



Hancock County Public Transportation  

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Passenger Handbook

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### **Service Statement:**

The mission of the Hancock County Public Transportation Program (hereinafter referred to as "HCPT") is to provide safe, reliable, clean and courteous public transportation services for all residents of Hancock County. HCPT believes that passengers have certain rights and responsibilities and that they should have full knowledge of those rights and responsibilities. To this end, HCPT has developed this Passenger Handbook.

### **Passenger Bill of Rights:**

HCPT passengers are entitled to:

- Safe, reliable and courteous demand response service in Hancock County.
- Clean, comfortable and well-maintained public transportation vehicles that meet Illinois safety and vehicle inspection requirements.
- Fully trained drivers, neatly dressed and well mannered, whose names and photographs are displayed on identification cards worn by drivers.
- Compliance with all vehicle and traffic laws and regulations.
- Dependable appointment information and on-time service response vehicles.
- Safe and orderly loading and unloading of passengers.
- Fair and reasonable fares.
- Diligent investigation and timely redress of complaints.

### **Description of Service:**

HCPT provides the following public transportation services to the residents of Hancock County:

- Curb-to-curb and door-to-door demand response service in Hancock County municipalities and rural areas.
- Out-of-county non-emergency medical transportation for Hancock County residents to and from essential and necessary medical appointments within a two-hour drive from Carthage.

### **Service Area:**

HCPT provides door-to-door and curb-to-curb demand response service in all of Hancock County; and out-of-county non-emergency medical transportation for Hancock County residents within a two-hour drive from Carthage.

### **HCPT Public Transportation Providers:**

The Hancock County Public Transportation Program uses the following organizations to provide demand response service in Hancock County:

McDonough County Public Transportation (City of Macomb is the IDOT grantee) - Out-of-county non-emergency medical transportation

McDonough County Public Transportation (City of Macomb is the IDOT grantee) - Countywide demand response service

**Days and Hours of Service:**

Demand response service is available from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

Out-of-county non-emergency medical transportation is available from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Thursday.

Public transportation service is not provided on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

**Fares:**

The HCPT fare structure is as follows:

**Demand Response Service**

- \$2.00 for a one-way trip within a Hancock County municipality and \$3.00 for a one-way trip between Hancock County municipalities for riders 6 years of age to, but not including, 60 years of age.
- \$1.00 for a one-way trip within a Hancock County municipality and \$2.00 for a one-way trip between Hancock County municipalities for eligible disabled passengers. In order to qualify for the reduced disabled passenger fare, a passenger's disability must be verified by a doctor, counselor, psychologist or caseworker familiar with the passenger's disability. A letter must be sent or faxed (309-837-6408) to the central dispatch center by the professional verifying the passenger's disability.
- Senior citizens 60 years of age or older ride for a free will donation.
- Persons under the age of 6 accompanied by an adult ride for free.
- Prior day scheduling is required for all rides. An additional one-way fare of \$4.00 will be assessed for passengers not scheduling rides at least one day in advance. The additional \$4.00 fare will be waived for unanticipated medical or other emergencies. All passengers, regardless of age or disability, will be assessed this fare when calling for same day service.

## Out-of-County Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

- \$5.00 for a one-way trip between Hancock County and any location within a two-hour drive of Carthage.

### Service Types:

**Demand response service** is available for the general public, disabled and senior citizens in Hancock County. Demand response service is either door-to-door or curb-to-curb, depending on the needs of the passenger. HCPT drivers are responsible for assisting passengers from door to door, especially frail and disabled passengers. Drivers are not allowed to go beyond the threshold of a passenger's residence or beyond the lobby of apartment buildings or office buildings. HCPT drivers will assist disabled and senior passengers in going up and down steps or ramps when it is determined by the drivers to be safe for both the passengers and the drivers. HCPT drivers will assist disabled and senior passengers in loading and unloading up to six (6) regular size grocery or shopping bags not weighing more than twenty (20) pounds per bag. HCPT will also provide service to personal care attendants and companions traveling with eligible riders.

**Non-emergency medical transportation service** is provided outside of Hancock County within a two-hour drive of Carthage. Non-emergency medical trips are defined as transportation to and from essential and necessary medical services that are not available in Hancock County. Rides must be scheduled at least two working days (defined as Monday through Friday) in advance of the appointment day. Persons are strongly encouraged to schedule rides far in advance of scheduled appointment dates. HCPT has a limited number of vehicles available for this service and may have to deny requests or require passengers to change appointment dates. Service is provided on a first-come, first served basis. Persons are limited to no more than three out-of-county trips in a thirty (30) day period. Non-medical related stops, other than restroom breaks and meals, will not be made during the trip. Persons scheduling trips must submit documentation from the health care provider concerning the purpose of and need for the non-emergency medical appointment. HCPT reserves the right to deny service if the need is not adequately documented as necessary or essential or if the medical need is considered to be an emergency situation where transportation should be provided by an ambulance. Personal care attendants must accompany riders with special needs.

### Animal Transportation Policy:

HCPT only allows for the transportation of service animals. At no time will any animal, other than a service animal, be transported in a HCPT demand response vehicle. A service animal is defined as any animal described as a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals are allowed in transit vehicles without muzzles. HCPT drivers may not insist on proof that an animal is a service animal. Drivers may not ask passengers about their disabilities or why they need a service animal. Service animals will be required to

remain on the floor and out of the aisle area of the public transportation vehicle. Passengers utilizing service animals will be responsible for the conduct of the service animals. Service animals that are disruptive and uncontrollable will not be allowed to ride. A service animal cannot be excluded from riding in a transit vehicle just because it barks.

### **Inappropriate and Illegal Behavior on Transportation Vehicles:**

The following illegal and/or inappropriate behavior is not permitted on any HCPT transportation vehicle: smoking, eating and drinking, using foul language, harassment of other passengers and the driver, horseplay, fighting, carrying of any legal or illegal weapon, possession and/or use of illegal drugs or substances, transporting of hazardous substances and transporting open containers of alcohol.

### **Wheelchair and Wheelchair Lift/Ramp Information:**

HCPT transportation vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts/ramps and wheelchair securement systems. Passengers needing mobility aids must provide their own. HCPT complies with ADA guidelines in accommodating all wheelchairs and mobility aids in common use. ADA defines a wheelchair as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. Three-wheeled scooters and other non-traditional designs that fit within these standards will be transported in HCPT transportation vehicles.

The following HCPT guidelines and policies apply to wheelchair lifts/ramps and securement systems:

- Passengers using wheelchairs will be transported even if wheelchairs cannot be secured satisfactorily by the transit vehicle's securement system. Passengers who refuse to allow their wheelchair to be secured by the transit vehicle's securement system will be denied transport.
- All passengers using HCPT demand response vehicles, including those in wheelchairs, are required to wear safety and shoulder belts. A waiver may be granted for medical reasons if requested by a licensed medical professional.
- All wheelchairs must be secured in transportation vehicles facing forward using securement devices. Persons in wheelchairs will not be denied service because the securement system is not functioning.
- A passenger will not be asked to transfer out of a wheelchair into another seat in the transportation vehicle, but will be allowed to transfer to a regular seat if the passenger requests to do so, and is able to complete the transfer with no assistance from the driver.

- Electric wheelchairs/scooters and other electric assistive mobility devices must have the power turned off when secured.
- Drivers will permit passengers to use the lift or ramp to board or disembark the transit vehicle if they request to do so. Drivers will offer this option if they notice passengers having difficulty climbing the vehicle's steps.
- A driver may refuse to allow passengers from using the lift or ramp to board the transit vehicle if the lift cannot be deployed at the stop because of the surrounding area, the lift will be damaged if deployed at the stop, and/or all passengers are precluded from using the stop due to conditions that are not under the control of the HCPT.
- Passengers must ensure that ramp and wheelchair paths are properly paved and kept clear of snow, ice, parked cars, trash or other obstructions.
- HCPT drivers cannot and will not help wheelchair users up and down steps.

### **Disabled Passenger Services and Other Requirements:**

HCPT is committed to providing safe, reliable, courteous, accessible and user-friendly services to its customers. To ensure equality and fairness, HCPT makes reasonable modifications to its policies, practices and procedures to avoid discrimination and ensure programs and services are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Requests for reasonable modifications can be made by calling 309-837-3941 or e-mailing [mcpt@837ride.com](mailto:mcpt@837ride.com). For more information, visit [www.hancockcountyhealth.info/Rides](http://www.hancockcountyhealth.info/Rides).

- Passengers with disabilities will be allowed to travel with respirators or portable oxygen supply units. Persons scheduling demand response rides must notify the dispatcher at the time the ride is scheduled so that adequate time for boarding and disembarking can be scheduled.
- Personal care attendants traveling with passengers will ride for free. Companions riding with passengers will be charged the same fare as the passenger.
- Passengers with disabilities will be allowed adequate time to complete boarding and disembarking of transit vehicles. Drivers will offer to assist passengers as needed or requested.
- Information concerning the transit system, including this Passenger Handbook, is available in large type or Braille upon request by contacting the Transit Director at 309-837-3941.
- An attendant may be required for certain passengers with conditions that may cause them to be disruptive or to accost other passengers. Service may be refused

to certain passengers who have a history of violent or disruptive behavior that may be harmful to other passengers.

- One-on-one training on how to ride the demand response system is available to persons with disabilities. Passengers wishing to receive this training should contact the central dispatch center.

### **Demand Response Service Scheduling Procedure:**

Passengers must telephone the central dispatch center at 1-877-371-4278 to schedule a demand response door-to-door or curb-to-curb ride. Passengers are required to schedule rides 24 hours in advance (6:00AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding HCPT holidays). Passengers requesting same day service will be assessed a \$4.00 additional fare in addition to the regular one-way fare. This additional fare will be waived for medical related emergencies.

HCPT will attempt to schedule rides when requested by passengers. Passengers are encouraged to call as far ahead as possible for reservations. Dispatchers will not be responsible for confirming personal appointments. A requested pick-up or drop-off time may be adjusted by the dispatcher, if necessary, in order to maintain efficiency. HCPT requires a variance of fifteen (15) minutes before and after the scheduled pick-up time to allow for adjustments or alterations of appointments. Passengers are encouraged to be ready at least twenty (20) minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time.

### **Cancellation Policy and Procedure--Demand Response Service:**

Passengers are encouraged to cancel scheduled pick-ups in a timely manner. Cancellations can be made by telephoning the central dispatch center at 1-877-371-4278 between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Cancellations should be made 24-hours in advance or as early as possible. Cancellations will be accepted up to one hour prior to scheduled pick-up times without penalty. Any cancellation received later than one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up will be considered a late cancellation and will be noted as such by the dispatcher in the passenger's record. Three or more late cancellations in a 30-day period AND fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled rides will be considered excessive and the passenger will receive written notification of such via the U.S. Postal Service. A passenger having an additional cancellation during the next 30-day period will be denied service for a 15-day period following the additional cancellation. Passengers have a right to appeal the denial of service in accordance with the Appeal Policy.

### **Passenger No-Show Procedure--Demand Response Service:**

Passengers are expected to be present and ready for transportation vehicles upon their arrival. Passengers who are not present for scheduled pick-up within five minutes of the arrival of the transportation vehicle are considered no-shows. All no-shows will be noted on the passenger's record by the central dispatch center. Three or more no-shows in a



30-day period AND fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled rides will be considered excessive and the passenger will receive written notification of such via the U.S. Postal Service. A passenger having an additional no-show during the next 30-day period will be denied service for a 15-day period following the additional no-show. No-shows that occur because of an emergency situation beyond the passenger's control will not be considered a no-show provided the passenger can provide a documented explanation. Passengers have a right to appeal the denial of service in accordance with the Appeal Policy.

### **Conditional and Restrictive Service:**

Conditions and restrictions may be placed on certain passengers based on their conduct and how it may affect other passengers. The following requirements and regulations apply to conditional and restrictive service:

- Passengers having a history of violent or disruptive behavior that may be harmful to other passengers may be refused service or service may be conditional or restrictive.
- Attendants may be required for passengers with conditions that may cause them to be disruptive or to accost other passengers.
- Passengers with excessive no-shows as defined in the passenger no-show procedure may be denied service after appropriate notification.
- Passengers who participate in inappropriate behavior on transportation vehicles may be immediately denied service or have service restricted. Inappropriate behavior includes the following: eating and drinking on transit vehicles, using foul language, harassment of other passengers and the driver, horseplay, fighting, carrying of weapons, possession of illegal drugs or substances, transporting hazardous substances on transit vehicles, and transporting open containers of alcohol.

HCPT will notify passengers in writing via the US Postal Service of any conditions or restrictions placed on their transportation service.

Passengers placed on conditional or restrictive service must be given an opportunity for a hearing before an Appeals Committee consisting of the Hancock County Board Chair, the Hancock County Transportation Committee Chair and the Transit System Director. Written and oral testimony will be accepted from any persons wishing to give such testimony, and all relevant records concerning the matter will be made available to the passengers. A request for an appeal must be filed in writing within 60 days of the notification by the HCPT to the passenger of the conditional and/or restrictive service decision. The Appeals Committee must review the appeal and issue a decision within 30 days. If a decision on the appeal is not made by the Appeals Committee within 30 days

of the completion of the process, the passenger's conditional and/or restrictive status will be lifted until such time as a decision by the Appeals Committee is made.

### **Safety and Security:**

HCPT drivers are properly trained in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. HCPT drivers receive training in defensive driving, passenger assistance, emergency procedures, seat belt and wheelchair securement procedures, evacuation procedures, bloodborne pathogens exposure control, and other safety and security areas.

HCPT drivers are required to undergo drug and alcohol training and testing in accordance with Federal Transit Administration rules and regulations, including pre-employment, random, reasonable suspicion, post accident and return to duty testing.

HCPT drivers are required to perform pre-trip and post-trip inspections of their vehicles on a daily basis and any problems noted are immediately addressed by certified mechanics. HCPT has stringent policies for maintaining all demand response vehicles. HCPT is committed to keeping all vehicles properly maintained, clean and in safe working order.

All passengers in demand response vehicles are to be seated and are required to use safety belts while vehicles are in motion. All wheelchair passengers will be secured to the vehicle utilizing wheelchair tie-downs. Passengers will not be required to wear safety belts if they have a documented medical condition that prohibits their use.

Children under the age of eight (8) years of age riding in HCPT demand response vehicles must be secured in appropriate child safety seats that meet the standards of the United States Department of Transportation. Child safety seats include infant seats, convertible seats and booster seats used with the vehicle lap shoulder belt system. Child safety seats will be secured in forward facing seats in the transportation vehicles. Passengers are required to provide the child safety seat. Drivers will assist passengers in securing child safety seats in the vehicles. Drivers will not place demand response vehicles in motion until children are appropriately secured.

HCPT vehicles may not operate when roads are icy or impassable because of heavy snow. Service cancellations will be broadcast on local radio stations.

HCPT drivers are trained in emergency evacuation procedures in the event of an accident. Passengers should follow driver's instructions and should remain calm. Passengers evacuated from vehicles should stay off the roadway in a safe location.

Passengers are responsible for notifying drivers if they or other passengers become ill, injured or are in distress while on HCPT vehicles.

HCPT vehicles have insurance coverage that complies with legally mandated minimum insurance requirements.

**Passenger Comment, Complaint, and Appeal Procedures and Policy:**

HCPT is committed to being responsive to passenger complaints, comments and recommendations. All complaints, comments and recommendations should be addressed according to the Complaint/Procedure/Policy. Complaints may be either informational or formal in nature. Both types of complaints will be investigated. Supervisors shall be responsible for taking both types of complaints. Positions classified as supervisory in nature include the following: Transit Director, Assistant Director, General Manager, and Operations Manager. All HCPT drivers and other personnel shall refer all persons wishing to file a complaint or suggestion to their supervisor.

The supervisor (Transit Director if the complaint involves a supervisor or the Macomb City Administrator if the complaint involves the Transit Director) must begin the investigation of the complaint within ten working days of the date the complaint was filed in order to ensure that the details of the event are fresh in the minds of all involved. All employees involved in the complaint will be interviewed by the supervisor (Transit Director or Macomb City Administrator).

If the customer is not satisfied with how the complaint was resolved, he/she has the right to appeal the decision as follows:

- All decisions made by supervisors may be appealed to the Transit Director.
- All decisions made by the Transit Director (or Macomb City Administrator) may be appealed to the Hancock County Board Chair.
- All decisions made by the Hancock County Board Chair may be appealed to the Hancock County Public Transportation Committee. The HCPT Committee's decision shall be final.

Passengers wishing to appeal restrictions on service, denials or suspensions on service, or any other decision rendered by HCPT have the right to file an appeal request, which must be in writing, stating the reasons why he/she disagrees with the decision. Passengers must submit their written appeal request within ten (10) calendar days of the date on any notice letter or the date of the decision, if no written notice provided. The submission date shall be the postmark date for mailed items, the date of any email received, or the date received if delivered in person. The Transit Director, Hancock County Board Chair or HCPT Committee shall reply in writing to the customer within 30 days of the date the written appeal is received, to the following address:

Transit Director  
701 East Pierce Street  
Macomb, Illinois 61455  
Telephone: 309-837-3941  
Fax: 309-836-3640

OR

Hancock County Board Chair  
Hancock County Courthouse  
500 Main Street  
Carthage, IL 62321  
Phone: 217-357-2616

TTY: 309-837-6402

Email: [mcpt@837ride.com](mailto:mcpt@837ride.com)

Website: [www.hancockcounty-il.gov/public-transportation/](http://www.hancockcounty-il.gov/public-transportation/)

All complaints, comments and recommendations will be handled in a timely and efficient manner. The full policy is available on the website above.

**Information:**

HCPT is committed to providing quality public transportation for the residents of Hancock County. Information concerning public transportation services can be obtained by contacting the following:

Demand Response and Out-of-County Non-Emergency Medical Transportation: 1-877-371-4278 or TTY 309-836-6041.

This document is available in the following alternative formats upon request: Braille, large print, audiotape, and flash drive.

HCPT reserves the right to make changes to policies and procedures at any time without notice. For more information, visit the HCPT website at:  
[www.hancockcounty-il.gov/public-transportation/](http://www.hancockcounty-il.gov/public-transportation/).

HCPT operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, national origin and persons with disabilities in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the HCPT. Complaints may be filed directly with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Civil Rights Office. ATTN: Title VI Program Coordinator 69 Washington Street Room 2100 Chicago, IL 60602 or with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). ATTN: Title VI Program Coordinator, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington DC 20590.

Approval:

Finance Committee: March 11, 2021

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