



Policies and Procedures Guide

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Meeting Our Customer's Travel Needs

This guide provides brief information about Bis-Man Transit (door-to-door paratransit service) and Capital Area Transit (fixed route service). It was intended to give service providers resources they need when they refer people to use public transportation services in the Bismarck and Mandan area. If you have questions about our paratransit or fixed-route bus service after reviewing this guide, please call our Bis-Man Transit office at (701) 258-6817.



Bis-Man Transit Paratransit Service

For eligible riders who have a disability that prevents them from making some or all of their trips on the fixed-route system, Bis-Man Transit offers a shared ride, door-to-door service called paratransit. This service is sometimes called “ADA Paratransit Service” because it is provided to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and ensures all individuals have the opportunity to use public transportation services.

Paratransit schedules and provides service to ADA paratransit eligible persons at any requested time on a particular day in response to a request for service made in advance the previous day. The service is provided with lift-equipped vehicles. If riders do not require an accessible vehicle, they could be transported by a Taxi 9000 vehicle without a lift. Taxi 9000 provides overflow service for Bis-Man Transit. Riders cannot request a taxi instead of a bus for their ride. Paratransit service operates 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The service can be used for any trip purpose.





Capital Area Transit Fixed-Route Service

Capital Area Transit (CAT) is committed to providing transportation services that can be used for all of our customers. Fixed-route buses operate on set routes throughout the Bismarck and Mandan communities. All fixed-route buses have lifts or are low-floor with a kneeling feature to better serve riders who use wheelchairs or have difficulty getting up and down the vehicle steps. Our fixed-route vehicles are 100% accessible.

For everyone's benefit and to comply with federal requirements, drivers announce route timing points and transfer points to help riders recognize their bus stop or point of transfer. A limited number of seats are usually available near the entrance of the bus for persons who have mobility concerns. Reserved spaces with tie-down straps and drivers assistance are available for riders who use wheelchairs.

Persons with disabilities and seniors age 60 or older may show their Bis-Man Transit membership card or other approved verification of age or disability to receive a reduced fare rate on The CAT. If someone has a verifiable disability and would like a Bis-Man Transit membership card to receive a discounted fare, he or she needs to fill out and submit the Bis-Man Transit application which can be obtained by calling (701) 258-6817 or found online at www.bismantransit.com. We encourage our customers with disabilities and seniors to take advantage of the flexibility, independence, and reduced cost that our fixed-route services provide.

Students in grades K-12, seniors age 60 or older who are not members of Bis-Man Transit, and Medicare card holders can also receive the reduced fare rate. Proper identification showing proof of age is required for seniors age 60 or older, a form of school identification is required for students, and presentation of a Medicare card is required for Medicare card holders.

For route and schedule information, travel training information, or any questions you may have about using The CAT bus fixed route bus services, call (701) 323-9228 or visit our website at www.thecatbus.com.



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SECTION 1: GUIDE INTRODUCTION

Section 1.1 - Purpose of this Guide

This document outlines the operational guidelines for the Bismarck-Mandan area paratransit and fixed-route services. The paratransit service is provided for individuals with disabilities and senior citizens age 60 or older whose transportation needs cannot be met by The CAT Bus fixed-route service. For those individuals able to use or access the city bus, Capital Area Transit provides fully accessible fixed-route bus service throughout the cities of Bismarck and Mandan.

Section 1.2 - References to Federal Regulations

The Bis-Man Transit paratransit and fixed-route services are funded in part through federal, state, and local governments. Operational guidelines comply with federal, state, and local regulations and conform to the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Regulation 49 CFR Parts 37.

References will be made throughout this document to specific regulations to assist in updating guidelines as regulations are modified.

Section 1.3 - Statement of Non-Discrimination

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.5]

The Bis-Man Transit Board does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, age or familiar status in the provision of public transportation services.

Section 1.4 - Accessible Formats

The information contained in this guide, information concerning the eligibility determination process, application materials, and determinations concerning eligibility are available in accessible formats upon request by contacting the Bis-Man Transit office at (701) 258-6817. Information will be provided in a format a person can use according to their disability.

Section 1.5 - Paratransit Application Process

Paratransit service is available to all Bismarck, Mandan, University of Mary, and Lincoln residents eligible for the service (ADA eligible out-of-town riders see Section 3.3).

To receive a Bis-Man Transit membership card, the applicant must obtain and fill out an application by printing it from www.bismantransit.com, receiving a printed application from the Bis-Man Transit office by calling (701) 258-6817, stopping at the Bis-Man Transit office at 3750 E Rosser Ave in Bismarck, or getting an application from service providers who have them in their offices.

Section 1.5 - Paratransit Application Process Continued

The application is to be completed in its entirety by both the applicant and the appropriate human service professional if applicable.

- All applicants must complete Part I and Part V of the form.
- Individuals with a disability must complete Parts II, III, and IV as they relate to their specific disability.
- Seniors age 60 or older must submit a document as proof of age
 - Copy of a photo ID
 - Copy of a birth certificate
 - Copy of a Medicare card
- Individuals qualifying as disabled must have verification of the disability
 - Human service professional signature on #13 (nurse, case worker, physician, counselor, etc.)
 - A note with a human service professional's signature stating the applicant's name and disability
- All applications must be signed by the applicant by question #34

The completed application form and additional documentation of the applicant's age or disability must be mailed or faxed to:

Bis-Man Transit
3750 E Rosser Ave
Bismarck, ND 58501

Fax Number: (701) 258-6752

Applicants can also bring the application and supplemental documentation to the Bis-Man Transit office at 3750 E Rosser Ave in Bismarck and office staff will make a copy of the supplemental document for the applicant to include with the application form.

Bis-Man Transit staff will evaluate the information on the application. If an application is approved, the new rider will be notified by mail and will be issued a rider verification card. The rider verification card contains the following information:

- Assigned Bis-Man Transit rider ID number
- Name of the eligible rider
- Address of the eligible rider
- Expiration date of card (if applicable)

Each applicant's eligibility will be determined according to guidelines in Section 3: Paratransit Eligibility.

Riders are required to sign the back of their identification card and are encouraged to carry it at all times.

In the case of a temporary disabling condition, the human service professional must clearly state the duration of the temporary disability. The temporary ID card will be marked as temporary with the date of the card expiration.

If an application is not approved, the applicant will be notified and he or she will have an opportunity to provide additional information for reconsideration by Bis-Man Transit.

SECTION 2: TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Section 2.1 - Service Description

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.129]

All Capital Area Transit fixed-route buses are accessible through provision of lifts or ramps (low floor buses).

Bis-Man Transit Paratransit is required to provide door-to-door transportation service on a reservation basis for individuals with disabilities who are ADA paratransit eligible and unable to utilize CAT fixed-route bus service independently (refer to section 3.1). Paratransit utilizes buses with lifts for accessibility. For riders who do not require a lift, Taxi 9000 is under a contract agreement with Bis-Man Transit and may provide some of the rides. Riders are not able to request a certain vehicle. Considerations for a vehicle request will be taken into account only if a physician submits a written, detailed description why a rider needs special provisions. This does not guarantee that the rider request will be granted.

Section 2.2 - Service Hours

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.131 (e)]

The CAT bus fixed-route system's route times are listed on the route maps and on the websites, www.thecatbus.com and www.bismantransit.com.

The CAT bus doesn't run on Sundays or the following holidays: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, or Christmas Day. Limited routes are available on Saturdays.

Paratransit door-to-door service is available and operates 24 hours per day and 365 days per year. Rides need to be scheduled at least the day prior by calling the scheduling dispatch assistants at (701) 223-9001 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. The scheduling line is open seven days a week.

Section 2.3 - Service Area

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.131 (a)]

The CAT bus fixed-route service operates along set routes throughout the Bismarck and Mandan communities.

Paratransit door-to-door service serves riders within the cities of Bismarck, Mandan, and Lincoln and also serves University of Mary. Paratransit also provides service within two miles of Bismarck and Mandan city limits.

Section 2.4 - Paratransit Trip Purpose

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.131 (d)]

No restrictions or priorities are imposed based on trip purpose for rides given by Bis-Man Transit paratransit. Paratransit is not an ambulance service and does not provide emergency medical transportation. Drivers are prohibited from providing delivery services.

Section 2.5 - Rider Fares

ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.131 (c)]

CAT Bus

The rates for The CAT Bus fixed route service are as follows (June 2011):

- \$1.25 one way for adults
- \$.50 one way for seniors age 60 or older, persons with disabilities, students in grades K-12, and Medicare card holders (verification required to receive discounted rate)
- Free for children age 4 and under when riding with an adult
- Free transfers
- \$5.00 for 1-day pass for adults
- \$2.50 for 1-day pass for seniors age 60 or older, persons with disabilities, students in grades K-12, and Medicare card holders (verification required to receive discounted rate)
- \$30.00 for 30-day pass for adults
- \$20.00 for 30-day pass for seniors age 60 or older, persons with disabilities, students in grades K-12, and Medicare card holders (verification required to receive discounted pass)

Each one-way fare listed above is for a one way complete trip. Once a rider disembarks from the vehicle or arrives at a destination, a trip is completed. Transfers are free at the following locations: Kirkwood Mall, Gateway Mall, Arrowhead Plaza, Simle Middle School and Bismarck State College (College and Schafer). When transferring, riders must board the next bus going toward their final destination.

CAT Bus fareboxes accept cash, coins, and check. The fareboxes do not return change and drivers do not carry change. If riders do not pay with exact change, they will be issued a ticket with the remaining balance. The ticket must be used on the CAT Bus within one year of its issue date. Riders must pay the fare or feed their 30-day pass into the farebox immediately when they enter the bus. Drivers are not permitted to access a rider's personal wallet, purse, or backpack, nor write and/or fill out any information on a rider's personal check.

30-day passes and 1-day passes can be purchased from CAT Bus drivers. 30-day passes can also be purchased at the Bis-Man Transit office at 3750 E Rosser Ave in Bismarck. If a rider purchases a pass from a CAT Bus driver, he or she must tell the driver what pass is needed BEFORE money is fed into the farebox. One ride tickets are also available for purchase at the Bis-Man Transit office. If an agency is purchasing a large quantity of these tickets, it is advised that the agency call ahead and the office staff will get them ready for pickup.

Paratransit

The fare for each one-way trip on paratransit is \$2.50 (June 2011). Exact fare is required in the form of cash, change, or check. Drivers do not have change and they are not permitted to access a rider's personal wallet, purse, or backpack, nor write and/or fill out any information on a rider's personal check. Punch cards in \$10 increments are available for purchase at the following locations:

- Bis-Man Transit office
- Dan's Supermarket Customer Service Counters (North, South, Arrowhead, Mandan)
- Cash Wise Foods Customer Service Counter
- Central Market Customer Service Counter (Bismarck, Mandan)

Section 2.5 - Rider Fares Continued

In addition, some developmental disabilities agencies also have punch cards available for purchase. Bis-Man Transit members who will be using the service to access the Burleigh County Senior Center or Mandan Golden Age may purchase discounted tickets at these senior centers. The punch cards sold at Burleigh County Senior Center or Mandan Golden Age are different colors than regular punch cards and they can only be used for trips to and from the senior centers.

The following conditions apply to punch card sales:

- Members must present their Bis-Man Transit membership card when purchasing punch card from any location. Locations have the right to ask for a photo ID to verify the membership card belongs to the person purchasing the punch card.
- Punch cards cannot be redeemed for cash under any circumstances
- Lost or stolen cards will not be replaced
- Punch cards are valid for use on paratransit and The CAT bus

Note: to use the punch cards for CAT bus rides, Bis-Man Transit members must show their membership card along with the punch card and drivers have the right to ask for a photo ID to verify the membership card belongs to the person in possession of it.

Paratransit escorts with a responsibility to help the rider are free of charge (Section 5.3 – Paratransit Escorts). Bis-Man Transit members age 8 and under cannot ride alone and must have an escort (Section 5.10 – Children). Children under the age of 7 ride free when accompanied by an eligible adult rider. Eligible riders are allowed one companion with additional companions on a space available basis. Companions are charged the same rate as the Bis-Man Transit member, which is \$2.50 each way. Fares cannot be paid in advance (except through the purchase of punch cards) or billed at a later date without the approval of the Bis-Man Transit Executive Director. All fares are subject to change for both paratransit and the fixed-route bus systems.

Section 2.6 - Rider Courtesy and Conduct

Bis-Man Transit and Capital Area Transit have lists of rules and courtesy to ensure the safety of all riders and drivers. Riders, their escorts, or companions traveling with riders, who engage in physical abuse or cause physical injury to another rider or driver, or who engage in other illegal activities, may be subject to immediate suspension from riding paratransit and/or CAT buses. They also may be subject to possible criminal prosecution, which may include fines.

Riders who engage in an activity that disrupts the safe or effective operation of paratransit or CAT Bus services, may be subject to a suspension of service. If a rider is disruptive, Bis-Man Transit reserves the right to require that an escort travel with the rider as an option instead of service suspension.

Bis-Man Transit

- Riders shall maintain appropriate, reasonable personal hygiene.
- Shirts and shoes must be worn.
- No eating, drinking, or smoking in vehicles.
- Smoking is not allowed within 15 feet of Bis-Man Transit doors and windows.
- Make reservations in advance.
- Be ready at pickup location and be on time.
- Call if the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the “30-minute window.”

Section 2.6 - Rider Courtesy and Conduct Continued

- Call to cancel unneeded rides at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time to avoid a “no show.”
- Pay the correct fare in the exact amount or with a pre-purchased punch card.
Wear seat belts.
- Avoid distracting the driver or annoying other riders with inappropriate behavior.
- Head, arms, and other body parts must be kept inside the vehicle
- No abusive, threatening, or obscene language or actions.
- No physical abuse of another rider or the driver.
- Baby strollers and walkers must be folded and stowed to not block the aisle or cause injury to persons on the vehicle.
- Parents must control children.
- Expect “shared-ride” service. Others may be picked up after you or dropped off before you reach your destination.
- No littering in the vehicle.
- Objects must not be thrown from a vehicle window.
- No riding with open containers of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- No riding while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs if the rider’s behavior disrupts the driver or other riders.
- No deliberate fare evasion.
- No petting guide dogs or other service animals without the permission of the owner.
- No playing of radios, mp3 players, cassette tape players, or other multimedia devices (without headphones) and no other noisy equipment while on board.
- No operating or tampering with any vehicle equipment.
- Dangerous weapons are prohibited on Bis-Man Transit vehicles.
- Federal regulations prohibit the transportation of flammable or explosive materials on paratransit vehicles.
- Packages are limited to what the rider can carry in one trip and contain within their seating area on the Bis-Man Transit vehicle.

CAT Bus

- Riders shall maintain appropriate, reasonable personal hygiene.
- Shirts and shoes must be worn.
- Pay the correct fare in the exact amount or with a 1 or 30 day pass.
- Keep arms, legs, and personal items out of the aisles.
- Do not stand in the stairwells.
- No eating, drinking, and no open containers on the bus.
- No smoking on the bus or within 15 feet of bus doors and windows.
- No multimedia devices without headphones.
- No rollerblades or in-line skates may be worn on the bus.
- No animals are allowed on CAT buses (except service animals)
- Please limit yourself to 2 packages.
- Strollers and walkers must be folded and stored out of the aisles.
- Parents must control children.
- No littering in the vehicles or shelters.
- No riding with open containers of alcohol or with illegal drugs.
- No riding while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs if the rider’s behavior disrupts the driver or other riders.

CAT Bus continued

- No operating or tampering with any vehicle equipment.
- Dangerous weapons are prohibited on CAT buses.
- You may ask your driver questions pertaining to the routes while on the bus, however, please refrain from carrying on a conversation with the driver while the bus is in motion.
- Avoid distracting the driver or annoying other riders with inappropriate behavior.
- Threatening behavior or vulgar language may result in a rider being asked to leave the bus.
- Drivers have the right to refuse service.

Section 2.7 - Paratransit Driver Responsibilities

Bis-Man Transit has a list of rules to ensure the safety of drivers and riders and to provide a positive riding experience. Drivers will adhere to the same standards of common courtesy and personal hygiene as those required of the riders.

- Treat riders with courtesy.
- Be uniformed appropriately.
- Stay within sight of their vehicle at all times.
- Maintain the assigned service schedule for the convenience of all riders.
- With permission, assist riders when entering and leaving the vehicle.
- Provide rider assistance when instructed by dispatcher.
- On request, the driver will assist riders between the vehicle and up to the entrance of a house, apartment building, or other building.
- Drivers are allowed to carry no more than what they can carry in one trip per paratransit eligible rider (maximum total weight of 25 pounds).
- Assure seat belts and all mobility devices are properly secured.
- Follow the guidelines for pick up and drop offs.
- Maintain radio contact with dispatch.
- Collect fares for riders' trips as appropriate.

Drivers are **NOT** permitted to:

- Enter a rider's residence or other buildings
- Access a rider's personal wallet, purse, or backpack, nor write and/or fill in any information on a rider's personal check
- Perform any personal care assistance for riders
- Lift or carry riders or wheelchairs up or down steps
- Call riders to pick them up earlier or later than scheduled (all drivers must only use the dispatcher to communicate with riders)

SECTION 3: PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY

Section 3.1 - Paratransit Eligibility Criteria and ADA Paratransit Eligibility

Bis-Man Transit paratransit service is intended to provide transportation services to individuals with disabilities and seniors age 60 or older who are unable to independently use the fixed-route CAT Bus system. To be eligible to use paratransit, riders must be considered eligible based on the application process.

Paratransit eligibility is based on a functional, rather than medical, model. Persons are not qualified or disqualified on the basis of a specific diagnosis or disability. An individual will be certified as paratransit eligible if there is any part of the CAT fixed-route system in the designated service area which cannot be used or navigated by that individual because of a disability.

The three categories of ADA paratransit eligibility established by the federal government are listed below:

Category 1 – Persons unable to board, ride, or disembark fully accessible fixed-route services

Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment, (including a visual impairment) and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and unable by individuals with disabilities. [37.123 (e)(1)]

An example of eligibility under this category includes persons with mental disabilities or vision impairments who cannot “navigate the system” or otherwise cannot physically use fixed-route services. This would include people with physical disabilities who cannot stand on a bus, get on or off the lift, or proceed from the wheelchair securement area without assistance except as provided by the driver or other employee of the service.

Category 2 – Persons unable to board, ride, and disembark even if the vehicle is accessible (equipped with a ramp or lift)

Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle that is readily accessible to and unable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during the hours or operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route. [37.123 (e)(2)]

Eligibility under this category depends on the accessibility of vehicles and routes. A person is eligible for paratransit service if the fixed route on which they want to travel is not yet accessible.

- An individual is eligible for paratransit if a vehicle’s lift or boarding device could not be deployed at the stop which they want to use
- An individual is eligible if they use a “common wheelchair” but cannot be served by the fixed-route system because the lift on the vehicle they need fails to work
- All Capital Area Transit vehicles are 100% accessible

Section 3.1 - Paratransit Eligibility Criteria and ADA Paratransit Eligibility Continued

Category 3 – Persons unable to travel to the boarding location or from the disembarking location.

Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system.

[37.123(e)(3)]

Environmental conditions and architectural barriers not under control of the public entity, do not, when considered alone, confer eligibility. If, however, travel to or from a boarding location is prevented when these factors are combined with the person's specific impairment-related condition, paratransit service must be provided. Examples of architectural and environmental factors that, in combination with certain disabilities, could prevent travel include: lack of curb cuts, the distance from the stop to the trip origin or destination, snow or ice, temperature extremes, major intersections, or temporary construction projects.

Section 3.2 - Eligibility for Discount Fare on Fixed-Route CAT Buses

The membership card issued by Bis-Man Transit entitles an individual to ride the fixed-route CAT Bus System (Capital Area Transit) for a fare of \$.50. The rider must show the Bis-Man Transit membership card to the driver when boarding the bus. (Refer to section 3.5 – Eligibility Process to apply for a Bis-Man Transit Membership Card)

Section 3.3 - Visitors

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.127]

Individuals certified as eligible by another public entity that claim to be “ADA Eligible,” are presumed to be eligible and will be similarly provided service. Any limitation/condition placed upon a certification by another public entity will be honored for paratransit services.

Section 3.4 - Temporary Disabilities

An individual with a temporary disability that meets paratransit eligibility criteria will be issued a temporary Bis-Man Transit membership card upon completion of the Bis-Man Paratransit Application. An example of a temporary disability is a broken leg.

Section 3.5 - Eligibility Process for Persons with Disabilities

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.125]

Applicants must submit a completed, written application to Bis-Man Transit at 3750 E Rosser Ave, Bismarck, ND 58501.

Section 3.5 - Eligibility Process for Persons with Disabilities Continued

For the purpose of determining eligibility for paratransit services, the individual applying for services must also provide verification of the disability such as

- A note stating the disability and complications associated with the disability from a service provider with access to medical records
- Completion of question 13 on the Bis-Man Transit application by a service provider with access to the applicant's medical records
- A copy of a letter showing the applicant receives Social Security Disability benefits

Bis-Man Transit is responsible for reviewing applications and determining eligibility. A written response stating the determination of eligibility will be mailed to the applicant within 5 calendar days of receipt of a completed application and appropriate verification. Determination of ineligibility will include reasons for the finding.

Approved riders will be issued a Bis-Man Transit membership card stating they are eligible for paratransit. This membership card shall include the following:

- Assigned Bis-Man Transit rider ID number
- Name of the eligible rider
- Address of the eligible rider
- Expiration date of card (if applicable)

Section 3.6 - Application Form

The following contents of the Bis-Man Transit Application for Transit Services will be utilized by Bis-Man Transit in determining and notifying individuals of eligibility for paratransit service:

- Part I – General Information must be completed by all applicants
- Part II – Must be completed by applicants with physical disabilities
- Part III – Must be completed by applicants with a visual and/or hearing impairment
- Part IV – Must be completed by applicants with mental or developmental disabilities
- Part V – Emergency Contact Info and Signature must be completed by all applicants

Applicants age 60 or older must submit a copy of identification that contains their birthdate such as a state issued ID or a birth certificate. Applicants with a disability must have a human service professional fill out and sign question number 13 on Part I of the application or must have a human service professional submit an official note stating that the applicant's disability qualifies him or her for Transit services.

SECTION 4: PARATRANSIT TRIP RESERVATIONS PROCEDURES

[ADA 49 CFR 37.131 (b)]

Section 4.1 - Reservations

The following telephone number must be called to reserve a ride:

Bis-Man Transit Scheduling Line (701) 223-9001

The Bis-Man Transit Scheduling Line is open seven (7) days a week between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Call volumes tend to be higher on weekends, so riders are encouraged to schedule their rides Monday-Friday.

Individuals who utilize a text telephone or TDD should call the Relay Service at 7-1-1 to get assistance in reserving a ride.

Section 4.2 - Advance Notice Requirement

Reservations may be made no more than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to when the individual wishes to ride. Reservations must be made at least one day in advance of when the individual wishes to ride by calling the Bis-Man Transit Scheduling Line between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm.

Medical appointments and some work arrangements allow for “will call” returns. In the case of a “will call,” the rider is allowed to call the scheduling line when their appointment is done and the dispatcher will send a vehicle as soon as possible. If a rider has a return trip scheduled for his or her medical appointment or work and he or she will be delayed past the scheduled ride time due to unforeseen circumstances, the rider needs to call the scheduling line immediately and we will attempt to reschedule the trip and accommodate the rider on a space available basis.

Section 4.3 - Same Day Reservations

To accommodate last minute trip needs, reservations may be made for same-day service **only as space and time allows**. Paratransit services are not for emergency medical needs. Riders need to call 9-1-1 if they are experiencing a medical emergency.

Section 4.4 - Reservation Procedures

Paratransit trips will be coordinated to transport as many riders as possible.

When calling the scheduling line, have the following information ready:

- Name
- Date ride is needed
- Pickup location
- Destination
- Time that the rider needs to arrive at the destination
- If a companion or escort will be accompanying the rider
- If rider assistance is needed by the driver (what type of assistance)
- Time of return trip

Section 4.4 - Reservation Procedures Continued

The scheduler that takes the call will give an estimated time that the bus will pick the rider up for the trip and for the return trip.

Penalties are imposed for late cancellations and no-shows (Refer to Sections 6.1 - Cancellations Procedures and 6.2 - Penalties Imposed for “No Shows”).

Section 4.5 - Reservation Cancellation

A rider up to 30 minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time may cancel reservations without being penalized with a no-show. (Refer to Section 6.2 - Penalties Imposed for “No Shows”).

Section 4.6 - Subscription Service

[ADA Regulation 49 37.133]

If a rider wishes to ride at the same time and to the same destination on a regular basis, he or she may make a subscription reservation. Subscription service may not absorb more than fifty (50) percent of the number of trips available at any given time of the day, unless there is a non-subscription capacity.

Subscription reservations are restricted during all weekday peak demand operating hours to the following trip purposes: work (including volunteer), school, medical/counseling services, meals and social service programs. The dispatcher may reschedule or rearrange subscription reservations as needed for efficient use of vehicles and the rider will be notified of the change.

Section 4.7 - Same Day Request for Early Pickups

Requests to change your return pickup time because you are ready early will be accepted, but there is no guarantee that the time will be changed. The only exception to this will be return trips from appointments that are set up as “will calls.” In this case, every effort will be made to adjust the rider’s return trip pickup time and assign another vehicle to pick him or her up at a later time.

SECTION 5: PARATRANSIT PICKUP AND TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Section 5.1 - Pickup Procedures

The rider will be provided with a scheduled pickup time. All riders should be ready 15 minutes prior to their scheduled pickup time and allow 15 minutes to pass beyond their pickup time before calling the scheduling line at (701) 223-9001 to inquire about their ride. The driver will wait five (5) minutes beyond the scheduled pickup time for the rider to appear. If the rider does not appear within the five minutes, he or she will be considered a no-show (refer to section 6.2 - Penalties Imposed for “No Shows”).

If the vehicle arrives earlier than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time, the driver will beep the horn, unless the dispatcher has been notified otherwise. If the rider is not yet ready, the driver will wait until scheduled pickup time before again sounding the horn and beginning to count the five minutes allowed for the rider to appear.

If the paratransit vehicle arrives more than 15 minutes later than the scheduled time under normal weather, road and operating conditions, and the rider chooses not to take the ride this will be considered a “missed trip” rather than a “no show.” If the rider decides to still take the trip, the rider may not be obligated to pay the fare if he or she calls the Bis-Man Transit office at (701) 258-6817 and discusses the situation with the Transit Director.

The entrance to the building where the rider is picked up will be the same entrance the rider will be brought back to unless the scheduler is notified otherwise at the time the rider is booking the ride.

Section 5.2 - Companions

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.123 (f)]

Eligible riders may take one (1) companion with them. The beginning and ending destination of this companion must be the same as the Bis-Man Transit rider. Companions must pay for their ride (refer to Section 2.5 – Rider Fares). Additional companions may be accommodated on a space available basis. Escorts are not counted as companions.

Section 5.3 - Escorts

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.123 (f) and 37.131 (c) (3)]

The escort (also known as a personal care attendant) is defined as someone designated or employed specifically to help the eligible rider meet his or her personal needs. An escort is allowed to ride free. If a rider requires an escort, he or she must indicate this on the application for eligibility form or notify the main office by calling (701) 258-6817 if the need arises after the person becomes a rider. Escorts must have the same origin and destination as the eligible individual. Escorts must remain with the rider during the complete trip.

Section 5.4 - Origin to Destination Service

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.129]

On request, the driver will assist riders between the vehicle and the entrance of a house, apartment building, or other building. Such assistance must be requested in advance by notifying the dispatcher when the rider makes the reservation. If the rider has indicated on his or her application that he or she requires driver assistance regularly, the schedulers shall indicate this on the rides for all future trips.

Driver assistance ends when the driver has assisted the rider in getting to the main door of the building. If the rider needs additional assistance beyond the main door, he or she needs to have someone meet him or her at the door or have an escort and/or companion ride along. The driver will not assist individuals in wheelchairs into buildings that are not accessible (other than opening doors), nor will drivers push wheelchairs through areas that have not been cleared of snow. Assistance will be provided up/down curbs.

If the destination building is locked and an escort is not with or no one is available to meet the rider, the driver may get approval from the dispatcher to return the rider to the place of origin. For the safety of the rider, consistent occurrences of disruptions to the service may result in requiring an escort to accompany the rider.

Because the vehicle will be shared, riders should limit their parcels to one armload. Packages must be kept on the rider's lap or under his or her seat. For the safety of all riders, people may not transport explosives, acids, flammable liquids, weapons, or other hazardous materials.

Drivers are allowed to carry no more than one trip per paratransit rider (maximum total weight of 25 pounds). For grocery trips, the number of packages is still limited to one trip. Small personal grocery carts may be brought on the paratransit vehicle; however, they must be placed behind a seat out of the aisle. A limit on the number of packages is established due to the available space and time required to carry the items. Packages may be placed on the floor as long as they don't interfere with wheelchair securements.

During the winter months, it is the riders' responsibility to ensure that all sidewalks and pathways are clear of snow at their residence. If a rider cannot be accommodated because of impossible boarding conditions, then the trip is considered cancelled.

Section 5.5 - Use of Ramp/Lift and Securement Inside Paratransit Buses

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.165]

The driver will operate the ramp or lift at all times during such operation. The driver will assist on and off the ramp/lift riders who use the ramp/lift.

For those riding in wheelchairs, the driver will secure the wheelchair using the vehicle's securement system. Wheelchairs must be secured during transport. Refusal by the rider to allow securement devices to be used will result in denial of service.

Section 5.5 - Use of Ramp/Lift and Securement Inside Paratransit Buses Continued

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.165]

It is recommended, for safety reasons, that electrically powered wheelchairs must have the main power switch placed in the “off” position at all time while the vehicle is in motion.

All (“common wheelchairs”) and their users will be transported. Individuals whose wheelchairs or other mobility devices do not meet the definition of “common wheelchairs” will be denied service.

A common wheelchair is defined as a wheelchair that does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied. Wheelchairs are defined to include both three-wheeled and four-wheeled mobility aids. Three-wheeled “scooters” and other non-traditional designs that meet the definition of a common wheelchair must be transported.

Drivers and riders shall use seat belts at all times. Drivers shall instruct each rider to use the belt. Before pulling away from a stop, drivers shall make sure that riders are seated with seat belts properly secured. Children under the age of seven (7) who weigh less than 80 pounds and are less than 4’9” (57 inches) tall shall use an approved child restraint systems at all times. The child restraint system is to be provided by the customer. Failure to use the seat belt and/or child restraint system shall result in denial of transportation services to the rider for that trip.

Exceptions to the mandatory seat belt requirements will be made for medical reasons upon receipt of a written statement from a physician, stating that the individual cannot be safely transported using seat belts because of a medical condition, body size, or physical disability.

Section 5.6 - Capacity Constraints

Bis-Man Transit will monitor service levels to determine the need to increase or reduce service to meet the transportation needs of riders. Therefore, records are kept and reviewed monthly of untimely pickups, missed trips, and excessively long trips (see definitions below) in order to consider the need for additional vehicles to meet capacity. There must be a consistent pattern and problems must be considered substantial in order to identify capacity constraints. If a significant capacity constraint is identified, additional vehicles may be placed into service to meet the demand.

Missed trip – Trips that are not completed because the vehicle arrived more than 15 minutes later than the scheduled time will be considered a “missed trip.”

Excessively long trips – Travel time between pickup and drop off of more than one hour will be considered an “excessively long trip.”

Section 5.6 - Capacity Constraints Continued

Bis-Man Transit is not responsible for operational problems caused by circumstances beyond our control such as unanticipated weather or traffic problems (trains, accidents, etc). Such problems will not be considered in establishing whether or not patterns that limit the availability of service exist.

The Bis-Man Transit driver cannot change a route (pickup or destination points) or make detours upon a rider request without first informing the dispatcher and receiving authorization.

Section 5.7 - Service Animals and Life Support Equipment

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.167]

ADA paratransit eligible riders may travel with service animals trained to assist them. Service animals include guide dogs used by persons with vision or hearing impairments and dogs and other animals that provide aid to persons with mobility problems. Riders should tell the scheduler when reserving trips that a service animal will be traveling with. Eligible riders may travel with portable life support equipment such as respirators and portable oxygen.

Service Animals: The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If the animal meets this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government.

Emotional support animals are not considered service animals under ADA. Transit operators may ask the rider what kind of assistance or service the animal performs, but cannot ask for proof of service certificate.

The Department of Justice states: You may exclude any animal, including a service animal, from your facility when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. For example, any service animal that displays vicious behavior toward other riders or the driver may be excluded. People may not make assumptions, however, about how a particular animal is likely to behave based on past experience with other animals. Each situation must be considered individually.

Section 5.8 - Prohibited Activities

Smoking, drinking, or eating is not permitted in Bis-Man Transit vehicles. Smoking is not permitted within 15 feet of Bis-Man Transit vehicle doors and windows.

Section 5.9 - Animals

Pets may be brought on Bis-Man Transit vehicles if they are contained within a small pet carrier during the whole trip duration.

Section 5.10 - Children

ADA eligible children age eight (8) and under are required to be accompanied by an adult who will serve as the child's escort. If special equipment is needed to transport an infant or toddler, the family member or guardian accompanying the rider must provide the equipment (such as a car seat). The adult escort will not pay a fare.

SECTION 6: PARATRANSIT TRIP CANCELLATIONS AND DENIALS

Section 6.1 - Cancellations Procedures

Rides must be cancelled at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time, otherwise the ride will be considered a “no show” and be subjected to the penalties (refer to section 6.2 - Penalties Imposed for “No Shows”). Bis-Man Transit requests that cancellations be called in as soon as possible as a courtesy to others needing a ride.

The dispatcher’s clock is the correct time for determining lateness of cancellations. Clocks at the Bis-Man Transit office are regulated by atomic clocks on satellite time. Refer to a cell phone or atomic clock for the same time as ours.

If you need to cancel a ride scheduled before/after regular scheduling hours (8:00 am to 5:00 pm) you may do so by calling Taxi 9000 at 223-9000. Taxi 9000 schedulers are able to cancel rides for Bis-Man Transit before and after regular scheduling hours. Taxi operators will not schedule or re-schedule ride reservations.

Section 6.2 - Penalties Imposed for “No-Shows”

[Federal Regulation 49 CFR 37.125 (h)]

If a rider does not appear for a scheduled trip or did not cancel the ride at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled trip, that rider is considered a “no show.”

“No shows” take up a trip that might have been filled by another rider and may reduce the number of riders that can be provided service. Therefore, “no shows” are considered to be detrimental to transit service and penalties are imposed as follows:

- Records will be kept by rider name, date, and time of “no show.” If the rider receives four “no shows” within a 30-day period, he or she will be suspended from service for seven (7) days.
- Riders who are not eligible for paratransit under ADA guidelines will be imposed the following fees for “no shows”
 - 1st “No Show” in a 30-day period is forgiven**
 - 2nd “No Show” in a 30-day period will result in a charge of \$2.50**
 - 3rd “No Show” in a 30-day period will result in a charge of \$5.00**
 - 4th “No Show” in a 30-day period will result in a seven (7) day suspension of transit services.**
- Transit riders who are eligible according to ADA guidelines will not receive financial penalties for “no shows” but will be subject to suspension.

Riders will receive a written notice warning them that they have received 3 “no shows” and one more “no show” will result in suspension from services.

If a ride is cancelled due to a “no show,” all the rider’s remaining trips for that day will be cancelled as well.

Section 6.2 - Penalties Imposed for “No-Shows” Continued

If the reason for the “no show” is due to the rider’s disability and beyond his or her control, the ride shall be excused or discounted in the calculation of “no shows” for that 30-day period and payment for that ride will not be required. The rider must notify the Bis-Man Transit office of these circumstances of the “no show.”

A “no show” that is due to the driver being more than 15 minutes later than the scheduled ride time will not be considered a “no show” but rather will be counted as a missed trip made by paratransit. The rider will not be penalized. Refer to Section 5.6 for more information on missed trips.

Section 6.3 - Refusal of Service

[Federal Regulation 49 CFR 37.5 (h)]

Service may be refused to anyone who is seriously disruptive or commits an illegal or violent act in violation of an established regulation or law. An example would be a rider that refuses to use a seat belt during travel.

Seriously disruptive behavior does not include conduct related to a rider’s disability that may be disruptive or annoying to other riders. An example of this is a person with Tourette’s syndrome who may periodically utter involuntary profane statements.

Bis-Man Transit reserves the right to deny entrance into a vehicle if the rider appears disorderly or leads the driver to conclude that the rider will exhibit disruptive behavior that would pose a safety threat not only to the driver, but also the other riders, including, but not limited to, intoxication and use of illegal drugs.

The use of offensive language when addressing the scheduler, driver or other riders is not allowed. Refusal to discontinue usage upon request may result in trip denial.

Denials of service shall be recorded. A copy of the record can be provided to the rider or the rider’s legal guardian upon request.

Section 6.4 - Condition of Service

Bis-Man Transit reserves the right to require an escort when transporting a rider that has a documented medical or behavioral condition that could pose an unsafe situation for the rider, driver, or other riders. Bis-Man Transit may suspend eligibility or permanently revoke riding privileges if our records indicate that the rider has threatened or abused a driver or other rider.

SECTION 7: OTHER INFORMATION

Section 7.1 - Travel Training

Information about travel training for riders for Bis-Man Transit and the fixed-route Capital Area Transit buses may be obtained by calling the Bis-Man Transit office at (701) 258-6817 or TDD phone line at 7-1-1.

Section 7.2 - Accessible Phone Communications

[ADA Regulation 49 CFR 37.167 (f)]

Individuals who may utilize a TDD phone should call 7-1-1 to reserve a ride.

Section 7.3 - Public Information

[ADA 49 CFR 37.167 (f)]

For information on how to obtain large print copies or a cassette tape of these guidelines, please call the Bis-Man Transit office at (701) 258-6817 or TDD phone line at 7-1-1. Copies may be obtained from the Bis-Man Transit, 3750 E Rosser Ave, Bismarck, ND 58501. Copies are also available on the website at www.bismantransit.com

Section 7.4 - Privacy Regarding Medical Information

The medical information that may be gathered as part of the eligibility determination process will not be shared with any other party. Bis-Man Transit, however, may share information regarding the functional ability of an individual to utilize transit services with another transit system if this is required to determine eligibility in that system.

Section 7.5 - Complaints and Compliments

Bis-Man Transit would like to hear your suggestions, compliments, or complaints. Comments should be forwarded to the Transit Director by calling (701) 258-6817 or TDD phone line 7-1-1 or in writing to:

Bis-Man Transit
3750 E Rosser Ave
Bismarck, ND 58501

Section 7.5 - Complaints and Compliments Continued

Bis-Man Transit Board Official Complaint Process

Bis-Man Transit is responsible to provide a safe, dependable, affordable transportation service. We encourage any rider or concerned citizen to notify the administrative office if he or she is not provided such a service. We also encourage any citizen that observes a driver in a vehicle not driving in a safe manner to contact the administrative office with the time and place where the vehicle was observed.

Bis-Man Transit will not discriminate against any individual regardless of race, color or national origin as identified under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To make an official complaint a person must submit the complaint in writing to the administrative office. (If the individual filing the complaint is unable to write out the complaint, Transit staff will assist the individual with writing the complaint). All written complaints will be investigated and a report issued to the individual with the complaint within 5 working days. If the individual is not satisfied with the response received from the administrative office, he or she has the right to appeal the decision to the Bis-Man Transit Board of Directors meeting.

After the Board of Directors has reviewed the situation, they will provide a written response within 10 working days. In regards to an appeal of a Title VI complaint decision, the appeal will be made to the City of Bismarck, following the city's appeal process.

Section 7.6 - Driver Training

Drivers are trained to provide service to seniors and people with disabilities. In addition, all drivers received training in defensive driving and sensitivity, CPR and First Aid.

Section 7.7 - Vehicles

Bis-Man Transit requires vehicles to receive regular service and maintenance according to specified standards. If you feel that some aspect of the vehicle may not have been properly maintained, please call the Bis-Man Transit office at (701) 258-6817 or TDD line at 7-1-1.

Section 7.8 - Reporting Abuse

[Vulnerable Adult Act]

Drivers are to report any suspicion or knowledge that a vulnerable adult rider being transported has been abused, neglected, or exploited as soon as possible. Riders will be informed that the driver is making an "Adult Protection Report" with details of the observation or knowledge.

Addendum to Section 6.3 - Refusal of Service

Service may be refused to an individual who throws up or has an accident in which bodily fluids are involved. If a rider comes in the vehicle and gets sick or has an accident that causes the driver to take the vehicle into the garage before service can be continued, Bis-Man Transit has the right to charge a reasonable amount for cleaning the vehicle.