

HILL COUNTRY TRANSIT DISTRICT

Passenger Policy

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Hill Country Transit District

Passengers

Passenger Categories

Hill Country Transit District provides transportation services for all persons, regardless of race, creed, age, sex, color, disability or national origin. HCTD consists of three divisions:

Hill Country Rural Transit District

The service area consists of the rural portion of Bell and Coryell counties, and Hamilton, Lampasas, Llano, Mason, Milam, Mills, and San Saba counties.

Categories of ridership in the Rural area include:

General Public - Riders are under 60 years of age and must pay a fare to ride, based on the posted fare schedule. Public school children are included in this category. Not included in this group are Head Start, Medical Transportation, and 60+ passengers. (Exception: If a Head Start child is not approved for transportation by the Head Start program, and the parent chooses to pay for the service, the trip would fall under the general public category). No General Public transportation is provided in Rural Bell County.

60+ - Riders are 60 years of age and over. Trips are partially funded by the Texas Department on Aging. Riders are not required to pay a fare, but are encouraged to contribute, based on the posted fare schedule.

Medical Transportation - Riders must currently be receiving Medicaid, and trips must be approved through the Texas Department of Transportation. This category includes all age groups, as well as *approved* escorts. Services are for non-emergency medical transportation only.

Head Start - Riders are children who have been approved for services by the HCCAA Head Start program. The cost of a Head Start trip is based on the posted fare schedule and is paid for through an interagency agreement between the Head Start program and Hill Country Transit District.

Killeen Urban Transit District

The service area consists of the Killeen urbanized area, as defined by the Federal Transit Administration. This includes the cities of Copperas Cove, Killeen, Harker Heights, and Nolanville.

Categories of ridership for the Killeen urban area include:

Fixed Route Service - Transit buses run on a specific schedule, on specified routes, and stop at specified locations to pick up or drop off passengers. All persons are eligible to ride. All buses are wheelchair accessible.

Special Transit Service - Technically, this is known as ADA Complementary Paratransit Service. Riders must be either physically or mentally unable to ride the fixed route system. Riders must complete the ADA Certification Form and receive approval before using the STS. Services are provided through wheelchair-accessible vehicles and are either curb-to-curb or door-to-door.

Medical Transportation - Same as for Rural.

Temple Urban Transit District

The service area consists of the Temple urbanized area, as defined by the Federal Transit Administration.

Categories of ridership for the Temple urban area include:

Fixed Route Service - Same as for Killeen. All buses are wheelchair accessible.

Special Transit Service - Same as for Killeen.

Medical Transportation - Same as for Rural and Killeen.

NOTE: There may be other specialized categories in both the urban and rural area, based upon agreements or contracts that have been entered into for special purpose transportation services.

Rules for Passenger Conduct

Rules of conduct on Hill Country Transit District vehicles are the same as the laws governing conduct in public places. The driver may refuse to transport or may eject any persons violating the provisions contained below. If assistance is required, the driver will contact the appropriate authority and may stop the vehicle until assistance arrives.

- Please have exact fare, ticket, or pass ready when boarding the vehicle.
- In order to ride for a reduced fare, you must show your senior pass or disability pass. (Only in Killeen & Temple)
- Keep arms and legs as well as all personal items such as two-wheeled grocery carts, strollers, handbags, etc., out of the aisle.
- Passengers are required to wear shirts and shoes while riding HCTD vehicles.

- All children under the age of two must be restrained by an infant car seat that is age and weight appropriate, provided by the parent or guardian, excluding fixed route buses. All children between the ages of two and four must be restrained by the seat belt provided in the vehicle or an age appropriate booster seat provided by the parent or guardian, excluding fixed route buses. All passengers above the age of four will be required to wear seat belts, excluding fixed route buses. However, it is highly recommended that all fixed route passengers including infants, children, and adults be appropriately restrained either by car seat or seat belt.
- All children under 12 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. (Fixed Route Service Only)
- HCTD operated vehicles may not be used as a forum for religious, political, or personal beliefs; and no printed materials, other than that specifically provided by or authorized by HCTD, may be distributed on board.
- HCTD does not pick up at or deliver passenger to locations that may present an unfavorable image to the community. Examples of such locations are: bars, nightclubs, liquor stores, etc.

No person shall, while a passenger on any vehicle that is operated by Hill Country Transit District as a public conveyance, do any of the following:

1. Smoke or possess any lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar, cigarette, or any other tobacco product;
2. Consume any beverage, food, or alcohol. Open containers of food or drink are not permitted on the vehicle; (Dialysis patients may be allowed to have minimal food or beverage as necessary.)
3. Intentionally deface, damage, write upon, soil, spit, urinate, or defecate in or upon any part of the vehicle.
4. Throw, deposit or place paper, bottles, cans or any other garbage or soiled waste in or upon a vehicle;
5. Throw any object of any kind within a vehicle or out any door or window of a vehicle;
6. Play audio or video devices unless played through headphones so that it is inaudible to other passengers and the driver.
7. Bring any pet or animal onto a vehicle other than a service animal accompanying a person with a disability, or an animal in a cage or approved standard pet carrier;
8. Stand or walk around in a vehicle while it is in motion;
9. Possess any explosives or carry any corrosive acid or flammable liquid, gasoline or a gasoline container or any type of hazardous material while riding on any HCTD vehicle. (Respirators and portable oxygen supplies are permitted to be carried and used on board by a person requiring them for health reasons.)
10. Possess firearms, with the exception of law enforcement officers, while riding on HCTD vehicles;
11. Bring any laundry on board a vehicle unless it is in an enclosed bag or container;
12. Intentionally interfere with the driver's operation of the vehicle;

13. Conduct any unnecessary conversation with the driver, so that the driver's attention will not be diverted from the safe operation of the vehicle;
14. Use profane or abusive language toward the driver or other riders, or act in a hostile or threatening manner on board HCTD vehicles;
15. Bring on board the vehicle any baggage or articles which, due to their size, would restrict free movement of passengers.
16. Children must be removed from strollers and strollers folded prior to boarding the vehicle. Strollers must be kept out and away from the aisle and not reopened until completely out of the vehicle.

Passenger Relations

Understanding: Drivers are the most visible representatives of Hill Country Transit District. Maintaining cordial passenger relations with each and every transit passenger is an important part of every employee's job. Every employee should remember that no business has ever prospered without the understanding and support of its patrons. Drivers are the first and most important contact with the customers. Drivers must always be clean, neat in appearance and wear their identification badge. Public attitude and support is greatly influenced by the opinion formed at initial contact. A courteous approach is the key to a successful operation.

Assisting Passengers: Drivers should not hesitate to help elderly persons, persons with disabilities, or passengers with small children or packages, in getting on or off the vehicle. Assistance should be given in a courteous manner after confirming with the passenger that assistance is desired. If at any time a passenger objects to being helped, the driver will not insist but will always stand beside the door in case the need for help occurs. Intoxicated, ill, or infirm passengers should be assisted to the sidewalk if necessary, and not left until they are in a position of safety. If, in the judgement of the driver, the person cannot be left safely, the driver should call the dispatcher for assistance. Drivers should always consider the comfort of passengers and provide assistance such as rest stops and other reasonable accommodations when requested.

Altercations/Disagreements: In the case of a disagreement with a passenger, a reasonable effort should be made to resolve the situation. This should be attempted in a courteous manner. Should a situation develop that could lead to an altercation and possible harm to the driver or to a passenger, the matter should not be pursued. If more assistance is needed, call the dispatcher, using the proper code.

Ejecting a Passenger from the Vehicle: When a driver sees or hears passengers behaving in an offensive or destructive manner, they should ask them to stop the offending conduct. If they do not respond to this request, they should be asked to leave peacefully. If a situation develops that could lead to an altercation or harm to someone, the driver should say nothing to the passenger. Where it is possible to obtain assistance from a supervisor or law enforcement officer without placing anyone in jeopardy, request their assistance in handling the situation. Use the appropriate radio code. The dispatcher can then send assistance. Good judgement must be used in ejecting a passenger, and ejection must never be done in an unsafe or uninhabited area. Always remember that the safety of the passengers and the driver should be considered before any action is taken. A small child, a person of unsound mind, or a person who is unable to take care of themselves will not be ejected. However, if conditions warrant, the offending passenger

shall be turned over to a police officer or supervisor. All incidents of ejection should be reported on an *Incident Report* form and turned in to the supervisor.

Refusing a Ride: The driver may refuse transportation to an individual or group of individuals who are behaving offensively or could imperil the safety or comfort of other passengers. The driver must use common sense in dealing with situations of this type. If transportation is refused to potential passengers, it should be done discreetly and followed by notification to the dispatcher or immediate supervisor.

Drivers who Transport Children: Drivers who transport children may have a larger responsibility and be under closer scrutiny than with any other group of passengers. Parents and those who care for children are, understandably, very cautious and watchful of persons who deal with their children. Drivers should be extremely careful about their relations with the children they transport and how those relations might be perceived. Drivers should certainly be kind and caring, but should not become overly involved with or overly affectionate with children. If a driver observes a situation or a child with whom they have reason to believe there might be some type of problem – whether family related, health related, etc. – the driver should report the suspected problem to the proper authorities rather than get personally involved. Drivers should never touch a child unless it is in the form of assisting the child to board, fasten a seatbelt, disembark the vehicle, etc. Drivers may discipline a child to the extent that is required for safety and efficient transportation, but must not spank or touch the child. If a child is continually disruptive and is creating safety problems, the driver should notify their dispatcher or immediate supervisor who will then contact the proper person and notify them that transportation will no longer be provided for the child. Drivers must always check their vehicle at the end of the route to be sure a child is not left on the vehicle.

Client Confidentiality: Funding sources require a vast amount of personal information about passengers. Drivers and dispatchers are also privy to a great deal of personal information about passengers, due to the nature of their jobs. All information regarding passengers is to be kept confidential and only released to the extent required by funding sources for reporting and monitoring purposes. Any type of lists or other documents used for committee/board reports or other informational purposes must not contain the names or other identifying information of clients. Maintaining the confidentiality and respecting the privacy and dignity of our passengers is of utmost importance.

Rider Policies

Special Requests: Riders may not request a certain driver or a certain vehicle. This determination is made by the dispatcher for the overall benefit of the system.

Pick-Up Times: Hill Country Transit District is a public transit system, providing rides for many passengers each day. Drivers cannot be at three or four pick-up points at one time. Therefore, passengers must be ready approximately 30 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. Rides should be reserved at least 30 minutes before scheduled appointment times to ensure that passengers arrive on time. It is also important to follow the 24-hour advance reservation

policy for rural demand response service, to maintain schedules. On the return trip home, passengers should be prepared to wait 30 minutes and possibly 1 hour on medical pick-ups. Every effort will be made to pick up passengers within this time frame.

One-Way Trips: Fares are based on a one-way trip. This means that each time the vehicle is boarded, the fare must be paid by cash or token, (or presentation of pass in the urban area) based on the posted fare schedule. Drivers cannot make change. All fares must be paid by exact change or token and are collected in a locked box or fare box.

Policy on No-Shows (Rural Division Only)

If for any reason a passenger is unable to keep a trip reservation, the passenger is expected to call and cancel before the vehicle departs for pickup.

A No Show occurs when a reservation has been made and upon arrival for pickup, the person has made other arrangements or is not at the pickup location. This creates a hardship on Hill Country Transit District both financially and time-wise. Therefore, in an effort to meet the demands for service and to get passengers to their destinations on time, HCTD has developed a No Show policy.

The following No Show policy is specific to the Rural Division of Hill Country Transit District. It does not apply to the Killeen Division Paratransit (STS) Service or the Temple Division Paratransit (STS) Service.

This No Show policy has been developed to deal consistently and fairly with passengers who habitually miss scheduled trips. Regulations allow such persons to have service suspended, for a reasonable length of time, in most cases. This provision does not apply to trips that are missed for reasons that are beyond the individual's control, and certainly does not apply in cases of scheduling problems, late pickups, or other operational problems not within the control of the individual.

If a passenger fails to be at the scheduled pickup point during the window of scheduled pickup time, unless the failure is beyond the control of the individual, HCTD may consider the failure as a No Show. HCTD will take into consideration late-running doctor appointments, and other situations beyond the control of the individual. However, HCTD may also negotiate with passengers regarding scheduled pickup times if the passenger is consistently or regularly late due to late appointments.

In the case of No Shows, the following procedures are to be followed.

Due to HCTD's agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation, in the case of a Medical Transportation No Show, the Driver will record the No Show on the Daily Trip Report, leave a Notice of No Show (HCTD Form P-16, see Addendum A) at the designated pickup location, report the trip as a No Show to Temple dispatch.

Due to the agreement with HCCAA Head Start, in the case of a Head Start No Show, the driver is to record the No Show on the Daily Trip Report.

For No Shows *other than Medicaid and Head Start*:

The Driver is to record the No Show on the Daily Trip Report

In addition, the Driver is to make a copy of the Daily Trip Report, circle the name of the passenger that had the No Show, and file the copy in alphabetical order at the site. As the copies are filed, the Driver must determine if there is a previous copy of a No Show for that passenger dated in the past six months. At any time a passenger has two No Shows within a six month period, the Driver is to fax the two copies, along with *the passenger's telephone number*, to the Director of Rural Operations.

The Director of Rural Operations will contact the passenger and investigate the No Shows. If it is determined that the two No Shows were not beyond the individuals control, the Director of Rural Operations will inform the passenger that if they have another No Show within the next month, their transportation service will be suspended for a period of one month. The Director of Rural Operations will notify applicable transit staff of the results of the investigation.

If the passenger is a No Show within the next month, the Driver will copy the Daily Trip Report, circle the info, and fax the copy to the Director of Rural Operations.

The Director of Rural Operations will send a letter of suspension of service to the passenger and a copy to applicable transit staff of the suspension and when the service will be re-instated.

Policy on No-Shows (Urban Divisions Only)

A No Show policy has been developed to deal consistently and fairly with passengers who consistently miss scheduled trips. Regulations allow such persons to have service suspended, for a reasonable length of time, in most cases. This provision does not apply to trips that are missed for reasons that are beyond the individual's control, and certainly do not apply in cases of scheduling problems, late pickups, or other operational problems not within the control of the individual.

Due to HCTD's agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation, in the case of a Medical Transportation No Show, the Driver will record the No Show on the Daily Trip Report, leave a Notice of No Show (HCTD Form P-16, see Addendum A) at the designated pickup location, report the trip as a No Show to dispatch.

If a passenger fails to be at the scheduled pickup point during the 30 minutes window of the scheduled pickup time (15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time), unless the failure was beyond the control of the individual, Hill Country Transit District (HCTD) may consider the failure as a No Show. HCTD will take into consideration late running doctor appointments, and other situations beyond the control of the individual. However, HCTD may

also negotiate with passengers regarding scheduled pickup times if the passenger consistently or regularly is late due to late appointments.

In the case of No Shows, other than for Medical Transportation Program passengers, the following suspension penalties may be applied for No Shows accrued during any six-month period:

One No Show	No Action
Two No Shows	One week service suspension
Three No Shows	One month service suspension
Four No Shows	Two month service suspension
Five No Shows	May result in termination of service

Further, passengers will be charged the prevailing fare for any trip that is a No Show. In the event a passenger is subject to termination of service, that service may be terminated for no longer than one year. Then, HCTD must accept a new application for service if the person so requests.

Any time a passenger misses a trip that may be considered as a No Show, the form entitled "Passenger No Show Report" must be completed. (HCTD Form P-17, see Addendum, A) This form must be reviewed by the Administrative Assistant. The information contained on the report must then be recorded in the electronic report entitled "Summary of No Shows" (HCTD Form P-18, see Addendum A), which will contain information regarding each No Show, and which can be used to determine any patterns of No Shows for an individual.

Before a No Show is charged, the passenger will be contacted by HCTD to determine the reason for the No Show, and to verify if the trip was, indeed, a No Show, and to make sure the passenger understands the No Show policy. This contact gives the passenger the opportunity to explain circumstances that should be considered in determining if the missed trip is a No Show.

If it is determined that the missed trip is a No Show, the passenger should be so notified by telephone if possible. In the event the passenger cannot be contacted by telephone, the passenger must be flagged for the scheduler so the next time the passenger calls for a trip, he/she may be required to discuss the missed trip incident with the Operations Manager or designee before another trip may be scheduled. (However, reasonable caution must be exercised to ensure a person is unable to make a trip because of communication problems, and the passenger should not be prevented from making a trip if no one is available to discuss the No Show issue.)

Then, the standard notification letter must be sent to the passenger (HCTD Form P-19, see Addendum A). Prior to the penalty actually being imposed, a second letter must be sent to the passenger advising them of the imposition of the penalty (HCTD Form P-20, see Addendum A). In any event, the electronic report, "Summary of No Shows" must be updated to include the No Show incident.

Any service suspension imposed due to No Shows will not begin until the passenger has had the opportunity to appeal the suspension in accordance with the procedures provide herein, or has

waived such opportunity. Should no appeal be received by HCTD within ten (10) days from the date of the original notification of the pending suspension or termination of service, the passenger will be considered to have waived his/her right to appeal. The sanction will be stayed in the event of an appeal by the passenger, and will continue stayed pending the outcome of the appeal.

Any appeals must be submitted in writing, and will be handled in accordance with the Appeal Process attached to this, and made part of this, No Show Policy.

APPEAL PROCESS

The following administrative procedure has been established to ensure prompt and equitable resolution of any complaint regarding a service suspension imposed based on No Shows.

STEP ONE

The appeal by the passenger must be in writing to the local site manager, and must be received by the local site manager within ten (10) business days of the written notice by HCTD of the pending suspension. The written appeal must state the reason for the appeal, and a reasonable level of detail to allow the HCTD staff reviewing the appeal to make an appropriate decision. If such written appeal is not received by HCTD as stated within the ten (10) business days, the passenger will be considered as having waived appeal rights.

Once the local site manager or designee receives the written appeal, he/she must respond in writing to the appeal within ten (10) business days after receiving the written appeal. If the person is not satisfied with the appeal decision, the appeal process may go to Step Two.

STEP TWO

In this step, the passenger may submit a written appeal of the first step decision made by the local site manager. This second step appeal must also be in writing, and is to be submitted to the HCTD General Manager. This second appeal must be received by the HCTD General Manager within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the written decision by the local site manager. This second appeal must state the reason for the appeal, and must contain a reasonable level of detail to allow the General Manager to make an appropriate decision. If such written second level appeal is not received by HCTD as stated within the fifteen (15) business days, the passenger will be considered as having waived appeal rights hereunder.

Once the General Manager or his/her designee receives the written second step appeal, the General Manager or his/her designee must respond in writing to the appeal within fifteen (15) business days after having received the second step appeal notice.

The decision of the HCTD General Manager is final.

Procedures for Serving Passengers with Disabilities

It is the policy of Hill Country Transit District that passengers with disabilities will be served according to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) so that they may fully benefit from the services provided by HCTD to the extent that persons without disabilities benefit.

Persons with Limited Mobility:

Persons with limited mobility include those individuals that have difficulty walking, and may or may not include persons with mobility aids, such as walkers and canes. The largest group of these persons will include frail elderly. When providing paratransit service to persons with limited mobility, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Be prepared for anything. The driver must stand at the passenger door as passengers board and depart the vehicle.
- The driver should always ask if the passenger needs assistance, typically offering an arm for assistance. Do not touch the passenger unless permission is granted.
- The driver should walk next to the passenger in the event the passenger loses his or her balance.
- Do not rush the passenger. The driver should let the passenger set the pace.

Transporting Persons with Disabilities:

Lift and Securement Use: HCTD will make every reasonable effort to accommodate various wheelchair models available to passengers. However, due to the increasing size and weight of such equipment, some limitations will be necessary in order to ensure the safe transport of these wheelchairs and passengers. The following policy will apply to oversized, three-wheeled, or other non-conventional wheelchairs:

The Director of Rural Operations or the applicable Operations Manager will determine if a wheelchair can be safely transported. Passengers may be allowed to use small mobility devices while boarding, but they must still independently transfer to a regular vehicle seat once inside the vehicle. If the passenger is unable to independently transfer, either an attendant will be required to assist in the transfer or the passenger must use his/her standard wheelchair.

Accommodating Other Mobility Aids and Life Support Equipment: Specially trained service animals, including dogs used by persons with vision or hearing impairments and animals that provide aid to persons with mobility impairments, will be permitted to travel with their masters. Persons who use life support equipment will be permitted to travel with this equipment if it does not violate rules concerning the transportation of hazardous materials. Respirators and portable oxygen supplies shall generally be permitted.

Attendant Policies: An attendant traveling with a general public passenger will pay a fare.

Refusing Service: Service will only be refused for a rider engaging in “violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct”.

Announcement of Stops (Fixed Route Service): Stops will be announced at destination points, and at intervals along a route, sufficient to orient riders with disabilities as to their location. Drivers will also announce any stop on request.

Lift Procedures

Wheelchairs – Boarding the Passenger:

It is the policy of Hill Country Transit District to require all riders to have their common wheelchairs secured while aboard an HCTD vehicle. Drivers will follow these procedures:

- ✓ Plan your route so that the first wheelchair on is the last off, and the last on is the first off.
- ✓ Ensure that your vehicle is properly positioned to board the wheelchair and that the lift can be deployed in an accessible location. Avoid dirt, rocks, grass, mud, or sand.
- ✓ Double check the safety of the wheelchair and the security of the passenger.
- ✓ When opening the lift door, place your hand on the lift to ensure that, in the event of a malfunction, the lift does not fall down.
- ✓ After the lift has been deployed, back the passenger on to the lift. Please note that some passengers may request to be forward facing. This is permitted; however, the driver must take precautions to ensure that the passenger’s feet are not in danger of getting caught on the lift mechanism.
- ✓ If equipped with a lift belt, place it on the passenger after informing them of your intentions.
- ✓ Ensure that the lift end gates are up and fully locked. Test this with your feet.
- ✓ Lock the passenger’s wheelchair brakes.

Operation of the Lift:

- ✓ From a position on the ground next to the passenger, the driver, while holding on to a stable part of the wheelchair at all times, should then inform the passenger that the lift will be going up, and in one motion, raise the lift all the way to the vehicle floor.
- ✓ While continuing to hold the wheelchair securely, the driver will push the wheelchair into the vehicle and off of the lift. The passenger’s wheelchair brakes should then be set.
- ✓ The driver should then go in the vehicle and secure the wheelchair to the tie down. If the air conditioner is in use, the driver may want to replace the lift after moving the passenger out of the way, then tie down the passenger’s wheelchair.

Tying Down the Wheelchair:

- ✓ Forward facing positions are required from a comfort and safety perspective.
- ✓ The wheelchair should be secured to the vehicle using the tie down procedure recommended by the tie down manufacturer, to include, using the four-point tie down, lap belt, and shoulder harness.
- ✓ Do not secure a wheelchair by the arm or leg rests, or any other detachable component.
- ✓ Scooters will require special procedures. If the passenger is capable, it is preferable that he or she transfers to a regular seat. The scooter will then be tied down separately using the four point tie down procedures.

Departing the Vehicle:

- ✓ Park the vehicle close to the destination door, in an accessible location.
- ✓ Deploy the lift, release securement device, push the wheelchair onto the lift facing outward.
- ✓ Secure the wheelchair, ensuring that the front and rear wheels have the appropriate clearance.
- ✓ Secure the safety belt, check the end gate, ensure the wheelchair brakes are set, and then inform the passenger that you will be lowering the lift.
- ✓ The driver must hold onto a stable part of the wheelchair at all times while the passenger is on the lift.
- ✓ Make sure that the lift is all the way to the ground and will not rise as the weight of the wheelchair goes off of it.
- ✓ Assist the passenger off and clear of the lift to a suitable location.
- ✓ Immediately after completing the above tasks, make sure to stow the lift.

Standeers on the Lift: (Note: This practice is highly discouraged, and will only be used under special conditions.)

- ✓ If an ambulatory passenger needs to use the lift, use a boarding chair if available. If not the following procedures should be used:
 - Escort the passenger on to the lift.
 - Have them hold the handrail with one hand and the driver's arm with the other.
 - The driver will stand on the lift as the lift is raised, informing the passenger prior to movement.
 - The passenger is then escorted in the vehicle and seated by the driver, making sure the passenger does not hit his/her head while entering the vehicle.
- ✓ This same procedure is used in reverse when the passenger exits the vehicle.
- ✓ It is recommended that standees face the vehicle going in and face away from the vehicle when exiting.

FRS (Fixed Route Service) Wheelchair Capacity Constraints and Response

Questions sometimes arise regarding the proper action to take when FRS wheelchair capacity is reached and the result is that we are unable to board additional passengers. This situation is addressed in Federal Transit Administration regulations.

TITLE 49, PART 37, Subpart F, Section 37.121, (a) states:

Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, each public entity operating a fixed route system shall provide paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system.

FTA regulations further require:

Finally, as a special case of the requirement of 37.161 (b) that entities provide accommodations when an accessibility feature is out of order, the rule requires that when a bus is operating on the street with a broken lift, and the headway to the next bus with a working lift exceeds 30 minutes, alternative transportation will be provided.

Section 37.121 is very clear that we must “provide paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities”. If, therefore, a FRS bus reaches its wheelchair capacity, and the only reason we cannot accommodate another wheelchair passenger is because of those capacity constraints, while we would be able to board passengers not confined to a wheelchair, we must provide “paratransit or other special service”. As to timeliness, Section 37.161 allows up to 30 minutes for providing alternative transportation.

Based on these requirements, if a HOP FRS bus reaches its wheelchair capacity, and another wheelchair passenger wishes to board the bus, the following action shall be taken. The FRS driver shall stop the FRS bus, and notify the passenger that the bus has reached its wheelchair capacity, but that another vehicle will be dispatched. The FRS driver will radio dispatch, calling for a STS vehicle to be dispatched to that location to transport a 10-80 passenger. The FRS driver should also ask the waiting passenger about that passenger’s destination so the Dispatcher can notify the STS driver. The FRS driver must be sure to notify the waiting passenger to expect another vehicle, and how long to expect to wait. If the waiting passenger is traveling with other person(s), that person(s) should be allowed to travel with the passenger if the passenger so requests, provided space is reasonably available on the alternative vehicle. Again, the prevailing FRS fare must be paid.

The STS driver must arrive within 30 minutes of the call, and the passenger transported to the passenger’s destination. The passenger will pay only the prevailing FRS fare. During periods when FRS has free fare, no fare will be charged. The dispatcher must include this special service provision in the daily report, and should always promptly notify the Operations Manager.

Seat Belts

Drivers will wear seatbelts. All children under the age of two must be restrained by an infant car seat that is age and weight appropriate, provided by the parent or guardian, excluding fixed route buses. All children between the ages of two and four must be restrained by the seat belt provided in the vehicle or an age appropriate booster seat provided by the parent or guardian, excluding fixed route buses. All passengers above the age of four will be required to wear seat belts, excluding fixed route buses. However, it is highly recommended that all fixed route passengers including infants, children, and adults be appropriately restrained either by car seat or seat belt.

Sighted Guide

- ✓ Always offer assistance to every visually impaired person who may need assistance.

- ✓ Many persons with visual impairments can and do get on the vehicle by themselves. This is especially true with persons using a service animal (do not touch or distract the service animal).
- ✓ It is recommended that service animals not ride on the lift. Paws, tails, or equipment such as their leash could get caught in the lift mechanism and cause the animal injury.
- ✓ After asking and receiving acknowledgement that assistance is needed, the driver is to first determine which hand the passenger will use, and then offer the opposite arm, having his or her elbow touch the passenger's hand.
- ✓ The passenger should hold the driver's arm just above the elbow.
- ✓ While leading the passenger, the driver should hold out his/her arm about three inches from their body, making sure not to make any exaggerated motions.
- ✓ The driver must inform the passenger of every change of direction and give warning when approaching steps or other level changes.
- ✓ Make sure the passenger has enough clearance so that he or she will not walk into any objects.
- ✓ When the passenger is preparing to sit down, make sure they are properly aligned with the seat, or have their hand touching the seat.

Working with Persons with Communication-Related Disabilities

- ✓ This group of passengers is diverse, and includes persons with cognitive/mental impairments, hearing impaired persons, and persons with speech impairments.
- ✓ Under most circumstances, drivers will not have any problems communicating with persons with mental impairments.
- ✓ If a passenger is trying to communicate with the driver, he or she probably needs to tell them something. When this happens, the driver should make every attempt to understand them.
- ✓ Often the key is patience. It may take a while, but drivers *can* communicate. A few simple rules to follow:
 - Drivers should ask questions that can be answered with a yes or no.
 - When a person talks to a driver, the driver should always repeat back what they thought they heard.
 - Drivers should never say they understand someone when they do not.
 - Drivers should not get frustrated; but should continue to ask the individual to repeat portions of the statement that they do not understand.
 - If this does not work, the driver may communicate by writing. (Pad and pen should be kept on vehicle.)
 - If this fails or the passenger cannot write, the driver can ask another person on the vehicle to help. Often an individual needs to get accustomed to a passenger's speech pattern.
 - If all else fails, when the driver gets to their destination they should ask someone for assistance, or call the dispatcher if the passenger is insistent.

60+ Transportation Services – Texas Department on Aging, Title III-B

Hill Country Transit District makes transportation services available and accessible to all elderly residents living within the nine-county service area, including those elderly persons who are physically impaired. Opportunities and preference are afforded to low income older individuals living in rural areas who experience the greatest economic and social needs (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals); older individuals with severe disabilities and older individuals with limited English-speaking ability. Eligible persons can be taken to and from non-emergency medical and health care appointments, to health and human service agencies, to meals programs, senior center activities, to personal business, shopping, education, employment, training, recreational activities and to other needed community functions and activities.

As required by the *Older Americans Act*, Hill Country Transit District has developed the following guideline for prioritizing services, should there be a need to do so due to limited capacity or other scheduling problems (*This applies to the Rural Division. In Temple and Killeen this is applicable only for nutrition*):

- 1) Medical appointments and pharmacies
- 2) Nutrition sites
- 3) Employment
- 4) Grocery stores, banks, and other essential service destinations
- 5) Social service agencies
- 6) Other shopping destinations
- 7) Recreational

In instances where an eligible person requires an escort, the escort doesn't have to meet the 60 year of age criteria. The only requirement is that they are physically and otherwise able to assist the 60+ individual.

Services are provided on a demand-response, curb-to-curb basis, with door-to-door services provided as needed.

For purposes of the *Older Americans Act*, transportation service is defined as taking a person 60 years of age or older from one location to another. To be eligible for transportation services, individuals must be sixty (60) years of age or older, or the spouse of an eligible person. Eligible individuals will need to provide name, address, telephone number, date of birth and other information as required by TDoA, prior to participating in this service. (See Addendum, forms HCTD P-3, P-4)

Grievance Procedures for Participants in Older Americans Act (254.19)

- (a) Participants in Older Americans Act Programs may submit grievances regarding specific actions or activities affecting their personal participation in the program or the conduct of the program as it relates to all participants at that site or location.

- 1) Grievances may be in writing or may be made orally. (See Addendum A, forms HCTD P-5, P-6, P-7.)
- 2) A grievance may be presented by an individual on behalf of the participant. If the participant elects this option, he or she shall accompany that spokesperson to every meeting at which the appeal is discussed.
- 3) A grievance should be resolved at the lowest level of authority to avoid undue paperwork or loss of time. Grievances shall be directed as indicated to the following authorities in the order indicated:
 - (A) site director
 - (B) project director
 - (C) area agency on aging director
 - (D) grantee director
 - (E) executive director of the Texas Department on Aging
- 4) Grievances may be made at any time. The site manager, however, should be advised within ten days of the event which created the basis for the grievance of the intent to appeal.

(b) Grievance Procedures

- (1) An oral grievance must state in detail the basis for the appeal and the reasons the participant objects to the action or circumstances in question. To facilitate this statement, a written outline should be prepared for the oral grievance which outlines the reasons for the grievance. This outline should contain or refer to the following:
 - (A) the notice, document, policy or situation upon which a grievance is being made;
 - (B) the dates that are significant which pertain to the grievance;
 - (C) the names of individuals and organizations involved in the grievance;
 - (D) a reference to any provision of the Older Americans Act or regulations believed to have been violated by site management, grantee, area agency or the Department.
- (2) A written grievance may also be made. A written grievance must contain all the elements specified for the oral grievance, as stated in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(c) Disposition of Grievances

- (1) If the facts support the grievance, the site manager or service provider director shall, within 30 working days of the receipt of the written grievance, make the changes necessary to resolve the issue.
- (2) If the site manager's or service provider's director's decision is not acceptable to the participant, the participant may, within ten working days, appeal to the next higher authority as specified in subsection (3) of this section (relating to Resolving Issues at the Lowest Possible Level of Authority). The site manager or service provider director, and each level of authority at which the grievance has been unresolved, shall within ten working days following receipt of a request for continuing grievance action, develop a memorandum detailing the circumstances of the grievance, attach all pertinent documentation regarding the

findings and actions taken at that level of authority, and forward it to the next level with a request for a meeting of the parties concerned with the issue.

- (3) If the grievance is resolved, parties to the grievance shall jointly notify each level of authority involved in the grievance of this fact in writing.

(d) Referral to the Texas Department on Aging

If the grievance cannot be informally or formally resolved and it becomes necessary to refer it to the Texas Department on Aging, the Executive Director shall issue a decision on behalf of the department.

- (e) A copy of this rule will be made available to participants in Older Americans Act programs.

Contribution and Cash Handling Policy

60+ clients are informed at the time of intake of the opportunity for the client or their family or other advocate to voluntarily contribute all or a part of the cost of the trip. Clients are also made aware of this opportunity by a suggested contribution schedule which is posted in each vehicle.

- Clearly marked contribution boxes are on each vehicle. Passengers must put their contribution directly into the contribution box. HCTD adheres to a strict policy against handling of fares or donations by drivers or other staff.

Locked Contribution boxes must be available on vehicles during the provision of service.

At the end of service for the day, the driver must remove the locked boxes and place them in a designated secure location in the site.

The following procedure is to be followed except at the few HCTD Rural sites where there are a very limited number of persons. HCTD staff must not handle contributions. Contributions are to be counted and deposited according the schedule established by HCTD Admin. Two volunteers or others are to open the locked boxes, count the funds, properly record the amounts on the Deposit Record form (HCTD A-15), and complete the deposit slip(s). A third person is to take the deposit to the bank and provide a copy of the deposit slip(s) and original completed Deposits Record form to the designated staff. The information is to be verified as correct and forwarded to HCTD Admin office in San Saba.

Deposit slips are reconciled to bank statements at the end of each month. Monthly withdrawals are made from the local accounts and deposited into the main account at the administrative office.

All such contributions are used to support and/or expand services provided by the Area Agency on Aging, in accordance with applicable federal fiscal and program regulations.

Contributions are not required as a condition for receiving transportation services and there is no income requirement in order to receive services.

Medical Transportation Trip Procedures

Hill Country Transit District will notify TxDOT MTP of any changes in Key Personnel within 5 business days, immediately if HCTD changes ownership, and report TEJAS or HCTD automation system problems within 1 hour of problem onset.

Arranging the Trip (except for Mason County)

- See Addendum A, form HCTD P-10.
- All Medical Transportation trips will be arranged through the central dispatch office in Temple. HCTD staff may assist participants in arranging trips by contacting central dispatch by phone, if needed.
- Texas Department of Transportation technicians have responsibility for trip approval or denial. Their telephone number is 1-877-633-8747. Confirmation of approved trips is provided to HCTD dispatch through TEJAS (web report system).
- Central dispatch will alert HCTD Rural sites that are not centrally dispatched of pending trips as soon as the trip is requested and again when approved by TxDOT.
- Centrally dispatched HCTD Rural sites will be notified of approved Medicaid trips on the daily schedule which is faxed to the Rural site for each driver. Approved Medical Transportation trips are noted with the letters "M OK" in the schedule margins.
- If TxDOT contacts a Rural site directly, the trip should not be arranged. TxDOT must contact the central dispatch office directly to arrange the trip.

Reporting Trip Completion

- Drivers from Rural sites that are not centrally dispatched will report completions to central dispatch no later than 9:00 a.m. on the workday immediately following the trip.
- Drivers who are in radio/telephone contact with central dispatch will report completion of each Medical Transportation trip as it occurs.

Cancellation/No-Show Procedures

Drivers will report the circumstances to central dispatch whenever a Medical Transportation trip is not completed due to the passenger not being at the scheduled pickup location. Central dispatch will determine on a case-by-case basis whether the trip should be documented as a "no-show" or cancelled.

Medical Transportation Program Customer Service

The Board of Directors and the General Manager of Hill Country Transit District, pledge full commitment toward equality of transportation services. It is the policy of HCTD to provide fair and equal client services to all persons: regardless of race, color, creed, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, handicap, or political affiliation or belief.

HCTD takes positive steps to ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participating in, or denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program, or activity receiving federal financial assistance. HCTD

ensures that federally supported transit services and related benefits are distributed in an equitable manner.

A review of HCTD policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of beneficiaries of transportation services because of their race, color or national origin, or have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of any transportation program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color or national origin. HCTD will take reasonable steps to provide services and information in appropriate languages other than English in order to ensure that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons are effectively informed and can effectively participate and benefit from its programs.

HCTD shall not intimidate, retaliate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege granted by Civil Rights Laws and Regulations. HCTD shall not intimidate, retaliate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual because he/she has filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to discriminatory practices. The identity of all complainants must be kept confidential, except to the extent needed to resolve the complaint.

All new employees will be provided a copy of recipient rights and responsibilities as stated in 1 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 380.

Texas Administrative Code

<u>TITLE 1</u>	ADMINISTRATION
<u>PART 15</u>	TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
<u>CHAPTER 380</u>	MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM
<u>SUBCHAPTER C</u>	CLIENT RIGHTS
<u>RULE §380.301</u>	Client Rights and Responsibilities

(a) Recipient Rights.

(1) Nondiscrimination. The recipient has a right to receive services in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C.A. §§2000d, *et seq.*; §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C.A. §794; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C.A. §12101, *et seq.*; and all amendments to each, and all requirements imposed by the regulations issued pursuant to these Acts, in particular 45 CFR Part 80 (relating to race, color, national origin), 45 CFR Part 84 (relating to handicap), 45 CFR Part 86 (relating to sex), and 45 CFR Part 91 (relating to age).

(2) Abuse report. Recipients should report verbal or physical abuse or sexual harassment committed by other recipients or passengers, contractor employees, or department staff to Regional MTP staff or Regional Management staff upon arrival at the recipient's destination.

(3) Denial notification. If a service is denied, Regional MTP staff shall notify the recipient in accordance with Chapter 1, Subchapter C, §1.41 of this title (relating to Medicaid Uniform Fair Hearings Procedures). This recipient notification does not apply to transportation services under

§40.106 of this title (relating to Program Exclusions).

(4) Appeal request. A recipient whose services have been denied may request an administrative review by the Regional MTP Manager. A second administrative review may be conducted by the MTP Program Director. If the recipient is still dissatisfied, the recipient may appeal the administrative review decision or the service denial by requesting a fair hearing. A request for a fair hearing must be in writing and mailed or hand-delivered to the appropriate Regional MTP office.

(b) Recipient Responsibilities.

(1) When a recipient or responsible adult requests transportation, he/she must provide Regional MTP staff with the following information:

(A) recipient name, address, and, if available, the telephone number;

(B) Medicaid, TICP or CSHCN recipient identification number (if applicable) or Social Security number, and date of birth;

(C) name, address, and telephone number of health care provider and/or referring health-care provider;

(D) purpose and date of trip and time of appointment;

(E) affirmation that other means of transportation are unavailable;

(F) special needs, including wheelchair lift or attendant(s);

(G) medical necessity verified by the Health Care Provider's Statement of Need, if applicable; and

(H) affirmation that advance funds are needed in order for the recipient to access health care services;

(I) recipient must reimburse the department for any advance funds, and any portion thereof, that are not used for the specific prior authorized service.

(2) Recipients must refrain from verbal and/or physical abuse or sexual harassment toward another recipient or passenger, contractor's employees, or department employees while requesting or receiving medical transportation services.

(3) Recipients must safeguard all bus tickets and/or tokens from loss and theft and must return unused tickets or tokens to the Regional MTP office issuing the tickets or tokens.

(4) Recipients who receive mass-transit bus tickets or tokens must complete the department's Verification of Travel to Health Care Services by Mass Transit, Form 3111. Recipients must return this verification form prior to their next request for tickets or tokens. A letter from the health care provider verifying delivery of services may be substituted for the disbursement of mass transit tickets or tokens verification form. Exceptions to this documentation may be granted by a Regional MTP Manager or supervisor when circumstances occur that are beyond the recipient's control. Exceptions will be documented in the recipient's record.

(5) Recipients must not use authorized medical transportation for purposes other than travel to and from health care services.

(6) If the recipient does not need to use the authorized transportation services, the recipient or the responsible adult should contact the Regional MTP staff to cancel the particular trip no less than four hours prior to the time of the authorized trip.

(7) Recipients who receive advance funds for meals, lodging, and/or travel must return a completed Individual Volunteer Contractor (IVC) Service Record verifying services were provided, prior to receiving future advance funds or reimbursements.

(8) Recipients must cancel requests for advance funds or lodging when not needed and must refund any disbursed advance funds to the department.

(9) Recipients must provide appropriate receipts when seeking reimbursement for lodging.

Source Note: The provisions of this §380.301 adopted to be effective April 10, 2001, 26 TexReg 2720; amended to be effective May 11, 2003, 28 TexReg 3722; transferred effective March 1, 2004, as published in the Texas Register April 30, 2004, 29 TexReg 4267

Medical Transportation Passenger Complaint Policy

Passengers whose trips are funded by *Title XIX, Medical Transportation Services*, may submit complaints or grievances regarding those transportation services in the following manner:

1. Any HCTD employee who receives a complaint from a *Medical Transportation Services* client should document the information on forms HCTD P-8 (and P-9, if applicable). After the complaint has been documented, the client should be instructed to call *Medical Transportation Services*.
2. A copy of the complaint should be faxed immediately to the Director of Rural Operations/*Medical Transportation Services* contact and to the HCTD Administrative Office in San Saba. The original should then be mailed to the HCTD Administrative Office in San Saba.
3. All investigation and resolutions will be handled between the Director of Rural Operations/*Medical Transportation Services* contact person and *Medical Transportation Services* staff. The General Manager will be briefed on the investigation findings and resolutions.
4. HCTD employees are not to initiate calls to *Medical Transportation Services* clients concerning complaints.
5. Documentation of the complaint, investigation, resolution, and response will be maintained at the HCTD Administrative Office.

Employee Conduct

All employees of HCTD have a responsibility to maintain and conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times when representing HCTD. Employee behavior, regardless of an employee's job, is a direct reflection on HCTD. All employees shall conduct themselves as persons of high moral standards and shall treat other employees, customers, visitors and the general public with maximum courtesy and respect. No employee shall, at any time, speak in a derogatory fashion about any other employee, HCTD, any vendor, customer or competitor. The use of abusive language by employees will not be tolerated. An employee's violation of this policy may result in the disciplining or termination of the employee.

Customers are never an inconvenience. Staff should always cheerfully serve our customers and try to meet their needs. An explanation and assistance will be provided to customers when completing required documentation and address customer questions when transportation arrangements are not understood. All customers of HCTD transportation services will be treated with dignity and respect. Employees should try to meet all situations that arise calmly and courteously, and take any problem which they cannot solve to their supervisor. Our customers are our business. All HCTD vehicles will be maintained in a safe and clean status.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important aspect of HCTD. The business of HCTD and its customers is confidential. Employees should never discuss information they learn while at work with those

outside of HCTD. It is essential for each employee to respect the private nature of his/her job. If an employee has a question regarding whether an item is of a confidential nature, they should consult their supervisor.

There is potential for HCTD employees and customers to develop friendships as a by-product of day-to-day business, with honorable intentions. At no time, should a guardian-type relationship be developed with HCTD customers to include financial affairs responsibility. As a public entity and recipient of state and federal funding, HCTD must be vigilant about the professional image projected. Staff must always be alert to potential areas of conflict of interest or questionable situations that could allow HCTD to become subject to criticism and should take necessary precautions to avoid such situations.

If an employee does become involved in such a relationship, the employee must promptly notify HCTD management. The employee will be given the opportunity to choose between that relationship and continued employment with HCTD. Failure to notify HCTD may jeopardize the employee's continued employment.

No confidentiality policy can cover all situations, or all potential relationships. The purpose and intent, however, of HCTD's confidentiality policy is to provide to all employees the directive that HCTD will not allow the relationships between an employee and a client to be a detriment to HCTD, or to place HCTD or its employees in a position wherein ethics or integrity could be called into question.

Head Start Transportation Policies & Procedures

The transportation of Head Start children involves the Head Start Parent/Guardians, the Head Start children, the Head Start staff, and Hill Country Transit District staff.

Head Start Parents/Guardians

- Parents are required to have the child ready when the vehicle arrives.
- Parents are required to have someone accept the child at the designated drop-off.
- Parents are required to complete a *Change of Pick-Up or Drop-Off Form (HCTD Form P-13, see Addendum A)* when they want to make a change. The form must be completed before the child will be picked up or delivered at a location other than the normal destination.
- Parents are required to see that their children display good behavior while riding the vehicle.
- Parents are required to ensure that their children wear a seat belt while riding the vehicle.
- Parents are required to call in advance to notify HCTD if their child will not be riding.

Head Start Children

- Like all riders with HCTD, Head Start children are required to wear their seat belts.
- Head Start children are required to display good behavior.
- Head Start children will not be allowed to eat or drink on the vehicle.
- Head Start children will be allowed to talk or sing songs on the vehicle, but will not be allowed to fight, scuffle, scream, or in any way distract the driver.

- Head Start children will not be allowed to jump off the vehicle. They will be assisted off of the vehicle by the Head Start escort.

Head Start Staff

Hill Country Transit District and Head Start work together to coordinate the transportation service for Head Start children. The Head Start program makes the policies for Head Start Staff. The Head Start procedures and policies that relate to transportation are provided here as information to HCTD staff.

- As employees of the Head Start program, Head Start guidelines are the primary concern for the Head Start staff.
- Head Start staff will provide a copy of the Enrollment Information Forms (which includes Emergency Medical Information and Consent for Treatment, form HCTD P-11) to the transit driver for all Head Start children who are regular to-and/or-from the Head Start classroom riders. For those children who ride the vehicle only for field trips, Head Start staff will take the Enrollment Information Forms on the vehicle.
- Head Start staff will be available to accept delivery of the children as early as 7:30 a.m.
- Head Start will provide an escort. A Head Start escort is required on the vehicle when one or more children are transported (this does not apply to children transported to speech). The Head Start escort is responsible for Head Start children only, and will not be responsible for any non-Head Start children who are riding the van.
- The Head Start escort will coordinate with the transit driver regarding arrangements for meeting the vehicle.
- The Head Start escort will be responsible for noise control (children are allowed to talk or sing songs).
- The Head Start escort will maintain discipline.
- The Head Start escort will ensure that children's seat belts are buckled properly and assist if necessary.
- The Head Start escort will consider safety and the children's behavioral patterns and will determine seating arrangements.
- If the Head Start escort is certified in CPR and First Aid, he/she will perform CPR/First Aid if necessary. The transit driver will stop the vehicle and assist.
- Head Start staff or the transit driver may sign the children in.
- A designated Head Start staff member will communicate with the driver as to which regular riders will not be riding in the afternoon.
- The Head Start escort will assure that someone is at the drop-off point to accept the child in the afternoon.
- The Head Start escort will assure that no child is left on the vehicle. (The transit driver is also responsible for this.)
- In the event of an early closing of the Head Start Center, Head Start staff will give a one-day notice to the transit driver and transit site.

HCTD Staff

- HCTD staff will follow the procedures and policies as established by Hill Country Transit District.
- The driver will not collect a fare for a Head Start child's transportation if the Head Start program has approved that child for transportation service. But, if a Head Start child is not approved for service by the Head Start program, the parent may arrange for Hill Country Transit District to provide the transportation service (except in Bell County). In this case, the child's trips would be reported as "all other -60 trips" and the parent is required to pay the fare.
- The regular transit driver will provide back-up drivers with correct information on pick-up and delivery points on all Head Start children.
- Transit sites will get and keep on file a *HCTD Enrollment Form for Head Start Transportation* for each child that is transported to/from the Head Start Classroom. The transit driver will have a copy of the *Head Start Enrollment Information Form* (which includes *Emergency Medical Information and Consent for Treatment*) on the vehicle at all times for each Head Start child who is a regular to/from the Head Start classroom rider. For those Head Start children that ride the vehicle only for field trips, Head Start staff will take their Enrollment Information Forms on the vehicle.
- Children must be ready at pick-up time. If the driver goes to pick-up a child and there is no response, the driver will sound the horn three times. After approximately one minute the driver should sound the horn again. The driver may leave after a wait time of five minutes and the child will be considered a no-show.
- The transit driver will transport only the number of children that the vehicle is designed to carry. Each child must have their own seat belt/ safety restraint.
- If the Head Start escort is not certified in CPR and First Aid, the transit driver will perform CPR/First Aid if necessary. If the escort is certified, the driver will stop the vehicle and assist.
- The transit driver will not deny transportation to a Head Start child. This decision will be made only by Head Start administrative staff/HCTD administrative staff.
- The driver will not leave children on the vehicle unattended. When the driver exits the vehicle for any reason, the ignition keys must be removed and kept with the driver.
- The driver will not discipline a Head Start child. The Head Start escort is responsible for maintaining discipline. If there is a discipline problem with a child that is not resolved by the Head Start escort, the transit driver must contact the Director of Rural Operations.
- The driver will assure that no child is left on the vehicle. (Head Start escort is also responsible for this.)
- The driver will contact the Director of Rural Operations when there are Head Start transportation issues to be addressed.

Procedures When No One is Available to Accept Delivery of a Child

Following are guidelines which should be used if the driver is unable to deliver a Head Start child to their afternoon destination because no one is home to receive the child.

- 1) If no one is home when the driver first attempts to deliver the child, continue the route with the child on board.
- 2) After completing the route, again attempt to deliver the child to their proper destination.
- 3) If there is still no one there to receive the child, return the child to the Head Start Center.
- 4) If there is no one at the Head Start Center, use the following procedure:
 - Park the vehicle in a safe place.
 - Pull the emergency form on this child (please remember, the driver is required to have this information on all Head Start children they transport on their vehicle at all times).
 - Radio dispatch, give the emergency telephone numbers to them and ask them to start calling these numbers until they can find someone who will take responsibility for the child.
 - The driver may then either meet the person somewhere with the child or deliver the child to that person.
 - If the driver still does not have someone to accept the child, ask the dispatcher to contact Head Start staff at the HCCAA office in San Saba.
- 5) As a last resort, the driver may take the child to the local police department and see if they will either take the child or attempt to help locate the parents or guardian.

School Children Transportation

(See Policy Letter to Parents/Guardians, Addendum A, forms HCTD P-14, P-15)

Passenger Complaint Policy

For Medical Transportation Program and 60+ Transportation Services complaint procedures see those sections in this policy.

All other passengers may submit complaints or grievances regarding transportation services orally or in writing to:

Director of Rural Operations *or*
#7 South Starboard Lane
Morgan's Point Resort, TX 76513-6359
(254) 780-1355

Director of Urban Operations
5200 South General Bruce Drive
Temple, TX 76502
(254) 778-3636

Passengers who voice complaints orally may be asked to submit the complaint in writing. Every effort will be made to satisfactorily resolve the complaint or issue in a timely manner. Documentation of the complaint, investigation, resolution, and response will be maintained at the HCTD administrative office.

Addendum A

Forms addressed in the Passenger Policy

Passenger Information Form.....	HCTD P-1
(Rescinded).....	HCTD P-2
TDoA Participant Information Form.....	HCTD P-3
60+ Participant Consent for Disclosure Form.....	HCTD P-4
TDoA Complaint & Appeals Procedure (Capital Area).....	HCTD P-5
TDoA Complaint & Appeals Procedure (Central Texas).....	HCTD P-6
TDoA Complaint & Appeals Procedure (Concho Valley).....	HCTD P-7
Passenger Comment/Complaint Report.....	HCTD P-8
Passenger Complaint Procedures.....	HCTD P-9
Medicaid Transportation Client Information.....	HCTD P-10
Medical Trip Approval.....	HCTD P-10A
Enrollment Form for Head Start Transportation.....	HCTD P-11
Policy Letter to Parents - Head Start Transportation.....	HCTD P-12
Change of Pick-Up/Drop-Off Address Policy Form.....	HCTD P-13
Enrollment Form for Public School Transportation.....	HCTD P-14
Enrollment Form for Public School Transportation.....	HCTD P-14S
Policy Letter to Parents – Public School Transportation.....	HCTD P-15
Policy Letter to Parents – Public School Transportation.....	HCTD P-15S
Notice of No-Show (Rural Division).....	HCTD P-16
Passenger No-Show Report.....	HCTD P-17
Summary of No-Shows.....	HCTD P-18
Notice of No-Show Letter.....	HCTD P-19
Notice of Penalty Imposed Due to No-Show.....	HCTD P-20
Fare Schedule (Rural).....	HCTD P-21

Hill Country Transit District

Passenger Information Form *(Rural Division Only)*

In order for Hill Country Transit District to provide transportation for you, we need the following information for our records:

Please Print

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mailing address if different from above address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Medicaid Number: _____

Notify in Case of Emergency:

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Thank you for your cooperation in providing this information. The agencies that help provide funding for the operation of this transportation system request that Hill Country Transit District maintain this information in our local files. Please return this form to your driver as soon as possible.

Texas Department on Aging

Participant Information Form

The information on this form is needed by Hill Country Transit District, Area Agency on Aging and the Texas Department on Aging to more effectively plan for and deliver transportation services to older Texans. All information will be kept confidential and guarded against unofficial use. Your name, address, and telephone number will be used by Hill Country Transit District as needed in the provision of your services. Service information will also be used by your area agency to accurately report, as required funding sources, the number of persons receiving services.

New Participant Information? Yes ___ No ___

1. Today's Date: ___/___/___
2. SSN: ___ - ___ - ___
3. First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____
4. Street Address & Apt. No. _____
5. City _____
6. State _____
7. Zip _____
8. County _____
9. Phone (____) _____
9. Birthdate ___/___/___
11. Gender (Male/Female) _____
12. Race/Ethnic Group (Circle One):
(1) Black (4) Hispanic
(2) White (5) Asian
(3) Native American (6) Other
13. Marital Status (Circle One)
(1) Married (4) Separated
(2) Widowed (5) Never Married
(3) Divorced
14. Total number of family members in household (including self) _____.
("Family" – persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together)
15. Estimated total monthly income for you and your spouse: _____.
(Choose from Income Ranges on separate sheet. Enter: Low Moderate, High)
16. Receives Supplemental Security Income? (Y/N) _____.
17. Emergency Contact: _____ Phone (____) _____
18. Physician's Name: _____ Phone (____) _____

Hill Country Transit District

60+ Participant Consent for Disclosure Form

I hereby give my consent for Hill Country Transit District to furnish information or records concerning:

Name of Participant

Address

Date of Birth

To _____

Signature of Participant or Legal Representative

Date

Hill Country Transit District

Complaint and Appeals Procedure *Texas Department on Aging*

I have received a copy of Hill Country Transit District's Complaint and Appeals Procedure. I understand I have the right to appeal any decision that may result in a denial of service. I also understand I can file a complaint concerning quality of service provided by Hill Country Transit District, which is funded in part by the Area Agency on Aging of the **Capital Area**.

Date _____ Signature _____

Please detach here – return the top portion and keep the lower portion for your records.

Hill Country Transit District Complaint and Appeals Procedure

Transportation services are being provided to you by Hill Country Transit District, funded in part by the Area Agency on Aging of the **Capital Area**.

If you have any comments or complaints about the quality of service you receive, or if you have been denied service and wish to appeal the decision, please contact the Hill Country Transit District General Manager or the Director – Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area. Please call (325) 372-4677 or write to:

General Manager
Hill Country Transit District
P.O. Box 217
San Saba, Texas 76877

Director
Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area
2520 IH-35 South, Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78704

If you have contacted the above agencies and the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the Texas Department on Aging at the following address:

Texas Department on Aging
P.O. Box 12786
Austin, Texas 78711
Phone 1(800) 252-9240

Please sign, date and return the upper portion of this form to your driver or local Center Director. Thank you for helping us to comply with Texas Department on Aging regulation 40 TAC 270 and the Older Americans Act.

PLEASE KEEP THIS PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS

HCTD P-5

Hill Country Transit District

Complaint and Appeals Procedure *Texas Department on Aging*

I have received a copy of Hill Country Transit District's Complaint and Appeals Procedure. I understand I have the right to appeal any decision that may result in a denial of service. I also understand I can file a complaint concerning quality of service provided by Hill Country Transit District, which is funded in part by the Area Agency on Aging of **Central Texas**.

Date _____ Signature _____

Please detach here – return the top portion and keep the lower portion for your records.

Hill Country Transit District Complaint and Appeals Procedure

Transportation services are being provided to you by Hill Country Transit District, funded in part by the Area Agency on Aging of **Central Texas**.

If you have any comments or complaints about the quality of service you receive, or if you have been denied service and wish to appeal the decision, please contact the Hill Country Transit District General Manager or the Director – Area Agency on Aging of Central Texas. Please call (325) 372-4677 or write to:

General Manager
Hill Country Transit District
P.O. Box 217
San Saba, Texas 76877

Director
Area Agency on Aging of Central Texas
P.O. Box 729
Belton, Texas 76513

If you have contacted the above agencies and the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the Texas Department on Aging at the following address:

Texas Department on Aging
P.O. Box 12786
Austin, Texas 78711
Phone 1(800) 252-9240

Please sign, date and return the upper portion of this form to your driver or local Center Director. Thank you for helping us to comply with Texas Department on Aging regulation 40 TAC 270 and the Older Americans Act.

PLEASE KEEP THIS PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS

HCTD P-6

Hill Country Transit District

Complaint and Appeals Procedure *Texas Department on Aging*

I have received a copy of Hill Country Transit District's Complaint and Appeals Procedure. I understand I have the right to appeal any decision that may result in a denial of service. I also understand I can file a complaint concerning quality of service provided by Hill Country Transit District, which is funded in part by the Area Agency on Aging of the **Concho Valley**.

Date _____ Signature _____

Please detach here – return the top portion and keep the lower portion for your records.

Hill Country Transit District Complaint and Appeals Procedure

Transportation services are being provided to you by Hill Country Transit District, funded in part by the Area Agency on Aging of **Concho Valley**.

If you have any comments or complaints about the quality of service you receive, or if you have been denied service and wish to appeal the decision, please contact the Hill Country Transit District General Manager or the Director – Area Agency on Aging of the **Concho Valley**. Please call (325) 372-4677 or write to:

General Manager
Hill Country Transit District
P.O. Box 217
San Saba, Texas 76877

Director
Area Agency on Aging of the Concho Valley
5002 Knickerbocker Rd.
San Angelo, Texas 76904

If you have contacted the above agencies and the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the Texas Department on Aging at the following address:

Texas Department on Aging
P.O. Box 12786
Austin, Texas 78711
Phone 1(800) 252-9240

Please sign, date and return the upper portion of this form to your driver or local Center Director. Thank you for helping us to comply with Texas Department on Aging regulation 40 TAC 270 and the Older Americans Act.

PLEASE KEEP THIS PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS

HCTD P-7

Hill Country Transit District Passenger Comment/Complaint Report

Division/Program/Contract: _____

Instructions: This report is to be completed whenever a passenger or other person files a comment or complaint by telephone or in person. This report may also be used in conjunction with a written comment or complaint. The initial report should be sent to the Director of Urban Operations or the Director of Rural Operation, as appropriate, for investigation and action. Attach additional sheets of paper as necessary.

Printed Name of Person Filing Comment/Complaint

Date Comment/Complaint received

Mailing Address of Person Filing Comment/Complaint (Street, City, Zip)

Telephone Number

Date and Time of Incident

Comment/Complaint Details: _____

Investigation Findings: _____

Resolution: _____

Name of Person Submitting Report

Final Review by General Manager:

Carole Warlick
General Manager

General Manager's Signature

Date

Hill Country Transit District

Passenger Complaint Procedures

I have received a copy of the Hill Country Transit District Complaint Procedure. I understand I have the right to file a complaint regarding transportation service or denial of service.

Passenger Printed Name

Passenger Signature

Date

Please detach here – return the top portion to your driver and keep the lower portion for your records

Hill Country Transit District Passenger Complaint Procedures

Transportation services are being provided to you by Hill Country Transit District. If you have any comments or complaints about the quality of service, or if you have been denied service and wish to appeal the decision, please contact the following:

If you are a Medical Transportation Services passenger, contact:

Director of Rural Operation / TDH Contact
#7 South Starboard Lane
Morgan's Point Resort, TX 76513-6359
(254) 780-1355

All other passengers, contact:

Director of Rural Operations *or*
#7 South Starboard Lane
Morgan's Point Resort, TX 76513-6359
(254) 780-1355

Director of Urban Operations
5200 South General Bruce Drive
Temple, TX 76502
(254) 778-3636

Please print your name, sign and date the upper portion of this form and return it to your driver.
Please keep this portion for your records.

HCTD P-9

Medicaid Client Information

Date Of Trip(S) _____

Name _____ Total # of Trips Provided _____ (Include Escort Trips)

Pick-Up Address _____ City _____

Destination _____ City _____

Van # to Destination _____

Van # for Return Trip _____

Did client have escort? Yes No

Add escort trips to client total trips

Was this a no show?

Were any trips cancelled? Yes No

If no show, please explain reason _____

Medicaid Client Information

Date Of Trip(S) _____

Name _____ Total # of Trips Provided _____ (Include Escort Trips)

Pick-Up Address _____ City _____

Destination _____ City _____

Van # to Destination _____

Van # for Return Trip _____

Did client have escort? Yes No

Add escort trips to client total trips

Was this a no show?

Were any trips cancelled? Yes No

If no show, please explain reason _____

Medicaid Client Information

Date Of Trip(S) _____

Name _____ Total # of Trips Provided _____ (Include Escort Trips)

Pick-Up Address _____ City _____

Destination _____ City _____

Van # to Destination _____

Van # for Return Trip _____

Did client have escort? Yes No

Add escort trips to client total trips

Was this a no show?

Were any trips cancelled? Yes No

If no show, please explain reason _____

**Hill Country Transit District
Medical Trip Approval**

**Please return this form by fax as soon as possible to the Rural Dispatch office in
Temple. Their fax number is 254-791-8802**

Client's Name _____

Client's Address _____

Town _____ Telephone # _____

Client's Medicaid Number _____

Date of Trip _____ Appointment Time _____

Destination _____
Name of Facility

Destination Address _____

Destination Town _____ Telephone # _____

Will the client have an approved escort? Yes No



Yes, we can provide the trip for _____

on _____ Driver who will provide the trip _____

No, we can not provide the trip for _____

on _____

Reason for not providing the trip _____

Signature of person providing this information _____

I have confirmed this trip with the client Yes No

If yes, I spoke to client Left message
or no way to leave message phone disconnected
or other _____

Their pick up time is: _____ Time of notification _____

Hill Country Transit District

Enrollment Form for Head Start Transportation

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____
(Where child is to be picked up)

City: _____ Telephone Number: _____

In the afternoon, my child is to be returned to:

Address: _____

I, _____, do hereby authorize Hill Country Transit District to provide transportation for my child to and from the _____ educational facility.

In the event of an emergency, I do hereby authorize Hill Country Transit District personnel to seek medical attention for my child.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

School Year

Date

In case of emergency, please call:

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

In the event you move after the school year begins, Hill Country Transit District cannot guarantee the continuance of your child's transportation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the policy letter that contains the guidelines for using the services of Hill Country Transit District.

Signature of Parent/ Guardian

Date

Hill Country Transit District

Policy Letter to Parents/ Guardians *Head Start Transportation*

Thank you for allowing Hill Country Transit District to provide your child's transportation this year. In order to provide an efficient service, and for the safety and well being of your child, we have a few guidelines we would like to make you aware of:

- 1) If your child is riding our vehicle in the mornings, please have him/her ready to go when the vehicle arrives. Please be watching for us; we want all the children to get to class on time every day.
- 2) In the afternoons, there must be someone to accept responsibility for your child at the designated drop-off point. We do not leave children alone. If no one is home, your child will be returned to the Head Start Center. Habitual violation of this policy could jeopardize your child's transportation privileges.
- 3) If you need to have your child picked up or dropped off somewhere other than the designated location, you must fill out the *Change of Pick-Up or Drop-Off* form and give it to the driver prior to the time the change occurs. Our drivers cannot change the pick-up or drop-off location without a completed form.
- 4) All children must wear their seat belt while riding our vehicles. If your child is not in the habit of wearing a seat belt when riding in the family car, they probably will not want to wear one in our vehicle. Please help us by requiring your child to use the seat belt when riding in the family car.
- 5) Your child is expected to display good behavior while riding in our vehicle. Loud screaming, scuffling, and fighting is a distraction to our drivers and is a safety hazard. If your child causes a problem, you will be contacted and your cooperation in trying to solve the problem will be appreciated. If the problem cannot be corrected, it could cause your child to lose his/her transportation privileges.
- 6) Food and drinks will not be allowed on the vehicles. If your child receives candy or snacks at a school function, the child will not be allowed to consume them on the vehicle. We do not want your child to choke.
- 7) If you know your child is not going to attend school on a certain day, please call the transit office in advance at _____ and let us know what days your child will not need transportation. Not doing so could jeopardize your child's transportation privileges.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our Director of Rural Operations at (254) 780-1355 (office) or (254) 718-9666 (cell phone).

Hill Country Transit District

Change of Pick-Up/Drop-Off Address Policy Form *Head Start*

It is the policy of Hill Country Transit District to pick up and return all Head Start children to the address shown on the *Enrollment Form for Head Start Transportation*. It is your responsibility as a parent, to either be home in the afternoon or have a designated person in your house to receive your child.

In the event you have reason for your child to be picked up from or taken to a different address than that on the *Enrollment Form for Head Start Transportation*, this form must be filled out and given to your child's driver. For a change of pick-up in the morning, the driver must have this form the day before. If your child is to be delivered to a different address in the afternoon, this form must be given to the driver on the morning of the day the change is to take place.

THIS PROCEDURE IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF YOUR CHILD!

My child's name: _____

My child's Head Start School: _____

I am requesting a change in my child's:

_____ **Morning pick-up**

_____ **Afternoon drop-off**

_____ **Both morning pick-up and afternoon drop-off**

Date(s) change is to be in effect: _____

Address where my child is to be picked up or taken to: _____

Person who will be responsible for my child: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

In an emergency, Head Start staff can complete and sign.

Driver's Signature: _____

Note to driver: If necessary, you may fill in the information. However, the parent or guardian must sign the form. If you receive this information, but will not be driving on the day of change, it is your responsibility to forward this information to the driver who will be responsible for this child on the dates the change is to take place.

Keep this form on file for 1 month