



Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging
Serving Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington counties

Rural Transportation Program

Policies and Procedures
**Passenger
Handbook**

July 1, 2021



**Rural 
Transportation
 Program**



The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) Rural Transportation Program provides service in rural Douglas, Cass, Sarpy, Washington and Dodge counties in Nebraska. 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.

For additional information or questions, please call the Omaha office at 1-888-210-1093.



Holiday Closures

July 2021 to June 2022

2021

Monday, July 5 Monday..... Independence Day Observed
 Monday, September 6..... Labor Day
 Monday, October 11..... Columbus Day
 Thursday, November 11..... Veterans Day
 Thursday, November 25..... Thanksgiving Day
 Saturday, December 25..... Christmas Day
 Friday, December 31..... New Year's Day

Please double check these dates make sure they are correct.

2022

Saturday, January 1..... New Years Day
 Monday, January 17..... Martin Luther King Day
 Monday, February 21..... Presidents Day
 Monday, May 30..... Memorial Day
 Monday, June 20..... Juneteenth (observed)?
 Monday, July 4..... Independence Day
 Monday, September 5..... Labor Day
 Monday, October 10..... Columbus Day
 Friday, November 11..... Veterans Day
 Thursday, November 24..... Thanksgiving
 Sunday, December 25..... Christmas Day
 Monday, December 26..... Christmas Day (observed)

Notes:



Passenger Handbook

I have received a copy of the
2021-22 ENOA Rural Transportation Passenger Handbook

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Driver Initials: _____



Notes:



Rural
Transportation
Program



Notes:

POLICY: Accidents

All Rural Transportation Program vehicle accidents must be reported to the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging.

PROCEDURE:

- In case of an accident, the driver must call the Community Services Division Director at 402-444-6536 ext. 1021 to report the accident.
- If this office is not available, leave a message and then call the dispatch office for the appropriate county.
- If the dispatch office is also unavailable, call the agency benefits coordinator at the Eastern Nebraska Human Services Agency (ENHSA), 402-444-6580 to report the accident.
- If the driver or any of the passengers need to be seen by a doctor or transported to a medical facility the benefits coordinator at ENHSA must call ahead to make these arrangements.
- If the police are called, turn in a copy of the accident report to the Community Services Division Director of ENOA.
- If police are not called, the following information must be submitted to the Community Services Division Director of ENOA within 24 hours of the accident:
 - Date/time/location of accident;
 - Detailed description of what happened;
 - Other driver's name, address, phone, license plate number, driver's license number, make, model, year of their vehicle, last 6 of the VIN of their vehicle, name and phone number of their insurance agency;
 - List of all passengers in the ENOA vehicle at the time of the accident including: names, addresses, phone numbers and dates of birth;
 - Completed Workers' Compensation form, even if you were not seen by a doctor or transported to a medical facility.
- The Omaha office will complete all paperwork with agency insurance company and the Nebraska Department of Roads and make arrangements for a rental vehicle if one is needed.

POLICY: Cancellations

- Passengers must contact the dispatch office and/or driver when a ride must be cancelled.
- Rides must be cancelled within 1 hour of scheduled pick up time or passenger will be billed for the full cost of the ride.

Note: The only exception to this would be in case of an emergency situation which prevented a call being made to the office or driver.

- If this policy is violated 3 times you may be removed from the program

PROCEDURE:

- Cancellations can be made by contacting the dispatch offices between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Messages can also be left for the dispatch regarding a cancellation.
- Passengers may contact the driver if they are unable to reach the dispatch office and need to cancel their appointment on the day of their ride.



POLICY: Weather Closure

If extreme weather conditions make travel unsafe, services will be discontinued until conditions are more favorable. The Rural Transportation Program will follow main school district closings due to bad weather.



PROCEDURE:

When the main school district in the following counties closes, the driver shall be given the option of driving their route if they feel it is safe to do so:

- Washington County/Blair Public Schools
- Dodge/Fremont Public Schools
- Douglas/Omaha Public Schools
- Sarpy/Bellevue Public Schools
- Cass/Elmwood Public Schools

* If a driver chooses to not drive due to the weather, all passengers will be notified.

POLICY: Transporting Children

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program has established rules, roles and responsibilities in the transportation of children.

- Children under the age of sixteen (16) must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- The Rural Transportation Program is not considered a school bus transportation system and will not transport school children or school personnel on a regular scheduled basis.

NOTE: “Title 49 U.S.C. 53 (f) prohibits the use of FTA funds for exclusive school bus transportation for school students and school personnel. The implementing regulation (49 CFR part 605) does permit regular service to be modified to accommodate school students along with the general public (“tripper service”) if scheduling allows. In those occasional situations the school student(s) are required to be accompanied by a parent or guardian, no exceptions will be allowed.

- When scheduling trips, the parent or guardians must provide the child passenger’s age to the Rural Transportation program scheduler.
- The Rural Transportation Program does not supply car safety or booster seats; clients will be responsible for providing and securing these seats into the van as drivers are not allowed to do so.
- Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.

POLICY: Carry On Packages

Passengers shall limit their carry-on packages to not more than the equivalent of five brown paper grocery sacks or ten plastic bags per passenger. If passenger is unable to load and unload their packages an escort may ride along at no additional cost.



POLICY: Child Restraint

All children passengers must be properly restrained according to the following policies established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

PROCEDURE:

- All children up to age eight (8) must ride correctly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat.
- Children ride rear facing until age two (2) or until they reach the upper weight or height limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer.
- All children who have outgrown child safety seats should be properly restrained in booster seats until they are at least eight (8) years old.
If the child is 4 feet 9 inches before their eighth birthday they may use an adult safety belt.
- All children ages eight (8) and over must ride secured in a safety belt or child safety seat.
- All children twelve (12) and under must sit in the rear seat away from the force of a deploying air bag.
- The Rural Transportation Program will not provide safety or booster seats.
- The Rural Transportation Program is not responsible for restraining car seats or booster seats.



POLICY: Title VI Discrimination Complaint

The Executive Director of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging has the overall responsibility for the receipt and investigation of all Title VI Discrimination complaints filed against the office and/or their employees while conducting official business.

PROCEDURE:

- Complaint forms may be requested from the Executive Director at 402-444-6536.
- Investigations of all such complaints will be coordinated with the appropriate Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging officials in their respective offices and program areas.
- ENOA's Executive Director will be responsible for determining the scope of investigations, and the manner in which they will be conducted.
- The appropriate program officials in the respective offices will be kept informed of the progress of all of the investigations and of the outcome of the investigations.

POLICY: Service Animals

- The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program allows service animals to accompany passengers 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 a passenger with a disability.
- The task(s) performed by the service animal must be directly related to the passenger's disability. Under the ADA, "comfort," "therapy" or "emotional support animals" do not meet the definition of a service animal.
- Animals other than service animals as described above are allowed to ride the transit vehicle only in a secured pet travel carrier.
- Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.

Note: For more information about the rules and regulations regarding service animals, go to ADA's website at:

www.ada.gov



POLICY: Door to Door Assistance

- ENOA will not provide w/c or walkers.
- The Rural Transportation Program will provide door-to-door assistance to passengers as needed.
- Assistance shall not be given to any passenger that is wheelchair bound unless they reside on the ground floor or have elevator access in their building.
- Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers in or out of the vehicle or in and out of a wheelchair; if this type of assist is needed an escort may ride along at no additional cost.
- Drivers shall not enter the home to assist passengers for any reason
- Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.

PROCEDURE:

- If needed, drivers will assist passengers from their door into the vehicle. Assistance will also be given from the vehicle to the door of their destination.



POLICY: Grievance/Complaint

Any passenger has the right to file a complaint or a grievance. Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.

Procedure

The process is as follows:

- Each complaint/grievance shall be submitted in writing within 30 days of the act(s) and should:
 - Be signed by the passenger
 - Contain the passenger's name and address (or specify another means of contacting him or her)
 - Identify the individual against whom the grievance is filed, if applicable
 - List the date(s) on which the act(s) occurred, or if continuing, when such act(s) began and describe the continuing nature;
 - List the names and addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the facts of the grievance;
 - Describe the passenger's allegations in sufficient detail
- The Rural Transportation Program Coordinator will attempt to resolve any grievance informally by meeting with the parties in person or discussing the grievance with the parties by telephone.
- If the passenger is not satisfied with the decision and action offered by the Rural Transportation Program Coordinator, the passenger may request a meeting with the ENOA Executive Director for informal arbitration of the grievance.
- If the passenger is not satisfied with the decision and action offered by the ENOA Executive Director, the passenger must request a hearing at the ENHSA/Region 6 Governing Board within thirty days.
- If the passenger is dissatisfied with the ENHSA/Region 6 Governing Board's decision, the passenger may request a hearing of their grievance to the Nebraska Department of Roads.
- If the passenger does not believe their grievance has been adequately addressed by the Nebraska Department of Roads, they may pursue relief through other available legal options.

POLICY: Scheduling Rides

The Rural Transportation Program operates Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM. All rides will be booked through the office at 1-888-210-1093. Drivers are not allowed to book rides. Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.

PROCEDURE:

- Passengers must contact the dispatch office which covers their county, regarding all details of their requested trip at least 48 hour in advance with: Passenger Name;
 - Address of pick up;
 - Phone number;
 - Destination name and address;
 - Appointment time/requested pick up/return time;
 - Emergency contact day of ride.
- Passengers may request up to two (2) additional stops on the day of their ride. These additional stops will be granted as the daily schedule permits, and will be charged at the cost of a one-way ride
- The dispatch office will complete an intake and provide the rural transportation drivers with their schedules for the following day by 5:00 PM each day.
- Clients shall be ready 15 minutes prior to their scheduled pick up time.
- Clients need to have a backup transportation plan in the event of emergencies including but not limited to: van maintenance, weather, traffic delays, driver availability. A list of transportation resources is available upon request.
- Clients must be returned to the address provided to dispatch at the time reservation was made.

POLICY: Right to Refuse Service



The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging reserves the right to refuse service to any passenger who is: intoxicated, disruptive, smoking on the van (to include E-Cigarettes), belligerent/rude, poses

a safety or health threat to themselves or others or displays an unwillingness to follow policies/procedures of the program.

PROCEDURE:

- **First Offense**
 - A verbal warning will be given to the passenger-documentation of verbal warning will also be sent to the passenger.
- **Second Offense**
 - A letter will be sent and rides discontinued for one week.
- **Third offense**
 - A second and final letter will be sent and rides will be cancelled indefinitely.

This program also reserves the right to terminate services immediately.

POLICY: Grievance Appeal Form

Today's Date: _____

NAME: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

State the problem or concern that you have with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program:

What has been done to try and resolve this problem or concern (if possible list dates):

What do you see as a satisfactory resolution to this concern?

Date submitted to the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging: _____

Policy: Nondiscrimination

- The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging's Rural Transportation Program 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 Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program serves a diverse population of individuals with varying ages, physical challenges, economic status and ethnic backgrounds.
- The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program 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 Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program solely based on his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- It is the policy of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging to follow all of the applicable nondiscrimination requirements of the following:
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, (42 U.S.C. 2000D ET SEQ), provides that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance;
 - US. DOT Regulations, "nondiscrimination in federally-assisted programs or the Department of Transportation-Effec-tuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act," 49 CFR Part 21;
 - The current FTA circular 4702.1 nondiscrimination guide-lines for FTA recipients. "This document provides FTA re-cipients and sub recipients with guidance and instructions necessary to comply with the DOT title VI regulations (49 CFR Part 21), the U.S. DOT's order to address environmen-tal justice in minority populations (62 FR 18377, APR. 15, 1997, and U.S. DOT policy guidance concerning recipient's responsibilities to limited English proficient (LEP) persons (70 FR740987, December 14, 2005);

POLICY: Return Pick Up

All Rural Transportation Program return pickup times may be subject to rescheduling.

PROCEDURE:

- Driver will plan to pick client up at their scheduled return time.
- Driver will wait up to 15 minutes past the scheduled return time before notifying the client of their need to contact their back up transportation; a concerted effort must be made to reach the client. If driver is unable to reach the client they are to call the Omaha dispatch office and notify them.
- Driver or dispatch shall contact client when they will be late for their scheduled pick up time.

Policy: Program Waiver Form

I (print first and last name)

_____ have been informed of and understand that the driver for the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging rural Transportation Program was unable to properly secure my mobility device today. I was given the option of moving out of my mobility device and into a seat, staying on the vehicle without my mobility device being properly secured or cancelling my ride for today. I understand that the driver and the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging are not responsible for personal injury or damage to me or my mobility device.

Signature of client

Signature of driver

Today's date

Policy: Nondiscrimination *(continued)*

- U.S. DOT order to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations. This order describes the process that the office of the secretary of transportation and each operating administration will use to incorporate environmental justice principles (as embodied in Executive Order 12898 on environmental justice) into existing programs, policies and activities; and
- U.S. DOT policy guidance concerning recipient's responsibilities to limited English proficient (LEP) persons. This guidance clarifies the responsibilities of recipients of federal financial assistance from DOT and assists them in fulfilling their responsibilities to limited English proficient (LEP) persons, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations.
- No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in all programs or activities administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads or any of its sub-recipients.

Process

- Title VI complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging Rural Transportation Program shall be directed to the Executive Director of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, 4780 South 131st Street, Omaha NE 68137.
- The Executive Director of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging has the overall responsibility for the receipt and investigation of all Title VI Discrimination complaints filed against the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging.

Policy: Nondiscrimination *(continued)*

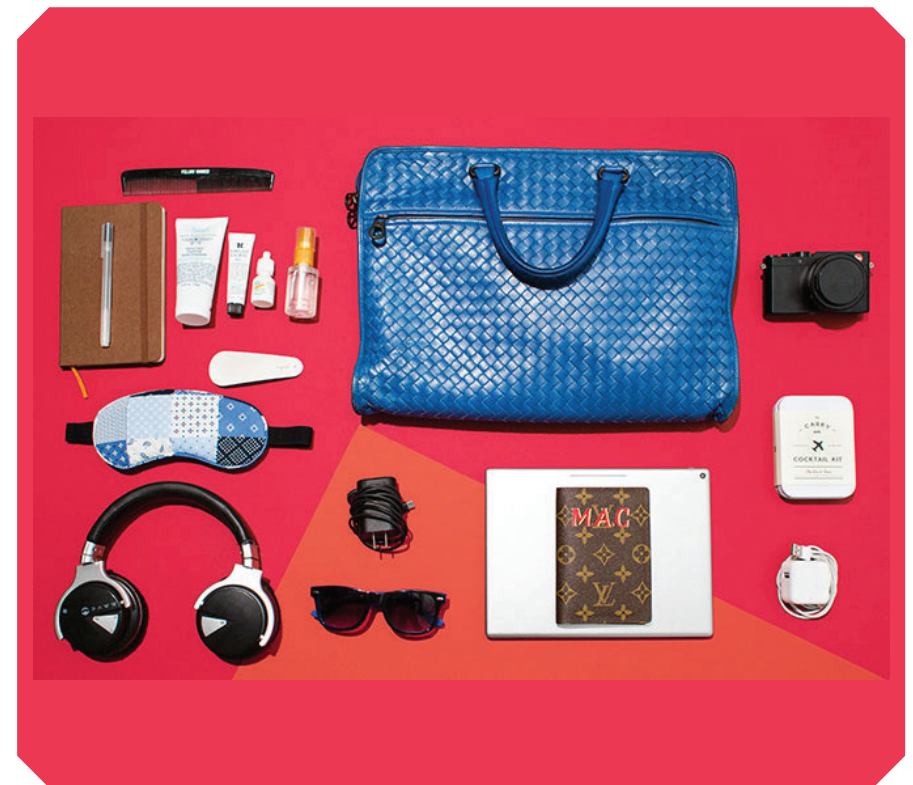
- Investigations of all such complaints will be coordinated with the appropriate Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging officials in their respective offices and program areas, however, the Executive Director will be responsible for determining the scope of the investigations, and the manner in which they will be conducted.
- The appropriate program officials in the respective offices will be kept informed of the progress of all of the investigations and of the outcome of the investigations.
- Complaints concerning discrimination should be directed to the Executive Director of the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, 4780 South 131st Street, Omaha, NE 68137; 402-444-6536.
- Copies of all complaints will be forwarded to the Nebraska Department of Roads, Transit Liaison Manager, Rail and Public Transportation Division within 7 calendar days of the date of receipt and the outcome of those complaints will be forwarded to the same within 7 calendar days of the date the decision is made.
- Complaints against the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging concerning Title VI discrimination may be directed to the Federal Transit Administration.

POLICY: Personal Items

The Rural Transportation Program nor the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging will be responsible for any personal items left on any of the vehicles in this program.

PROCEDURE:

- Passengers must be responsible for all personal items brought onto the van; no items shall be left behind in-between appointments.
- Items discovered on the van at the end of the day shall be turned into the Omaha office for client to make arrangements to pick up.



POLICY: Personal Assistance

Personal assistants are those who are directly involved in the mobility assistance of the passenger riding with the program and will be allowed to ride free of charge while accompanying them.

- A personal assistant will be allowed to ride with a passenger if any of the following conditions are present:
 - Immobility;
 - Disorientation;
 - Non- Comprehension;
 - Communication impairment.
- Or assistance is needed with:
 - Getting the passenger from door to the vehicle and back;
 - Opening doors;
 - Pushing wheelchair to and from the vehicle;
 - Transferring from mobility device to a seat;
 - Carrying large number or heavy packages;
 - Communicating with the driver if passenger is unable.
- Any other person riding with a passenger will be considered a guest and will be required to pay full fare.

Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.

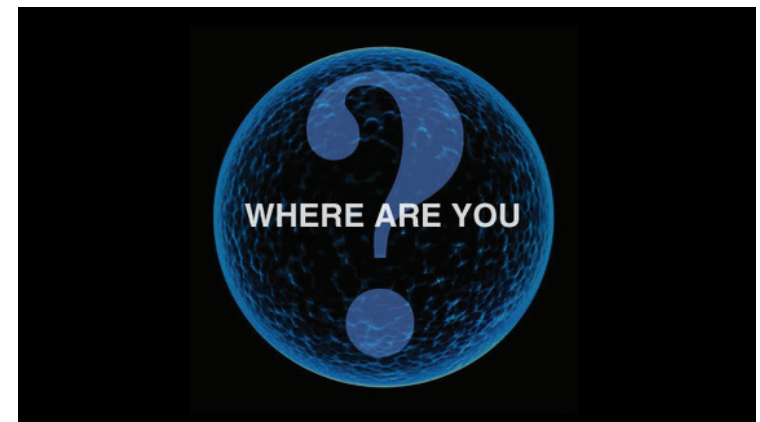
ENOA does not provide w/c.

POLICY: No Show

Scheduled rides are to be cancelled with dispatch or driver preferably 24 hours prior to pick up time, but no less than one (1) hour prior or the passenger will be credited with a “no show”. A “no show” is any instance in which a passenger does not keep their scheduled ride and fails to notify the Rural Transportation Program.

PROCEDURE:

- Upon arrival, the driver shall wait five (5) minutes for the passenger. After five (5) minutes, the ride will be marked as a no show.
- Upon three (3) no shows the following shall take place:
 - First Offense-a verbal warning will be given to the passenger-documentation of verbal warning will also be sent to the passenger
 - Second Offense- a letter will be sent to the passenger and rides will be discontinued for one week
 - Third Offense-a second and final letter will be sent to the passenger and rides will be cancelled indefinitely.



POLICY: Passenger Fees

All passengers shall be charged according to miles traveled in this program. Drivers do not accept any payments for rides. Invoices shall be sent on a monthly basis.

PROCEDURE:

- 1-10 miles shall be \$3.00 one way
- 11-20 miles shall be \$6.00 one way
- 21-40 miles shall be \$7.00 one way
- 41-60 miles shall be \$8.00 one way
- 61+ miles shall be \$9.00 one way
- Passengers with a past due balance of \$100 or more will be suspended from this program until payment is received bringing balance due to under \$100.

POLICY: Post-surgery Transportation

Transportation will only be provided to individuals who have been under anesthesia when an escort is available to ride with them. There will be no additional charge for the escort.

POLICY: Passenger Safety & Security

It is required that all passengers wear an approved safety device while riding on any Rural Transportation vehicle.

- Passengers utilizing mobility devices will be required to have their mobility device properly secured.
- A passenger will be required to sign a Rural Transportation Program Waiver releasing the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging from liability for personal injury or damage to a mobility device in the following instances:
 - If driver is unable to properly secure the mobility device and the passenger makes the decision to stay on the vehicle without the mobility device being properly secured.
 - If driver recommends that a passenger transfer from his or her mobility device into a vehicle seat and the passenger chooses not to transfer and to remain in the improperly secured mobility device.
- Any 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
- State laws apply toward child passengers and car and/or booster seats are not provided. Clients will be responsible for securing these seats into the van, drivers are not allowed to do so.
- Passengers shall at no time exit the vehicle until they have arrived at their destination and vehicle has come to a complete stop.
- Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification complaint process and form are available upon request.
- Drivers may not enter a passengers home for any reason.
- Passengers must wear seatbelts while riding in an ENOA van