

Tri-City Roadrunner Passenger Handbook

Effective Date: 6/1/2020



308.436.6687

Operated by Scotts Bluff County

Governing Body Approval: 5/2/2022

1825 10th Street • Gering, NE 69341



Tri-City Roadrunner Passenger Handbook

Welcome Aboard Tri-City Roadrunner!

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook informs riders of the policies and procedures established by Tri-City Roadrunner to provide safe and efficient transportation services. In Scotts Bluff County, Tri-City Roadrunner provides Flexible Route Deviation Service in Gering, Scottsbluff, and Terrytown. Outside these communities, curb-to-curb demand-response service is available within the County. It is the responsibility of the rider to arrange for assistance from curb to door, if needed.

All service is shared ride. This means there may be other people on the vehicle with you. The driver may stop to pick up or drop off other people on the way to your destination.

You may contact Tri-City Roadrunner between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday at:

Phone: 308.436.6687
U.S. Mail: 1825 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341
Physical Address: 785 Rundell Road, Gering, NE 69341

TRI-CITY ROADRUNNER MISSION STATEMENT

To provide transportation to health care, grocery shopping, meals, public services, employment, education, and recreation.

TRI-CITY ROADRUNNER - GOALS OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK

Tri-City Roadrunner, operated by Scotts Bluff County, is a transportation provider for Scotts Bluff County. This service has a set of policies and procedures that passengers are required to follow. It is to the benefit of all passengers that all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are followed. All policies will be enforced in a consistent and fair manner. If passengers perceive they have been treated unfairly, they have the option of filing an appeals complaint with Tri-City Roadrunner, as outlined within this Handbook.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

Tri-City Roadrunner provides flexible route and demand response public transportation services to residents of Scotts Bluff County. The Flexible Route Service combines the benefits of a traditional fixed route and demand response within the Gering, Scottsbluff, and Terrytown communities.

What is Flex Route?

The flexible route bus follows a defined route, picking up and dropping off passengers at designated stops. The bus will also "flex" or deviate off its route. The driver will re-route the bus to locations within ¼-mile of its usual route when a passenger has made a reservation in advance. Deviations are based on a first come, first serve, with limited deviations per trip.

There are two types of Bus Stops along the flex route:

- Flex will always serve designated Bus Stops.
- Flex will stop at Deviated Stops when a passenger has made reservation in advance

The flex route is a shared ride, public transportation service. Route deviations are available during regular service hours of 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Requests for deviated service may be made 24 hours in advance on the preceding business day that service is requested. Reservations may be made between the hours of 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Deviated same day service requests are not available. The trip requests for both destination and return shall be scheduled at the time of the request. Same day service is available at designated bus stops. Trip deviations are available on a first come, first serve basis. This service is available for all residents for \$3.00 per one-way trip. Persons age 60 years and older and persons with a qualifying disability are eligible for a reduced rate of \$2.00 per one-way trip when the transit office has the required documentation.

To qualify for the discount based on a disability, be sure to have your health care provider complete the appropriate forms. If you are age 60 or over, include a photocopy of your driver's license or photo identification card to receive the discounted rate. If you are both age 60 or over and you have a disability, you are only required to provide one document, either the Health Care Professional Certification or photo identification confirming age to qualify for the discounted rate

Demand Response Service

Tri-City Roadrunner provides "curb-to-curb" demand response service, in addition to the Flexible Route service. The Demand Response Service is available outside the Flexible Route Service Area within Scotts Bluff County. The following policies further define the demand response service:

- At pickup/dropoff locations:
 - Passengers must enter and depart the transit vehicle at the designated pick-up and drop-off points. Passengers must be waiting at the designated pickup point at least 15 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time or the no-show policy will apply.
 - Drivers will not enter private homes for any reason.
 - Drivers will assist passengers into and out of the vehicle only. Drivers will not assist passengers into or out of buildings.
 - Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.
 - Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs.
 - It is the individual's personal care attendants' responsibility to ensure that passengers are waiting at the appropriate time for their ride and assist transit passengers to/from the vehicle.

Stop Announcements

On the deviated fixed route system, Tri-City Roadrunner shall announce stops at major time points along a route sufficient to permit individuals with visual disabilities to be oriented to their location. The drivers shall announce any stop on request of an individual with a disability.

At bus stops where more than one route serves the same stop, the drivers shall provide a means by which an individual with a visual impairment or other disability can identify the proper vehicle to enter or be identified to the vehicle operator as a person seeking to ride on a particular route.

DAYS AND HOURS OF SERVICE

- Flexible Route Deviation Service - Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 630 pm
- Demand Response Service 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Tri-City Roadrunner does not operate on weekends or evenings. Public transportation services are not provided on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, and Christmas Day

SERVICE AREA

Tri-City Roadrunner provides public transportation services in the following areas: Scottsbluff, Terrytown, Gering, Melbeta, McGrew, Minatare, Mitchell, Morrill, Lyman & Henry.

HOW TO RIDE TRI-CITY ROADRUNNER

Bus Stops: Tri-City Roadrunner buses only stop at signed bus stops. Flag stops are not permitted. For a complete bus stop list, please contact the transit office.

Catching the Bus: Be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled departure. Make sure the driver can see you. Check the Route Sign located in the windshield by the front door to insure you board the correct route.

Paying your Fare: Be ready to pay your fare or present your pass when you board. Exact fare only. Bus Operators cannot make change.

Exiting the Bus: When boarding the bus, tell the bus driver your destination. When you see your destination or transfer point, call out "next stop". Please provide enough notice, so that the bus driver can stop safely. If you are not familiar with the area, ask the bus driver for assistance.

Flex Route Deviations: For deviated pickup and dropoff, call the transit office 24-hours in advance to reserve the ride. Deviations are limited to the first three requests per one-way trip. If the deviation is no longer needed, call the transit office to cancel and avoid a no-show penalty.

Bicycles: Bicycle racks are located on the front of all Tri-City Roadrunner Flexible Route buses. Racks are available on a first come-first served basis. Riders are responsible for loading and unloading bicycles, and use the racks at their own risk. Please let the driver know when you need to load or unload a bike.

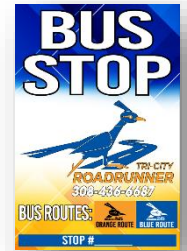
Animals on Tri-City Roadrunner: Service animals are welcome.

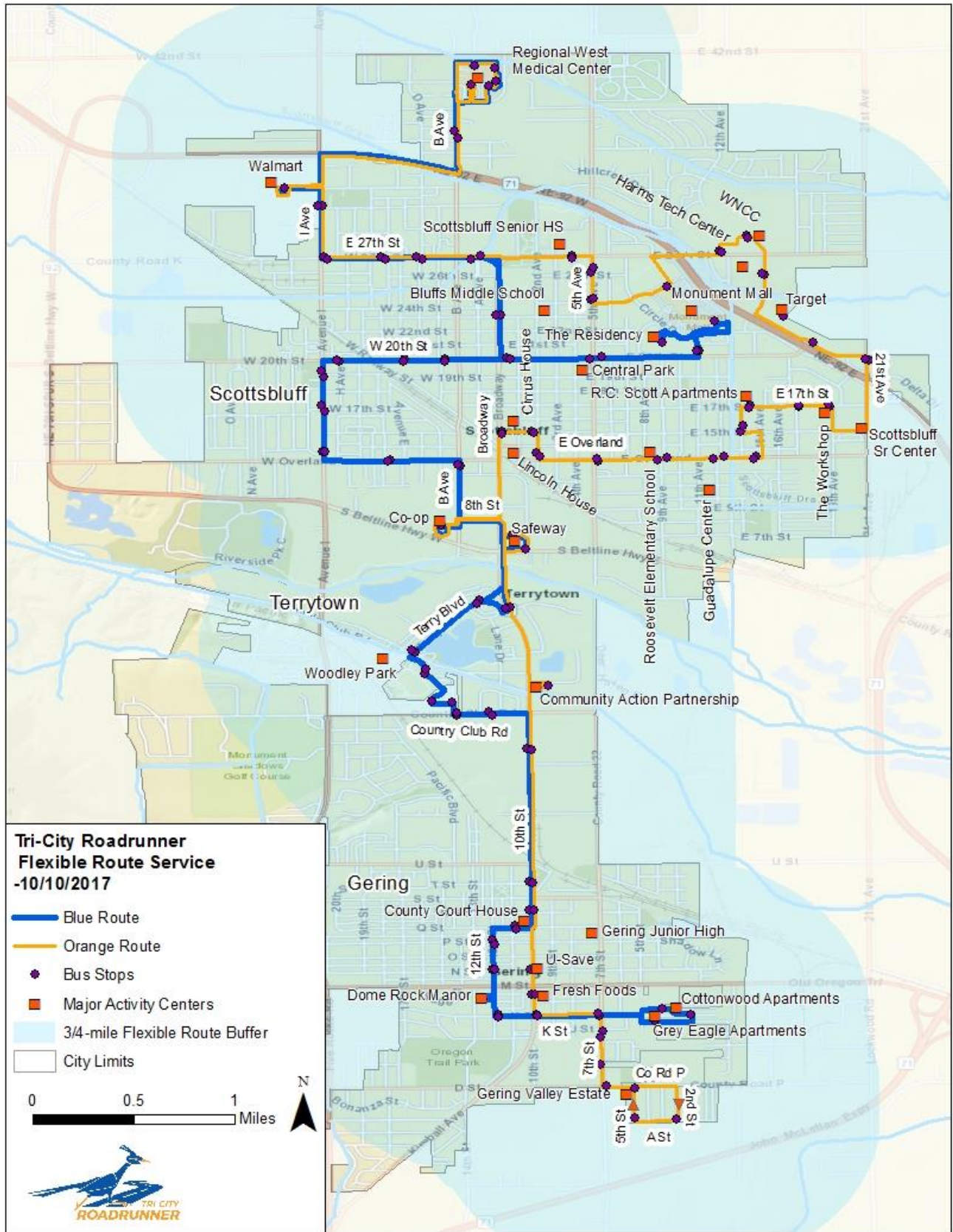
Lost and Found: If you leave an item on a Tri-City Roadrunner vehicle, please call the transit office to see if it has been retrieved or turned into a driver. Tri-City Roadrunner is not responsible for lost or stolen items on board its vehicles.

Mobility Training: New to transit? Learn how to ride Tri-City Roadrunner and plan your trip. Call the transit office for assistance. Staff will walk you steps to ride the transit system.

Transfers: Tri-City Roadrunner allows transfers between flexible routes. The agency does not issue transfers. Riders tell the driver if they need a transfer. The drivers will communicate the transfer location. The connecting trip must occur within a 60-minute time period.

Accessibility: All Tri-City Roadrunner flexible route vehicles are fully equipped with mobility device lifts and a mobility device securement area with space for two mobility devices. The bus driver provides assistance with normal boarding or exiting, mobility device securement and operation of the lift/ramp. Tri-City bus drivers are required to secure all mobility devices before the bus can leave the bus stop. All mobility aids must be able to fit within the allocated space, have working brakes, and cannot exceed the capacity of the lift/ramp (with the passenger and mobility aid). If the mobility aid cannot fit the lift/ramp platform, the passenger will not be able to ride. Mobility devices with leaking batteries or fluids will not be allowed to board.





TRIP SCHEDULING INFORMATION

Passengers who require trip scheduling for trip deviation or for trip information may call the Tri-City Roadrunner office at 308.436.6687.

When scheduling your trip deviation for flex route service or for demand response, please have the following information ready:

- Passenger name
- Pick up address
- Address of destination
- Arrival time to destination
- Approximate return trip request time
- Type of assistance device, such as wheelchair, cane etc.
- If a personal care attendant will accompany the passenger
- If a service animal will accompany the passenger
- If a guest will accompany the passenger

Trip Denials

A trip request may be denied for the flex route if Tri-City Roadrunner is at full capacity or the time is not available to complete the trip as requested. Alternate trip times will be suggested from the dispatch office.

Subscription Service

A subscription trip for flex route service is an ongoing reservation for a specific day of the week (for example, to work, dialysis, physical therapy, merchants, community services etc.). It is useful to schedule a subscription trip when a passenger goes to the same place one or more days each week. Subscription trips allow a passenger to schedule all trip requests with one phone call. Please call our Tri-City Roadrunner office during business hours to request a subscription trip. Subscription service is on a space available basis. According to the American with Disabilities Act guidelines, Tri-City Roadrunner may not absorb more than 50 percent of the trips available on a given day. It is the responsibility of the passenger to reconfirm all subscription trips, which are scheduled after holidays, school vacations, or other breaks.

Pick-Up and Drop Off

Passengers that request a trip deviation on the flex route service are picked up in between designated bus stops. Passengers receive an estimated pick up time. Please be ready and waiting in a place where you can hear or see the vehicle when it arrives. Drivers are not allowed to enter a residence or other facilities to look for passengers. To avoid delaying other passengers, drivers will only wait five (5) minutes at a deviated stop before proceeding on their route.

It is recommended that passengers accessing the flex route at a designated bus stop should arrive (5) five minutes early to avoid missing the bus. The vehicle requires an obstruction-free approach and sufficient turn-around area. Under some conditions alternate pick-up and drop-off locations may be established because of obstructed driveways, turnarounds, or other safety concerns.

Passenger Assistance

Transportation service is provided by ADA accessible lift equipped vehicles for flexible route service and demand response vehicles. All operators are trained to provide reasonable assistance. Operators are not trained to provide medical assistance.

Reasonable assistance includes:

- The operator will come to the curb of a residence or pick up location.

- The operator will attempt to notify passengers of arrival by sounding horn.
- The operator will assist passengers in boarding and exiting the van.
- The operator will deliver the passenger to the curb of his/her destination.

Reasonable assistance DOES NOT include:

- Assisting a passenger through the doorway or threshold of a residence.
- Assistance getting in or out of a wheelchair.
- Assistance in getting ready for the trip.
- Administering medication or oxygen.
- Assistance in carrying personal belongings or packages.
- Assisting passengers in wheelchairs up or down stairs that have more than one step.
- Tri-City Roadrunner reserves the right to refuse passenger assistance to areas deemed unsafe by the transit agency.

PASSENGER FARES

Fares for the flexible route service and for the demand response service are listed below. Fares must be paid upon each boarding by cash, bus pass, or ticket. Exact fare is required, operators cannot make change, Passengers may purchase tickets and passes from the bus driver. The current fares are as follows:

Fares

- Flexible Route Bus Stop Single Ride – One-way trip \$2.00
- Deviated Flex Route Single Ride – One-way trip \$3.00
- All Day Pass – unlimited rides for day of purchase \$5.00 per person
- Monthly Bus Pass for Flexible Route Service \$45 per month, per person
- Demand Response Service – (outside Flexible Route Service Area within Scotts Bluff County) –

Fee by Mile:

- 0-7 miles - \$2.00 per one-way trip
- 8-16 miles - \$4.00 per one-way trip
- 16 + miles - \$5.00 per one-way trip

Western Nebraska Community College

Active students of WNCC ride fare-free with proper WNCC identification.

Children

Tri-City Roadrunner established the following rules, roles, and responsibilities in the transportation of children under age 10. Parent or guardians must notify Tri-City Roadrunner at the time of trip scheduling the child's age. All children will be charged the same fare as the rider. All children must follow the rules. Violations of these rules by either the child or parent may lead to service suspension. Children 10 and over may travel alone. Exceptions to this policy for children over the age of four (4) include –

- Agency to agency transportation, such as from the Y.M.C.A. to a Public School. Transportation where the parent or guardian provides supervision for the child at both the pick-up and destination of the child's trip. Children are not allowed to change scheduled rides.

The driver will only wait five minutes for the responsible party to meet the vehicle. If no one arrives, the driver will notify the Transit Office and continue on their route. Office staff will attempt to reach the designated emergency contact person. If the customer is not met by the end of the route, nor contact made with the customer's appropriate contact persons, the drivers will be instructed to deliver the child to the local police station and appropriate contact persons notified. The customer will not be left unattended; however, the appropriate authorities will be notified to assist in locating a responsible party. Customers who must continue on a route beyond their scheduled destination may be subject to suspension of services.

Children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. A car seat or booster seat must be used for any child under eight years of age. Rear-facing car seats are recommended until the child is one year old or 20 pounds. Forward-facing car seats should be used until the child is eight years old or weighs 40 pounds.

Tri-City Roadrunner does not provide child safety seats and drivers are not permitted to secure child safety seats. It is the responsibility of the rider to provide and secure the safety seat. All children must be secured in an appropriate device or seatbelt while the vehicle is in motion. Children will not be seated in the front seat of the transit vehicle.

PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANTS / GUESTS

A personal care attendant (PCA) is someone who travels with a passenger to provide any assistance. A PCA rides for free and must board and de-board at the same location as the passenger. Your PCA may also meet you at both ends of your trip.

Please inform Tri-City Roadrunner when you make a reservation, that a PCA will accompany you to ensure sufficient seating availability on the van. Also, please let the dispatch office know if a guest will accompany you to ensure sufficient seating availability on the van.

Please note that if a passenger cannot be left alone at a destination, or if the passenger must be under constant care or supervision, Tri-City Roadrunner may request the passenger to travel with a PCA.

Personal care attendants are persons who are directly involved in the mobility assistance of the attendee and will be allowed to ride free of charge while accompanying their attendee. Assistance from the PCA typically includes, but is not limited to, the following duties:

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

CANCELLATIONS AND NO SHOWS

Passengers unable to keep scheduled pickup and dropoff appointments must call 24-hours prior to the designated pick up time. Cancellations will be accepted up to one hour prior to scheduled pick-up times, within the Scottsbluff/Gering area. Failure to take a scheduled trip or cancel that trip within the cancellation policy guidelines will result in a "No-Show." A pattern of successive no-shows may result in

service suspension. No-show suspension guidelines are as follows.

- **First No-Show:** After the first no-show the passenger will receive a verbal warning to call in cancellations in advance per the cancellation guidelines along with a verbal reminder of No Show consequences.
- **Second No-Show:** After the second no-show the passenger will receive a second verbal warning to call in cancellations in advance per the cancellation guidelines along with an additional verbal reminder of No Show consequences.
- **Third No-Show:** After the third no-show the passenger will be placed on a thirty (30) day suspension from the date the third no-show occurred.
- All no-shows following the third no-show suspension will be treated as a third no-show resulting in a thirty (30) day suspension,
- No-show violations will expire at the end of each year, ending on December 31st.

A no go charge will be assessed and payable when booking their next reservation. The rate will be double the one-way trip fare. As an example, it would a \$4.00 charge in Scottsbluff/Gering. \$8.00 in Mitchell, etc.

UNATTENDED CUSTOMER PROCEDURE

Customers determined as unable to be left unattended (based on age, cognitive limitations or special request of the responsible party) may schedule rides and ride unattended, however, arrangements must be made to have a responsible party meet the vehicle at each location. A customer or their legal guardian must submit a request for a passenger to be determined as unable to be left unattended. The driver will only wait five minutes for the responsible party to meet the vehicle. If no one arrives, the driver will notify the Transit Office and continue on their route. Office staff will attempt to reach the designated emergency contact person. If the customer is not met by the end of the route, they will be returned to the bus garage. The customer will not be left unattended; however, the appropriate authorities will be notified to assist in locating a responsible party. Customers who must continue on a route beyond their scheduled destination may be subject to suspension of services.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Disruptive or abusive behavior of any type, directed towards Tri-City Roadrunner employees or passengers, will not be tolerated. Instances of abuse will be thoroughly investigated on a case-by-case basis. The severity of the instance will determine the penalty and may range from a letter of warning to criminal prosecution. Tri-City Roadrunner reserves the right to suspend and/or revoke transportation privileges in cases of abusive behavior when the safety and well-being of the employees and/or passengers is compromised.

SERVICE ANIMALS & ACCOMODATION OF OTHER ANIMALS

Service animals are welcome to ride the Tri-City Roadrunner vehicle. Passengers using a service animal are responsible for the animal and will be held liable for the behavior and actions of the animal. Service animals regardless of training or certification may be denied transportation, if the animal becomes out of control and effective action is not taken to control the animal by the owner.

Tri-City Roadrunner does not transport non-service animals. Tri-City Roadrunner allows service animals to accompany owners as per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. ADA's revised regulations define a "service animal" as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the service animal must be directly related to

the person's disability. Under the ADA, "comfort," "therapy" or "emotional support animals" do not meet the definition of a service animal. For more information about the rules and regulations regarding service animals, go to ADA's website; www.ada.gov. Animals other than service animals, as described above, are not allowed to ride the transit vehicle.

CARRY-ON ITEMS - PACKAGES AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Passengers are allowed to bring on the bus or van as many packages as they are capable of carrying in one trip. If help is needed for additional packages, a companion must be available to assist the passenger. Passengers packages are to be held within their lap, wheelchair, or motorized scooter. Passengers may also leave packages within their carryon device, if adequate loading space is available for other passengers. Packages are not to be stored in the aisles of the vehicle or in unoccupied seats, if blocking travel lane and seats.

No one package shall weigh more than 20 pounds. An oxygen tank must be portable and secured in some fashion, so it cannot fall or roll. Securement can be with a seat belt or tank holder on the wheelchair. Drivers are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

RULES AND REGULATIONS TO RIDE TRI-CITY ROADRUNNER

Tri-City Roadrunner vehicle operations comply with all state and federal safety policies, as well as criminal statutes and municipal ordinances to ensure the safety of our passengers and the public at large. Here is a list of some of those policies that are meant to help you and your fellow passengers enjoy a safe and stress-free ride:

- No profanity.
- No Smoking.
- No eating or drinking aboard the vehicles.
- The use of portable audio equipment without headphones is prohibited.
- Keep the aisles clear of hazards such as carts, packages, and strollers.

Passenger Safety and Security

It is required that all passengers wear an approved safety device while riding on the bus. Passengers utilizing mobility devices will be required to have their mobility device properly secured. A passenger who cannot enter the vehicle using the stairs or ramp, but who does not use a wheelchair, will enter using the vehicle lift. Drivers have the discretion to assign seats and determine wheelchair placement when necessary for the efficiency and/or safety of the passengers. The driver may recommend a passenger transfer from his or her mobility device into a vehicle seat. In this instance, the passenger has the final decision as to whether a transfer is appropriate.

GENERAL PASSENGER RULES

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

- Riders shall wait until the transit vehicle has come to a complete stop before attempting to board or disembark. All riders shall stay seated until the vehicle stops.
- No roller skates, roller blades, ice skates, etc., are to be worn in the bus.
- All passengers are to be appropriately clothed and wearing some form of protective footwear.
- While waiting for the transit vehicle at the designated pick-up point or bus stop, riders shall stay off the traveled roadway at all times. Riders shall not walk along the side, directly in front of or behind the bus for any reason.

- Riders shall be considerate of others at all times. Threats, hitting, tripping, shoving, kicking, spitting, foul language, horseplay, teasing or any other improper or disruptive behavior towards anyone or themselves will not be tolerated.
- Devices such as radios or I-Pods are allowed with headphones.
- Passengers using alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances will not be permitted in the transit vehicle.
- Riders shall keep hand(s), head or any other body part inside the bus and within their seated area at all times.
- Riders shall obey the driver willingly and report any problems to the bus driver or dispatcher promptly.
- Riders shall assist in keeping the transit vehicle clean by using sanitary practices. Any offensive odors to others or any type of unsanitary practices are to be avoided.
- Eating or drinking beverages in the vehicle is not permitted.
- Use of tobacco product or vaping is strictly prohibited.
- Lighting matches, lighters, or any other type of flammable material is not permitted on the vehicle.
- Any items that the driver assumes may be explosive or any type of weapon is not permitted on the vehicle.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Tri-City Roadrunner 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. Tri-City Roadrunner serves a diverse population of individuals with varying ages, physical challenges, economic status, and ethnic backgrounds. Tri-City Roadrunner 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 Tri-City Roadrunner solely based on his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, gender, disability, or any other characteristic protected by laws.

Title VI complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies of Tri-City Roadrunner may be directed to the Transit Manager. Complaint forms are available at the Tri-City Roadrunner Office, 1825 10th Street, Gering, NE. on Scotts Bluff County website and in all vehicles.

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Passengers are responsible for snow removal of their driveways and sidewalks. The areas should be safe and accessible to transit vehicles.

If extreme weather conditions make travel unsafe, services will be discontinued until conditions are more favorable. Passengers with scheduled trips will be notified as soon as possible. In the event transit service is closed due to a weather event, it will be announced on local radio and TV stations.

Winter Riding Tips:

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

VIOLATIONS OF POLICY

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

- *First Offense:* A warning letter issued.
- *Second Offense:* A second letter issued, which results in rides being discontinued for one week.
- *Third Offense:* A third and final letter sent and rides discontinued indefinitely.

Tri-City Roadrunner reserves the right to terminate services immediately.

COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

As a recipient of State and Federal funds administered by the Nebraska Department of Transportation, Tri-City Roadrunner hereby attests it will abide by the eligibility guidelines and service priorities as stipulated by all applicable laws, rules and regulations. The process for submitting a Title VI complaint is outlined in this handbook. For all other complaints, contact the transit office for additional information and a copy of the complaint form:

*Tri-City Roadrunner
1825 10th Street
Gering, NE. 69341
308-436-6687*

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Tri-City Roadrunner representative will request written detail of the complaint or take an oral statement from the complainant. The complaint should include all details regarding the situation including date, time, driver, problem, etc. All complaints or statements should be signed or, if by telephone, the actual complainant should be the individual calling. Complaints received by telephone will be investigated and resolved as soon as possible on the day of the complaint. A written response will not be required if complainant is satisfied with the resolution. Upon completion of the investigation, a decision regarding the complaint will be rendered and a written response issued to the complainant no later than 10 days after receipt of the complaint. A copy of the complaint and action taken will be forwarded to the Nebraska Department of Transportation, Transit Section, and a copy will be kept on file at the transit office, 1825 10th Street, Gering, NE.