

## **Northshore Senior Center Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy**

It is the policy of Northshore Senior Center that, when viewed in their entirety, services, programs, facilities, and communications provided by Northshore Senior Center, including the Transportation Program, are readily accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities to the maximum extent possible.

### **1. Fare**

There is no fare for using Northshore Senior Center Transportation (NSCT). The recommended donation is \$1.50 per trip for those customers certified eligible by a transit agency for ADA paratransit; \$2.50 per trip for those customers not certified. However, service will not be denied due to inability to donate. No donation will be requested from any rider whose trip is funded under Medicaid.

### **2. Holiday Closures**

Northshore Senior Center facilities and the Transportation Department are closed on the following agency holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. Transportation may operate on holidays to provide Medicaid brokerage service if required under contract.

### **3. Approved Equipment**

In order to accommodate your mobility device on a NSCT vehicle, it must meet the following standards:

- The equipment must be 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.
- The measurement of the equipment must be no more than 32" wide by 51" long, including footrests and backpacks.
- The equipment must not weigh more than 800 lbs. when occupied.
- Equipment must be in good working order, with batteries charged, tires inflated, brakes working, footrests attached, all parts secure.
- Walkers must be collapsible and stored between seats.

### **4. Mobility Device Brakes**

When occupying a lift or securement area, it is recommended that riders apply the brakes on their mobility devices. With power chairs or scooters, it is recommended that the power switch be turned to the "off" position.

## **5. Portable Oxygen Use**

Individuals with disabilities who use portable oxygen may travel with respirators and properly secured portable oxygen supplies.

Transport oxygen cylinders in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The manufacturer's instructions and precautions are usually printed on a label attached to the cylinder.

Before boarding, inspect each cylinder to assure that it is free of cracks or leaks, including the area around the valve and pressure relief device. Listen for leaks; do not load leaking cylinders on the bus. Visually inspect the cylinders for dents, gouges, or pits. A cylinder that is dented, gouged, or pitted should not be transported.

Carry the cylinder carefully using both hands; oxygen cylinders are susceptible to valve damage if dropped. Do not drag or roll a cylinder, and never carry a cylinder by the valve or regulator.

Oxygen cylinders/containers must be secured as follows:

- All respiratory related equipment must be securely mounted or fastened to a wheelchair, bus seat, or bus floor during transit.
- Compressed gas oxygen cylinders should be secured to prevent movement.
- Liquid oxygen containers should be secured in an upright position to prevent leakage to prevent contact with cryogenic material; liquid oxygen containers must be stored in a well-ventilated area.
- Oxygen cylinders or other medical support equipment should never be stored or secured in the aisle. Make sure that the seating of the passenger requiring oxygen does not restrict access to exits or use of the aisle.
- Secure oxygen cylinders away from sources of heat or potential sparks, since the release of oxygen from a cylinder could accelerate a fire.

Under no circumstances should smoking or open flames (cigarette lighter or matches) be permitted in the passenger compartment when medical oxygen is present.

When you reach your destination, immediately remove all cylinders from the bus.

Non-portable supplies cannot be transported.

## **6. Securement Policy**

With respect to wheelchair/occupant combinations that are larger or heavier than those to which the design standards for vehicles and equipment of 49 CFR part 38 refer, NSCT must carry the wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can accommodate the wheelchair and occupant. NSCT may decline to carry a wheelchair/occupant if the

combined weight exceeds that of the lift specifications or if carriage of the wheelchair is demonstrated to be inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements.

Drivers will use front and rear tie-downs to secure mobility devices. NSCT may require that an individual permit his or her wheelchair to be secured.

Drivers will secure mobility devices at the strongest parts of the device; however the rider can indicate the most optimal tie-down spot. The mobility device will be secured forward facing.

NSCT personnel shall assist individuals with disabilities with the use of securement systems, ramps and lifts. If it is necessary for the personnel to leave their seats to provide this assistance, they shall do so; however drivers cannot assist riders using power chairs or scooters with the operation of their equipment.

NSCT cannot refuse to transport someone whose mobility device cannot be satisfactorily secured provided the mobility device fits within the definition described in Section 3. NSCT may recommend to a user of a wheelchair that the individual transfer to a vehicle seat. NSCT may not require the individual to transfer.

NSCT shall permit individuals with disabilities who do not use wheelchairs, including standees, to use a vehicle's lift or ramp to enter the vehicle.

All riders, ambulatory or using mobility devices, must be restrained with a seat belt.

## **7. Stop Announcements**

NSCT does not operate fixed route service, but will comply with 49 CFR 37.167 (a-c) if ever operating such a service.

## **8. Personal Care Attendants (PCA)**

A PCA may ride with you at no charge. A PCA is someone who travels with, and helps a rider who is unable to travel alone. You must provide your own PCA if you need one. Guests and companions may ride with you on NSCT. Guests and companions will be offered the opportunity to make a donation. A companion is anyone who rides with you who is not your PCA.

## **9. Service Animals**

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work with or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. In order to ride NSCT:

- The animal must be on a leash or in a container, remain under control of the owner, and behave appropriately.
- The animal must remain at your feet or on your lap. It may not sit on a vehicle seat.
- The animal must not be aggressive toward people or other animals.

- You are responsible for any damage caused by the animal.

## **10. Boarding Assistance**

Drivers shall position the bus to make boarding and de-boarding as easy as possible for everyone and minimize the slope of the boarding platform. Drivers shall provide assistance to riders open request. Riders with disabilities shall be allowed adequate time to board and disembark the bus.

## **11. Maintenance of Lifts**

Drivers must test the lift during the pre-trip inspection. Break down of accessibility equipment must be reported immediately to dispatch. A vehicle with an inoperable lift must be removed from service as soon as possible and cannot be returned to service until repaired. If there is a lift failure, a replacement vehicle must be dispatched if the next trip to the destination of any passenger using a mobility device is scheduled in more than 30 minutes. If the next trip to the destination of any passenger using a mobility device is scheduled in 30 minutes or less, a replacement vehicle may be dispatched if available.

## **12. Priority Seating**

Upon requests, drivers will ask – but not require – passengers to yield priority seating at the front of the bus to seniors and persons with disabilities. Drivers are not required to enforce the priority seating designation beyond making such a request.

## **13. Reserved Seating**

Mobility device securement areas on buses are reserved. Passengers using common mobility devices shall be boarded if the securement areas are not otherwise occupied by a mobility device regardless of the number of passengers on the bus. Drivers are required to ask passengers sitting in securement areas to move to another seat or to stand.

## **14. Suspension of Service**

A rider's privileges may be suspended for any of the following infractions on NSCT vehicles:

- Smoking, vaping or carrying a lit pipe, cigar, or cigarette.
- Discarding or dumping litter in places other than recognized receptacles.
- Consuming alcoholic beverages or in possessing of alcoholic beverages.
- Loud, raucous, unruly, harmful, or harassing behavior.
- Engaging in other conduct that is inconsistent with the intended purpose of the transportation vehicle.

Direct Threat:

It is not discrimination under 49 CFR 37.5 (h) for NSCT to refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities because that individual engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others. However, NSCT shall not refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of the entity or other persons.

If service is denied to an individual, they will be given the opportunity to appeal that decision under ([49 CFR 37.125\(g\)](#)). All appeals should be submitted in writing within 60 days of being denied services. Email is an acceptable form of written appeal. All appeals should be directed to the CEO who will conduct an investigation, provide written notification of their decision, and the reasons for it. If the investigation of the appeal takes longer than 30 days NSCT will continue to provide para-transit services from that point until such time as the matter has been settled.

## **15. Paratransit**

All transportation service currently operated by NSCT is paratransit by design and provided on a space available basis.

a. Eligibility Requirements: A person does not need to be certified to use NSCT. NSCT prioritizes service for people with special transportation needs, defined in RCW 47.06B as “persons, including their personal attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.”

For continuing funding purposes, NSCT asks persons potentially eligible for ADA paratransit service with King County Access or Community Transit DART to undergo the respective eligibility process. NSCT provides service for a minimum of 30 days while the individual seeks eligibility. Subject to available funds, NSCT will not deny service if the person completes the process and is ultimately determined not eligible for ADA paratransit. Due to the elimination of funding, NSCT will not duplicate ADA service provided by Community Transit DART.

In accordance with 49CFR 37.125(g) NSCT shall establish an administrative appeal process through which individuals who are denied eligibility can obtain review of the denial.

NSCT may require that an appeal be filed within 60 days of the denial of an individual's application.

The process shall include an opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments, separation of functions (i.e., a decision by a person not involved with the initial decision to deny eligibility), and written notification of the decision, and the reasons for it.

NSCT is not required to provide paratransit service to the individual pending the determination on appeal. However, if NSCT has not made a decision within 30 days of

the completion of the appeal process, NSCT shall provide paratransit service from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

b. Service Area: NSCT serves persons with special transportation needs both within the Northshore Park and Recreation Service Area -- Bothell, Kenmore, Woodinville, and portions of unincorporated King and Snohomish Counties -- and the surrounding area based on funding, including Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Redmond and Shoreline in King County, as well as Mill Creek, portions of Lynnwood, and the Cathcart and Echo Lake regions in Snohomish County.

c. Origin to Destination Service: Based on the functional ability of the rider at the time of the ride request, the driver will provide one of the following types of service:

- Curb to Curb
- Door to Door
- Hand to Hand

d. Trip Scheduling: Trip requests can be made between 14 days and 5 pm the day before the trip. No trip reservations will be accepted the day of the trip. Rides will be provided door to door unless otherwise requested.

e. Trip Cancellation: Trips should be canceled 24 hours in advance to permit scheduling of other requests, and must be canceled at least 1 hour in advance.

f. Hours of Service:

Monday-Friday: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

## **16. Visitor Certification**

Visitors are accorded the same service as local residents. Visitors are only asked to seek ADA certification if they will remain in the area 3 months or longer.

## **17. Reasonable Modification**

NSCT shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability or to provide program accessibility to their services, subject to the limitations of §37.169(c)(1)-(3).

NSCT, in meeting the reasonable modification requirement of §37.5(i)(3) with respect to its demand responsive, and complementary paratransit services, shall respond to requests for reasonable modification to policies and practices consistent with this section.

NSCT shall make information about how to contact NSCT to make requests for reasonable modifications readily available to the public through the same means it uses to inform the public about its policies and practices.

## **18. No-Show Policy**

If a driver receives no response at the customer's boarding location, he or she will radio the dispatcher, who will attempt to phone the customer. Unless the customer cancels on arrival, the driver will wait up to 5 minutes before declaring a no-show. If the customer lives alone, the dispatcher may also phone the individual's emergency contact person to inform them about a possible welfare concern.

If a customer no-shows frequently, the transportation manager will phone the passenger or caregiver to educate the individual about the cost and effect on trip availability for others. NSCT currently has no sanctions for no-shows.

## **19. Telephone Communication with Persons with Hearing and/or Vocal Impairments**

All of NSCT's dispatch staff receive training on the Washington State Relay (7-1-1) Service for communicating via telephone with persons with hearing and/or vocal impairments.

## **20. Complaint Process**

NSCT's commitment is to provide accessible community transportation that lives up to our motto: Safety, Courtesy, Comfort. NSCT has established a Customer Complaint Policy and customers wishing to file a complaint and/or obtain a copy of the Customer Complaint Policy may contact Northshore Senior Center Transportation at 425-286-1026, or in person at the Northshore Senior Center located at 10201 E Riverside Drive, Bothell, Washington, 98011.