

Nemaha County Veterans Service Office (NCVSO)

Rider Handbook-Passenger Policies

GOALS OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK:

Nemaha County Veterans Services Office (NCVSO) is a transportation provider for **veterans of Nemaha County, 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.

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 against the **Nemaha County Veterans Services Office** as outlined in the complaint procedures.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

Nemaha County Veterans Services Office 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. **NCVSO** serves a diverse population of individuals with varying ages, physical challenges, economic status, and ethnic backgrounds. **NCVSO** 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 **NCVSO** 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 **Nemaha County Veterans Services Office** may be directed to **Nemaha County Clerk**. Complaint forms are available at **1824 N Street Suite 201 Auburn, NE 68305**.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE:

NCVSO provides the following public transportation services to veterans of Nemaha County.

SERVICE AREA:

NCVSO provides veteran transportation services in the following areas:

Nebraska and Western Iowa, primarily Omaha, Lincoln and Shenandoah, IA

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DAYS AND HOURS OF SERVICE:

Public transportation services are not provided on the following holidays:

New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day.

FEE SCALE: Not Applicable

SERVICE TYPES: Demand Response

SCHEDULING RIDES:

Rides are scheduled through the **Nemaha County Veterans Services Office.**

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:

NCVSO 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 (<https://www.ada.gov>).

Animals other than service animals as described above are allowed to ride the transit vehicle only in a secured pet travel carrier.

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PERSONAL ASSISTANTS/GUESTS:

Personal care attendants are persons who are directly involved in the mobility assistance of the attendee and will be allowed to ride while accompanying their attendee. Generally, the following conditions would warrant an attendant: immobility, disorientation, non-comprehension, and communication impairment.

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 van 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. 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. Car seats are NOT provided.

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 vehicle.
3. All passengers are to be clothed and wearing some form of protective footwear.

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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 van 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
9. Riders shall keep hand(s), head, or any other body part inside the van and within their seated area at all times.
10. Riders shall obey the driver willingly and report any problems to the van 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.
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.

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.

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.

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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, the NCVSO will contact the impacted passengers.

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 in the van.
- 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 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.

NCVSO reserves the right to terminate services immediately.

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COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

As a recipient of State and Federal funds administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads, **NCVSO** 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:

Upon receipt of the complaint, the 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 **Nemaha County Clerk's Office, 1824 N Street Suite 201, Auburn, NE 68305.**