rides are scheduled based upon the needed arrival time, rather than the pick-up time. This is done to accommodate multiple riders sharing the same vehicle, while making sure riders get to their destination.

Our dispatcher will make every effort to accommodate a passenger's request. If the requested time is not available, an alternative date and/or time will be offered, if available.

Advance Scheduling

Advance scheduling is recommended for rides to appointments. Passengers should schedule their ride as soon as possible after their appointment is scheduled.

Advance scheduling is required for all rides that occur:

- Out of York County
- On a Saturday
- On a holiday which offers limited services.

With advanced scheduling the exact pick-up time will be assigned at the end of the day before the ride occurs. The passenger may request to get an automatic call that evening telling them of their schedule pick-up time for their ride the following day. Passengers will then need to be ready to go **15 minutes** before their scheduled pick-up time.

For Thursday's trips to **Lincoln** or **Grand Island**, passengers need to schedule appointments no earlier than 9:30 a.m. and no later than 1:00 p.m. This is so that we can get the individual there on time, and for them to be ready to return back home before the vehicle leaves town with the other riders. If there is only one passenger, departure and return times may be different

Same Day Scheduling

Please remember that rides are scheduled on a "first-come, first-served" basis and are subject to time and space availability.

Request for same-day service will only be considered after 9 am Monday through Friday and are not available thru the online portal. The dispatcher will attempt to schedule the requested ride and the return trip into existing schedules utilizing the following criteria:

- It falls within the driver's current scheduled hours.
- The vehicle must have seating space available.
- The vehicle must be in the vicinity of the requested ride.
- Time must be available to allow the trip to be accommodated without disrupting the passengers already scheduled.

Same-day passengers may incur a considerable wait time during peak periods.

Return Rides

Passengers are welcome to schedule their return trip if they know specifically what time they will be ready (within a 5-minute time period).

In the event the passenger is ready to return prior to the scheduled return time, passengers may notify the YCPT office so that the passenger can be picked up earlier, if possible. If the demand for service does not allow, passengers will be picked up at their originally scheduled return time.

Drivers will usually not wait while passengers are at a drop-off location. If a driver attempts to wait, they often get called away to provide a ride to another passenger.

Another option is to utilize our "will-call" option. A will-call is where passengers call us when they are done and we fit them in as soon as possible, however there may be quite a wait, depending upon other previously scheduled rides and where are drivers are located.

Trip Cancellations

Contact our office for any changes in your plans. Telling a driver is not sufficient. Failure to cancel rides in a timely manner causes us to make unnecessary trips, which costs our program and causes inconvenience to other passengers. Riders are asked to cancel unwanted rides as soon as possible. Cancellations with less than one hours' notice are counted as "No-Shows."

Cancellations for rides on Saturday or on a Holiday must be left on our answering machine **no later than** 8:45 a.m. the day of the ride. The driver will check the answering machine only once before they start their day.

Cancellations for out of county trips would need to be left at least 1 hour prior to their scheduled leave time.

Cancellations not called in by these times will be charged as “no shows.”

No-Show Policy

A no-show is defined as any instance in which a passenger is not present for their scheduled ride and/or fails to notify the YCPT office in a timely manner of the need to cancel a ride.

Repeated “no-shows” may result in a suspension (see Suspension Section).

BOARDING & ON-BOARD PROCEDURES:

YCPT provides rides for many passengers each day. Drivers must allow for time to ensure that each passenger makes it from their pick-up location to their appointment on time.

Passengers who are prompt help us to be on time for the next rider, which enables us to provide better and faster service for everyone.

Pick Up & Wait Time

YCPT makes every effort to arrive as closely to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. Due to the nature of the service, arrival times may vary. An on-time pick-up window has been established to accommodate for this variance. All passengers should anticipate an early arrival of up to 15 minutes or the possibility of a 15-minute delay. Within that time frame the vehicle is considered on time.

Example: If a passenger schedules a 9:30 a.m. pick-up, the vehicle may arrive as early as 9:15 a.m., so passengers should

be prepared to leave at 9:15 a.m. The vehicle may be delayed, so be prepared to wait until 9:45 a.m. for the vehicle to arrive.

Drivers will not go into an apartment building or business to locate passengers; Passengers need to be ready and watching for vehicles during the entire on-time pickup window.

In addition, when drivers arrive during the on-time pick-up window, they are only required to wait for 5 minutes from the scheduled pick-up time before leaving for their next scheduled passenger.

Passengers who do not board the vehicle within the 5-minute time period will be charged with a “no show” (see “No Show” section). In addition, we may not be able to return for a passenger unless another opening is available.

Boarding

Drivers are responsible for providing minimal assistance to passengers in getting on and off the vehicle. This includes loading/unloading and securing wheelchairs and scooters, etc. However, drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down steps. In addition, drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.

Any passenger who cannot step up into the vehicle is welcome to use the vehicle lift or ramp to assist in boarding.

Passenger Assistance

Upon request, drivers may escort passengers into and from the inside door of a business, however **drivers may not go further into a business to assist.** In addition, drivers **will not enter** a private home for any reason (See Personal Assistants section if help is needed beyond these points).

Drivers are not responsible for carrying a passenger's groceries and/or packages to the door or loading them onto vehicle. Exceptions will be made for individuals with a disability who have requested this service thru the dispatcher so that additional time may be scheduled.

Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

Personal assistants are people that travel at no charge to assist a passenger with a special need. They can help the rider carry packages, escort them safely through the door of their home or help them at their destination.

Passengers will need to make their own arrangements for a personal aide if this additional assistance is required.

Carry-on Items

To increase efficiency, YCPT is a "shared-ride" service; passengers must often ride while other passengers are picked up and dropped off. Personal items must stay in the custody of the passenger; no items may be left on the vehicle at any time.

Oxygen tanks must be secured with a seat belt or tank holder on the wheelchair.

Drivers are NOT responsible for a passenger's carry-on items. YCPT assumes no responsibility for damage, breakage, or loss.

Due to the limited space on vehicles, passengers should only purchase what they, or their assistant, can carry and securely place at their feet. Generally, this would limit a rider to about three or four bags with a 25lb maximum weight limit per bag. A bag is considered to be a grocery bag, case of pop/water, a box or any separate parcel or package.

No baggage limit trips may be available. Contact the dispatcher for information concerning when these trips are available.

Passengers should not expect to use the shared storage area of the vehicle as it may be already filled. In addition, passengers should not expect to use the area beyond their feet as we may be picking up other passengers who may have their own bags.

Don't expect to transport anything which might cause inconvenience, discomfort, offense, or danger to other passengers. YCPT reserves the right to limit the weight and size of an article to be transported.

The driver has the authority to reasonably interpret and enforce this policy.

Seat Belt Policy

The driver and all passengers are required to use seat belts. Passengers who are medically unable to wear a seat belt may do so **only** in the back seat, and **only** when a doctor's statement has been submitted to our office. The statement must set forth reasons why use of a seat belt by the person would be impractical or harmful to the person by reason of physical condition, medical problem or body size.

MOBILITY DEVICES:

Wheelchairs and other mobility devices must be properly secured (where possible) with the passenger facing forward.

ADA requires that drivers attempt to secure a mobility device to the best of their ability in order to accommodate mobility devices that do not meet the definition of "common wheelchair." YCPT will not be liable for damages to a mobility device that is not recommended by the manufacturer for use to transport.

In addition, the driver may recommend to a passenger of a mobility device that they transfer to a vehicle seat; however, an individual may not be *required* to transfer.

With respect to the size and/or weight of wheelchairs, YCPT will transport a mobility device and its user, as long as the lift can accommodate the size and weight of the rider and their mobility device, consistent with legitimate safety requirements.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN:

Children under age 5 must be accompanied by an adult.

Nebraska State law states, “all children up to age eight must ride correctly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat.” Parents are responsible for supplying a child’s car seat and will be responsible for both securing and removing the car seat from the vehicle.

TRANSPORTING ANIMALS:

YCPT requires all animals to be secured in a pet travel carrier with the exception of service animals.

Passengers who have a service animal need to let the dispatcher know when scheduling their appointment.

Service animals are to accompany their owner; however, they must be properly leashed and/or controlled by their owner to prevent potential injuries to other passengers and driver.

LOST AND FOUND:

YCPT is not responsible for any item(s) left on a vehicle, however an attempt to return lost items will be made, if time allows. Items that we are unable to determine who they belong to will be brought back to the office where they will be held for a

maximum of seven (7) days until claimed. Once seven (7) days expire, the item(s) may be discarded or donated.

SEVERE WEATHER AND OFFICE CLOSINGS:

All YCPT services will be cancelled when the York County Courthouse closes due to severe weather. County shut downs will be announced via KAWL 1370 radio.

If York County has NOT cancelled services, YCPT will take all precautions necessary to provide safe travels for all of our passengers. Therefore, we may be running a bit behind.

If there are any schedule changes due to bad weather during the day, we will contact passengers by phone, when possible.

The driver has the right and responsibility to determine their capability and that of the vehicle. The driver will determine whether a road is passable or not.

The Director will determine whether to cancel a specific trip due to weather conditions (present or pending).

Passengers are responsible for having snow removed as needed so driveways and sidewalks are accessible. Drivers may refuse to transport a passenger if they determine they are unable safely assist the passenger to the vehicle.

GENERAL PASSENGER RULES:

The general rules listed below are not intended to be all-inclusive but are considered a guideline for proper passenger behavior. The driver may use his/her discretion and ask passengers to comply, especially if other passengers are being affected by their behavior. This is considered a verbal warning.

- Keep voices at a low level.

- Wear headphones with electronic devices.
- Shirts and shoes are required.
- Pick up after themselves and keep their area clean.
- All drinks must have lids to prevent spills.
- Out of respect for others, please practice good hygiene.
- Use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited, including chewing tobacco.
- Passengers under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal substances will be refused service.
- NO firearms, guns or concealed weapons are allowed.
- Violence/harassment of any type (sexual, verbal or physical) or foul/offensive language will not be tolerated and may result in the immediate and/or permanent suspension of services.

The driver has the authority to reasonably interpret and enforce this policy and may deny a ride for passengers not complying.

SUSPENSIONS/TERMINATIONS:

Failure to follow the rules outlined in this handbook, may result in refusal of passenger service, suspension, or termination of service. The transit director shall determine all suspensions.

Generally, a verbal warning will be given first. If the driver indicates that a problem continues, a warning letter would be issued next. Finally, a suspension letter would be sent.

When contemplating a suspension for no-shows, patterns of occurrence would be taken into consideration.

Riding privileges will generally be suspended for one week for the 1st suspension. Repeat suspensions will increase in duration.

When the severity of an offense warrants, YCPT reserves the right to skip the procedures above and immediately suspend or terminate services.

Appeal Process

If a passenger is in disagreement with any penalty resulting from the enforcement of these policies, they have 15 days to submit a written request for appeal to the York County Board of Commissioners at 510 Lincoln Ave., York, NE 68467.

Upon receipt of the request, the appeal will be scheduled to be heard at the commissioner's meeting following receipt of the request.

PASSENGER COMPLAINTS:

YCPT strives to offer safe, affordable, and on time transportation services. If our service did not meet a passenger's expectations, they should call the director at 402-362-7626 or complete a written complaint form and send to:

York County Public Transportation
Attention: Program Director
1614 Division Ave. PO Box 96
York, NE 68467

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

York County Public Transportation 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.

YCPT 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 YCPT solely based on his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

If an accommodation is needed to fully use our services, passengers may request one by contacting the YCPT director at the address above.

Title VI Complaints

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint of discrimination by completing and submitting the agency's Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form. This form can be downloaded on the agency website at https://www.yorkcounty.ne.gov/uploads/1/1/6/4/116459595/titlev_inoticetopubliceng_spanform.pdf; additionally, the form can be requested by contacting the agency at the address provided below. A telephone interpreter can be provided to assist persons of limited English proficiency.

York Co. Public Trans.
Attn: Program Director
1614 Division Ave. PO Box 96
York, NE 68467
(402)362-7626

NE Dept of Transportation
Attn: Title VI Transit Manager
1500 Hwy. 2
Lincoln, NE 68502
(402)479-4694

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attn: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor-TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

York County Public Transportation

PO Box 96

York NE. 68467