



# **Transportation Manual**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Duet's mission is to support, encourage and empower people to lead lives of learning and fulfillment. In order to accomplish this, Duet Transportation Services provides transportation to individuals to support them to access waiver services, community activities, and resources as specified in the individual's Individual Support Plan. This service is not intended to replace formal or informal transportation options, such as the use of natural supports.

## **GOALS OF PASSENGER HANDBOOK**

This service has a set of policies and procedures that passengers are required to follow. It is to the benefit of all passengers that all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are followed.

All policies will be enforced in a consistent and fair manner. If passengers perceive that they have been treated unfairly, they have the option of filing a complaint (refer to Duet Policy Regarding Complaints #520 and Procedures for Complaint #521).

## **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Duet complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal equal opportunity laws. Duet supports a diverse population of individuals with varying ages, physical challenges, economic status, and ethnic backgrounds. ENHSA/Duet shall ensure that no person shall be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, undertaken by ENHSA/Duet solely based on race, color, religion, sex, national original, age, disability, or family status. Title VI complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies of Duet may be directed to the DUET Director at (402) 444-6500 extension 1111.

## **SERVICE AREA/DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE/SERVICE TYPES**

Duet Transportation Service provides the following transportation services to individuals in Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Hall, Sarpy, and Washington counties.

Transportation services include:

- Transportation to and from day services
- Transportation to and from community activities
- Transportation to and from medical appointments



## **DAYS AND HOURS OF SERVICES**

Transportation services are available from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Transportation is not available on the following holidays: Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday, and Memorial Day.

## **FEE SCHEDULE**

State funding for transportation to day services is provided to some individuals. For individuals or other provider agencies that are requesting private pay transportation, rates will be based on the state reimbursement rate.

## **SCHEDULING RIDES**

Transportation is provided by fixed pre-scheduled routes. For any schedule changes please allow up to 7 business days to complete the request. New transportation request must be directed to the Duet Transportation Director (402) 444-6500 extension 1114. Accommodating new request will be subject to availability.

## **CURB-TO-CURB SERVICE**

Duet provides "curb-to-curb" service only. The following guidelines further define this service.

1. Private Homes:
  - Passengers must enter and depart the vehicle at the designated pick-up and drop-off points.
  - Drivers may assist passengers to and from the vehicle.

- Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.
  - Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs.
2. Business/Medical Facilities/Public Buildings:
- Drivers may assist passengers into and from the inside door. Due to extreme temperatures in the entryways, drivers may assist passengers through the second entry door when necessary. Drivers will not assist passengers further into the building.
  - When picking up passengers from a business or medical facility, drivers may go through the first door. Drivers will not go past this point.
  - It is the individual, family, and/or staff responsibility to ensure that passengers are waiting inside the door for their ride.
  - Drivers will not enter nursing homes, medical facilities, shopping centers or businesses to locate passengers.
  - Passengers must be waiting at the designated pickup point at least 15 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time.

## CANCELLATIONS

Passengers are encouraged to cancel scheduled pick-ups in a timely manner. Cancellations can be made by contacting the Transportation office between 5:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at (402) 444-6500 extension 1114 to cancel. Cancellations should be made 24 hours in advance or as early as possible.



## **PASSENGER READINESS**

Passengers should be prepared for vehicles to arrive 15 minutes before or after your scheduled pick-up time. Schedule rides accordingly to arrive at your destination for appointments.

## **TRANSPORTATION SERVICE ANIMALS & ACCOMODATION OF OTHER ANIMALS**

ENHSA/Duet allows service animals to accompany passengers under the Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 49 C.F.R Section 37.3). Revised regulations define a “service animal” as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders, or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items. The task(s) performed by the service animal must be directly related to the passenger’s disability. Under the ADA, “comfort,” “therapy” or “emotional support animals” do not meet the definition of a service animal. Animals other than service animals as described above are allowed to ride the transit vehicle only in a secured pet travel carrier. For more information about the rules and regulations regarding service animals, to the ADA's website at [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANTS**

Personal care attendants are persons who are directly involved in supporting the individual during transport. Personal care attendants may be individuals who are hired by the person, Duet staff, or a van aide who provides support to the person.

Reasonable modifications/accommodations shall be made to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities. A Reasonable Modification Complaint Process and form are available upon request.



## **INTERRUPTION OR TERMINATION OF SERVICE**

In some circumstances where there are health/safety concerns that pose an impediment to safe transport, the Transportation

Director will request a team meeting to address health/safety concerns and to develop a plan to eliminate any barriers to safely transport the person or others. Planning may include implementing medical or behavior supports to assist the person during transportation. While the plan is being developed, services may be interrupted when transportation may pose a danger to the person or others.

In addition, Duet may also opt to terminate transportation services when an individual moves and transportation is not available at the new address. In situations where barriers to transportation cannot be resolved, Duet will invoke 60-day notice of termination, per state regulations and Duet Policy and Procedures #211.

## **PASSENGER SAFETY AND SECURITY**

- All passengers must wear an approved safety device while riding in vehicles. Passengers using mobility devices will be required to have their mobility device properly secured.
- A passenger who cannot enter the vehicle using the stairs or ramp, but who does not use a wheelchair, will be allowed to enter the vehicle using a lift.
- Drivers have the discretion to assign seats and determine wheelchair placement when necessary for the efficiency and/or safety of the passengers.
- The driver may recommend that a passenger transfer from their mobility device into a vehicle seat. In this instance, the passenger has the final decision as to whether a transfer is appropriate.
- State laws apply toward child passengers. Car seats are not provided.
- In the case where the use of seat belt poses a health risk, a physician's order will be obtained, and the individual and/or legal representative will complete the Instructions and Release Regarding Seat Belt Usage During Duet-Provided Transportation (Duet-15).

## **GENERAL PASSENGER RULES**

The rules listed below are not all-inclusive, but are considered a guide for courteous and safe passenger behavior:

- Riders should stay seated until the vehicle stops and will wait until the vehicle comes to a complete stop before boarding or disembarking.
- No roller skates, roller blades, ice skates, etc., are to be worn in the vehicle.
- Passengers must be clothed and wear protective footwear.
- While waiting, riders shall stay off the road, and not walk along the side, in front of, or behind the vehicle.
- Passengers will remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.
- Riders will engage in courteous behavior toward others and will refrain from threats, aggression, foul language, horseplay, or any disruptive behavior towards self or others.



## **GENERAL PASSENGER RULES**

*(Continued)*

- Devices such as radios or iPod's can be used with headphones.
- Passengers carrying or using alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances will not be permitted in Duet vehicles.
- Riders shall keep hands, head or any other body part inside of the vehicle and within their seated area at all times.
- Riders shall obey the driver willingly and report any problems to the driver properly.
- Riders shall assist in keeping the vehicle clean by using sanitary practices. Any offensive odors to others or any type of unsanitary practices are to be avoided.
- Eating or drinking beverages in the vehicle is not permitted.
- Use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited.
- Lighting matches, lighters, or any other type of flammable material is not permitted in the vehicle.
- Any explosive devices or weapons are not permitted.

## CHILD RIDER POLICY

Duet has established rules, roles, and responsibilities in the transportation of children under the age of 16. Therefore, the following rules must be followed.

- All children will follow transportation rules, regulations and policies. Violation of rules by the child or parent/guardian may lead to an interruption in service.

No child under the age of four (4) is permitted to ride alone. Exceptions to this policy include:

- Agency to agency transportation, such as from the YMCA to a school.
- Transportation where the parent/guardian provides supervision for the child at both the pick-up and destination of the child's trip.
- All children under the age of six (6) must wear an approved child safety restraint. Parents or guardians must provide the approved restraint. If the parent/guardian does not have an approved child safety restraint device, DUET will provide one.



## CHILD RIDER POLICY

*(Continued)*

- Children under sixteen (16) will be transported only to the destination scheduled by the parent or guardian. Children are not allowed to change scheduled rides.
- Due to safety considerations children under sixteen (16) will be transported within the city limits of their trip origin, unless accompanied by an adult.
- Parent/guardian must notify Duet of the child's age at the time of the transportation request.
- If an adult is not at the destination location to accept the child (< 16 years of age), the child will not be left at the drop off location but taken to the police station and parents notified.



## PACKAGES AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Passengers shall limit carry-on packages to no more than the equivalent of five (5) brown paper grocery sacks or ten plastic bags per person. Oversized packages will not be permitted. No one package shall weigh more than 20 lbs.

Oxygen tanks must be portable and secured with a seat belt or tank holder, so it cannot fall or roll. Duet is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

## SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

Driveways should be cleared of snow and ice so that driveways are safe and are accessible to vehicles. If extreme weather conditions make travel unsafe, services will be discontinued until conditions are more favorable.

For transportation cancellations due to inclement weather, Duet follows the cancellation policy of Omaha Public Schools. If Omaha Public Schools (OPS) are closed for a day, then Duet day services in Omaha and Bellevue will be closed. If closure is needed on a day when OPS is not in session, then a notice will be made on the local television stations. The announcement will state, "Duet Day Services Closed." The announcement will be made as early as possible in the morning.



## SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

*(Continued)*

For transportation cancellations due to inclement weather in Dodge/Washington counties, the D/W Area Director will notify transportation drivers and passengers of cancellation.

### Winter Riding Tips:

- Be aware of weather conditions which may affect transportation.
- Allow extra time to reach your destination.
- Be prepared for sudden stops.
- Wear appropriate winter clothing.

## **COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

As a recipient of State and Federal funds administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads, Duet will abide by the eligibility guidelines and service priorities as stipulated by all applicable laws, rules and regulations. The process for submitting a Title VI complaint is outlined in the Nondiscrimination section of this handbook.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

From time to time in the delivery of services, problems or concerns may arise regarding the services provided. The focus of these procedures is to establish a fair and orderly process for responding to concerns. The goal of these procedures is for all complaints to have resolution that is agreeable to all parties. These procedures are available to the person served, his/her parents, legal representative, and the other ISP team members.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

*(Continued)*

It is Duet's desire to see that all concerns are handled in a timely fashion. The parties involved are encouraged to present the issues in a fair and non-confrontational manner. It is the expectation of the agency for staff members, in responding to the concerns, to act in a professional manner that is conducive to the understanding and potential resolution of the concerns. There are two steps available to the concerned parties:

- Verbal (Informal) - For most concerns, the person is encouraged to contact the facility or program supervisor. It is the expectation of the agency that the supervisor will resolve these concerns, if it is possible, and will do so in a timely fashion. If the response is not satisfactory, the concerned party is free to contact the next level of supervision.
- Written (Formal) - When the informal process does not resolve the concern, a written option is available. The concerned party should identify the nature of the problem, the efforts that have been put forth to resolve the problems, and a statement as to what they see as the satisfactory resolution to the concerns identified. This written statement should then be presented to the responsible Area/Division Director. The Area/Division Director will solicit the documentation and information necessary to fairly consider the issues and will provide a written response to the concerned party within one week. A copy of the response will be forwarded to the Duet Director. In extenuating circumstances, the Duet Director may extend the time frame to allow for further fact finding. If the concerned party is still dissatisfied with the response, they may submit their concerns to the Duet Director who will follow the same timelines and guidelines as set forth for the Area/Division Directors. All decisions made by the Duet Director shall be final.

These procedures, as set forth here, are not intended to take the place of the State due process hearing as identified in 205 NAC 2-005.