

*Getting you where  
you need to go.*

To: Passengers and Caregivers

Subject: Transit System Rules and Procedures

Guilford County Transportation and Mobility Services operates a public transit system for persons living within the county that do not have access to public transit or any other form of transportation. We provide transportation for medical appointments, employment and education and for persons over 60 years of age to senior centers and adult day care. The majority of our service is the provision of a trip through one of our transit vehicles.

We are dedicated to delivering quality, customer-oriented service. The efficient operation of a transit system requires the cooperation of passengers, caregivers, the county and its contract transit providers.

If you are a transit system passenger or caregiver to a passenger, please read these policies. They outline expectations for you and our commitment to you.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please call me at (336) 641-3515.

Irma Zimmerman  
Transportation Services Supervisor

Transit system Dispatch Office  
Guilford County Transportation and Mobility Services: (336) 641-2561

## Transit System Rules and Procedures

These Transit System Rules and Procedures were established by the Guilford County Transportation Planning Board to ensure quality customer service, efficient service delivery and safety for all our passengers, drivers and other transit staff. These rules and procedures must be adhered to, to achieve these goals.

Trip Reservations: All trip reservations should be made through TAMS (Guilford County Transportation and Mobility services) at 336-641-2561. Trips can be either a single occurrence, referred to as a Demand Trip, or reoccurring on a set schedule, referred to as a Subscription Trip. A trip to see a doctor is an example of a Demand Trip. Demand Trips must be scheduled individually. A trip must be scheduled by noon on the business day prior to the appointment. For example, a doctor's appointment on a Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. must be called in before noon on Tuesday. A doctor's appointment on Monday at 9:00 a.m. must be called in before noon on Friday of the previous week. Also, please be cautious of days the TAMS office is closed. If Monday is a holiday and your appointment is Tuesday, you must call in before noon on Friday of the previous week.

Trips to dialysis centers or daily trips to an adult day care are examples of Subscription Trips. Subscription trips must be on a reoccurring, set schedule. **TAMS reserves the right to treat the trip as a Demand if 1) there are variances in the days or times to a recurring trip, or 2) a set Subscription Trip is frequently canceled.** The reservations for these trips only need to be called in once, unless there are changes to your schedule or address. These changes must be called in by noon on the business day prior to the day the change would take effect. All reservations and changes to existing subscription must be made by calling TAMS. Do not attempt to communicate schedule changes with drivers.

When you call to reserve a trip, please be prepared to supply us with the following information:

- ☑ Your Name
- ☑ Your address (or where you are to be picked up)
- ☑ Your phone number
- ☑ The name and phone number of someone we can reach in case of an emergency
- ☑ Your Medicaid number, if applicable
- ☑ The address, name, if applicable, and phone number of the location you are going to
- ☑ The time of your appointment or when you need to be there
- ☑ The time you need to be picked up

Please be willing to repeat all information for every reservation and to spell names and confirm addresses to ensure accuracy. When your trip is scheduled you will be given a reservation confirmation number. Please write this number down along with your pick-up time. If you need to call to confirm or change your trip, you may be asked for the confirmation number.

### Service Days and Hours

Medicaid and education transportation is provided Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., except on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and two days at Christmas. Dialysis trips are provided Monday through Saturday except, Christmas and New Year's.<sup>1</sup> Transportation employment is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week except for New Year's, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and two days at Christmas.

### Same Day Service

A driver's daily route is determined a day in advance based upon reservations for that day. Adding a trip to an established route or modifying trips on the day of the trip can cause other passengers to be delayed. **Same day trips will not be scheduled. TAMS is a transit system, not a personal transportation service. If you have a medical emergency you need to call 911.**

### Vehicle Request

Passengers will no longer be able to make vehicle request.

### Checking on the Status of Your Trip

On the day of your trip, you can check the status of the trip by calling either TAMS or the contract provider. When you call, please be prepared to provide your name and trip confirmation number. Our contract providers have 20 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time (see below) before considered late. We ask that you wait those 20 minutes before calling TAMS or the contract provider. If you have waited more the 45 minutes past your scheduled pick-up, please call TAMS at 336-641-2561.

Scheduled Pick-up Time: Passengers are to be picked up within a window 20 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time and 20 minutes after. Passengers should be ready at least 30 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time. Drivers will wait a minimum of 5 minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time before leaving. If the client does not appear, he or she is counted as a No Show. Refer to No-Show policy. Passengers that pay a fare have the right to refuse payment for trips where the pick-up is made more than 20 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

Passenger Assistance: TAMS provides door-to-door service in which the driver assists passengers while boarding and exiting vehicles. We are not responsible for getting passengers, not in wheelchairs, up or down more than one single group of steps per stop. Drivers can not lift or otherwise assist passengers in wheelchairs down steps. Therefore, passengers in wheelchairs have route from the door to the vehicle that is flat or moderately sloped. Handicapped ramps that meet ADA standards are acceptable. The passenger is responsible for the cost and installation of the ramp.<sup>3</sup>

Since this is a door-to-door service, drivers will go to the door and knock or ring the doorbell at a residence or go to the main door of the facility to assist the passenger to the vehicle. Impaired passengers (i.e. visually or memory) may receive additional assistance beyond the main door of a facility upon request, including signing persons in or assistance to a front desk.

Wheelchair Safety: TAMS requires that each wheelchair passenger be buckled or secured in their wheelchair. Passengers must provide their own lap belts. The driver will lock the wheelchair while the lift is in motion and secure the wheelchair once situated in the van.

Pharmacy Trips: Trips to the pharmacy may be scheduled along with a medical appointment. The driver will wait for ten (10) minutes outside the pharmacy for the passenger. If the passenger's transaction is not completed within ten (10) minutes, the driver may leave and have another vehicle dispatched. Should an unscheduled trip to a pharmacy be necessary following a medical appointment, the passenger must inform the driver as soon as they are picked up from the appointment. The pharmacy should be in close proximity of the medical office or the passenger's drop-off.

Waits: Occasionally, an appointment will only take a few minutes. If you know this to be true, please let the reservationist know when you call. The trip can either be set-up for the driver to return in thirty (45) minutes or the driver can wait. The best option is for a thirty (45) minute return time. The driver will wait a maximum of ten (10) minutes. After that time the driver may need to proceed with the route. If that happens you will need to call and a vehicle will be dispatched. Under this circumstance we have up to one (1) hour to return. Need to revisit.

Return Trips: All trips are scheduled with a return time. If the passenger has no idea when a medical appointment will be completed, the reservationists will ask for an estimated time. If the passenger is ready to return prior to their scheduled pickup time, they may call TAMS or the provider to inform them they are ready to be picked up. Passengers should be picked up within sixty (60) minutes of notification that they are ready or at the scheduled return time, whichever comes first. Passengers will be picked up where they were dropped off. Passengers should stay at the location where they will be picked up and in an area where they can see the vehicle pull up. The driver is not permitted to take a passenger to any location other than the

location that the reservation is made for. **If you miss your return trip you may have to find alternate transportation to return home.**

Appointment Overruns: If an appointment runs past the scheduled pick-up time, the passenger should attempt to contact TAMS or the provider. If a passenger missed their scheduled return they should call TAMS or the provider as soon as possible. The passenger should allow sixty (60) minutes for a pick-up in these situations.

Cancellations & No-Shows: Passengers should notify TAMS between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. of a cancellation at least sixty (60) minutes prior to a scheduled pick-up. Failure to do so will cause the trip to be considered a No-Show. A passenger is allowed three no-shows within a month's period before they are suspended. First suspension shall be for one week, second suspension for two weeks, and the third suspension for three weeks. The fourth suspension will cause an indefinite suspension. Reinstatement will require a written request for reinstatement and approval by the TAMS Director. **Eligible Medicaid recipients will follow the new NC DMA no-show policy.**

Service Animals: Service animals are allowed on the transit vehicles to assist persons with disabilities including those with visual, hearing and mobility impairments, epilepsy, rheumatoid, arthritis and other physical or mental disabilities. Service animals are defined as any guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Animals that do not meet the above criteria are not allowed on the transit vehicles.<sup>2</sup>

Escorts/Companions/Personal Assistants: TAMS will allow a passenger to ride with one (1) escort, companion or personal assistant. Any persons riding with you must be reported to TAMS when you make the reservation. Escorts must board and exit at the same location as the eligible passenger. Children of the escort, companion or personal assistant, under the age of 12, may ride at a cost of \$2.50 one-way per child. You must indicate if an escort, companion or personal assistant will be riding, including the number of their children if applicable, at the time you make the reservation. *Persons that do not meet the criteria above or under the next section may not ride the system.*

Children: Children age 8 and under riding as companions or as eligible riders shall be transported in a size and weight appropriate child safety seat, as required by law. It is the responsibility of the child's parents or guardians to provide such a child safety seat. A child who does not have a child safety seat will be refused transportation. Children under the age of 12 or with special needs may not ride without an authorized adult. *Children that are under the care of a passenger for only part of the day may not ride the system.* Drivers may be required to check out children age 12 and over from school or adults from adult day care. Parents or

guardians must notify the school or day care and give the TAMS driver permission to check out children.

Service Disruption: Please understand that TAMS is a transit system, not a personal transportation service. There are numerous occurrences that disrupt service. TAMS' goal is to take any necessary action to prevent or minimize inconvenience experienced by our passengers and make an effort to ensure their safety and comfort. In the event of a service disruption or delay, TAMS and the provider will make every effort to correct the situation as soon as possible.

Service Concerns: If you have a complaint related to your trip, please call TAMS. Depending on the nature of the complaint, we may refer you to the contract provider. Regardless we will listen to your concern, provide an explanation if applicable, and explain what we can do to keep it from happening again. If one of our vehicles is involved in an accident resulting in injuries, the contract provider will handle any medical claims. TAMS can assist with contact information.

Title VI Discrimination Complaints: TAMS hereby gives notice that it is their policy to assure full compliance with the Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low- Income Populations, Executive Order 13166 Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and services. It is TAMS's policy that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, income status, national origin, or disabilities be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program, activities, or services for which Guilford County receives Federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been mistreated by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with Guilford County. Any such complaint must be in writing or in person with the TAMS office, 301 W. Market Street Greensboro, NC. 27401, within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discrimination occurrence. Title VI Discrimination Complaint forms may be obtained from the TAMS office at no cost by calling 336-641-3515.<sup>4</sup>

Inclement Weather: TAMS is responsible for canceling service or modifying service due to inclement weather. A decision concerning service for the day will be made by 5:00 a.m. Decisions are based upon actual and predicted driving conditions, schedule modifications made by the school system, local governments and other local transit systems. Service disruptions will be posted on TV with WFMY News 2 and WGHP Fox 8 and on the Guilford County web site at <http://www.co.guilford.nc.us/>.

If service must be modified after it begins, TAMS and the providers will make every attempt to complete trips and deliver passengers to their point of origination. We will also make every attempt to notify passengers whose trips cannot be performed that day.

Passenger and Caregiver Behavior: The behavior of passengers on vehicles is important. Disruptive behavior can cause a safety issue for the driver. Our passengers have a diverse ethnic, economic, physical and mental background. Transportation will be suspended or cancelled for passengers who are disruptive or who pose a threat or danger to themselves, to other riders, or to the driver. This policy extends to caregivers and could lead to suspense of the passenger being cared for. All vehicles are equipped with cameras that can be activated by the driver. This policy does not apply if the inappropriate behavior is caused by the nature of an individual's disability (e.g. Tourette's syndrome). Allowances will be made as long as it does not create a safety issue.<sup>5</sup>

TAMS staff and the staff of our providers are committed to quality customer service. We all value the assistance that we provide. Numerous actions are required for each and every trip to go smoothly. Therefore, we ask that all communications with all transit staff, including employee of contract providers, be respectful and courteous. We understand that the safety of the person you care for is important. We share that concern and pledge to you to be respectful and courteous.<sup>5</sup>

Inappropriate or disruptive behavior that is prohibited on TAMS vehicles and/or directed to any passenger or transit staff (including the driver, reservationist, dispatch from a passenger or caregivers consists of the following:

- ☒ Smoking, eating or drinking while onboard. Diabetics may eat or drink if medically necessary.
- ☒ Playing radios, disc players or other such sound devices without earphones or in a way that disturbs other passengers or the driver.
- ☒ Getting out of a seat while the vehicle is in motion.
- ☒ Leaving the vehicle while it is parked to pick-up or drop-off another passenger.
- ☒ Disturbing the driver while he/she is driving.
- ☒ Disturbing passengers in a manner they feel is inappropriate.
- ☒ Refusing to exit the vehicle.
- ☒ Being verbally abusive and cursing.
- ☒ Making or placing false trips.
- ☒ Writing bad checks.
- ☒ Violent behavior.
- ☒ Physically or verbally threatening.





- ☒ Engaging in conduct or activity that is a danger to one's self, other passengers or the driver.
- ☒ Riding while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- ☒ Damaging or destroying vehicle equipment.
- ☒ Weapons, explosives, flammable liquids, acids or other hazardous materials or items are not permitted in the vehicles.
- ☒ Other illegal behaviors.

When a passenger or caregiver demonstrates inappropriate behavior as described above, it negatively affects the service that TAMS provides to all its passengers. Therefore, suspension or cancellation of service will occur as follows:

- ☒ After the first documented instance of inappropriate behavior, TAMS staff will make the passenger or caregiver aware that such behavior cannot be tolerated. This will be done through either a written warning or verbally.
- ☒ After the second instance of such behavior within sixty (60) days of the warning, the passenger's service will be suspended for thirty (30) days.
- ☒ If two additional instances of such behavior occur within sixty (60) days of the reinstatement of service after a suspension, the rider's service will be permanently suspended.
- ☒ Reinstatement will require a written request for reinstatement, detailed changes that have been made to address the disruptive behavior and approval by the TAMS Director.

### Definitions

**Passenger:** Includes the persons receiving the trip, personal assistants, companions, children accompanying an adult, or a caregiver.

**Caregiver:** Any person or entity reserving trips, making inquiries or acting on behalf of a passenger.

**Children:** Any person under the age of 16. The person must be related to the passenger or their legal guardian.

**Demand Trip:** A single trip, for example to a doctor's appointment, which is not reoccurring.

**Subscription Trip:** A reoccurring trip on a set daily schedule.

**Trip Cancellation:** Contact with the county or service provider at least one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time.

**No-shows:** Failure on the passenger's part to board the vehicle within 5 minutes of its arrival but not before its scheduled arrival time.

**Will Call:** Allows the passenger to have a flexible return time when the length of the appointment is unknown. A return time is preferred.





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