

## Passenger Assistance Policy

Suburban Transit Network, Inc. (TransNet) is committed to providing safe, reliable and courteous transportation for all passengers.

1. The passenger is responsible to inform the reservation specialist about his/her specific cognitive or physical impairment and the type of assistance required. Persons who will be traveling in a wheelchair must identify the type of wheelchair he/she will be using. TransNet reserves the right to assess the wheelchair type and home access to determine if transportation can be provided safely. All persons who are transported in a wheelchair must also have and use a wheelchair lap belt. Lap belts must be secured prior to loading the wheelchair on the lift. TransNet will provide temporary lap belts for use on the vehicle while a passenger is obtaining his/her own lap belt. Lap belts are available for purchase by contacting the TransNet at **215-542-RIDE** (7433).
2. Drivers are required to offer curb-to-curb service. Curb to curb service is defined as assistance to embark and disembark the vehicle.
3. Drivers will confirm that all passengers are properly secured prior to departure. If the passenger is unable to secure his/her seatbelt independently, the driver is required to offer assistance to help the passenger secure his/her safety belt.
4. If a person may not be left alone, the driver will not leave that person at his or her destination unless someone is there to receive that person. The driver will contact the dispatcher and request assistance. The dispatcher will instruct the driver to wait at the destination or transport the individual to an alternate destination.
5. When door-to-door assistance is requested, it is defined as assistance to and from the vehicle and to and from the entrance of the building. This assistance includes allowing the passenger to take the driver's arm, pushing a wheelchair, carrying four (4) grocery bags or packages (20lb limit) and opening the entrance door. Assistance **does not** include the physical lifting of the passenger or lifting the wheelchair in any way.
6. If requested by the passenger, door to door assistance will be provided if the physical or mental condition of the passenger is such that he/she cannot reach the entrance to their home or destination independently. However, TransNet reserves the right to require that the passenger use a mobility aid (wheelchair, walker, etc.) to insure safe boarding and transport. TransNet may deny assistance if the driver is unable to provide assistance safely. (see #12)
7. **PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THE DRIVER MAY NOT LEAVE THE VEHICLE UNATTENDED IF THERE ARE OTHER PASSENGERS ON BOARD WHO MAY NOT BE LEFT ALONE. IN THIS CASE, A RESPONSIBLE PERSON MUST BE AVAILABLE AT THE ORIGIN AND DESTINATION TO PHYSICALLY ASSIST THE PASSENGER (S) TO AND FROM THEIR RESIDENCE AND THE VEHICLE AND TO AND FROM THE ENTRANCE OF THEIR DESTINATION. TRANSNET WILL ADVISE STAFF AND/OR FAMILY MEMBERS IN ADVANCE IF THIS SITUATION OCCURS.**

8. All residences and facilities must have easy access for persons who have mobility impairments. Access must be paved, cleared of snow and ice and have either a level or ramped surface. Passengers are responsible to rectify accessibility problems at their residence. TransNet will provide resource information to passengers upon request.
9. TransNet will provide seatbelts in all vehicles and seven (7) point restraint systems and forward facing seating in all lift equipped vans. All drivers will be properly trained in passenger assistance.
10. Passengers using wheelchairs during transit must be properly and safely secured using a 7-point securement system. If a wheelchair cannot be safely loaded or properly secured, and the passenger is unable to independently transfer to a seat, TransNet will not transport the passenger.
11. Passengers in wheelchairs will be provided with assistance to embark and disembark a lift-equipped vehicle. However, if a passenger in a wheelchair requests to be transported in a sedan or mini-van which is not equipped with a lift or ramp, the passenger must have someone at the origination and destination point to transfer the person into his/her seat and to store the wheelchair in the trunk or inside the vehicle. Vehicles that are not lift equipped or ramped will **only** be used to transport passengers in wheelchairs if the wheelchair can fit into the trunk or inside the vehicle.
12. For persons traveling to and from organized programs such as adult day centers, senior centers and vocational training centers or to and from medical facilities, trained personnel must be available to escort passengers to and from the vehicle.
13. Senior citizens who require additional assistance beyond the assistance TransNet offers are required to provide and travel with an escort. An escort is defined as an able bodied person with the ability to provide the necessary assistance. TransNet will make the final determination concerning the need for an escort and TransNet's procedures for approval of an escort must be followed. **If an escort is approved for a senior citizen, this passenger must always travel with an escort.**
14. **Drivers are prohibited from entering a person's home or a facility to provide passenger assistance.**

**TRANSNET RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY TRANSPORTATION IF TRANSNET DETERMINES THAT TRANSPORTATION CANNOT BE PROVIDED IN A SAFE MANNER. FURTHER, TRANSNET DOES NOT ACCEPT ANY LIABILITY FOR PASSENGERS WHO FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY.**

- Amended 9/24/08

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## Wheelchair Lap Belt Policy

All persons who are transported in a wheelchair are required to use a wheelchair lap belt. These belts must be secured prior to loading the wheelchair on the lift for **SAFETY** and **LIABILITY** reasons.

Please contact the TransNet Risk Manager at **215-542-RIDE** (7433) if you have any questions regarding this or if you would like to purchase lap belts. The cost of the lap belt is \$10.

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## Escort / Personal Assistant Policy

Passengers, who require physical assistance that cannot be provided by the driver, may travel with an escort or personal assistant. The passenger must provide the escort or personal assistant. The escort or personal assistant is charged a minimal fare of \$5.00. The trip origin and destination of the passenger and the escort or personal assistant must be the same.

Escort or personal assistants must be physically able to provide assistance if needed by the passenger. The need for an escort or personal assistant should be indicated on the Certification of Disability Form submitted with the passenger's Registration Form. When the trip reservation is made, the passenger must inform the reservation specialist if an escort or personal assistant will be traveling with them.

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## Trip Cancellation / No-Show Policy for Shared Ride Trips

1. Please cancel all shared-ride trips at least 2 hours PRIOR to your scheduled pick-up time. When you cancel, please write down the name of the person you spoke to and the time.
2. All shared-ride trips that are not cancelled in accordance with these guidelines will be subject to a no-show charge. The no-show charge is 100% of the fare. You currently only pay \$3.50 or 15 % of the fare, whichever is higher. For example, if your current charge is \$4.00, the no-show charge would be \$26.50
3. No-show charges MUST be paid before any new trips may be scheduled.
4. Riders who fail to cancel their trips 3 times within a 90-day period will be suspended from service for 30 days.
5. Since this is a shared-ride service, drivers may be at the designated pick-up location either 30 minutes before or 30 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.
6. Drivers are instructed to wait only 5 minutes at designated pick-up locations. Please remember that this service is curb-to-curb unless you have been approved in advance for door-to-door service. It is important for you to understand that the vehicle may already have other passengers on board. By not being ready on time, you are inconveniencing the driver, the other passengers on board, and those passengers who are waiting to be picked up.
7. It is the rider's responsibility to call the dispatcher at least 2 hours prior to their scheduled pick-up time, if they know they will be late for a scheduled pick-up.
8. All riders must be at their designated pick-up location. If your return pick-up location is going to be different than your original drop-off location, please inform the call-taker the day before when you schedule your trip. Please do not, under any circumstances inform the driver or rely on the driver to make any changes to your trip for you. Please do not leave your designated pick-up location.

The Shared-Ride Program is a service provided to senior citizens and persons with disabilities through funding made available from the Pa. Department of Transportation. This service is designed to offer transportation service at a reduced rate as long as the service is provided on a shared, cost-effective basis. Trips that are not cancelled not only result in an unnecessary cost for the transportation carrier, but they also cause great inconvenience for other riders who may be waiting for service.

Since it is a shared-ride service, it is the transportation carrier's responsibility to try to group trips as much as possible. This may result in a request for you to be flexible with your pick-up time in order for other riders to be picked up in a more efficient manner.

## Complaint Procedure

Service complaints should be submitted by phone or in writing to:

### **TransNet**

980 Harvest Drive, Suite 100

Blue Bell, Pa. 19422-1955

215-542-7433

215-542-0699 (fax)

[ride@suburbantransit.org](mailto:ride@suburbantransit.org) (e-mail)

Attention: Risk Management Department

A complaint form is also available on the TransNet website and can be directly forwarded to [ride@suburbantransit.org](mailto:ride@suburbantransit.org).

A complaint is a verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction. All complaints will be reviewed and a TransNet staff person will provide a telephone response within 3 days and a written response within 7 days. This staff person may not be involved in the action that is the subject of the complaint. Written documentation of complaints will be kept on file.

If the complaint resolution is not satisfactory, the consumer has the right to request that the Executive Director review the complaint. A response to this second level of complaint review/resolution will be provided within 7 days after receipt.

If the complaint resolution by the Executive Director is not satisfactory to the consumer, the complaint will be forwarded to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for review and resolution.