

INTENT OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express is pleased to serve the City of Mitchell and the surrounding trade area with public transit service. This service has a set of policies that passengers must follow.

This handbook provides the policies pertaining to passenger responsibilities for our service. Please note that the policies are not new ones.

It is for the benefit of all passengers and the long-term survival of the transit system itself that policies regarding passenger responsibilities are adhered to. The policies in the handbook are simple to follow, and also critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of our system.

All passengers' policies will be enforced in a consistent, fair manner. If you feel you have been dealt with unfairly, an appeals process and telephone comment number is also included in this booklet.

Trained bus operators are available to assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicles used in the service. Following our guidelines, your trip can be pleasant, relaxing and trouble-free.

Minimal assistance includes:

- 👉 The operator will come to the curb of a residence or pick up location.
- 👉 The operator will attempt to notify passenger of arrival by sounding horn.
- 👉 The operator will assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicle.
- 👉 The operator will deliver passenger to the curb of his/her destination.

Minimal assistance DOES NOT include:

- 👉 Assistance getting in or out of wheelchair.
- 👉 Assistance in getting ready for the trip.
- 👉 Assisting passengers in wheelchairs up or down ramps.
- 👉 Assisting passengers up and/or down ramps at residence or destination.
- 👉 Assistance in carrying personal belongings or purchases.
- 👉 Going into facility to look for a passenger.
- 👉 Assistance opening doors at residence or destination.

If one driver breaks policy – Don't expect others to also break policy for you. It could result in us going out of business.

A Few Basic Rules

Rules for riding Palace Transit:

1. Have exact fare upon boarding the bus.
2. Have your money, token or check ready before boarding the bus. If you don't have the fare, you don't ride.
3. All passengers are required to wear seatbelts. **DO NOT REMOVE SEATBELT UNTIL THE BUS HAS MADE A COMPLETE STOP AT YOUR DESTINATION.**
4. Smoking, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping, food, gum, beverages, radios and disruptive behavior are prohibited.
5. Beverages are not allowed on the bus unless in a sealable container. Fast Food restaurant cups or cans are not allowed. For your safety, eating & drinking is not permitted while vehicle is in motion.
6. Pets are allowed only if in a pet carrier (excluding service animals).
7. Stay properly seated while on the bus.
8. Profane or indecent language will NOT be tolerated.
9. Do not put your feet on the seats or back of seats.
10. Do not lie down on the seats.
11. Aisle must be kept clear of all loose objects at all times. All carry-on items must be able to be properly secured so that they do not pose a threat to others.
12. Law prohibits firearms, knives and any other weapons on buses.
13. All passengers riding in wheelchairs must allow the driver to properly secure the wheelchair per the manufacturer's recommendations.
14. Keep noise level to a minimum. The bus operator needs to be able to hear traffic & emergency vehicles.
15. Do not leave trash on floor or between seats.
16. You must limit packages and bags to no more than one seat of space and area on floor in front of seat out of consideration to all customers, so please plan your shopping accordingly. Time & space do not permit more than this limit. Warning letters will be given if passengers exceed the one seat limit. We do not transport furniture or larger items.
17. It is not the responsibility of the driver to assist you with your bags and packages. An excessive amount of packages causes delays and driver to run late.
18. Children under three must ride with a parent or responsible guardian.

SERVICE HOURS

Hours of service for Palace Transit & Palace Transit Express are as follows:

Palace Transit - Monday thru Friday	7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Palace Transit Express - Monday thru Friday	5:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Saturday	7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Sunday	7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

No service will be provided on the following holidays:

New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

SCHEDULING RIDES

Request Service:

All rides must be scheduled with the Palace Transit office, not with the bus operators. Rides must be scheduled with the dispatcher in the transit office Monday thru Friday by 4:00 pm at least one day prior to your appointment (if you need a ride on Monday you must call by 4 pm on Friday). We will do our best to accommodate everyone but priority will go to those who have called in advance. To reach Palace Transit Express during their operating hours call 999-8440.

Regularly scheduled rides:

Passengers who require regular transportation service (work, therapy, school, etc.) may schedule up to 90 days in advance.

Canceling rides:

To cancel a ride, passengers must call the Palace Transit office at least 30 minutes before scheduled pickup time. If you do not call 30 minutes in advance, you will be charged full fare as explained in the no-show policy (see page 6).

Please Note: If you need to schedule a ride or make changes to an existing ride, you must contact dispatch. Drivers cannot take ride information.

Scheduled trips:

Palace Transit makes every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. Due to the nature of service, arrival times will vary. A 10-minute window has been established for everyone's benefit.

- ✦ All passengers should anticipate an early arrival of up to 10 minutes or the possibility of a 10-minute delay.

Example: If you schedule a 9:30 a.m. pick-up, the bus may arrive as early as 9:20 a.m. so you should be prepared to leave at 9:20 a.m. The bus may be delayed so be prepared to wait until 9:40 a.m. for the bus arrival.

- ✦ All bus operators will wait only three (3) minutes past the scheduled pick-up time. After a 3 minute waiting period and no signs of activity, the bus will leave. Any longer can cause unnecessary delays. You may call to reschedule the trip for an additional charge.
- ✦ Bus Operators will not go into facilities or homes to get a passenger.
- ✦ In the event the appointment is completed prior to the scheduled return time, passengers are encouraged to notify the Palace Transit office that they are available for early return. Every effort will be made to pick up the passenger as soon as possible but if the demand for service does not allow, passengers will be picked up at their scheduled return time.
- ✦ If you are planning on making more than one stop, those arrangements must be made with the transit office when you schedule your ride. **If prior arrangements are not made, the extra trips will not be made.**
- ✦ Same day call-ins, including unscheduled request for return trip, will not be accepted (exceptions are contracts and wheelchairs). You must have a scheduled pick-up to be returned to a location. Although Palace Transit cannot assure any specific pick-up time unless scheduled, the client shall be held financially responsible for worked in trips missed just as they would be for any other no show unless they notify dispatcher prior to the bus arrival.
- ✦ Palace Transit is public transportation and you may have to share rides; therefore, you may not be taken directly to and from your destination.
- ✦ Passengers may remain onboard a Palace Transit bus for up to one (1) hour.

CURB TO CURB SERVICE

Palace Transit's service provides curb-to-curb service. The following policies explain the meaning and intent of curb to curb.

Private Homes:

-  Palace Transit bus operators will not enter private homes for any reason.
-  Bus operators will assist passengers on and off the bus only.
-  Bus Operators will assist in carrying small packages and/or groceries off the bus and no further. Bus Operators are not allowed to go into apartment buildings or residential homes. If you have a cart for groceries you must have it outside and ready. Bus Operators are not allowed to go into residence to get the grocery cart. Carts are not allowed on the bus unless they can be collapsed & secured in between the seats.
-  Palace Transit will not be held responsible for items that are damaged during transport.

Business/Medical Facilities/Public Buildings:

-  Palace Transit bus operators may assist passengers into and from the inside door. Bus operators **will not** assist passengers past this point. If such a condition exists, passengers are responsible for arranging assistance from someone other than the Palace Transit bus operator.
-  It is the individuals' personal care attendant or care provider's responsibility to ensure that passengers are waiting inside the door for their ride.
-  Bus operators will not enter nursing homes, medical facilities, shopping centers or businesses in an attempt to find passengers. Passengers must be waiting at a designated pick-up point at least ten-minutes before their pick-up time or the no-show policy will apply.

MEDICAID RECIPIENTS

Palace Transit is a Medicaid provider. Dispatchers will need to verify that travel expenses will be covered by Medicaid before the ride is scheduled.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Palace Transit is not an ambulance service. If you require emergency medical attention, please call 911.

If a medical emergency occurs while Palace Transit is transporting a passenger, the driver will contact dispatch and medical personnel will be notified.

If you have a medical condition you feel Palace Transit should be aware of, let dispatch know prior to scheduling services.

NO-SHOW POLICY

- Cancellations need to be made at least 30 minutes before scheduled pick up time. Please be sure to cancel pickup times well in advance so other passenger needs can be met. Any passenger who is not at their designated pick-up point within three (3) minutes after their scheduled ride time will be considered a “No Show” and the bus operator will continue with the daily schedule. Passengers will pay the full fare for any no show before they will be allowed to ride the bus again. The no show fare must be paid in order to ride the bus again. If you anticipate being late for your scheduled pick-up, please notify our office at 995-8440.

No show penalties:

- Passengers will pay the full fare for any no show before they will be allowed to ride the bus again.

TRANSIT FARES

All passengers are required to pay one fare for each one-way ride. Fares may be paid with a token or cash. If a passenger, under 60, does not have a token or cash fare, service will not be provided, unless other arrangements have been made in the office. If an individual, 60 & over, is unable to afford transportation service, arrangements for bus fares can be made at the Palace Transit office at 300 West 1st or call 995-8440. The Palace Transit committee will review arrangements.

* One-way \$2.00

 Wait - \$1.00 Dropped off and the bus operator waits 3 minutes.

Bus Operators are not to wait longer than 3 minutes as this causes a schedule delay for others.

EXPRESS FARES

* Cash or token -One-way \$3.00

* In the event of a no show - ride will be billed at \$5.00 each way

Any rides beyond Palace Transit boundaries will be charged mileage of \$2.50 per mile plus regular fare. Boundaries are as follows: East of Tiger Street, West of Dick's Body Shop, South of Wal-Mart and North of 23rd St.

Fares

Payment is required at time of service unless previous arrangements have been made with the office. Tokens and cash are accepted. If paying cash, **correct change is required**. All insufficient funds checks will be charges \$40.00 service fee.

Tokens

Tokens may be purchased at:

 Palace Transit (James Valley Community Center)
300 West 1st Ave
Mitchell, SD 57301

REFUSING SERVICE

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express reserves the right to refuse service to any passenger who is:

- ✦ Intoxicated
- ✦ Disruptive
- ✦ Belligerent/rude
- ✦ Poses a safety threat or health threat to themselves or others
- ✦ Unreasonable personal hygiene

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express also has in place a behavior policy. The steps are as follows:

- ✦ First offense: A warning letter will be sent.
- ✦ Second offense: A second letter will be sent which will result in rides being discontinued for one week.
- ✦ Third offense: A third and final letter will be sent and rides will be discontinued indefinitely.

Palace Transit needs to be notified of any communicable diseases. Universal precautions will be followed at all times. Palace Transit reserves the right to refuse service.

SEATBELT POLICY

All passengers of Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express are required to wear a seatbelt. Passengers who refuse to wear a seat belt will be denied service (unless a written notice has been filed with the Palace Transit office). If a car seat is required, it is the passenger's responsibility to make sure that the car seat is properly secured, it is also to be double checked by the bus operator.

If a wheelchair passenger does not have a lap belt, a belt buddy will be used to help keep passenger properly seated in the wheelchair.

In accordance with City of Mitchell policy all Palace Transit Bus Operators are required to wear seatbelts.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT/AIDE

For medical trips, one personal care attendant/aide who is directly involved in the mobility assistance of their attendee will be allowed to ride free of charge (non-medical trips will require attendant to pay for their bus fare). Aides must be picked up and dropped off at the same address as the client and need to be placed on the schedule when the trip is requested.

COMPANIONS

Any other person riding with passenger will be considered a companion and will be required to pay full fare. All companions must be scheduled the day before by 4 pm.

WEATHER

Passengers are responsible for snow removal to make their homes accessible to the Palace Transit bus operators. Bus operators are not allowed to assist passengers through snow or across ice.

If a passenger schedules service knowing that a path has not been cleared to their homes, the trip will be considered a no show and that policy will apply.

Discontinuing Service Due to Weather Conditions:

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express bus operators will make every effort to provide service whenever scheduled. In the event extreme weather conditions exist which makes travel unsafe, Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express reserves the right to discontinue service until conditions are favorable. We do not consider routine medical appointments or hair appointments a necessary ride based on weather. If service is temporarily discontinued, all rides, regardless of trip purpose, will be cancelled. Listen to local radio stations: KMIT, KORN, KOOL 98 & or Q107 for any cancellations.

Winter riding tips

- ❖ Keep abreast of weather conditions which may affect Palace Transit service.
- ❖ If streets are icy, allow additional travel time.
- ❖ Avoid delays by being on time and having correct fare ready.
- ❖ Clean footwear of snow and slush before boarding so it does not gather on the steps and floor of bus, causing danger to others.
- ❖ Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before leaving your seat and before boarding.
- ❖ Be prepared for sudden stops while riding the bus.
- ❖ At all times, watch your step, wear your seatbelt and wear appropriate winter clothing.

Severe Weather

Severe snow and rainstorms can affect Palace Transit bus service. The following service reductions may occur any time hazardous road conditions exist:

- ❖ Time intervals between buses will increase.
- ❖ Some routes may be shortened or canceled.
- ❖ Bus service on less traveled streets – especially those not plowed or sanded may be canceled.
- ❖ Absolutely NO alley travel allowed.
- ❖ In case of severe weather, all passengers will be taken home immediately.

PROPER AND ADEQUATE CLOTHING

Passengers and/or care providers are responsible for ensuring that passengers are properly dressed for their ride. Bus operators will not assist passengers with their clothing. This includes proper coats, hats, gloves, and/or footwear.

Passengers who are not adequately dressed for the weather conditions will be refused service.

SERVICE FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS

Service will not be provided from vehicle up to and from specialized equipment (ex. ramps, etc.) for wheelchair users.

ASSISTANCE FOR PASSENGERS IN WHEELCHAIR UP/DOWN STEPS

Palace Transit bus operators are not allowed to assist passengers in wheelchairs up or down any steps or ramp.

Under no circumstances will a bus operator be allowed to assist a person in a wheelchair up or down any steps or ramp. If such a condition exists, passengers are responsible for arranging assistance from someone other than the Palace Transit bus operator.

MOBILITY DEVICE SECUREMENT

All persons using mobility device are required to have their device secured while aboard a transit vehicle. The bus driver may decline service to a rider who refuses to allow his or her device to be properly secured.

SPECIAL SERVICES OFFERED

Palace Transit vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts. If the rider is unable to complete travel by his or herself an attendant/escort will be required to assist the rider.

****Palace Transit will not furnish wheelchairs.****

- ✦ If unable to board a bus because of steps, passenger may use wheelchair lift to board bus, only if lift is equipped with handrails.

PALACE TRANSIT BACKING POLICY

No backing of Palace Transit vehicles is permitted. The backing policy was adopted on 1-1-93 by the Palace Transit Board.

Due to this policy, drivers will not pull in residential driveways or put themselves in a position which requires backing up. Please do not request bus operators to pull into your residential driveway.

LOST & FOUND ITEMS

At the end of each shift the bus operator will bring in any items that have been left in the vehicles. Lost and found items will be retained for 30 days.

ASSISTING PASSENGERS WHO ARE OXYGEN DEPENDENT

It is the policy of Palace Transit to make transportation resources available to passengers who are dependent upon portable oxygen, consistent with their needs and care planning.

These reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate these passengers as much as practical and consistent with good safety practices.

All drivers and others who assist in transportation will be aware of the features and problems associated with portable oxygen. Specific procedures will be available as necessary.

The following general procedures apply:

- All oxygen containers must be secured during transportation. Containers, which are normally secured to a wheelchair, may stay in those securements.
- Containers, which are attached to mobility aids such as wheeled walker, must be separately secured to the vehicle.
- The test for adequate securement will be that the tank would not reasonably be expected to break free from the securements in the event of a slow or moderate speed crash. This allows for the use of metal racks or heavy-duty rubber straps, as long as the device is in good repair and adequate to the stated task.
- Unless special approval is received, only one portable tank may be carried per oxygen dependent passenger. Requests for special approval should be made to the Transportation Supervisor.

APPEAL PROCESS

If a passenger is in disagreement with any penalty resulting from the enforcement of the policies, a written request for appeal may be submitted to:

Palace Transit
300 W 1st Ave
Mitchell, SD 57301

Appeals may be presented in writing or in person. If you prefer a hearing, please indicate this in your written request for appeal. Also indicate if special accommodations or requirements are needed.

Palace Transit will provide service during the appeal process.

TELEPHONE INFORMATION

Scheduling information605-995-8440
Comments, Compliments and/or Complaints.....605-995-8440

This transit agency is committed to providing non-discriminatory service.

To request more information or to file a discrimination complaint, contact this transit agency or the South Dakota Department of Transportation at (605) 773-3540.



Transportation for Ages 3-18

- No child will be transported unless an Emergency Contact form is on file with Palace Transit.
- **No rides can be charged. Token or correct fare is required. If your child does not have proper bus fare they will not be able to ride the bus. There are NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- It is your responsibility to contact Palace Transit regarding changes in your child's schedule. For safety reasons, we cannot take information regarding transportation changes from your child. If your child will not be riding you must call to cancel, if you fail to cancel you must pay for the no show. If there are repeated "no shows" due to not cancelling ride, refusal of service may apply.
- Palace Transit will honk once for your child. We will NOT call for your child. Your child must be ready and waiting. We only wait 3 minutes.
- A wave at the door from your daycare provider, babysitter or parent is required at time of drop-off unless you have a signed consent form allowing your child to enter the residence by themselves.
- Negative behavior will not be tolerated.
 1. First Offense: Warning letter will be sent.
 2. Second Offense: Second letter. Rides will be discontinued for one week.
 3. Third Offense: Third and final letter. Rides will be discontinued indefinitely.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times and child must remain seated until vehicle has made a complete stop at their destination.
- Routes are determined based on routing software. There are no guarantees on pick up or drop off time. If your child has not arrived within 45 minutes of dismissal time please feel free to call the office and check on your child.
- Palace Transit is public transportation, so your child will be riding with other passengers.
- All rides must be scheduled with the transit office Monday-Friday by 4 pm at least one day prior to riding.

The mission of Palace Transit is to provide safe, reliable and quality transportation.

Palace Transit

Palace Transit

How Are We Doing?

We are committed to providing you with the best public transit experience possible, so we welcome your comments. Please fill out this questionnaire and mail in or you may give it to the bus operator.

Please rate the quality of the service you received from your bus operator.

1 2 3 4 5

Disappointing

Exceptional

Please rate the quality of the service you received from the dispatcher.

1 2 3 4 5

Disappointing

Exceptional

Was your bus operator...

Courteous?

Yes | No

Informative?

Yes | No

Prompt and efficient?

Yes | No

Please rate the dispatcher's customer service.

1 2 3 4 5

Disappointing

Exceptional

Please rate the quality of your ride.

1 2 3 4 5

Disappointing

Exceptional

Was our vehicle clean?

1 2 3 4 5

Disappointing

Exceptional

Did the bus operator offer assistance?

Yes No

Please rate your overall transit experience.

1 2 3 4 5

Disappointing

Exceptional

How frequently do you use our service?

1-5 times per week 3-5 times per month

Once every 3 months Other

Do you plan to ride Palace Transit again?

Yes | No

Would you recommend our service to a friend?

Yes | No

Why, or why not?

Please share any additional comments or suggestions.

What was the purpose of your transit trip today?

- Medical Shopping Employment Social
 Recreation Education Nutrition

Palace Transit

300 W 1st Ave
Mitchell SD 57301
605-995-8440
cityofmitchell.org