

# Palace Transit

300 W 1<sup>st</sup>  
Mitchell, SD 57301  
Phone: 605-995-8440  
Fax: 605-995-8439

# Palace Transit Express

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Mitchell, SD 57301  
605-999-8440

August 2014

**This transit agency is committed to providing non-discriminatory service.**

To request more information or to file a discrimination complaint, contact this transit agency or the South Dakota Department of Transportation at (605) 773-3540.

## **INTENT OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK**

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express of Mitchell is pleased to serve the City of Mitchell and the surrounding trade area with public transit service. This service has a set of policies that passengers must follow.

This handbook provides the policies pertaining to passenger responsibilities for our service. Please note that the policies are not new ones.

It is for the benefit of all passengers and the long-term survival of the transit system itself that policies regarding passenger responsibilities are adhered to. The policies in the handbook are simple to follow, and also critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of our system.

All passengers' policies will be enforced in a consistent, fair manner. If you feel you have been dealt with unfairly, an appeals process and telephone comment number is also included in this booklet.

Trained bus operators are available to assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicles used in the service. Following our guidelines, your trip can be pleasant, relaxing and trouble-free.

### **Minimal assistance includes:**

- ✦ The operator will come to the curb of a residence or pick up location.
- ✦ The operator will attempt to notify passenger of arrival by sounding horn.
- ✦ The operator will assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicle.
- ✦ The operator will deliver passenger to the curb of his/her destination.

### **Minimal assistance DOES NOT include:**

- ✦ Assistance getting in or out of wheelchair.
- ✦ Assistance in getting ready for the trip.
- ✦ Assisting passengers in wheelchairs up or down ramps.
- ✦ Assisting passengers up and/or down ramps at residence or destination.
- ✦ Assistance in carrying personal belongings or purchases.
- ✦ Going into facility to look for a passenger.
- ✦ Assistance opening doors at residence or destination.

## **A Few Basic Rules**

Rules for riding Palace Transit:

1. Have exact fare upon boarding the bus.
2. Have your money, token or check ready before boarding the bus. If you don't have the fare, you don't ride.
3. All passengers are required to wear seatbelts. **DO NOT REMOVE SEATBELT UNTIL THE BUS HAS MADE A COMPLETE STOP AT YOUR DESTINATION.**
4. Smoking, chewing tobacco, food, gum, beverages, radios and disruptive behavior are prohibited.
5. Beverages are not allowed on the bus unless in a sealable container. Fast Food restaurant cups or cans are not allowed.
6. Pets are allowed only if in a pet carrier (excluding service animals).
7. Stay properly seated while on the bus.
8. Profane or indecent language will NOT be tolerated.
9. Do not put your feet on the seats or back of seats.
10. Do not lie down on the seats.
11. Aisle must be kept clear of all loose objects at all times.
12. Law prohibits firearms, knives and any other weapons on buses.
13. All passengers riding in wheelchairs must allow the driver to properly secure the wheelchair per the manufacturer's recommendations.
14. Keep noise level to a minimum. The bus operator needs to be able to hear traffic & emergency vehicles.
15. Do not leave trash on floor or between seats.

**SERVICE HOURS**

Hours of service for Palace Transit & Palace Transit Express are as follows:

<b>Palace Transit</b> ~ Monday thru Friday	7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
<b>Palace Transit Express</b> ~ Monday thru Friday	5:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Saturday	5:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Sunday	7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

No service will be provided on the following holidays:

New Year’s Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

**SCHEDULING RIDES**

**Request Service:**

All rides must be scheduled with the Palace Transit office, not with the bus operators. Rides must be scheduled with the dispatcher in the transit office Monday thru Friday by 4:00 pm at least one day prior to your appointment (if you need a ride on Monday you must call by 4 pm on Friday). We will do our best to accommodate everyone but priority will go to those who have called in advance. To reach Palace Transit Express during their operating hours call 999-8440.

**Regularly scheduled rides:**

Passengers who require regular transportation service (work, therapy, school, etc.) may schedule up to 90 days in advance.

**Canceling rides:**

To cancel a ride, passengers must call the Palace Transit office at least one hour before scheduled pickup time. If you do not call 1 hour in advance, you will be charged full fare as explained in the no-show policy (see page 7).

***Please Note: If you need to schedule a ride or make changes to an existing ride, you must contact dispatch. Drivers cannot take ride information.***

### Scheduling trips:

Palace Transit makes every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. Due to the nature of service, arrival times will vary. A 10-minute window has been established for everyone's benefit.

- ✦ All passengers should anticipate an early arrival of up to 10 minutes or the possibility of a 10-minute delay.

Example: If you schedule a 9:30 a.m. pick-up, the bus may arrive as early as 9:20 a.m. so you should be prepared to leave at 9:20 a.m. The bus may be delayed so be prepared to wait until 9:40 a.m. for the bus arrival.

- ✦ All bus operators will wait only three (3) minutes past the scheduled pick-up time before leaving without the passenger. Any longer can cause unnecessary delays. Bus Operators will not go into facilities or homes to get a passenger.
- ✦ In the event the appointment is completed prior to the scheduled return time, passengers are encouraged to notify the Palace Transit office that they are available for early return. Every effort will be made to pick up the passenger as soon as possible but if the demand for service does not allow, passengers will be picked up at their scheduled return time.
- ✦ If you are planning on making more than one stop, those arrangements must be made with the transit office prior to your pick up. **If prior arrangements are not made, the extra trips will not be made.**
- ✦ Same day call-ins, including unscheduled request for return trip, will not be accepted (exceptions are contracts and wheelchairs). You must have a scheduled pick-up to be returned to a location. Although Palace Transit cannot assure any specific pick-up time unless scheduled, the client shall be held financially responsible for worked in trips missed just as they would be for any other no show unless they notify dispatcher prior to the bus arrival.
- ✦ Passengers may remain onboard a Palace Transit bus for up to one (1) hour.
- ✦ Palace Transit is public transportation and you may have to share rides; therefore, you may not be taken directly to and from your destination.

## **CURB TO CURB SERVICE**

Palace Transit's service provides curb-to-curb service. The following policies explain the meaning and intent of curb to curb.

### ***Private Homes:***

- Palace Transit bus operators will not enter private homes for any reason.***
- Bus operators will assist passengers on and off the bus only.***
- Bus Operators will assist in carrying packages and/or groceries off the bus and no further. Bus Operators are not allowed to go into apartment buildings or residential homes. If you have a cart for groceries you must have it outside and ready. Bus operators are not allowed to go into residence to get the grocery cart.***
- Palace Transit will not be held responsible for items that are damaged during transport.***

### ***Business/Medical Facilities/Public Building:***

- Palace Transit bus operators may assist passengers into and from the inside door. Bus operators **will not** assist passengers past this point.***
- It is the individuals' personal care attendant or care provider's responsibility to ensure that passengers are waiting inside the door for their ride.***
- Bus operators will not enter nursing homes, medical facilities, shopping centers or businesses in an attempt to find passengers. Passengers must be waiting at a designated pick-up point at least ten-minutes before their pick-up time or the no-show policy will apply.***

## **MEDICAID RECIPIENTS**

Palace Transit is a Medicaid provider. Dispatchers will need to verify that travel expenses will be covered by Medicaid before the ride is scheduled.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

Palace Transit is not an ambulance service. If you require emergency medical attention, please call 911.

If a medical emergency occurs while Palace Transit is transporting a passenger, the driver will contact dispatch and medical personnel will be notified.

If you have a medical condition you feel Palace Transit should be aware of, let dispatch know prior to scheduling services.

## **NO-SHOW POLICY**

- Cancellations need to be made at least 30 minutes before scheduled pick up time. Please be sure to cancel pickup times well in advance so other passenger needs can be met. Any passenger who is not at their designated pick-up point within three (3) minutes after their scheduled ride time will be considered a “No Show” and the bus operator will continue with the daily schedule. Passengers will pay the full fare for any no show before they will be allowed to ride the bus again. The no show fare must be paid in order to ride the bus again. If you anticipate being late for your scheduled pick-up, please notify our office at 995-8440.


### **No show penalties:**

- Passengers will pay the full fare for any no show before they will be allowed to ride the bus again.

## **TRANSIT FARES**

All passengers are required to pay one fare for each one-way ride. Fares may be paid with a token or cash. If a passenger, 60 & under, does not have a token or cash fare, service will not be provided, unless other arrangements have been made in the office. If an individual, over the age of 60, is unable to afford transportation service, arrangements for bus fares can be made at the Palace Transit office at 300 West 1<sup>st</sup> or call 995-8440. The Palace Transit committee will review arrangements.

\* **One-way \$2.00**

 **Wait** - \$1.00 Dropped off and the bus operator waits 3 minutes.

**Bus Operators are not to wait longer than 3 minutes as this causes a schedule delay for others.**

## **EXPRESS FARES**

\* **Cash or token -One-way \$3.00**

\* **In the event of a no show - ride will be billed at \$5.00 each way**


Any rides beyond Palace Transit boundaries will be charged mileage of \$2.50 per mile plus regular fare. Boundaries are as follows: East of Tiger Street, West of Dick’s Body Shop, South of Wal-Mart and North of 23<sup>rd</sup> St.

### **Fares:**

Payment is required at time of service unless previous arrangements have been made with the office. Tokens and cash are accepted. If paying cash, **correct change is required.**

### **Tokens:**

Tokens may be purchased at:

 Palace Transit  
300 West 1<sup>st</sup>  
Mitchell, SD 57301

## **REFUSING SERVICE**

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express reserves the right to refuse service to any passenger who is:

- 🚩 Intoxicated
- 🚩 Disruptive
- 🚩 Belligerent/rude
- 🚩 Poses a safety threat or health threat to themselves or others
- 🚩 Unreasonable personal hygiene

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express also has in place a behavior policy. The steps are as follows:

- 🚩 First offense: A warning letter will be sent.
- 🚩 Second offense: A second letter will be sent which will result in rides being discontinued for one week.
- 🚩 Third offense: A third and final letter will be sent and rides will be discontinued indefinitely.

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express has adopted as part of their behavior policy the following gray words. If a passenger is heard using any of these words that passenger will receive a warning letter as stated in the passenger handbook. In addition to commonly known inappropriate language, the following words or derivations of these words are inappropriate if directed toward another person or situation.

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 🚩 Dick         | 🚩 Queer               |
| 🚩 Dildo        | 🚩 Retard              |
| 🚩 Dumbass      | 🚩 Skank               |
| 🚩 Faggot       | 🚩 Slut                |
| 🚩 Gay          | 🚩 Sucks               |
| 🚩 Homo         | 🚩 Wussy               |
| 🚩 Lesbian, lez | 🚩 Flipping People off |
| 🚩 Pussy        | 🚩 Fart                |

## **SEATBELT POLICY:**

All passengers of Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express are required to wear a seatbelt. Passengers who refuse to wear a seat belt will be denied service (unless a written notice has been filed with the Palace Transit office). If a carseat is required, it is the passenger's responsibility to make sure that the carseat is properly secured, it is also to be double checked by the bus operator.

If a wheelchair passenger does not have a lap belt, a belt buddy will be used to help keep passenger properly seated in the wheelchair.

In accordance with City of Mitchell policy all Palace Transit Bus Operators are required to wear seatbelts.

## **PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT/AIDE:**

For medical trips, a personal care attendant/aide who is directly involved in the mobility assistance of their attendee will be allowed to ride free of charge (non medical trips will require attendant to pay for their bus fare). Aides must be picked up and dropped off at the same address as the client and need to be placed on the schedule when the trip is requested.

## **COMPANIONS:**

Any other person riding with passenger will be considered a companion and will be required to pay full fare.



## **WEATHER**

Passengers are responsible for snow removal to make their homes accessible to the Palace Transit bus operators. Bus operators are not allowed to assist passengers through snow or across ice.

If a passenger schedules service knowing that a path has not been cleared to their homes, the trip will be considered a no show and that policy will apply.

### **Discontinuing Service Due to Weather Conditions:**

Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express bus operators will make every effort to provide service whenever scheduled. In the event extreme weather conditions exist which makes travel unsafe, Palace Transit/Palace Transit Express reserves the right to discontinue service until conditions are favorable. We do not consider routine medical appointments or hair appointments a necessary ride based on weather. If service is temporarily discontinued, all rides, regardless of trip purpose, will be cancelled. Listen to local radio stations: KMIT, KORN, KOOL 98 & or Q107 for any cancellations.

### **Winter riding tips:**

- ❖ Keep abreast of weather conditions which may affect Palace Transit service.
- ❖ If streets are icy, allow additional travel time.
- ❖ Avoid delays by being on time and having correct fare ready.
- ❖ Clean footwear of snow and slush before boarding so it does not gather on the steps and floor of bus, causing danger to others.
- ❖ Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before leaving your seat and before boarding.
- ❖ Be prepared for sudden stops while riding the bus.
- ❖ At all times, watch your step, wear your seatbelt and wear appropriate winter clothing.

### **Severe Weather:**

Severe snow and rainstorms can affect Palace Transit bus service. The following service reductions may occur any time hazardous road conditions exist:

- ❖ Time intervals between buses will increase.
- ❖ Some routes may be shortened or canceled.
- ❖ Bus service on less traveled streets – especially those not plowed or sanded may be canceled.
- ❖ Absolutely NO alley travel allowed.
- ❖ In case of severe weather, all passengers will be taken home immediately.

## **PROPER AND ADEQUATE CLOTHING**

Passengers and/or care providers are responsible for ensuring that passengers are properly dressed for their ride. Bus operators will not assist passengers with their clothing. This includes proper coats, hats, gloves, and/or footwear.

Passengers who are not adequately dressed for the weather conditions will be refused service.

### **SERVICE FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS**

Service will not be provided from vehicle up to and from specialized equipment (ex.ramps, etc.) for wheelchair users.

### **ASSISTANCE FOR PASSENGERS IN WHEELCHAIR UP/DOWN STEPS**

Palace Transit bus operators are not allowed to assist passengers in wheelchairs up or down any steps or ramp.

Under no circumstances will a bus operator be allowed to assist a person in a wheelchair up or down any steps or ramp. If such a condition exists, passengers are responsible for arranging assistance from someone other than the Palace Transit bus operator.

### **SPECIAL SERVICES OFFERED**

Palace Transit vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts. If the rider is unable to complete travel by his or herself an attendant/escort will be required to assist the rider.

\*\*(Palace Transit will not furnish wheelchairs.)\*\*

- ✦ If unable to board a bus because of steps, passenger may use wheelchair lift to board bus, only if lift is equipped with handrails.

### **PALACE TRANSIT BACKING POLICY**

No backing of Palace Transit vehicles is permitted. The backing policy was adopted on 1-1-93 by the Palace Transit Board.

Due to this policy, drivers will not pull in residential driveways or put themselves in a position which requires backing up.

### **FOOD AND DRINKS**

There is **NO** eating or drinking allowed on Palace Transit vehicles. Drinks can be transported but must remain closed with a tightly secured lid.

## **ASSISTING PASSENGERS WHO ARE OXYGEN DEPENDENT**

*It is the policy of Palace Transit to make transportation resources available to passengers who are dependent upon portable oxygen, consistent with their needs and care planning.*

These reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate these passengers as much as practical and consistent with good safety practices.

All drivers and others who assist in transportation will be aware of the features and problems associated with portable oxygen. Specific procedures will be available as necessary.

The following general procedures apply:

- All oxygen containers must be secured during transportation. Containers, which are normally secured to a wheelchair, may stay in those securements.
- Containers, which are attached to mobility aids such as wheeled walker, must be separately secured to the vehicle.
- The test for adequate securement will be that the tank would not reasonably be expected to break free from the securements in the event of a slow or moderate speed crash. This allows for the use of metal racks or heavy-duty rubber straps, as long as the device is in good repair and adequate to the stated task.
- Unless special approval is received, only one portable tank may be carried per oxygen dependent passenger. Requests for special approval should be made to the Transportation Supervisor.

**APPEAL PROCESS**

If a passenger is in disagreement with any penalty resulting from the enforcement of the policies, a written request for appeal may be submitted to:

Palace Transit  
300 W 1<sup>st</sup>  
Mitchell, SD 57301

Appeals may be presented in writing or in person. If you prefer a hearing, please indicate this in your written request for appeal. Also indicate if special accommodations or requirements are needed.

Palace Transit will provide service during the appeal process.

**TELEPHONE INFORMATION**

Scheduling information .....605-995-8440  
Comments, Compliments and/or Complaints.....605-995-8440

**This transit agency is committed to providing non-discriminatory service.**

To request more information or to file a discrimination complaint, contact this transit agency or the South Dakota Department of Transportation at (605) 773-3574

# Questionnaire

**Please fill out the survey and return it to Palace Transit. The survey may be photocopied.**

1. Was the vehicle clean?     Yes     No
  
2. Was your ride too long?     Yes     No
  
3. Was your bus within the 10 minute window of service?     Yes     No
  
4. Was your driver courteous?     Yes     No
  
5. For which of the following do you most often use Palace Transit?  
 Work     School     Recreation     Medical     Shopping  
 Social Recreation     Other
  
6. Would you like information on any of the following?  
 Retired Senior Volunteer Program  
 Senior Meals  
 James Valley Community Center
  
7. Palace Transit is always striving to improve service. Please give us any suggestions that would make the service better for you.  
  

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Mail survey to:  
Palace Transit – Survey  
300 W 1<sup>st</sup>  
Mitchell, SD 57301