

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit

Passenger Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit provides safe and affordable public transportation to persons of all ages, including persons with disabilities, within our service area of Johnson County, Nebraska.

GOALS OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit is a transportation provider for Johnson 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 City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit as outlined below.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit 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. The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit serves a diverse population of individuals with varying ages, physical challenges, economic status, and ethnic backgrounds. The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit 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 the City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit solely based on his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Title VI complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies of the City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit may be directed to Janelle Moran at 402-335-4011 or 402-335-3570. Complaint forms are available on the bus, at City Hall located at 122 South 4th Street, Tecumseh, NE or the city website at www.tecumsehne.com.

Any person who believes he or she has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practices under Title VI may file a complaint with:

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit
Janelle Moran
122 South 4th Street/P.O. Box 417
Tecumseh, NE 68450

Nebraska Department of Transportation
Attn: Sarah Soula
1500 Nebraska Parkway
Lincoln, NE 68502
(402) 479-4871
sarah.soula@nebraska.gov

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI program coordinator
East Building, 5th floor-TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit system operates a demand-responsive, dial-a-ride basis to provide transportation services to persons of all ages, including persons with disabilities within our service area. The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit provides public transportation services in the following areas: Tecumseh, Sterling, Cook, St. Mary, Crab Orchard, Vesta and Elk Creek in Johnson County. We also travel to Johnson (Nemaha County) and Steinauer (Pawnee County). We will also coordinate with other towns (Syracuse, Unadilla, Palmyra, Adams, Bennett, Burr and Douglas), to pick up and drop off residents wanting to travel to Lincoln. The Bus provides non-emergency medical transportation. If there is a medical emergency, please call 911.

DAYS & HOURS OF SERVICE

The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit operates on:

Monday-Friday, 7:30am-12pm, 12:30pm-2:30pm. (Last pick up is 2pm). (Lunch is 12pm-12:30pm)

Transportation services are not provided on weekends or federal holidays.

The bus is closed for inclement weather or for repairs.

First Monday of the month – Bus goes to Beatrice

Second Monday of the month – Bus goes to Lincoln

If a holiday falls on one of those Mondays, the trip is moved to the following Monday.

Departure is approx. 8am – arrival in Beatrice/Lincoln by 9am. All doctor appointments should be made within the 9:15am – 1pm range. Please bring Doctor's or clinic name, correct address and phone number for doctor appointments. Advance notice is required for these trips.

FARES & PAYMENTS

All rides must be paid at the time of service. Cash or checks are accepted on the bus. You may also purchase a ticket from the driver – that is for 10 one-way rides. You can also use a debit card at City Hall to purchase a ticket. Tickets are non-refundable, but can be transferred to another person.

**\$2 per ride for city - \$4 round trip - \$2 each additional stop with advance booking.

\$4 without 24-hour advance booking.

**\$4 per ride for county (out of city limits) - \$8 round trip - \$2 each additional stop (in city limits).

\$8 without 24-hour advance booking.

**\$20 to Beatrice or Lincoln - \$15 for passengers picked up in other communities (Syracuse, Unadilla, Palmyra, Adams, Bennet, Burr and Douglas) on the way to Beatrice or Lincoln.

Fares are per boarding, so the higher fare listed would be for each trip if there is no 24hr advance booking.

SCHEDULING RIDES

Contact City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit at 402-335-2030 to schedule your ride. The driver may ask passenger name, address, phone number, destination name and address and expected arrival time to destination. You must call at least 24hrs in advance to schedule rides. All bookings are first come, first served. Once you schedule rides and get on the bus – you cannot change your schedule. You must make any changes to your schedule in advance. If you do not call 24 hours in advance for a ride, you will be charged accordingly. Changing your scheduled rides will fall under the 'without 24-hour advance booking.

CURB-TO-CURB SERVICE

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit provides "curb-to-curb" service only. The following policies further define this service:

1. Private Homes:

- Passengers must enter and depart the transit vehicle at the designated pick-up and drop-off points.
- Drivers will not enter private homes for any reason.
- Drivers may assist passengers to and from the vehicle if requested.

- Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.
- Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs.

2. Business/Medical Facilities/Public Buildings:

- Drivers may assist passengers into and from the inside door. Due to extreme temperatures in entryways, drivers may assist passengers through the second entry door when necessary. Drivers will not assist passengers further into the building.
- When picking up passengers from a business or medical facility, drivers may go through the first door. Drivers will not go past this point.
- It is the individual's personal care attendants' responsibility to ensure that passengers are waiting inside the door for their ride.
- Drivers will not enter nursing homes, medical facilities, shopping centers or businesses to locate passengers. 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.

CANCELLATION POLICY AND NO SHOWS

Passengers are encouraged to cancel scheduled pick-ups in a timely manner. Cancellations can be made by contacting the transit office at 402-335-2030 between 7:30am and 2:30pm, Monday thru Friday.

Cancellations should be made 24 hours in advance or as early as possible. Cancellations will be accepted up to one hour prior to scheduled pick-up times without penalty. Any cancellation received later than one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up will be considered a late cancellation and will be noted as such by the dispatcher in the passenger's record. Three or more late cancellations in a 90-day period will be considered excessive and the passenger will receive written notification of such via the U.S. Postal Service. Passengers having additional late cancellations during the next 90-day period will be assessed a \$5.00 late cancellation fee, payable at the next boarding call.

A no show is defined as any instance in which a passenger does not keep their scheduled ride and fails to notify the City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit at least 2 hours prior to scheduled pick-up time. Upon arrival at the scheduled pick-up point, the transit driver will wait for the passenger for five minutes. After five minutes, the driver will continue on his/her route and the ride will be marked as a no show. **The passenger is charged for a no show ride.**

PASSENGER READINESS

Passengers should be prepared for transit vehicles to arrive 15 minutes before or after your scheduled pick-up time. Schedule rides accordingly to arrive at your destination for appointments.

TRANSPORTING SERVICE ANIMALS & ACCOMODATION OF OTHER ANIMALS

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit 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. Where reasonable, miniature horses are also allowed as service animals.

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.

Animals other than service animals as described above are allowed to ride the transit vehicle in a secured pet carrier – or if the animal is too big, the animal has to be under the control of the owner.

PERSONAL ASSITANTS/GUESTS

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. Generally, the following conditions would warrant

a fare free attendant: immobility, disorientation, no comprehension, and communication impairment. Any other person riding with a passenger will be considered a guest and will be required to pay full fare.

Personal care attendants are required to specifically assist the passenger. This assistance 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)

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 be allowed to enter the vehicle using the 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 that 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.

State laws apply toward child passengers.

GENERAL PASSENGER RULES

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

1. 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.
 2. No roller skates, roller blades, ice skates, etc., are to be worn in the bus.
 3. All passengers are to be clothed and wearing some form of protective footwear.
 4. While waiting for the transit vehicle at the designated pick-up point, 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.
 5. All passengers will remain seated while the vehicle is in motion and for the duration of their ride.
 6. 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.
 7. Devices such as radios or I-Pods can only be used with headphones.
 8. Passengers carrying or using alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances will not be permitted in the transit vehicle. Unopened alcoholic beverage containers are allowed if purchased by a legal adult for personal use.
 9. Riders shall keep hand(s), head or any other body part inside the bus and within their seated area at all times.
 10. Riders shall obey the driver willingly and report any problems to the bus driver or dispatcher promptly.
 11. 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.
 12. Eating or drinking beverages in the vehicle is not permitted.
 13. Use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited (cigarettes, vapor, electronic cigarettes, or chewing tobacco).
 14. Lighting matches, lighters, or any other type of flammable material is not permitted on the vehicle.
 15. Any items that the driver assumes may be explosive or any type of weapon is not permitted on the vehicle.
- Fuel in a gas can is NOT permitted on the bus

CHILD RIDER POLICY

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit has established rules, roles and responsibilities in the transportation of children under the age of 16. Therefore, the following policies will be followed:

1. All children must follow the transit rules, regulations, and policies. Violations of these rules by either the child or parent may lead to service suspension.
2. No child under the age of three (3) is permitted to ride alone on the bus. The exception is where the parent or guardian or daycare provides supervision for the child at both the pick-up and/or destination of the child's trip.
3. According to a law that became effective January 1, 2019, all children must travel in rear-facing seats until they are 2 years old or they reach the weight limit set by the seat manufacturer.
After reaching the weight and height limit for rear-facing seats, prescribed by the seat manufacturer, and before they are ready for the booster seat, children can graduate to a forward-facing seat.
Children between the ages of eight and eighteen must wear a seat belt.
I do require an infant car seat for infants which I do not have – you are required to supply those. I do have integrated child seats built into the bus if the child weighs between 22-78lbs and whose height is between 33 and 51 inches and can sit up by themselves. There are EZ-ON 86Y car cam which converts lap belt to a 4-point securement system for children that are 66-168 lbs.
4. Parent or guardians must notify City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit at the time of trip scheduling the child's age.
5. If no adult is at the destination location to accept the child (under 16 years of age), the child will NOT be left at the drop off location. Drivers will be instructed to deliver the child to the local police station, and parents will be notified.

PACKAGES AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Passengers shall limit their carry-on packages to not more than the equivalent of five brown paper grocery sacks or ten plastic bags per person. An attendant may travel to assist with the loading/unloading of packages. Oversized packages will be refused for transport. No one package shall weigh more than 20 pounds. A basket is provided to place items in for each passenger.

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.

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Passengers are responsible for snow removal so their driveways and sidewalks are 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 that transit service is closed due to a weather event, it will be announced on www.tecumsehne.com or City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit FB page

***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.

SERVICE DENIAL

Service may be denied if an individual engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others. Abusive, disruptive, or threatening behavior will not be tolerated. Any indirect or direct threats of physical violence and/or verbal abuse to any transit personnel or other passengers, will not be tolerated and will result in suspension of services. We may refuse service for any situation that disrupts the provision of service.

The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit has zero tolerance towards violence. Any act of violence or threat of violence will result in termination of passenger rides.

The City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit has a NO firearms, guns or concealed weapons on all transit buses and transit property, in accordance with the Tecumseh City Code.

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 will be issued.

Second Offense: A second letter will be issued which will result in rides being discontinued for one week.

Third Offense: A third and final letter will be sent and rides will be discontinued indefinitely.

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit reserves the right to terminate services immediately.

Any act or threat of violence will result in immediate termination of service and may be reported to law enforcement. A letter will be sent by the Transportation Manager or Agency Director describing the reasons for service denial.

COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

As a recipient of State and Federal funds administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads, City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit hereby attests that 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 the Nondiscrimination section of this handbook. For all other complaints, contact the following for additional information and a copy of the complaint form:

City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit
Board of Directors
P.O. Box 417
Tecumseh, NE 68450

Upon receipt of the complaint, the City of Tecumseh/Johnson County Public Transit 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 prior to ending the call. 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 Roads, Transit Section, and a copy will be kept on file at City Hall.