

PASSENGER HANDBOOK



GROTON COMMUNITY TRANSIT, INC.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Managed by:

**Groton Community Transit, Inc.**  
**205 E 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave**  
**PO Box 693**  
**Groton, SD 57445**  
**Office: 605-397-8661**  
**Fax: 605-397-8661**  
**Email: [gct@nvc.net](mailto:gct@nvc.net)**  
**Dispatch Email: [gct2@nvc.net](mailto:gct2@nvc.net)**

Groton Community Transit is pleased to serve the community of Groton, SD. This service has a set of policies that passengers must follow. Transit policies can and should be used as a guide for decisions that can affect passenger's responsibility.

It is for the benefit of all passengers and long-term survival of the transit system itself that the policies in this booklet are simple to follow, and critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of our system.

All passenger policies will be enforced in a consistent and fair manner. If you feel you have been dealt with unfairly, an appeals process and telephone comment number is also included in this booklet. [A complaint form for ADA, Title VI and general complaints can be found at the GCT office or in any of the vehicles.](#)

## APPEAL PROCESS

No one shall be denied a ride based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, political affiliation, or belief in any other consideration prohibited by law. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in the transit system should contact the GCT office where he or she may complete a complaint form. If you have any questions, please contact the office via phone, email, or mail.

## SERVICE HOURS

GCT regular service hours are as follows:

<b>In town services</b>	<b>Monday through Friday</b> <b>8:00 am – 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Out of town medical services</b>	<b>Monday through Friday</b> <b>7:00 am – 5:00 pm</b>

***Special Occasion Services:*** Hours of service for evenings and weekends may be requested. Transportation will be provided if it falls within the guidelines of service.

**No service will be provided on any holiday unless a special request is granted.**

## SCHEDULING RIDES

24 hour notice is required for all in town transportation and 48 hour notice is required for all medical trips out of town. Transportation schedules will be accommodated with shorter notice if possible, but are not guaranteed. A rider may call or email ([gct2@nvc.net](mailto:gct2@nvc.net)) to schedule a ride. If a rider calls to schedule a ride and there is no answer, leave a message and your call will be given prompt attention. Riders who require a regular pick up schedule (work, therapy, school, etc) may schedule up to 30 days in advance.

## CANCELLING RIDES

Passengers must call the GCT office at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled pick up time. If you do not call in advance, you will be charged full fare as explained in the [No Show Policy](#).

## ARRIVAL TIMES

We try to pick up all passengers at the designated pick-up time. Because of the fluctuation in different passenger pick-ups, we have a 10 minute window before and after designated pick-up times. Riders should be ready to get on the bus/van at the ten minute pre-scheduled time so they are ready when the bus/van gets there.

*Example: If you schedule a 9:00 am pick-up, the bus may arrive as early as 8:50 so you should be prepared to leave at 8:50. However, the bus may be delayed so be prepared to wait until 9:10 for the bus to arrive.*

If you have concerns, contact the dispatch number and contact will be made with the driver as to their arrival status.

Return rides can be scheduled for riders that have set arrival and departure times. (*Example: Special education students that have scheduled start and ending class times.*) If you are not sure of your return trip time, you should call the dispatch (397-8661) as soon as you know your time and your pick-up will be as close to that time as possible.

## FARES

Each passenger is required to pay \$1.00 for each one-way destination. A 22 ride ticket cost is \$20.00 (\$0.91 per ride). If any riders are unable to pay the required fee, arrangements for bus fare can be made by contacting the GCT office. Discounted rates will be reviewed by the GTC Board. An individual who requests assistance with purchase of tickets will need to supply our office with an explanation of financial need.

22 ride punch tickets can be purchased at the GCT office.

Passenger tickets are held by the dispatcher in a file so the rider will have the convenience of leaving their ticket with the transit vehicle if desired.

After hour event trips or special request trips must be pre-paid at transit office or paid to the driver upon leaving for destination.

## SPECIAL EVENT FARES

Special request fares will vary depending upon destination of event. Out-of-town events will pay \$1.00 per mile one way plus each individual rider will pay \$1.00. Driver expenses, such as meals or event admission will be paid by the passengers.

Arrangements for special request trips must be made through the dispatch at least one week in advance. If drivers are available, the request will be honored.

## FARE CHANGES

All fare fees are subject to change if expenses of transit cannot be met due to fuel increases or other increases in costs. We will give advance notice if this should become necessary for the long term success of the community transit program.

## NO SHOW POLICY

Any passenger who is not at their designated pick-up point within 5 minutes of their scheduled pick-up time will be considered a “**no show**”. If you anticipate being late for your scheduled ride call the GCT office and we will alert the driver who can then arrange a later pick-up time.

## PENALTIES

**First Offense:** Passenger pays for trip

**Second Offense:** Passenger pays for trip and will receive a phone call from the transit.

**Third Offense:** Passenger will not be scheduled for any rides until arrangements have been made by the transit office and all fees are current.

## CURB TO CURB SERVICE

GCT provides curb to curb service. However, drivers will follow guidelines meeting ADA requirements for those riders needing assistance.

GCT does not require wheelchair users to transfer to a seat.

## PRIVATE HOMES

Our drivers are instructed not to enter past the first door of a private home. This is to protect both the driver and the passenger.

## BUSINESS, MEDICAL FACILITIES & PUBLIC BUILDINGS

When picking up passengers from a business, medical facility or public building, drivers may enter into the lobby area. Drivers will not go any further than the lobby to drop off or pick up a passenger. Drivers must be able to maintain a “line of sight” of their vehicle. If more assistance is needed, the passenger will need to provide an assistant to accompany them to their destinations. There is no charge for the assistant’s ride.

## APARTMENT BUILDINGS

GCT drivers are will not enter apartment buildings any farther than the front door. The driver must be able to keep their vehicle in a “line of sight.” If assistance is needed beyond this point, it is up to the passenger to provide said assistance.

## WEATHER RELATED EXCEPTIONS

Passengers are responsible for snow removal to make their homes accessible to Transit drivers. Drivers are not allowed to assist passengers through snow and ice. If a passenger schedules service knowing that a path has not been cleared to their home, the trip will be considered a no-show and that policy will apply.

Groton Community Transit Staff will make every effort to provide service whenever scheduled. In the event that extreme weather conditions exist which make travel unsafe, GCT reserves the right to discontinue service until conditions are favorable. If service is temporarily discontinued, all rides, regardless of trip purpose, will be cancelled.

## WINTER RIDING TIPS

1. Keep abreast of weather conditions, which may affect services.
2. If streets are icy, allow additional travel time.
3. Avoid delay by having the correct fare and being on time.
4. Clean footwear of snow and slush so that it doesn't gather on our steps and the floor of the bus, causing danger to yourself or others.
5. Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before leaving your seat and before boarding.
6. Be prepared for sudden stops while riding.
7. At all times, watch your step, wear your seat belt, and wear appropriate winter clothing.

## ESCORTS AND ASSISTANTS

GCT has three (3) handicap vehicles equipped for wheelchair transportation. If the rider is unable to travel without an aid, an escort or assistant is required to travel with the rider. There will be no fare charge for the escort or assistant.

- ) If a passenger is unable to board the bus because of the steps, the passenger may use the wheelchair lift to board the bus.
- ) If passengers riding the transit are a special request group from a live-in facility, an event escort is required.
- ) If a passenger requires oxygen or carries an oxygen tank, the driver is not responsible for client "personal care." Arrangements should be made prior to transportation if help is needed for the passenger.
- ) GCT drivers are not allowed to assist passengers in wheelchairs up or down any steps. Under no circumstances will a driver be allowed to assist a person in a wheelchair up or down stairs. If such a condition exists passengers are responsible for arranging assistance from someone other than the Transit Driver.

## MOBILITY DEVICE SECUREMENT

If a mobility device cannot be secured properly and safely, the device will not be allowed to ride in the transit vehicle. In order to ensure safety for all passengers and for the operator of the vehicle, all mobility devices must be able to be secured properly before a ride is given.

Passengers in wheelchairs are not required to transfer to a seat. The vehicle securement system would be used should the passenger choose to remain in the wheelchair. The driver is under no obligation to

assist a passenger in transferring from a wheelchair to a seat should the passenger be unable to do so on his/her own.

## MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

The Groton Transit provides transportation to and from Aberdeen for medical appointments. The transit delivers the passenger (and assistant if needed) to the appointment site. The driver's phone number is given to the passenger as well as the transit office phone number. The passenger calls the driver when they are finished with their appointments for pick up to return home. If the passenger fails to call the driver and doesn't show up for pick-up the transit is not under any policy to provide transportation back to Groton. The transit will alert the caseworker, if applicable. After 30 minutes passed the expected appointment end time and a call to the rider and GCT office, the driver is then free to return to Groton. The passenger will be responsible for finding another mode of transportation back to Groton. ***The Groton Transit is not under any obligation to make a return trip in to pick up said passenger.***

## SERVICE ANIMALS

GCT allows service animals accompanied by the rider on all vehicles. The service animal must fit in the definition of service animal noted by the ADA.

## GCT REVERSE POLICY – BUS

Transit drivers have been instructed to avoid backing up the bus in all situations. We are trying to avoid possible accidents due to the length and size of the transit vehicle. If a rider requests that we back into a destination drop off point, the transit driver can refuse to accommodate this request.

## CARRY ON ITEMS

Walkers, Oxygen tanks and other medical devices needed for the passenger must be secured properly before driver is allowed to dispatch the vehicle. If needed, ask driver for assistance.

Drivers will assist with up to 5 packages per person. The packages cannot take up more than 1 seat in the vehicle or else reschedule ride for a time that rider can be the only one in the vehicle at that time. We do not transport furniture or larger items. All articles brought onto the transit must be secured and the Groton Transit is not responsible for the articles brought on board.

## SEAT BELT POLICY

All passengers of GCT are required to wear a seat belt. Passengers who refuse to wear a seat belt can be denied service.

If a passenger's wheelchair has a secure seat belt, GCT drivers may request to add additional security for the safety of the rider and others in the vehicle.

## REFUSAL OF SERVICE

GCT reserves the right to refuse service to any passenger who is:

1. Intoxicated
2. Belligerent or rude

3. Poses a safety or health threat to themselves or others
4. Unreasonable personal hygiene
5. The GCT will refuse service if a rider is to be under anesthesia at their appointment.

**Smoking is NOT permitted in any transit vehicle.**

**Food and beverages are NOT permitted in any transit vehicle.**

## PROPER AND ADEQUATE CLOTHING

Passengers and care providers are responsible for ensuring that passengers are properly dressed for their ride. Drivers will not assist passengers with their clothing. This includes: proper coats, hats, gloves, and footwear. Passengers who are not properly dressed for the weather conditions may be refused service.

## SEVERE WEATHER

Severe weather can affect transit bus service. The following service reductions may occur at any time hazardous road conditions exist:

1. Time pick-up intervals could vary.
2. Pick-ups may be cancelled.
3. Bus services on less traveled streets, especially those not plowed or sanded may be cancelled.
4. NO alley travel will be allowed.
5. During cases of severe weather changes, all passengers will be taken home immediately.

**Riders should monitor local radio stations for reports and information regarding bus service, weather related cancellations, or call the GCT office if the weather is questionable.**

## Complaint Process

Should any passenger wish to file a complaint, there are forms located at the Groton Community Transit. Please contact a dispatcher to fill out a form. The complaint forms are also available at our website at <http://www.grotonsd.gov/transit.html>. Each complaint will be dealt with on a case by case basis.