

# Hyde County Transit

## Passenger Guide

## **Hyde County Transit Passenger Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Service Statement :**

The mission of Hyde County Transit (HCT) is to provide quality mobility opportunities in a safe, ethical, and financially sound manner.

HCT believes that passengers have certain rights and responsibilities and that they should have full knowledge of those rights and responsibilities.

### **As our riders, you have the right to:**

- A safe and reliable bus ride
- Professional and courteous service
- A clean and comfortable bus
- Accurate information on routes, schedules, fares, and other mobility options
- Report problems with your vehicle operator or route
- Rider-to-rider courtesy as encouraged by the vehicle operator
- Tell us about the quality of our service
- Tell us how we can make your transit system better

### **For your comfort and safety:**

- Have your fare in exact change ready when boarding the bus
- Allow seniors and disabled persons to occupy priority seating
- Please do not occupy more than one seat when others need seating
- Close your strollers and have children seated for their own safety
- Please maintain packages in your seating area
- Refrain from smoking, eating, drinking, or spitting
- Use headphones when playing audio devices at low volume
- Illegal drugs are prohibited. Alcohol consumption is also not permitted on the vehicle.
- All passengers must wear seat belts, unless a physician's statement can be provided to exclude such use. All children must be secured in proper seating requirements in accordance with North Carolina State Law.
- Allow the operator to drive the bus safely by not speaking with the operator while the bus is moving.

### **Description of Services**

- 1) Passengers may utilize public transit services to serve a variety of daily needs such as medical appointments, grocery or other general shopping, go to work, or many other social and recreational needs. HCT transportation schedules are published and mailed to your home every four months. Please call our office if you did not receive one or you need additional copies, and we will promptly mail you one. If you need to schedule transportation, please call HCT by noon the day prior of the requested service. HCT reserves the right to deny transit request made after 12:00pm the day prior of the requested service.
- 2) Transportation Service is provided curb to curb, and will not be provided for passengers from their door to the vehicle. All passengers must arrange for assistance, if needed, to vehicle.
- 3) HCT provides non-emergency transportation only.
- 4) HCT has handicap accessible vehicles available. Please let us know if you need this service when you schedule your transit service.

### **Service and Service Area**

- 1) Our service area includes Hyde, Pitt, Dare, Beaufort, and Tyrrell County. HCT serves the Hyde County area Monday through Friday. Employment transportation services are also available on Saturday and Sunday. Please refer to our service schedules to see when out-of-county trips are available. HCT occasionally schedules trips to Washington, Greenville, and the Outer Banks during the evening hours for your convenience. Please let us know if you are interested in those trips.
- 2) Our Hyde County Service is provided daily Monday – Friday from 7:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M unless stated otherwise in our service calendar.
- 3) Transit Services will be not provided on days of severe inclement weather such as snowy or icy conditions.
- 4) Transit Services will be unavailable on the following Holiday schedule: January 1, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> .

### **Reservations, Scheduling and Cancellations**

- 1) Office hours are 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday through Friday.  
**Transit services can be scheduled during these hours.**
  
- 2) The telephone number for reservations is 926-1637. The hearing impaired may call the Telecommunications Relay Service TDD 1-800-735-2962 or Voice 1-877-735-8200 . If you need to call after hours, passengers may leave a message on the answering service. HCT will get back to you regarding scheduling your trip at the earliest possible time.
  
- 3) HCT requests that passengers be ready at least 20 minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time. In order for HCT services to remain on schedule, the vehicle operator will only allow 3 minutes waiting time for you to **appear** at your place of pick-up.
  
- 4) For the safety of our passengers, HCT may adjust scheduled transit services based on pending weather conditions such as snow storms.
  
- 5) Passengers discharged by a medical facility must call Hyde County Transit prior to the discharged day and time. Passengers are to call by noon the day prior for your return trip home. If a passenger becomes ill during while riding HCT, the vehicle operators will call 911 for an ambulance.
  
- 6) Cash payment for General Public trips must be made upon boarding the vehicle. Please have correct change. Driver will not issue change.

## **Passenger Assistance**

- 1) It is the policy of this agency that passengers unable to access the system on their own be accompanied by an escort. The passenger is responsible for furnishing his or her own escort. An escort must be physically able to provide assistance to the passenger. An escort must be physically able to assist the escorted passenger on and off the vehicle.
- 2) This agency does not transport children unaccompanied under the age of 16 to medical appointments.
- 3) Passengers must provide their own mobility aids (Ex. Walkers, Infant Car Seats)
- 4) This agency only allows service animals on the vehicle.
- 5) Passengers and or escorts must be able to handle all equipment, carry-on bags and shopping bags.
- 6) Passengers scheduled for appointments will not be transported if the following symptoms are evident:
  - Chest pains
  - Shortness of breath
  - Severe nausea
  - Vomiting or diarrhea
  - Abdominal pain
  - Labor pain

If the driver finds the passenger in distress upon arriving at the passenger's home, the driver will notify HCT, and HCT will recommend transport by the Hyde County Emergency Medical Services .
- 7) Drivers will assist passengers in boarding and exiting from the vehicle only.
- 8) For return trips, HCT will pick the passenger up from the same location that the passenger was dropped off at. You will not be picked up from the new location unless prior arrangements have been made.

### **Passenger Conduct and Responsibilities**

Hyde County Transit requests that all passengers conduct themselves with courtesy and consideration to the vehicle operator and other passengers. The HCT Vehicle Operator is responsible for enforcing HCT policies and procedures on HCT vehicles. Passengers should follow instructions from the Vehicle Operator.

HCT reserves the right to refuse service based on violation of our policies and procedures. A passenger's right to transportation can be terminated by the transportation system due to misconduct of the passenger. Disruptive or abusive behavior to other passengers or the driver will not be tolerated.

- 1) No tobacco products are to be used in the vehicle. This includes smoking, chewing, or dipping.
- 2) Passengers are permitted to eat, or drink in vehicles; however, passengers are responsible for taking all items off the vehicle upon their departure. If a passenger leaves trash or exhibits an inability to control the spillage of beverages, the vehicle operator may not allow the passenger to have food or beverages on the vehicle.
- 3) No abusive or foul language. No profanity or vulgarity is allowed while on board the transit vehicle.
- 4) Lack of personal hygiene is offensive to others. Passengers should be clean before boarding the vehicle.
- 5) No horseplay of any kind will be allowed.
- 6) Possessions of alcohol and/or illegal drugs are not allowed. Prior use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs before boarding the vehicle will result in denial of transportation.
- 7) Passengers must secure any carry-on or personal items.

- 8) No weapons (knives or firearms) will be allowed on a system vehicle.
- 9) All passengers must wear seat belts to insure the safety of all individuals in the vehicle. Passengers will be denied transportation services if they choose not to abide by the seat belt policy. In the event that a passenger is unable to wear a seatbelt for medical reasons, the passenger must provide such notice from their physician in order to be excluded from the seat belt policy.
- 10) No inappropriate display of affection or sexual activity to the Vehicle Operator or another passenger.

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

- Passengers having a history of violent or disruptive behavior that may be harmful to other passengers may be refused service or service may be conditional or restrictive.
- Attendants may be required for passengers with mental conditions that may cause them to be disruptive or to accost other passengers.
- Passengers with excessive no-shows as defined in the passenger no-show procedure may be denied service after appropriate notification.
- Passengers who participate in inappropriate behavior on transportation vehicles may be immediately denied service or have service restricted. Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to the prohibited behaviors described in the previous section .

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

Passengers placed on conditional or restrictive service must be given an opportunity for a hearing before an Appeals Committee consisting of the HCT Board Chairman, HCT Board Vice-Chairman, and the Transit System Director. Written and oral testimony will be accepted from any persons wishing to give such testimony, and all relevant records concerning the matter will be made available to

the passengers. A request for an appeal must be filed in writing within 60 days of the notification by HCT to the passenger of the conditional and/or restrictive service decision. The Appeals Committee must review the appeal and issue a decision within 30 days. If a decision on the appeal is not made by the Appeals Committee within 30 days of the completion of the process, the passenger's conditional and/or restrictive status will be lifted until such time as a decision by the Appeals Committee is made.

### **Cancellation Procedure**

Passengers are encouraged to cancel scheduled pick-ups in a timely manner. Cancellations can be made by calling the Hyde County Transit office between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Cancellations should be made by 12:00pm the day prior of scheduled pick-up. Any cancellation received later than 12:00pm the day prior of scheduled pick-up, will be considered a late cancellation and will be noted as such by the dispatcher. The Passenger will be assessed a \$5.00 late cancellation fee payable at the next boarding call. Five late cancellations in a 60-day period will be considered excessive and the passenger will receive written notification of a 30 day suspension of service via the U.S. Postal Service.

### **No-Show Procedure**

Passengers are expected to be present and ready for transportation vehicles upon their arrival. Passengers who cancel their transportation after 5:00pm the day prior or who are not present for scheduled pick-up within five minutes of the arrival of the transportation vehicle are considered no-shows. All no-shows will be noted by dispatch. No-shows will be assessed a \$10.00 charge payable upon the next boarding call. Three no-shows in a 60-day period will be considered excessive and the passenger will receive written notification of a 30 day suspension of service such via the U.S. Postal Service.

### **Service Animal Transportation Policy:**

HCT only allows for the transportation of service animals. At no time will any animal, other than a service animal, be transported in a HCT vehicle. A service animal is defined as any animal described as a guide animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals are allowed in transit vehicles without muzzles. Service animals will be required to remain on the floor and out of the aisle area of the transit vehicle. Passengers utilizing service animals will be responsible for the conduct of the service animals. Service animals that are disruptive and uncontrollable will not be allowed to ride.

### **Passenger Service Complaint Procedure**

Customer satisfaction is a priority for Hyde County Transit. Passenger complaints are a significant tool for improving performance and customer satisfaction.

#### Submitting Complaints

Hyde County Transit staff who encounter persons wishing to make a complaint (either in speaking with them in person or on the telephone) shall provide them with a Complaint Report and the procedure for which the complain will be addressed. Passengers are encouraged to submit written complaints or service suggestions to administrative staff. However, passengers that are unable to submit a written complaint may call the Hyde County Transit office . Under these circumstances, the complainant will be interviewed and the staff person receiving the complaint will convert the complaint to writing. The staff person recording the complaint will sign and date the Hyde County Transit Complaint Form.

#### Complaints:

- 1) Should be in writing (using the HCT complaint form) or complainant may call and have staff convert the complaint in writing.
- 2) Must be signed and dated;
- 3) Must be submitted within 15 calendar days of the date of offense;  
and
- 4) Must be submitted to:

Hyde County Transit  
P.O. Box 205  
Swan Quarter, N.C. 27885

## Complaint Review and Response

1. The Administrative Staff will review and investigate all Complaint Reports received.
2. Administrative Staff will respond to all protests in writing (certified mail), addressing each substantive issue raised in the protest. Response will be made by Administrative Staff within fifteen calendar days after receiving the complaint. A copy of the response will be forwarded to the Municipal Administrator. The written response will advise the Complainant that she/he has the ability to submit a written request for second review of the matter.

## Second Review

In the event the Complainant believes that the situation has not been resolved satisfactorily, she/he may submit a written request for second review of the matter. This written request must be received by the Transportation Director within fifteen calendar days of the date noted on the HCT's response letter. The request for second review must be addressed to Hyde County Transit , P.O. Box 205, Swan Quarter, N.C. 27885

Once received, the Transportation Director will forward the written request to the HCT Board Chairman, who will render a written response to the Complainant. The written response will be sent via certified mail to the Complainant within 15 calendar days after being received by HCT.

## Complaint Procedures Alleging Discrimination

### II. Notice to the Public

#### Hyde County Transit

##### Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI

- ✓ Hyde County Transit operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the Hyde County Transit system.
- ✓ For more information on the **Hyde County Transit** system's civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact 252-926-1637, (TTY 1-800-735-2962); email [hydetransit@lycos.com](mailto:hydetransit@lycos.com) ; or visit the Hyde County Transit facility located at 20968 US Hwy 264, Swan Quarter, NC 27885.
- ✓ A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE Washington, DC, 20590.
- ✓ If information is needed in another language, contact 252-926-1637.  
*Si se necesita informacion en otro idioma de contacto, 252-926-1637.*

Hyde County Transit system's Notice to the Public is posted in the following locations:

- Hyde County Transit Facility
- HCT Passenger Guide
- Agency Website

## **Title VI Complaint Procedure**

Hyde County Transit system's Complaint Procedure is made available at the following locations:

- Hyde County Transit Facility
- HCT Passenger Guide
- Agency Website

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Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin by Hyde County Transit may file a Title VI complaint by completing and submitting the agency's Title VI Complaint Form. Hyde County Transit investigates complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident. Hyde County Transit will process complaints that are complete.

Once the complaint is received, Hyde County Transit will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by our office.

Hyde County Transit has 45 days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, HCT may contact the complainant.

The complainant has 7 business days from the date of the letter to send requested information to the investigator assigned to the case.

If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 7 business days, Hyde County Transit can administratively close the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

After the investigator reviews the complaint, she/he will issue one of two (2) letters to the complainant: a closure letter or a letter of finding (LOF).

- ✓ A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title VI violation and that the case will be closed.
- ✓ A letter of finding (LOF) summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, she/he has 10 days after the date of the letter or the LOF to do so.

A person may also file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration, at FTA Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

## Title VI Complaint Form

<b>Section I:</b>				
Name:				
Address:				
Telephone (Home):			Telephone (Work):	
Electronic Mail Address:				
Accessible Format Requirements?	Large Print		<b>Audio Tape</b>	
	TDD		<b>Other</b>	
<b>Section II:</b>				
Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?			Yes*	No
*If you answered "yes" to this question, go to Section III.				
If not, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are complaining:				
Please explain why you have filed for a third party: _____				
Please confirm that you have obtained the permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party.			Yes	No
<b>Section III:</b>				
I believe the discrimination I experienced was based on (check all that apply):				
<input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Color <input type="checkbox"/> National Origin				
Date of Alleged Discrimination (Month, Day, Year): _____				
Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. Describe all persons who were involved. Include the name and contact information of the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as names and contact information of any witnesses. If more space is needed, please use the back of this form.				
_____				
_____				
_____				
_____				
_____				
<b>Section IV</b>				
Have you previously filed a Title VI complaint with this agency?			Yes	No
<b>Section V</b>				
Have you filed this complaint with any other Federal, State, or local agency, or with any Federal or State court?				

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, check all that apply:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Agency: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Court _____	<input type="checkbox"/> State Agency _____
<input type="checkbox"/> State Court _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Agency _____
Please provide information about a contact person at the agency/court where the complaint was filed.	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Agency:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	
<b>Section VI</b>	
Name of agency complaint is against:	
Contact person:	
Title:	
Telephone number:	

You may attach any written materials or other information that you think is relevant to your complaint.

Signature and date required below

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date

Please submit this form in person at the address below, or mail this form to:

Hyde County Transit  
 Attn: Beverly Paul - Title VI Coordinator  
 PO Box 205  
 20968 US Hwy 264  
 Swan Quarter, N.C. 27885

## Other Information

### Alternative Formats

*“Upon request, this document may be made available in Braille, large print, audiocassette, or electronic form. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write:*

*Hyde County Transit*

*P.O. Box 205*

*Swan Quarter, N.C. 27885*

*Phone Number (voice) 926-1637*

*Fax: 926-0032*

*Email: [hydetransit@lycos.com](mailto:hydetransit@lycos.com)*

*Telecommunications Relay Services Phone number (TDD) 1-800-735-2962*

*Telecommunications Relay Services Phone number (Voice) 1-877-735-8200*

Although material will generally be provided in the requested format, Hyde County Transit reserves the right to provide material in another format if: (1) time does not allow for provision of the requested format, or; (2) the requested format would involve an unreasonable cost compared with providing material in another suitable format.