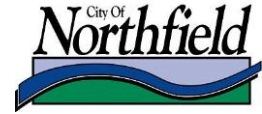




Northfield Transit Rider Policies

January 2012



Introduction

The ability to get from one place to another is a necessity for any American who wants to work, participate in recreational activities or to enjoy a full and stimulating social life. It is the mission of Northfield Transit to provide transportation opportunities within the Northfield community. The City has provided public transportation since 1979 and will continue to do so as long as sufficient public funding is available.

This document outlines specific service standards for the operation and management of Northfield Transit. These standards have been developed through the review of previous service guidelines, present service capacities, and compliance with State and Federal guidelines.

General Rider Policies

- The bus is available to everyone for any reason. Individuals of all ages may ride the transit bus to go to places such as the grocery store, medical clinic, pharmacy, hair salon, library, etc. Northfield Transit provides demand-responsive and route deviation service to the general public within the city limits of the City of Northfield. All transit buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts that are accessible to all individuals.
- Northfield Transit operates on a “shared-ride” basis. Shared-ride means that trips will be coordinated to carry as many passengers as possible as economically as possible. For example, several people could be included in one trip, depending on the pickup and drop-off points and time schedule, please allow for this when scheduling.
- Riders are requested to fasten their seatbelt while the bus is in motion.
- Children under the age of 6 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Pets are not permitted. ADA-designated service animals are permitted on all buses.
- Drivers are not required to assist passengers with packages
- Bags and packages must remain with the passenger and may not obstruct the aisle or the wheelchair securement area. No more than 3 bags per passenger.
- Eating, drinking, and tobacco use are not permitted on the buses. Transporting groceries is allowed, but riders may be held responsible for spills.
- Passengers who are disruptive or unsafe may be asked to leave the bus. Persistent problems may result in a rider being banned from Northfield Transit. See the Passenger Conduct and Responsibility Section below.
- Car seats are permitted when used to carry an infant, but riders should be aware that the bus seats are not designed for infant or child car seats.

Dates and Hours of Service

- Route Service
 - Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM (see route schedule for details)
- Work Trip



- Monday – Friday, 7:00 AM – 9:00 AM, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM
- Dial-a-Ride Service (see qualification criteria below)
 - Monday – Friday, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
- No Transit Service on the holidays listed below. Reduced service may precede or follow holidays.
 - New Year’s Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving Day and Friday afterward
 - Christmas Day (service ends at 12:00 PM on Christmas Eve Day)

Rider Assistance & Accommodations

- TDD users can make ride reservations by calling 507-645-3030 Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM.
- All buses have a wheelchair lift and two positions for wheelchairs. Drivers are trained to operate the wheelchair lifts and safety equipment.
 - For safety reasons, if a wheelchair or motorized chair/scooter cannot be safely secured in the wheelchair location on the bus, the passenger may be asked to transfer to a bus seat.
 - Passengers who use the lift will be assisted onto and off the lift by the driver. Drivers will always operate the lift and will keep the passenger under surveillance at all times.
- Trained service animals, as defined by the American Disabilities Act, are permitted on the buses.
 - Service animals cannot be denied access to the bus if other passengers are allergic or afraid of the animal.
 - The service animal must be under the control of its handler and cannot block access to the bus aisle.
 - The handler is responsible for any damages caused by an animal in their care while on the bus.
- Drivers cannot assist with packages or assist passengers into businesses or homes.
- A companion may travel with a passenger in need of assistance. Passengers who are unable to independently conduct themselves outside of the vehicle should have a personal care attendant or companion present to assist the passenger.
 - One companion/medical aide may ride free when assisting any disabled passenger.
 - Companions/aides must embark and disembark at the same location as the passenger that they are assisting.
 - Northfield Transit reserves the right to require a personal care attendant or assistant when transporting a passenger that has a documented medical or behavior condition that could pose an unsafe situation for either the driver or any of the other passengers.

Route Service

- Buses will DEPART each stop at the time listed
- Buses will stop at ALL scheduled stops along the route
- Riders may flag down the route buses between any scheduled stops except along Hwy 3. The bus can be flagged down only at the Spring Creek Soccer Field entrance on Jefferson Parkway.
- Riders may board or depart the bus at any scheduled stop



- Deviation pick-up and drop-off requests must be received at least three (3) hours prior to the pick-up.
- Deviation requests will be scheduled on a first-come/first-serve basis and time-dependent basis in order to keep the buses close to their scheduled times.
- Deviation requests cannot be scheduled more than two weeks in advance.
- Qualifications to request a route deviation (BOTH of the following must be met):
 - Mobility challenges or other health condition(s) that prohibit the ability to walk to or from the scheduled route or stops
 - Pickup and/or drop-off location within the deviation corridor for those with mobility challenges or health issues that prohibit direct access to the route buses (approx. 3 blocks; approximately 1,000 feet)
- The route bus will drop off passengers at the scheduled bus stops on the same side of the road as the bus travels. Deviation requests may be able to pick up or drop off riders on the requested side of the road as long as there are no safety concerns (e.g. driving in Reverse gear or turning around in an unsafe manner).
- There is no additional charge for deviations
- Northfield Transit recommends that those needing wheelchair accommodations utilize the Dial-a-Ride service if the trip would require a transfer between route buses.

Work Trip

- The Work Trip service is intended to accommodate early morning and evening riders who use the bus to get to and from work. As the routes develop and expand we expect to eliminate the Work Trip as the routes take on commuting passengers and Dial-a-Ride service is extended during route service hours.
- Work Trip service hours are Monday – Friday, 7AM – 9AM; 4PM – 5:30PM.
- Work Trip rides cannot be scheduled on a permanent basis. Rides may be scheduled no more than two weeks in advance. Riders are required to submit their ride schedule by phone, email, or mail every two weeks in order to retain their place on the Work Trip bus. Work Trip reservations are scheduled on a first-come/first-serve basis.
- Work Trip rides must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.
- Cancellations must be reported to the Northfield Transit Dispatch office before 4:30 PM the day before the scheduled trip.
- Repeated cancellations or no-shows (more than 3 in a week or more than 6 in a month) will result in a warning letter for the first incident. Subsequent no-shows or frequent cancellations in the following 6 months will result in removal from the Work Trip service for a period of one month. Riders may re-apply for Work Trip service after the one month suspension.

Dial-a-Ride

- Ride requests are scheduled on a first-come/first-serve basis. It is recommended that individuals reserve their trip 24 hours in advance. Reservations made less than 3 hours in advance will be refused.
- Ride requests cannot be made more than two weeks in advance.
- Dial-a-Ride trips are scheduled to maximize the efficiency of the bus service and to accommodate as many people as possible. Every effort will be made to ensure that you arrive at your destination by your scheduled time. All requests for service shall be met within the



constraints of available capacity in terms of routing and scheduling. All attempts shall be made to provide service within a period of 45 minutes of the time that is requested. Everything possible will be done to arrange an alternative travel time that is acceptable to the passenger. Only in the event that a suitable travel time cannot be arranged will a trip request be denied.

- The bus may arrive ten (10) minutes before or after the scheduled pick-up time.
- The bus will wait a maximum of three (3) minutes before departing and reporting a no-show to the dispatcher. The bus will not return unless a new ride is scheduled.
- Other pick-ups or drop-offs may occur between your pick-up location and your destination
- Except for those with mobility challenges or medical conditions that prohibit use of the route buses, Dial-a-Ride may take a rider only as far as the nearest route bus stop from which a transfer ticket will be provided to continue on the route bus without an additional fare.
- No reservations will be taken with less than a three (3) hour notice.
- Individuals needing wheelchair accommodations should indicate this to the dispatcher when scheduling a ride and make the reservation at least 24 hours in advance.
- Those needing wheelchair accommodations should utilize the Dial-a-Ride service if destination would require a transfer between route buses

Cancellations/No Show Policy

- All passengers are requested to cancel reservations for Dial-a-Ride or Route Deviations at least two (2) hours before the scheduled pick-up. Work trip passengers are requested to cancel by 4:00 PM the previous day.
- A no-show occurs when an individual misses a scheduled pick-up time or does not give sufficient cancellation notice of two hours.
- Two (2) missed pick-ups (no-shows) within a 30-day period will result in a written reminder of Transit policies. Continuation of “no-shows” may result in the loss of Dial-a-Ride access and route deviation requests for the rider for a set period of time.
- Events that occur beyond the control of the individual rider will not be considered a no-show.

Late Pick-Ups

Transit vehicles may be late for a passenger’s scheduled pick-up time due to breakdowns, weather conditions, traffic or trains, etc. Please wait 10 minutes beyond your scheduled pick-up time before calling the dispatcher to inquire about your ride.

Scheduling a Dial-a-Ride or Route Deviation

- Dial-a-Ride and Route Deviation reservations may be made by calling the Northfield Transit dispatcher at 507-645-7250 (Monday-Friday, 8:30-4:30) or by emailing transit@ci.northfield.mn.us. Please include your name, pick-up address and time, destination address and time, your phone number, and any accommodations you may need.
- Reservations for evening service must be scheduled during the office hours listed above.
- Wheelchair and work trip passengers are requested to make reservations at least 24 hours in advance.
- Route Deviation and Dial-a-Ride reservation requests must be made at least 3 hours in advance.



Fare Payment & Transfers

- Fares (per passenger, per trip)
 - Route bus
 - Single-ride cash \$1.25
 - Transfers No Charge
 - Dial-a-Ride \$2.00
 - Children under 6 years old ride free with paying adult (maximum 2 free children/adult)
- Payment for a ride must be made at the time of pick-up.
- Numerous payment options are available:
 - Cash fare – Exact change is required; drivers cannot provide change
 - Tokens – Available at City Hall and numerous city businesses and community centers
 - Prepaid fare cards – 11 rides for the price of 10. Available at City Hall and numerous city businesses and community centers
 - Unlimited ride passes – Available at City Hall and numerous city businesses and community centers
- Transfer tickets will be provided by the driver upon the request of the rider at the time of pick-up.
 - The transfer ticket allows the rider to continue on a second bus at no additional charge
 - Transfers are valid between the route buses or from the Dial-a-Ride bus to the route bus
 - Transfer tickets must be used within twenty (20) minutes of the time indicated on the ticket.
 - Transfer tickets more than twenty (20) minutes old will not be honored and a new fare will be charged.

Safety

- All passengers are requested to promptly seat themselves and to use the seat belts.
 - We strongly encourage that a federally approved car seat be used for young children.
- Passengers who use the lift will be assisted onto and off the lift by the driver. Drivers will always operate the lift and will keep the passenger under surveillance at all times.
- All passengers in wheel chairs are to be safely secured by the driver, when the vehicle is in motion.
- For safety reasons, persons using a 3-wheel electric cart will be requested to transfer to a bus seat.

Emergency Procedures

Please be aware that the driver is in command of the vehicle. We request that you follow his or her instruction, especially in the case of an emergency. The driver will assess unsafe conditions and will make the decision to load or unload at an alternate location or to seek shelter during severe weather.

In the event of an accident or on-vehicle emergency procedures, you will be asked to:

- Follow the driver's instruction
- Remain calm



- Make an orderly evacuation of the vehicle if warranted, staying off the roadway in a safe location until further notice

If you or another passenger becomes ill, injured or in distress while on the vehicle please notify the driver or another passenger that you need assistance.

Passenger Conduct and Responsibility

All passengers are expected to behave in a courteous manner with consideration for fellow passengers. No eating or drinking or open containers are allowed on the bus. No tobacco products, inappropriate language, bothering of other passengers, horseplay, fighting, carrying of weapons, or possessing illegal drugs will be allowed on Northfield Transit vehicles.

Passengers must secure all personal items and belongings while riding the bus. Northfield Transit is not responsible for items left on vehicles.

Drivers reserve the right to deny entrance into a vehicle if the passenger appears disorderly or leads the driver to conclude that the passenger will exhibit disruptive behavior that would pose a safety threat not only to the driver but also the other passengers. Northfield Transit reserves the right to refuse service to anyone who violates any of the standards.

Failure to adhere to the above conduct policies may result in the following:

- First Offense: Verbal warning from the driver, dispatcher or transit manager.
- Second Offense: Written warning from the transit manager.
- Third Offense: The passenger will be prohibited from using the transit system for a designated period of time, based upon the severity of the violation.

If the violation is serious, the driver has the discretion to terminate the passenger's ride immediately, omitting steps one and two. If violations continue following suspension, the passenger may be suspended indefinitely.

The driver may contact the Police at any time if they feel there is a risk or threat to anyone on the bus.

Lost and Found

Please contact Northfield Transit at 507-645-7250 to inquire about lost items. All items found on the bus will be turned in to the dispatcher.

Passenger Comments and Complaint Procedures

Northfield Transit is committed to providing safe, cost-effective transit service. If for any reason you would like to make a comment or file a written complaint you may do so by addressing your concern to the following address:

Transit Manager
City of Northfield
801 Washington St S



Northfield, MN 55057
Phone: 507-645-3027
E-mail: brian.welch@ci.northfield.mn.us

Comment forms are available on all buses.

Non-Discrimination

Northfield Transit will not discriminate against any individual, regardless of age, race, color, sex and/or national origin.

