

Operated by

Colorado Valley Transit District

P.O. Box 940, Columbus, TX 78934

979-732-6281 | 1-800-548-1068

www.gotransit.org



Serving the following counties:

Austin
Colorado
Waller
Wharton

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES FOR PASSENGERS

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General – The Colorado Valley Transit District (CVTD) serves the general public; and a large diverse population of individuals with varying, physical challenges, economic and financial status, and ethnic backgrounds.

CVTD shall ensure that no person shall be excluded from the participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity undertaken by CVTD, solely by the reason of his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. CVTD assures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended (section 504), the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities.

Eligible participants - an individual boarding a bus within the counties: of Colorado, Austin, Waller and Wharton without restrictions to visitors. Service is not limited to membership in a specific private organization, group, association, or fraternal organization, race, color, creed, sex, age, or handicap.

Reservations and determination are processed at the time of the request, unless unavailable or other variables apply. The intake takes only a few minutes; eligibility is determined by service area; type of service is determined by service request; and customer files serve as documentation of eligibility.

Operations:

Service (hours & days) – Transit shall operate a fleet of vehicles and contracted supplemental vehicles as approved by the CVTD Board of Directors. Vehicles shall be operational from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday for Public Transit Services. Public Transit Service is not offered on weekends. Services will not be available on the following Holidays:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| New Year's Day | Thanksgiving Day |
| Memorial Day | Day after Thanksgiving |
| Independence Day | Christmas Eve |
| Labor Day | Christmas Day |

Staff safety meetings/operational reviews - CVTD will not provide regular service when staff safety meetings are scheduled with efforts made not to interrupt travel arrangements. CVTD system will be reviewed on a regular (at least quarterly) basis. These reviews will include formal meetings of management and training, accidents, scheduling, expenditures, personnel and other key areas.

TYPES OF SERVICE:

1. **Deviated and fixed route service** - is provided through deviated loop trips and link trips from city to city in certain areas, and deviated routes according to an established time schedule. All participants are eligible if mobility does not prohibit them from walking to a bus stop. This includes the elderly, handicap, i.e., wheelchair, walker, blind, and so forth. The driver must assist all handicapped and elderly passengers.

2. **Demand response (DR) service** - is provided with a twenty-four (24) hour advance notice for reservations by calling one of the local telephone numbers or 1-800-548-1068 OR 979-732-6281. All clients located more than three blocks from a bus stop, disabled, or elderly and unable to walk great distances are eligible for demand responsive service.

In order to schedule a trip on DR service, one must speak with a scheduler/dispatcher who will require the following in scheduling a trip:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Passenger Name | 6. Emergency Contacts |
| 2. Date of Birth | 7. Destination Name |
| 3. Address | 8. Destination Address |
| 4. Phone Number | 9. Request Time |
| 5. Assistance Needs | |

Clients must remember to call the office when you are not going on your regularly scheduled trips or plans change. This service, like any other type of transportation service, cannot guarantee your arrival at your destination at any certain appointed time due to unforeseen reasons. However, it is our goal to provide on time service.

Curb-to-curb - is provided from the curb nearest a client home.

Door-to-door - is provided from the door of a client, lobby area, main entrance, or exit for elderly or handicapped passengers needing extra assistance.

Verification from a doctor may be required from clients requesting DR service and live within three blocks of a bus stop in a deviated fixed route system. Every effort will be made to make verifications via a telephone on the same day request are made to help process presuming eligibility. Written documentation will be maintained and re-verified when applicable. Violations of DR Service will be suspended. Appeals will be handled the same as grievance procedures.

3. Vanpool Service - referred as STAR is for groups of 6 to 15 people who live relatively close to each other, have similar schedules and share work destinations. Two or more serve as a volunteer driver for the group. All van costs are shared among the riders. Sharing the cost of the ride to work can result in significant savings and convenience over driving alone; and a public transportation help make the monthly cost per rider even more attractive.

Same day service - if available.

Waiting lists - is maintained on clients unable to assist and willing to receive service later.

Unscheduled riders or stops - drivers are not to deviate from a fixed route in response to a passenger request; demand response service may if the request will not interfere with his or her schedule.

Purposes of trips - are not limited except Title III B contract clients.

Out-of-county medical trips - are not required by the agency; but we work with other sponsoring agencies to provide service, i.e. Veterans, United Way, etc. This service is pre-scheduled, subject to availability and resources. The trip may be canceled with a three (3) day advance notice, early departures and late returns; however every effort will be made not to inconvenience our passengers. Passengers must also remain at their destination until the vehicle is scheduled to return.

Extremely ill persons - are not allowed to be transported since CVTD is not a medical service.

Fare Structure - Every passenger who boards a CVTD vehicle must pay the applicable fare unless the trip is being subsidized by another funding source. Below are the applicable one-way fares:

Rates:

Loop (Inner City)	\$1.00 (One Way)
Link (Inner County)	\$2.00 (One Way)
County to County	\$5.00 (Per Trip within service are)
Specialized Services	Please call the office for more details

Cash - A fare per each one-way trip shall be charged to all eligible passengers and their escorts with the exception of required personal care attendants, who may travel with an eligible passenger at no cost. Fares are based on a one-way trip. This means that each time the vehicle is boarded, the fare must be paid by cash, or fare card, based on the fare schedule. Drivers cannot make change. All fares must be paid by exact change only. If trip demand allows, a customer may request an added trip to obtain exact change, however no guarantee of on time delivery. A fare will be charged for the additional trip. Failure to do so will result in no service for that trip and the trip will be reported as a No Show.

Fare Box Procedures - Each vehicle is equipped with a fare box that must be utilized for collecting cash/ donations from clients. Driver are instructed to utilize the locked fare box daily and are not permitted to physically handle revenue unless it involves a handicapped passenger who needs assistance. At the end of each shift the vault should be removed by the driver with the key provided; deliver the vault to the office; and the office staff removes revenue, counts and records.

Fare Cards -The passenger will swipe their cards for payment of fares. Each vehicle is equipped with a tablet must be utilized for collecting fares from clients. Drivers are instructed to utilize the swipe card daily and are not permitted to physically handle cards unless it involves a passenger needing assistance.

Tab & Go!



All Austin & Waller county senior citizens - CVTD provides Service on a donation basis for elderly passengers (sixty years and older) in Austin and Waller County in their respective area through Older American funding. Below are the suggested donations:

Inner City \$1.00 per trip
Inner County ... \$2.00 per trip

Senior citizens of contracted areas are not to be denied service due to inability to pay suggested donations, and must be assured confidentiality of contributions and client information.

Children are charged the same fare as adults. All passengers must pay the applicable fare when boarding the vehicle and deposit fare in fare box. All passengers are asked to have the correct change since drivers do not provide change and are not permitted to handle money.

Confidential - staffs are required to keep information regarding a client personal issues as it relates to infectious diseases “confidential”, and adhere to all HIPA laws. Blood borne pathogen training is given to all employees to help educate staff and to assure all safety precautions is taken.

Contract specialized service - maybe arranged subject to availability with applicable rates.

Inclement Weather - If inclement weather exists, CVTD may with approval of the Director Reschedule or cancel service. Employees are to report to work unless otherwise informed by Dispatch or direct supervisor. CVTD will attempt to inform passengers by using local radio stations, television stations, and etc.

ADA - Pursuant to 49 CFR Part 37, the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 provides that no entity shall discriminate against an individual with a disability in connection with the provision of transportation service. The law sets forth specific requirements for vehicle and facility accessibility and the provision of service.

Service to individuals with disabilities must be comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities.

Demand response - service is provided with a twenty-four (24) hour advance notice for reservations by calling one of the local telephone numbers or 1-800-548-1068 OR 979-732-6281. All clients located more than three blocks from a bus stop, disabled, or elderly and unable to walk great distances are eligible for demand responsive service.

Considerations at rider’s home - When conditions at a passenger's home exist that may hinder safe transportation, service may be denied. Examples include:

- . An unsafe passenger accessible home, i.e., over two steps if in a wheelchair.
- . Ice, snow, high water in walkway, or driveway.
- . Defective passenger equipment; i.e., unsafe wheelchair or ramps.
- . Unrestrained pets.

- . Location of home, i.e., boarding a vehicle in heavy traffic.
- . Unsafe vehicle access to enter and exit home.

Mobility devices - Section 37.5 of the DOT's ADA regulations, a transit operator is not permitted to mandate the use by wheelchair users of seatbelts and shoulder harnesses, unless the operator mandates the use of these devices by all passengers, including those sitting in vehicle seats.

HB 537 states buses designed to transport fewer than 15 or more passenger including driver seatbelt are required. (This refers to CVTD smaller buses).

Seatbelts - all drivers must wear seatbelts. Passengers are required to wear seatbelts. If clients need assistance with seatbelts, the driver will provide the assistance.

Wheelchair - three- or more wheeled devices; many power wheelchairs now have more than four wheels; these should not be excluded from the definition of "wheelchair" solely on the basis of having a larger number of wheels.

Wheelchair & Securement - CVTD requires that all wheelchairs, and/or mobility devices, along with the individual be secured with all provided securement devices and seatbelts. The TRANSIT must carry a wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate them, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements. "Legitimate safety requirements" includes such circumstances as a wheelchair of such size that it would block an aisle, or would be too large to fully enter a lift, block the entrance, or would interfere with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency.

Securement - On board, the bus operator will help secure your mobility device to ensure a safe and comfortable ride. We offer special straps that attach to the corners of your mobility device, making securement on the bus easier and faster. Call 800-548-1068 or email cvt@gotransit.org for details.

Transit cannot impose a limitation on the transportation of wheelchairs and other mobility aids based on the inability of the securement system to secure the device to the satisfaction of staff. The Transit cannot deny service to people who use wheelchairs just because particular devices may be problematic from a securement point of view.

"Legitimate safety requirements" must be based on actual risks, not on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with disabilities or about the devices they use for mobility purposes.

Those individuals whom do not want their wheelchair secured but are physically able to transfer to a seat will be asked to do so and to wear the appropriate seatbelt. The wheelchair, or mobility device, must then be either secured or folded and placed in a position as to not allow freedom of movement while the bus is in motion.

Any individual with a wheelchair or mobility device that can be secured, but refuses to allow the device to be secured, will have potential hazards explained to them. These hazards may include, but not be limited to, those that could result in damage or injury to themselves and/or their mobility device from not being properly secured while in transit should an accident or incident occur. They also may have future service declined to them for safety reasons. Federal regulations allow service to be declined for safety reasons.

If a particular type of wheelchair or mobility device cannot be secured, the individual will not be denied transportation. Instead, if the individual is physically able to, he/she will be asked to transfer to a seat and will be required to wear a seatbelt. If physically unable, he/she will be asked to remain in their mobility device and will be asked to be secured, at a minimum, with the shoulder harness-seatbelt.

Boarding the Bus with a Mobility Device

Each bus has a lift.

How to board the bus while waiting on the operator?

Wait in the middle of the bus stop where the operator can see you. That way when your bus arrives, the operator will know to deploy the ramp or lift, which helps save time.

If you need the ramp or lift, just ask the operator. He or she can assist you if you need help guiding your mobility device onto the ramp or lift.

Priority seating and securement areas: On board, look for the priority seating area near the front of the bus. Two securement areas are provided for mobility devices. The operator will help secure your mobility device.

Press the signal strip to request a stop: Press down on the signal strip or pull the cord along the window to let the operator know you want the next stop. Getting off the bus: when the bus stops, the operator will remove the securement straps from your mobility device, and deploy the ramp or lift for you.

Tips for using the lifts on high-floor buses - Set the brakes on your mobility device and turn off the power. If you are standing on the lift, be sure to hold onto the hand rail.

Limitations - Lifts can hold mobility devices up to 30 inches wide and 48 inches long, weighing up to 800 pounds when occupied. A personal attendant may ride the lift with you.

Backing your mobility device onto the lift may make it easier to maneuver into the securement area inside.

Three or more wheeled devices - You can bring a three or more wheeled electric device (such as the Segway®) on the bus when used as a mobility device due to a disability. (Note: The device must be turned off when boarding, riding and exiting the vehicle.)

Lifts - passengers with mobility problems (walkers) may ride on an ADA approved lift. The driver should hold wheelchairs while they are on the lift. Clients should never be left unattended on the lift. Lifts are never left opened or unattended.

Tie downs - drivers are responsible for the safe securement of all wheelchairs. Wheelchairs must be properly secured in a tie-down in the standard way. No non-standard equipment, tie-down straps, or belts may be used. Exceptions must have prior written approval.

Standees - People using canes or walkers and other standees with disabilities that do not use wheelchairs but have difficulty using steps (e.g., a person who can walk on a plan without use of mobility aid but cannot raise his or her legs sufficiently to climb bus steps) must also be permitted to use the lift, on request. To ensure safe boarding and unloading of standees on accessible equipment the driver must:

1. All other patrons will be allowed to get on or off the vehicle before the lift is cycled for a standee.
2. Standee will be asked if they have ridden a lift before. If he or she has not, we will explain briefly what to do to get on and off the lift.
3. All patrons will be cautioned to remain clear of the lift while it is in operation.
4. All patrons will be verbally or physically guided to the standee proper position on the lift. The wheelchair loading-edge barrier will be lowered if necessary, and "painted feet" shown on the lift that shows where the standee will locate the passenger.
5. All standees will be instructed to hold the handrail (s) and to keep his or her head low enough so that it will not strike the vehicle doorframe.
6. The driver will cycle the lift to "up" position, assist the standee off the lift and into the bus corridor.
7. If necessary, standees will be assisted to his or her seat.
8. The driver will cycle the lift to "stowed" position.
9. A standee who refuses to hold the handrail (s) or who stands on the lift in an unsafe manner will be refused service.

Malfunctions - should a wheelchair lift malfunction while a passenger is about to be loaded or is already aboard please reassure the passenger by stating the lift has a small

problem and you will need to operate it manually. The outside door must be opened and can be lowered by opening the hydraulic pressure valve and allowing the platform to move into the full down position. To raise the platform, close hydraulic pressure valve and insert the hydraulic jack handle into the hydraulic jack and jack the platform into the up position. Close the outside door and lock it securely. When a malfunction is encountered with the lift, they should be noted on the daily driver vehicle report form turned into the dispatcher/supervisor.

Waiting time (demand responsive service only) - drivers are asked to knock at the doors of the elderly, handicapped, or limited mobility passengers.

Loading (embarking) and unloading (disembarking) - drivers are required to “get out of the bus” and help with loading and unloading elderly and handicapped individuals giving ample time for passenger embarking and disembarking. Handicapped passengers and assist wheelchair passengers up and down only two steps. Wheelchair passengers should have ramps provided at their home and should be confirmed at the time of reservation. If not, the client must have an assistant who will place the wheelchair on the ground level and to the vehicle if other barriers exist. Unloading of passengers should be to the curbside of a road when possible.

Passenger assistance - drivers will assure the safe boarding and transporting of all passengers. Assistance provided will vary based on rider capabilities. Service is provided on fixed routes curb-to-curb. Clients receiving demand responsive service and outside fixed routes, elderly, & handicapped individuals may receive door-to-door service provided no barriers exist. The driver will go to the door and walk beside the client to and from the vehicle and stand at the base of the vehicle steps when loading and unloading provided no barriers exist. Drivers will maneuver wheelchairs; operate the lift; and secure wheelchairs in tie-downs.

Elderly, handicapped, or passengers with limited mobility may need assistance carrying grocery bags to their front door. Drivers are expected to use good judgment in determining the appropriate level of assistance and will be trained in providing such assistance. The agency may reserve the right to require a passenger to have a personal assistance travel with them at no expense to the individual.

Drivers are not to provide home or personal care (i.e., taking out trash, assist in dressing, giving medication, putting groceries away, etc.). Keep in mind that our business is transportation and we do what is necessary to provide a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable ride. A passenger may clearly need assistance, but refuses the driver's offer of help, if

so stand nearby ready to assist should the need occur. The dispatcher/supervisor should be notified. In the future if it is, determined assistance is needed and the passenger refuses, then CVTD reserves the right to refuse service.

Service Animals & Accommodation of Animals – CVTD requires all animals to be secured in a pet travel CVTD with the exception of service animals as described below.

It is the policy of CVTD to allow service animals to accompany their owner without restraint. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, a service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal that is required to aid the owner and that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a mobility device or retrieving dropped items.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 allows for the imposition of legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for the safe operation of CVTD. CVTD can generally require use of a secured pet travel CVTD for any animal that in the opinion of the Director or his/her designee is a health or safety hazard regardless of the training or function the animal serves for its owner. Handler maintains full responsibility of service animal.

Persons who have service animals, i.e. canines, snakes, pigs, monkeys, etc. may board the vehicles. The animals do not have to be muzzled or caged. Any animal that is aggressive and pose a safety hazard should be reported

Accessible format - Each vehicle has braille signs to assist with the service.

Training - All employees receive training the following area with annual updates as applicable.

- Safe operation of vehicle
- Accessibility equipment
- Proper treatment of persons with disabilities

Riding Transit. – Transit is a public transit system, providing rides for many passengers each day. Drivers cannot be at three or four pick-up points at one time and must allow for time to ensure that customer makes it from origin to destination by scheduled appointment time. Therefore, passengers must be ready for pick-up and allow for travel time for transportation to destination. For local scheduled trips, passengers should be ready at least one hour prior to required arrival time at destination. In the event that a rider will be required to be ready earlier, then Dispatch will contact passengers by telephone as to the approximate pick-up time. CVTD will attempt to drop off passengers no more than 1 hour prior to requested time. Drivers are permitted to drop off public transit passengers regardless of inclement weather and/or entry.

When the driver arrives at the pick-up location, he/she is not required to wait more than five (5) minutes for the public transit passenger, Drivers will honk, and make a courtesy call if phone number is available. Drivers will leave a no-show card at passenger's home if it can be done safely and confidentially. A no-show card will simply notify the passenger that CVTD arrived and left the pick-up location.

Service may not be rendered if origin or destination location cannot be accessed by the vehicle or if the location does not provide safe passage for the vehicle or safe access to and/or from the vehicle by the passenger. The driver shall attempt to make reasonable accommodations and if not possible then they shall immediately call the Dispatch office for further instruction in such a case. Steep driveways, low hanging trees/limbs, deteriorated sidewalks, backing situations, road and driveway conditions, etc. may result in denial of service. **CVTD drivers prohibit use of personal driveways unless unavoidable.**

- Drivers are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.
- Drivers are not permitted to lock/unlock passenger's door.
- Drivers may provide door-to-door service when requested at time of advanced scheduling, but are not permitted to enter a passenger's home.
- Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down steps or along gravel areas.
- Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.
- Drivers are not allowed to exit vehicle to assist or enter upon property (fences or porches) unless animals are restrained to avoid possibility of biting.
- Drivers have the discretion to assign seats and determine mobility device placement when necessary for the efficiency and/or safety of the operation.

Assistants (escorts/companions) - when a passenger request and assistant/escort/companion a CVTD authorization form maybe requested and must be completed by the physician and kept on file for that passenger if the staff deems applicably. Exceptions: nursing homes, Limited English Proficiency clients, dialysis patients, cancer patients, and retirement centers. In addition, CVTD will permit one individual to ride at no charge if the trip is out-of-service area, and the client is under the age of 16, over 60 years of age, Limited English Proficiency, and/or handicapped (blind, a wheelchair, mental). The escort must assist the passenger with all travel needs except driving, boarding & unloading, and remain at the same location as the paying passenger. Until CVTD receives the authorization form signed by the physician, the elderly/escorts/companions must also pay the applicable fare.

Unauthorized assistants/escorts/companions - or companions will be charged a fare unless contract authorized.

Personal Care Attendants – CVTD allows a personal care attendant to accompany a passenger at no additional charge when such an attendant is required to utilize the CVTD service. Passengers are required to supply their own attendants at their own expense. Generally, the following conditions would warrant a fare-free attendant:

Immobility, Disorientation, Non-Comprehension, OR Communication Impairment.

Personal care attendants are required to specifically assist the passenger. This assistance includes, but is not limited to, the following duties:

- Assisting the passenger from his/her door to the bus and back again;
- Opening doors;
- Pushing mobility device to and from the vehicle;
- Transfer assistance from mobility device to a seat;
- CVTD packages
- Communicating with the driver (if passenger is unable).

If an attendant does not specifically perform some type of assistance for the passenger, then that individual is not considered an escort and is charged the normal fare. Attendants are not to assist in mobility device boarding or securement; this is the driver's responsibility.

Horn honking - is permitted at the homes of clients. It is also permissible when you feel there is a dog present or in a rural area.

Parking/driveways - of the vehicle will be closest to their pick-up or drop off if available, unless an elderly, wheelchair or handicapped passengers are being serviced then the designated stopping area should be used. **CVTD drivers prohibit use of personal driveways unless un-avoidable.**

Gifts and tips - Gifts or Honoraria - You should always ask yourself whether it is appropriate for you to accept something from a person who wants, or may want, or may be seen to want, an official favor within your authority. It is unethical to accept or give a gift that is meant to sway a decision in favor of the gift-giver. For drivers and supervisors or any other employees are not required and not encouraged.

Under Local Government Code Chapter 176, a local government officer must disclose a vendor's offer of gifts to the officer or to the officer's family member worth \$250 or more using the Conflict of Interest Form approved by the Texas Ethics Commission. The Form requires disclosure even if the officer refuses the gift. An officer commits a Class C misdemeanor if the officer knowingly violates the disclosure requirements.

Giving Gifts or Honoraria to State Employees - State employees are legally and ethically prohibited from accepting gifts and honoraria, except in very limited situations. You may be held criminally liable for offering or conferring any benefit to a state employee in exchange for the recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote, or other exercise of discretion as a public servant. "Benefit" means anything reasonably regarded as financial gain or financial advantage, including a benefit to any other person in whose welfare the beneficiary has an interest. Benefit does not include an item with a value of less than \$50 or a gift or other benefit conferred on account of kinship or an independent relationship.

Rules for Passenger Conduct - Rules of conduct on CVTD Vehicles are the same as the laws governing conduct in public places.

- Passengers utilizing mobility devices will be recommended to have their mobility device properly secured with a six point tie down safety restraint system, including shoulder and lap belts.

No person shall, while interacting with a CVTD employee and/or as a passenger on any vehicle that is operated by CVTD as a public conveyance, do any of the following acts:

1. Smoke or possess any lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar, or cigarettes

2. Consume any beverages, food, or alcohol (unless medically necessary).
3. Intentionally deface, damage, write upon, or soil any part of the vehicle;
4. Spit, urinate, or defecate in or upon any vehicle;
5. Throw, deposit or place paper, bottles, cans or any other garbage or solid waste in or upon a vehicle;
6. Throw any object of any kind within a vehicle or out any door or window of a vehicle;
7. Play audio or video devices, unless played through headphones so that it is inaudible to other passengers and the driver;
8. Bring any pet or animal on to a vehicle other than a guide dog accompanying a person with a disability, or an animal in a cage or approved standard pet CVTD;
9. Walk around in a vehicle while it is in motion;
10. Possess any explosives or CVTD any corrosive acid or flammable liquid not in a sealed container;
11. Possess firearms, with the exception of law enforcement officers;
12. Bring any laundry on board unless it is in an enclosed bag;
13. Intentionally interfere or conduct any unnecessary conversation with the driver, so that the driver's attention will not be diverted from the safe operation of the vehicle;
14. Use profane or abusive language toward the CVTD employee or other passenger or act in a hostile or threatening manner while on board the vehicle;
15. Board intoxicated;
16. Present a significant risk to the health or safety of others;
17. Bring on board any baggage or articles which, due to their size, would restrict free movement of passengers;

18. Bring on board gasoline or a gasoline container or any type of hazardous material. (Respirators and portable oxygen supplies are permitted to be CVTD and used on board by a person needing them for health reasons);
19. Board with unreasonable personal hygiene;
20. Conduct any unnecessary conversations of a personal nature that could be viewed as offensive or harassment.
21. The exposure of a person's anus or genitals which are reckless concerning others who may be present and who may be offended or alarmed by such act.
22. An offensive gesture or display, which tends to incite an immediate breach of the peace.
23. No person shall enter or remain in a bus or on any portion of a transit facility without a shirt or without clothing that covers the upper portion of the body. No person shall enter or remain in any bus or on any portion of a transit facility without shoes or sandals on both feet.
24. The transit facilities of the CVTD are designated for the sole and exclusive use of passengers of the transit system. Further, no person shall sleep on the seats, benches, or other areas, or on any portion of a transit facility.

CVTD may refuse to transport or may eject any persons violating the provisions contained above. If assistance is required, the driver should contact Dispatch or appropriate member of management.

Monitoring and Surveillance – For our customers' safety and security, activities on and around CVTD vehicles and facilities may be visually and audibly recorded.

Cameras protect passengers and employees from dangers by serving as deterrents, assisting in monitoring and training for employees regarding emergency situations, incidents/accidents, various training components to include customer service, and aiding in investigations as necessary. Drivers are to immediately notify the Information Technology Specialist, if unavailable then their immediate supervisor with any issues related to video surveillance equipment.

Special Circumstances

Transportation of Children – All children who are under eight years of age are required to be restrained in an approved child passenger safety seat unless the child is at least 4 feet, 9 inches in height as State law mandates. The passenger must provide the car seat. Children under 1 year of age should have child safety restraint rear-facing seat. Passengers traveling with infants, as their escorts will be required to provide their own infant CVTD approved for use in vehicles. The passenger will be responsible for placing the infant into the CVTD and securing the CVTD with a safety belt.

The passenger and escort must both be ready at the door when the vehicle arrives. The infant will not be allowed to ride up the lift with a passenger utilizing a mobility device. The infant's car seat will be secured by a safety belt to the vehicle seat during transport.

A child who is school age may travel alone. Children under school age must have an adult (18 years or older) attendant accompany them during transport. The Director may grant exceptions.

Infants and children using demand response service ... only school age children are allowed to ride alone on an inner-county trip. Preschool age children may ride alone on LOOP and LINK service and inner city trips only.

Abuse, neglect, and exploitation of elderly, children or etc. ... drivers are required to report when it appears that one is a victim of abuse or neglect and complete an incident report.

Accommodation of Mobility Devices – CVTD will accommodate mobility devices, which do not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length when measured two inches above the ground, and do not weight more than 600 pounds when occupied.

Any passenger who utilizes a mobility device shall ensure the brakes on the device are in working order before transportation can be provided. CVTD will make every reasonable effort to accommodate various models available to passengers. However, due to the increasing size and weight of such equipment, some limitations will be necessary in order to ensure the safe transport of the mobility device and passengers.

Carry-On Packages –An attendant may travel to assist with the loading/unloading of packages. Oversized packages will be refused for transport. Packages must be limited to no larger than a brown paper grocery bag. No one package shall weigh more than 50 pounds. Passengers must make other arrangements for delivery of any item larger than specified. Drivers may assist with carry-on packages but are not required to.

Medical Oxygen for personal use – Oxygen will be transported only when medically necessary. It will be in a cylinder maintained in with support traveling devices.

Backing Policy – CVTD Operators are instructed to avoid BACKING UP if at all possible and to report all backing situations for investigation purposes.

Service Suspensions and Terminations

Cancellations – It is requested that passengers notify the dispatch office of any necessary cancellations at least two (2) hours prior to the scheduled trip. This allows the dispatch office to reassign that time to another passenger whose service request was previously denied. A cancellation is considered “late” if it is made less than two (2) hours prior to the trip (example: after 7:00 a.m. for those trips scheduled before 9:00 a.m.)

To encourage proper and timely cancellations, cancellations will be treated as no shows if not called within the time frame listed above.

No Shows – A no show is defined as any instance in which a passenger does not keep their scheduled ride and fails to notify the CVTD office at least two hours prior to scheduled pick up time. Implementation of this policy has become necessary due to the rapidly increasing number of no shows. We have determined that no show trips affect not only the transit system, but also other customers. Our drivers make every effort to pick up all passengers on a timely basis, and when **one of our customers is not there** the drivers are required to spend time seeking out the person. This delay has caused our drivers to fall behind their anticipated daily schedules and has caused unnecessary delay for other passengers attempting to get to their scheduled destinations.

If a passenger no-shows from his/her origin, CVTD will not return to complete the trip. If a passenger later determines that they need a return trip, then they must call CVTD to attempt to schedule. CVTD will attempt to return at the earliest time possible, within service hours, depending upon vehicle availability. No guarantees of return are made. The Director reserves the right to authorize a driver to return for a pick up if circumstances warrant. The No-Show Policy for all Public Transportation customers will be as follows:

- a)** Three no-shows within a one month period will result in a letter of notification and the passenger being placed on no-show status.
- b)** A third no-show within a one month period will result in a review of past services provided and a customer’s record on no-shows. This review could result in a letter of notification that riding privileges on City and Rural Rides has been suspended.
- c)** If determined preventable, no-show will result in suspension of services for 1 week.
- d)** A second occurrence of three no-shows within a one month period will result in a 2 week suspension.

e) A third occurrence of three no-shows within a one month period will result in a month suspension.

f) Suspension periods cannot be split or otherwise divided or altered without approval by the Director.

g) No-shows for billed customers will be submitted to funding source for reporting purposes.

Other Suspensions – Passengers who in the judgment of the Director, demonstrates tendencies toward violent or destructive behavior through threats, verbal and/or physical behavior, shall have their CVTD service eligibility terminated.

Disciplinary Procedures: CVTD has established the following procedures to handle late cancellations, and other violations and circumstances:

1. **First violations**, CVTD dispatcher or assigned authorized staff will give the passenger a verbal warning of CVTD policies and procedures which states three late cancellations may result in cancellation of service for two month or permanently if appropriate.
2. **Second violation**, CVTD will send a written warning of the violation and the policies and procedures.
3. **Third violation**, CVTD will issue a certified letter referencing the violation and refusal of service action, which states CVTD transportation, has been suspended for a period of two months or permanently if appropriate.

Appeals of Suspensions and Terminations – Passengers may appeal their suspensions or terminations by written notification as outlined in Complaint Procedures with can be found on our website.

The CVTD Board of Directors and the Director shall have the discretion to alter the penalty as dictated by circumstances.

II. Complaint Procedures

Title VI Policy – Colorado Valley Transit Districts Commitment to Civil Rights

CVTD hereby gives public notice of its policy to uphold and assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related statues. Title VI and related statutes prohibiting discrimination in federally assisted programs require that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice regarding CVTD's programs has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint must be in writing and submitted to Title VI Complaint Coordinator within 180 days following the date of the alleged occurrence. For more information regarding civil rights complaints, please contact: CVTD P.O. Box 940, Columbus, Texas 78934 or by Telephone: 1(800)548-1068.

Title VI Notice to the Public, is posted on all CVTD service vehicles, at the CVTD website www.gotransit.org, at the Administrative office located at 108 Cardinal Ln. Columbus, Texas 78934. Title VI Complaint forms are available at www.gotransit.org, or at the above listed location, or by calling 1(800)548-1068. Title VI Policy and Complaint forms are available in English and Spanish.

CVTD does have a Public Participation Plan, including information about outreach methods to engage minority and limited English proficient populations (LEP). The plan is an attachment as part of the Equal Opportunity Policy/Plan approved by the CVTD Board of Directors, which governs activities of the District. CVTD has no non-elected committees and councils.

Any person who believes that they have been subjected to discrimination may file a written complaint with CVTD's office. Federal and state law requires complaints be filed within one-hundred eighty (180) calendar days of the last alleged incident.

A complaint form may be obtained or a complaint may be submitted in a written statement that contains the following information:

- Name, address, and telephone number of the complainant.
- Names of person(s) who allegedly discriminated against you, if known.
- Date(s) of alleged incident.
- Location of alleged incident.
- Type of alleged discrimination.
- Explain what happened and how you believe you were discriminated against.
- Name, addresses and telephone numbers of persons who may have knowledge of the event.
- What other information do you have that you believe is relevant to this investigation?
- Have you filed a complaint with CVTD before? If so, include: when, where and how.
- Complainant's signature and date.
- The complaint may be emailed to cvt@gotransit.org to CVTD Title VI Complaint Coordinator at P.O. Box 940, Columbus, Texas 78934 or faxed to (979) 732-9458.

What Happens To My Complaint?

The Title VI Complaint Coordinator will contact the complainant in writing no later than fifteen (15) working days after receipt of complaint for additional information, if needed to investigate the complaint. If the complainant fails to provide the requested information in a timely basis, the Title VI Complaint Coordinator may administratively close the complaint.

The Title VI Complaint Coordinator will complete the investigation within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint and/or additional details received. A written investigation report will be prepared by the investigator. The report shall include a summary description of the incident, findings and recommendations. The CVTD Director who is the Title VI Complaint Coordinator will review the report. A closing letter will be provided to the complainant. CVTD maintains a list of transit related Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits.

If the matter cannot be resolved or if the complainant is not satisfied, then the complainant can make an appeal request to the CVTD Board within sixty (60) days of the incident. The written appeal must include the customer's name, address, and telephone contact number. A statement of reason(s) why the applicant believes the denial of accommodation request or access to public transportation was inappropriate is recommended. If the matter cannot be resolved, the complainant will be informed of his/her right to appeal to:

Texas Dept. of Transportation
Office of Civil Rights
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attn: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE.
Washington, DC 20590

General Complaint Procedures

As a recipient of Public Transportation funds, administered by the Texas Department of Transportation, CVTD hereby attests that it will abide by the eligibility guidelines and service priorities, as stipulated and set forth in the Agency's Contracts.

Any person who believes they have been denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or subject to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin by CVTD has a right to file a formal complaint. For more information regarding Title VI Civil Rights or to request a Title VI Complaint Form, please call 1-800-548-1068 or visit www.gotransit.org.

In the event of a Public transportation complaint, the complainant should adhere to the complaint procedure that is listed below:

Complaint Procedure will be as follows:

In the event of a complaint, the complainant should contact the Administrative office at (979)732-6281 or 1(800)548-1068 or by mail to P.O. Box 940, Columbus, Texas 78934.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the CVTD representative will request written detail of complaint or take an oral statement from the complainant. The complaint should include details regarding the situation: i.e. date, time, driver, problem, etc. All complaints or statements should be signed or if by telephone the actual complainant should be the person that calls. Complaints received by telephone will be investigated and resolved prior to ending the call. A written response will not be required if complainant is satisfied with the resolution. The Director will be notified upon receipt of all complaints, and an assigned staff member will conduct an investigation into written complaints. Upon completion of the investigation, a decision regarding the complaint will be rendered and a written response issued to the complainant no later than ten days after receipt of the complaint. A copy of the complaint and action taken will be forwarded to the funding source offices as required, and a copy will be kept on file at the CVTD Administrative office.

In the event, the complainant is not satisfied with the decision and action taken by the Director, the complainant should notify the Director in writing at the below listed address.

Claudia Wicks, Executive Director
COLORADO VALLEY TRANSIT DISTRICT
P.O. Box 940, Columbus, Texas 78934
1(800)548-1068 or Email: cvt@gotransitorg

The Director will review all information regarding the complaint and shall have the discretion to form an impartial panel of reviewers to assist him – comprised of: Transit District Board members, or public and private social service representatives. Following a review of the complaint, the Director shall inform the complainant of the findings of the review panel or his decision and action to be taken regarding complaint. A decision regarding the complaint will be rendered and a written response issued to the complaint no later than ten days after the Director receives the complaint.

Additional Complaint Information - Upon receipt, the assigned staff will investigate the complaint by speaking with appropriate personnel involved in the incident. A copy is forwarded to the Director.

Upon completion, the Director documents the response via electronic mail within the specified time frame following receipt of complaint. A hard copy of the complaint (including response) is kept by the assigned staff.

CVTD personnel will at no time, follow up on a complaint directly with the complainant.

CVTD shall ensure that its staff shall not retaliate or give the appearance of retaliation against an individual who has submitted a complaint against CVTD or submitted a negative comment on the recipient survey.

Hearing Impaired - The agency utilizes Relay Texas to ensure access to a telecommunications system for the deaf (TDD/TTY) to facilitate communication with hard of hearing, hearing impaired and deaf recipients. "Relay Texas", a telecommunication service established for the sensory impaired by the 71st Texas Legislature in 1989, allows an individual to make and receive calls from anywhere in the United States. The toll free number will be printed on agency pamphlets/literature.

What is Relay Texas and How Does it Work?

Relay Texas - Relay Texas provides telephone interpreting service between people who can hear and those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or speech-disabled. Relay Texas agents have computers that enable them to hear the voice user as well as read the signals from the TTY user. The service is available for Texans 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. There are no restrictions imposed on Relay Texas calls. Confidentiality for relay users and operators is assured by Texas Law.

Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTY) - A TTY is a typewriter like device with a small display which attaches easily to a standard telephone or can be plugged directly into a telephone jack. Using a TTY, a person who is deaf is able to call another person with a TTY. Deaf persons use a TTY to call Relay Texas to make a call to a hearing person who does not have a TTY.

Procedure of TRS -The Relay Texas Center has over 250 relay agents that can accept calls from both TTY users and non-TTY users (hearing persons who do not have TTY machines) at the same time. Example: you (voice user) call 1-800-735-2988 on your telephone and a relay agent will answer. Give the agent the phone number of the deaf person, and the agent will dial the number. The agent will act as a translator between you and the deaf person. Talk directly to the deaf person and pretend the relay agent is not there. The relay communication is thus CVTD out by both parties.

Cost of the Relay User - Relay Texas allows you to place local calls at no charge. Long distance calls within Texas are priced at rates lower than the usual rate, if the contracted CVTD is used for billing.

Relay Texas Telephone Numbers:

To use Relay Texas:

Non-TTY Users (hearing persons) 1-800-735-2988

TTY Users (deaf, or speech-impaired) 1-800-735-2989

ASCII Users (deaf, or speech-impaired) 1-800-735-2991
VCO users (hard of hearing), use your own voice 1-877-VCO1RTX

Blind or Sight Impaired - The District has its CVTD Policies and Procedures available in Brail, and tape cassettes with CVTD brochure information detailed. This information is available upon request by blind or sight impaired passengers.

Other Useful Contact Information

Texas Commission for the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing
P.O. Box 12904
Austin, Texas 78711
(512)407-3250 – Voice
(512)407-3251 – TTY

Texas Rehabilitation Commission
6400 Hwy 290 E, #201
Austin, Texas 78723
(512)451-9579
1(800)687-2676

Texas Commission for the Blind
4800 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite #340
Austin, Texas 78756-3178
1(800)252-5204

Management Policies - communication and operational review are the general management policies of CVTD'S operations. Open lines of communication through the various levels of management will be maintained. This will be accomplished through formal, informal meetings, operational reviews, memos and appropriate methods.

Coordination and outreach - are used to assist in targeting rural transportation service to the low income elderly, minority elders, and disabled elderly, elders with limited English-speaking ability, Alzheimer's disease or related disorder citizens and their families, Native American Indians as they are identified. CVTD currently provides bi-lingual information and bilingual speaking staff to assist local groups such as health fairs, home health, visiting nurses, physical therapy, nursing homes, discharge nurses, retirement homes, Alzheimer groups, local churches and so forth.

CVTD continues the work with others in the community to reach those citizens who would benefit most from our service and maximize resources through coordination when possible.

In addition, CVTD is a member of the local resource councils where updates are provided regarding service and annual client satisfaction surveys are conducted to help develop service.

Limited English Proficiency - the agency provides bilingual staff flyers' in Spanish, free assistants, and interpreter service to offer clients who may need guidance in using the service.

PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCEMENT

Policy Statement - it is the policy and intention of the CVTD to provide transportation service to members of the public, which is free from conduct detrimental to order and the safety and rights of each passenger of the transit system.

Criminal Prosecutions - in the event of any violation of these rules, which also constitutes a violation of state law or local ordinance involving criminal penalties, the CVTD shall assist in the prosecution of such offenses with the appropriate authorities. In the case of emergencies or continuing criminal conduct, law enforcement officers may be called to a bus or transit facility or scene for the arrest and detention of violators or for the issuance of citations. Further, arrangements may be made with appropriate prosecuting attorneys for the CVTD employee witnessing any such violations to execute formal complaints.

Refusal of Transportation - any bus operator may refuse to transport any member of the public who violates these rules established by the CVTD. The operator must contact the Dispatcher at the first opportunity to notify the Dispatcher of such refusal. A report shall be prepared as necessary describing the violation and the reasons for refusal of transportation.

Refusals of service - for other reasons listed below:

- ❑ When safety is involved; disruptive conduct and carrying a firearm or other weapon (illegal knife, club).
- ❑ Passengers demonstrate impaired judgment and pose a potential threat too other (i.e., an uncontrollable person under the influence of drugs or alcohol).
- ❑ Need of emergency care and an ambulance is needed. Illness and other extenuating circumstances are considered before.
- ❑ Reason to believe that the rider cannot be loaded or secured into the vehicle without the risk of physical harm to themselves, the driver or others.
- ❑ Rider has violated a transit policy, failed to pay his/her fare, violated a rule, or procedure (i.e., no shows, waiting time).

- ❑ Rider has demonstrated abusive and/or violent behavior toward a driver, other riders or the dispatcher/staff or board members.
- ❑ Rider has used profanity, derogatory racial statements, or verbally abusive language toward a driver, other riders or the dispatcher/staff or board members.
- ❑ Rider request trips at time or to destinations when the transit service is not available.
- ❑ Riders with offensive personal hygiene.
- ❑ Incontinent passengers without self-restraint of natural discharge (i.e., urine) are to be reported to the dispatcher/supervisor for special handling.

The drivers are to call the dispatcher/ supervisor when he or she has refused service, identifies unsafe conditions, passengers who request a ride but is too ill, lacking in stamina, or other unsafe barriers exist.

Denial of Service - In the event of multiple violations of these rules by any passenger who, after two or more warnings concerning such behavior, fails to conform his or her conduct to the requirements of these rules, the CVTD reserves the right to deny service to such person for a period of up to two months. Any such individual shall receive written notice of the CVTD' s intention to impose a period for denial of service, and such people shall have fifteen days in which to request a hearing under the grievance procedure, which follows. Failure to request a hearing within the required time shall authorize the CVTD to impose the temporary denial of service upon written notice to such individual.

Removal of Passengers - in the event any passenger violates these rules and refuses to conform his or her conduct to the requirements of these rules after notification from the operator, the operator may instruct the passenger to leave the bus. The operator shall seek assistance from the Dispatcher in the removal of such passengers. The operator will prepare a report regarding any such incident as required.

Criminal Prosecutions - in the event of any violation of these rules, which also constitutes a violation of state law or local ordinance involving criminal penalties, the CVTD shall assist in the prosecution of such offenses with the appropriate authorities. In the case of emergencies or continuing criminal conduct, law enforcement officers may be called to a bus or transit facility or scene for the arrest and detention of violators or for the issuance of citations. Further, arrangements may be made with appropriate prosecuting attorneys for the CVTD employee witnessing any such violations to execute formal complaints

Incident reports - are tools that staff members, use to document any "out of ordinary" event or to report any information that needs to be communicated. Anything qualifies as an "incident," from a scheduling problem to praising another staff member's performance. Completed incident reports are to be turned into the supervisor with action to be taken, logged, dated and filed.

Procedures - CVTD has established the following procedures to handle no shows, waiting time, and other violations and circumstances:

4. **First violations**, CVTD dispatcher or authorized will give the passenger a verbal warning of CVTD policies and procedures.
5. **Second violation**, CVTD will send a written warning of the violation and the policies and procedures.
6. **Third violation**, CVTD will issue a certified letter referencing the violation and refusal of service action, which states CVTD transportation has been suspended permanently.

Grievance procedure - if you have any problems with CVTD service, please telephones the CVTD office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. The telephone number is 979/732-6281 or 1-800-548-1068.

The following grievance procedures have been adopted by the Colorado Valley Transit, Inc. board to provide due process for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by regulations applicable to participants, beneficiaries, applicants or employees involving service related issues.

STEP ONE - The complainant initiates action for redress by telephone or in person at the CVTD office. The Assistant Director or his/her representative resolves an informal complaint. When the informal complaint procedures are unsuccessful or inappropriate, the complaint is forwarded to Executive Director as a written memo. If the complaint is against the Director, it is given to the Board.

STEP TWO - The Executive Director will review the complaint and provide the complainant with a decision. If further appeal is necessary, the complaint may appeal to the Colorado Valley Transit, Inc. board for final resolution.

Or the party may contact the Texas Department of Transportation District Office(TXDOT), P O Box 1386, 7600 Washington Street, Houston, Texas 77007, 713-802-5395; TXDOT Division, 125 East 11th. Street, Austin, TX. 78701, 512-478-8883; Office of Civil Rights, Box 13006, Austin, TX. 78711, 888-452-4778, etc.

SERVICE STANDARDS & POLICIES

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

GENERAL REPORTING:

LAW SUITS
COMPLAINTS
PENDING APPLICATIONS
CIVIL RIGHT MONITORS
CIVIL RIGHT ASSURANCES
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

SERVICE STANDARDS & POLICIES **TRANSPORTATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

The service standards were adopted along with or transportation policies, with an annual survey of clients to help measure service.

VEHICLE LOAD

The vehicle load is determined by the ratio of the number of seats on a vehicle to the number of passengers to determine overcrowding or the need for additional vehicles.

Level of Service (LOS) checked to see if a route at a particular time is adequate to assure LOS.

VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT

ADA vehicles are assigned to deviated routes with largest seating capacity and amenities according to site demands and cooperation of business.

Types of service are assigned according to passenger needs, i.e. deviated routes, demand response.

Timing of vehicles is driven by passenger needs and availability.

Other factors are handled case by case.

VEHICLE HEADWAY

Currently not applicable.

DISTRIBUTION OF TRANSIT AMENITIES

Major generators, safety factors, and/or business cooperation, along with funding determines the distribution of amenities.

TRANSIT ACCESS

Deviated routes provide service for individuals able to access the transit service up to three blocks. All others are provided demand responsive service.

OTHER

Preventive Maintenance is an ongoing process with documentation on file for all service performed. This documentation includes breakdowns.

SERVICE FEATURES

A description of the service is approved by the Board with regard to service changes, and future service needs.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The transit community informed of service changes by posting and distributing on-board information, local newspapers, churches, employment centers, mail, public speaking, and etc.

MINORITY REPRESENTATION

The transit board consists of a minority representation of the overall client service. The board selects representatives with recommendations from the local community.

MULTILINGUAL FACILITIES

Flyers, signs in buses, are printed in both English and Spanish. Dispatchers and drivers are bilingual to help assist our transit community. When applicable Hispanic staff is assigned to special events, i.e. health fairs, job fairs, etc.

COMPLAINTS

The agency has a form for documenting complaints and/or appeals.

Accessible format - Each vehicle has braille signs to assist with the service.

Training - All employees receive training the following area with annual updates as applicable.

- Safe operation of vehicle
- Accessibility equipment
- Proper treatment of persons with disabilities