Rider Information Handbook



DSNWK / ACCESS General Public Transportation

August 2021

General Public transportation for the CITY OF HAYS AND ELLIS COUNTY.

DSNWK/ACCESS Public Transportation's goal is to deliver the highest quality public transportation service within Ellis County.

We will strive to increase our ridership in response to the continued growth of the area, to aid in and contribute to a growing Ellis County economy and improve the quality of life for the whole community.

Contents

About The Agency 3

Service Area 3

Who Can Ride The Bus? 3
Days And Times Of Operation 3
Fares 4
ACCESS Bus Fare Sales 4
How Do I Get A Ride? 4
Will Calls 5
What County Services Are Available? 5
Pickup Times And Wait Policy 5
Delays 5
No Show And Cancellation Policy 6
Can Children Ride The Bus? 7
Will You Transport Animals? 7
What About Trips That I Need Regularly? 8
Wheelchair Procedures 8
Personal Care Attendants 9
Personal Assistance To Riders 9
Transporting Medical Equipment 10
Conduct, Hygiene And Prohibited Behaviors 10
Clothing And Footwear 10
Complaint And Grievance Procedure 12
Appendix 1 and 2 13 and 15

About The Agency

DSNWK / ACCESS General Public Transportation (ACCESS) is a non-profit organization funded by several organizations, Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, Kansas Department of Transportation, City of Hays, Ellis County, and Fort Hays State University. Daily operations are conducted by the Transportation Manager, Lead Dispatcher, office staff, a dispatch team, a team of carefully trained drivers and service technicians.

Service Area

The service area is the City of Hays and all of Ellis County, Kansas.

Who Can Ride The Bus?

Service is available to the general public. ACCESS is committed to offering courteous, safe, and reliable service for all riders, without regard for race, gender, age, or disability. Seat belts must be worn at all times when riding ACCESS.

Days And Times Of Operation

ACCESS General Public Transportation is an on demand response service from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm, seven days a week. To request a ride, call 785-628-1052. To insure a ride we ask that client's book as soon as possible since ACCESS rides are booked on a first come first served basis. Rides may be booked out two weeks in advance. **PPE masks must be worn when riding ACCESS at all times.**

ACCESS will observe these holidays and no service will be available: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Tiger Transport operates on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Pickups will be from FHSU (corner of Dwight and Custer at the bus stop), Walmart (north entrance) every 15 minutes. During the

summer months of June and July, Tiger Transport only operates on Friday during the same operating hours.

Fares

Demand response fares for a one way ride are as follows:

Inside the city limits of Hays	**$2.00**
Anywhere inside Ellis County	**$4.00**

ACCESS Bus Fare Sales

Single trip fares will be paid to the driver with exact change only. Fares will be deposited into the fare box or collected by the driver prior to departure. The driver will not make change. Demand response ticket cards are available for purchase from the drivers and are available at our main office at 1205 E. 22nd, Hays, KS. The cost is $20.00 for set of ten City tickets and $40.00 for set of ten County tickets.

How Do I Get A Ride?

ACCESS offers origin to destination “demand-response” general public transportation. Appointments for rides are taken seven days a week from 6:00 am to 9:30 pm. To assure a ride, it is strongly advisable to book as soon as possible. Our system allows us to book rides up to two weeks in advance. For next day rides the cutoff time for scheduling is 6:00 pm the day before. Ride requests outside of the City of Hays must be booked 24 hours in advance. We also do same day rides within the City of Hays and will be booked if time is available, but understand that there is no guarantee that time will allow a ride to be booked if you call on the day you need a ride. **ACCESS is not an emergency**

vehicle and will not transport passengers to the emergency room for medical care, call 911 and request an ambulance.

To request a ride, call 785-628-1052.

Will Calls

A “will-call” is defined as not having a specific return time, and passengers calling the Dispatcher as soon as they are ready to return from their appointments. For situations when you need a ride but you can’t be sure of the time, the passenger should contact ACCESS when they are ready for a pickup. Please note “will-call” riders may have an extended wait for their ride. Please be aware that during peak usage, riders may wait up to an hour before being picked up.

What County Services Are Available?

The ACCESS Bus serves all of Ellis County. We gladly offer this service on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, however rides must be scheduled 24 hours in advance. Service is available on a first come first served basis. Service is not available on holidays recognized by ACCESS. Service may be unavailable due to inclement weather conditions in Ellis County.

Pickup Times And Wait Policy

When scheduling a ride, the dispatcher will give the rider a 30 minute pick-up window. The driver may arrive anytime during this pick-up window. Upon arrival, the driver will wait for **FIVE** minutes only. If the rider does not board the bus within the five minutes of the buses arrival time, the rider will be considered a ***no show*** for that ride. If a return ride is scheduled for that day it will be automatically cancelled by dispatch.

Delays

ACCESS is proud of our record of getting riders to their

destinations on time. If you feel that your bus may have missed you, please call dispatch to check the status of your buses arrival.

Be aware that road work in and around the area or inclement weather may cause route delays. ACCESS will take every measure to ensure that buses arrive on schedule; however, we realize that service may be delayed due to accidents or other circumstances beyond our control. Any service closures due to inclement weather will be announced on local radio and television stations.

No Show And Cancellation Policy

The definition of a no-show is: A rider who has a scheduled trip and does not appear at the designated pick-up point and time, does not cancel the trip in advance or refuses to take the scheduled trip.

In order to provide the greatest service to all passengers, cancellation notice should be made no less than **one** hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time.

Cancellations made less than one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time will be considered a late cancellation. This policy applies to all scheduled trips including subscription trips.

A late cancellation is considered a no-show.

Excessive No-Show/Late Cancellations:
Any rider who demonstrates a pattern or practice of no-shows will be suspended from service.

No-show/late cancellations are considered excessive when a customer reserves 5 or more trips within any month and no-shows and/or late cancels 20 percent or more of those scheduled trips. At no time can a customer's no-show/late cancellations exceed 5 within one month without causing a violation. This will be considered a *pattern or practice* of missed trips and the customer will be sent written notification that he/she has violated the No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy and is subject to suspension.

Suspensions
Customers incurring excessive no show or late cancellations may be warned and then suspended for a reasonable period. Repeated violations of this policy will result in longer suspension periods each time. The following suspension periods shall apply to violations of this policy that occur within the same rolling 12-month period.

- **1st Violation: Written Warning**
- **2nd Violation: 1 Week Period**
- **3rd Violation: 2 Week Period**
- **4th or Subsequent Violations: 30 Days**

Excessive Cancellations:
Even though a scheduled trip is cancelled the same day at least one hour in advance of the established pick-up window, a pattern or practice of excessive cancellations may often cause service to be unavailable at a time other passengers may desire the service.

The policy is as follows: Riders canceling 50% or more of their trips scheduled with a minimum of five (5) cancellations within a ninety (90) day rolling period, may be subject to a 14-day suspension from service.

A rider may appeal a suspension through the grievance procedure process (see Appendix #2). A no-show or late cancellation that occurs as the result of circumstances beyond the control of the rider or due to inclement weather will not count.

Can Children Ride The Bus?

All children under the age of fourteen must be accompanied by an adult on demand response trips. Children under 14 will be allowed to ride for free. Children under four years old must be in a federally approved child safety seat. All children 4 years or older must be in a safety or booster seat until they turn 8, weigh more than 80 lbs., or are taller than 4 feet, 9 inches. The child must be secured with an appropriate child seat provided by the parent or guardian.

The parent or guardian will properly fasten such devices using the vehicle seatbelts.

Will You Transport Animals?

For policy purposes, animals are considered either service animals or pets.

Service animals will be transported with their owners without restriction or extra cost. Service animals must be on a leash and the owner/handler must retain full control of the animal at all times. Owners/handlers are responsible for cleanup of any waste or litter caused by the service animal and is liable for any damages to the bus the animal may cause.

Pets may be transported with their owners if the pets are secured in an enclosed pet carrier and if they can be fit into the schedule. Pets have the lowest priority for transportation. Pets requiring emergency veterinary assistance will not be transported. An ill service animal is treated as a pet in this respect: such animals are not performing their service function.

What About Trips That I Need Regularly?

A subscription can be made for rides that are taken on a regular basis, at the same time by the same individual, to regularly scheduled appointments. Subscriptions will be set up for riders taking two or more round trips per week. Subscriptions will be taken on a first come first serve basis.

It is the responsibility of riders with subscriptions to cancel any subscription ride that they do not intend to take. Individuals with subscription rides will be subject to the no show and late cancellation policy. In addition, two or more violations of the no show and late cancellation policy within a rolling 12 month period will result in the loss of subscription ride privileges. Upon request, the rider may again be scheduled for a subscription after a 30 days suspension period.

Due to the way ACCESS schedules rides on-board changes of ride destinations are not allowed. You may not board the bus and ask the driver to change your booked destination.

Wheelchair Procedures

Section 37.3 of the DOT regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38) defines a “wheelchair” as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

- Drivers will assist customers on approved wheelchair ramps.
- Drivers will not assist passengers in wheelchairs up or down stairs.
- Drivers will secure all wheelchairs with tie-downs and their passengers with lap and shoulder belts.

Riders using scooter type vehicles may be asked to transfer to regular seating for their safety. However, passengers with scooters cannot be required to transfer, nor is ACCESS required to transport any mobility device that exceeds the weight capacity and or dimensional capacities of the lift. The measurement of the lift platform is 34”x48” with a maximum lift capacity of 800 pounds. All wheelchairs must be properly secured, ACCESS will refuse to transport any rider who refuses to have a wheelchair secured during their trip.

Personal Care Attendants

A personal care attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to assist the rider with daily life functions on a “regular” basis and may provide assistance during the ride or at the destination. One attendant per rider will be permitted to ride the bus without charge. To prevent potential abuse, a companion (e.g. friend or family member) does not count as a personal care attendant unless the rider regularly makes use of a PCA and the companion is actually

acting in that capacity.

Personal Assistance To Riders

Due to scheduling demands, drivers must limit their personal assistance to riders. Drivers assist riders with only those activities directly related to boarding or exiting the vehicle. Drivers may not enter a rider's home. Drivers shall not handle rider's keys, purses, garage door openers, or access any home security devices. Riders may bring grocery and personal items purchased at stores on the bus, but **must maintain possession and control** of those items and are limited to what the rider can carry in one trip. Riders should not expect ACCESS to transport furniture items, including televisions, gardening items such as potting soil, or any items of weight exceeding 15 pounds.

Drivers will be responsible for passengers entering and exiting the bus safely. ACCESS reserves the right to refuse to transport any rider whose driveway, sidewalk, or any other access is icy, snowy, or in other condition that impedes the rider from safely entering and exiting the bus.

Only drivers will operate the power lifts provided with vehicles. While operating the lift, drivers may not at the same time be riding the lift. Drivers are not permitted to lift individuals required or wanting to transfer from a scooter or wheelchair to regular vehicle seating. Such riders will be asked to provide their own personal care attendant to assist in their transfer.

Transporting Medical Equipment

Passengers traveling with respirators, portable oxygen and other life support equipment must follow safety procedures that ensure protection of all passengers and ACCESS drivers. The portable oxygen tank may not exceed 15 lbs. in total weight, 29 inches in height, and 4 inches in diameter. Drivers will inspect any portable oxygen tank. Defective leaking or otherwise unsafe or unfit tanks will not be allowed on the vehicle. Portable oxygen tanks must be turned off when not in use. Drivers will secure oxygen tanks in an

upright position using a securement belt or system approved cargo belt. Oxygen tanks may be secured in an unoccupied area away from the side wall of the bus, to an isle side seat back or other areas designed by management. Passengers who wear or carry portable oxygen tank/concentrator must secure the medical device along with themselves within their required seat belt. The medical device may not be secured in the seat next to the passenger, it must be secured with the passenger. ACCESS personnel may not administer or assist with the administration of any medication. Any passenger requiring assistance while on the vehicle should travel with the assistance of a PCA.

Conduct, Hygiene And Prohibited Behaviors

If at any time the driver judges that he/she is in an unsafe situation, the driver, with consent of the Dispatcher, will have the right to exercise judgment and stop the vehicle and ask passenger to exit the vehicle or call authorities, if needed. Inappropriate conduct, including behaviors which present a danger to other passengers or the driver, will not be tolerated. These include, but are not limited to: intoxication, fighting, arguing, spitting on others and threatening the driver or fellow passengers, use of foul or derogatory language and sexual harassment. Anyone posing a safety hazard to him/her or others caused by any kind of bodily fluids may be denied bus service. At the driver's discretion, with consent of the Dispatcher, a rider who engages in persistent inappropriate and/or dangerous behavior may be required to leave the vehicle. No alcoholic beverages may be consumed on the bus. **NO TOBACCO USAGE WHILE ON THE BUS.** Tobacco products include: cigarettes, e-cigarettes or like products, smokeless tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

NO OPEN CONTAINERS, NO WEAPONS INCLUDING KNIVES, GUNS OR AMMUNITION AND NO HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SUCH AS CAR BATTERIES, GASOLINE, PROPANE, ETC. ARE ALLOWED ON THE BUS. If a passenger is found to have any of these items, they will be asked to leave the bus immediately and may be suspended

from riding for up to 30 days. If a person refuses to leave the bus when requested to do so by the driver for any of the above listed reasons including tobacco use, the police will be called to escort him/her off the bus. A second offense will result in a 60 day suspension, a third offense is an indefinite suspension from riding ACCESS.

Threats of violence, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against any employees or other individuals are prohibited. Any person who threatens violence, displays threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts in ACCESS offices or in or around ACCESS vehicles will be removed from the area or vehicle as soon as safety allows. Said person shall be prohibited from entering ACCESS offices or ACCESS vehicles until an investigation of the conduct in question has been completed.

Clothing And Footwear

Proper clothing (shirts, pants/shorts, dresses, etc.) and footwear must be worn prior to getting on the vehicle and must remain on until exiting the bus.

Complaint And Grievance Procedure

Passenger complaints will be referred to the Transportation Manager as soon as possible. A complaint form (see Appendix 1) should be completed for passenger complaints and problems. The drivers carry additional complaint forms on each bus. The driver will call immediate concerns in to the Dispatcher for resolution. A customer who has a complaint, may also elect to discuss the matter with the Transportation Manager in person, but should do so within five working days of the date of the incident. The Transportation Manager will respond to all complaints within five working days, making every effort to resolve the complaint at this level. If a resolution is not reached, then the grievance form must be filled out and described in writing and submitted to the Director of Administrative Services within an additional five working days (See Appendix 2). The Director of Administrative Services will review the evidence presented by the person filing the grievance. If the Director of Administrative Services

determines a meeting with both parties present would be beneficial, the Director will coordinate such meeting. A decision by the Director will be made within 10 working days. The decision of the Director of Administrative Services is final.

Appendix 1

DSNWK/ACCESS GENERAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
Complaint Form

PERSONAL INFORMATION
Name: _____
Address: _____
Contact Number: _____
Email: _____
NATURE OF COMPLAINT
Type of Complaint: _____ (ie: Staff/Service)
Date and Time of Occurrence: _____
Location of Occurrence: _____
Detail of Person/ Party Involved (if any): _____
Details of Complaint:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
(Attach additional sheets, if necessary)

Submit to or call:

DSNWK/ACCESS TRANSPORTATION
Attn: Transportation Manager
Box 310
Hays, KS 67601
785-621-2078

Signature_____
Date_____

DECLARATION: I declare that to the best of my knowledge the information provided in the statement above is true and correct. The complaint written in this form is fully accountable and there is no part of the story being deliberately altered, hidden, omitted or added to create a bias and/or benefit/harm any party. The complaint made is based on objective judgement and no personal sentiment involved against any party. I acknowledge that I am filling this complaint form of my own free will

without demand or force from any party. I agree to provide additional information/documentation, if requested.

Appendix 2

DSNWK/ACCESS GENERAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
Grievance Form

Date: _____

Complainant Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____
Email: _____

Description of the Grievance: Please include full names of any other person(s) involved, addresses and phone numbers, if relevant.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
(Attach additional sheets, if necessary)

Submit to:

DSNWK/ACCESS TRANSPORTATION
Attn: Director of Administrative Services
Box 310
Hays, KS 67601

Signature_____
Date_____