



LAC LA BICHE COUNTY POLICY

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| TITLE: LAC LA BICHE COUNTY PARATRANSIT SERVICE | POLICY NO. CM-71-009 |
| RESOLUTION: 11.764 | EFFECTIVE DATE: JANUARY 12, 2010 |
| LEAD ROLE: COMMUNITY SERVICES | NEXT REVIEW DATE: JANUARY 15, 2013 |
| SPECIAL NOTES/CROSS REFERENCE: | AMENDMENT DATE: DECEMBER 20, 2011 |

POLICY STATEMENT:

Lac La Biche County believes that a good quality of life should be available to all of its citizens. A paratransit system is a necessary component of a good quality of life by assisting handicapped and elderly people in travelling to local economic centres to access medical care, shopping and social activities.

PROCEDURE:

1. Trips shall occur within Lac La Biche County. Administration may consider use of the bus outside County boundaries if the request proves to be efficient use of the service and does not disrupt regular service (i.e., seniors' adventure tours).
2. All bookings for the Paratransit System shall be done through the County dispatch, or the designated service provider. Details of the hours of service and booking procedures are detailed in the Paratransit Procedures schedule.
3. The service may be provided to any citizen with a disability or citizens over the age of 60 that reside within the boundaries of Lac La Biche County. Program clientele may be accompanied by an aide, if required. The service to clients and client responsibilities are outlined in the Paratransit Procedures schedule.
4. If an individual is found to present disabilities or behaviours which exceed the capabilities of staff, and may present a risk to staff or other program users, the individual may be denied access to the service.
5. A fee structure for the service will be established with consideration for cases of financial barriers and reviewed on a regular basis. The fees will be assessed on a yearly basis. The fee structure is detailed in the Paratransit Procedures schedule.

6. All drivers for this service must have a Class 2 or Class 4 license and be authorized to drive by the County Manager or designate. Drivers will follow the County Occupational Health and Safety manual for safe vehicle operation.
7. Drivers are responsible for bus operations, cleanliness, daily pre- and post-travel inspections and general maintenance of the vehicle.
8. The booking clerk responsibilities are detailed in the Paratransit Procedures schedule.
9. The Paratransit Procedures schedule is a living document which may be edited or updated by Administration as required to meet the evolving needs of clientele and staff.

"Original Signed"
Chief Administrative Officer

January 29, 2012
Date

"Original Signed"
Mayor

February 6, 2012
Date

LAC LA BICHE COUNTY PROCEDURE SCHEDULE: PARATRANSIT POLICY

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HOURS OF SERVICE, BOOKING PROCEDURES

Days and Hours of Service

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|-----------------|--|
| Office Hours: | Monday to Friday 8:30-12:00, 1:00–4:30 |
| Holiday Hours: | Closed for Statutory Holidays |
| Service Hours: | Driver’s hours are 8:30 a.m.-noon; 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. |
| Special Hours: | Exceptions may be made based on extenuating circumstances |
| Severe Weather: | All service will continue unless the following occurs <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A severe storm occurs that would endanger the employee and/or passengers- The temperature is -32 Celsius in rural areas or -37 in town- School buses are cancelled |

Booking, Scheduling and Cancellations

Call in time: Bookings should be made by 3 p.m. the day before the service is required. Trip requests received on short notice will be honoured on the basis of space- and time-availability. Paratransit operators will not call doctors, etc. to confirm passengers’ appointments.

Booking Trips / Cancellations or Requesting Changes:

- ◆ Phone 780-623-6763 Please leave a message on the dispatcher’s line, if requested.
- ◆ Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m.-noon: 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., except Statutory holidays
- ◆ For next working day service, phone before 3 p.m.
- ◆ Clients must be registered with the Paratransit System before the first pick up can take place.
- ◆ When booking for a pick up, clients must provide their address, telephone, medical/dental or agency appointments that the client is attending and notify the service of any mobility aids that will be brought by the client. Information about the mobility aids must include the size of the wheelchair.
- ◆ Actual pick-up times will be adjusted based on Paratransit needs, based on the commitment to honour passengers’ schedule needs in a cost-efficient fashion, and using the priority listing as follows:
 - Medical/Dental appointments
 - Service agency appointments
 - Shopping activities
 - Social activities
- ◆ Ready for pick-up and standard wait times are as follows:
 - The driver may arrive up to five minutes early and the passenger must be ready to go.
 - Upon arriving at the pick-up location, the driver will wait a maximum of five minutes at the location before moving on.
 - In the event of a “no show” the passenger will be charged a one-way fare.
 - If you are delayed, phone 780-623-6763 or 780-520-0417 (driver’s cell phone) as soon as possible prior to your pick-up time as the driver will only wait five minutes (or ask someone to phone for you, i.e. nurse, receptionist, etc.)
 - In the event of a “no show”, the driver will phone the dispatch prior to departing to ask if there has been further information provided.

- In the case of a delay (e.g. a medical appointment is running late) Paratransit will do its best to accommodate the client, taking other clients' schedule commitments into consideration.
- ◆ **The County reserves the right to determine the pick-up schedule and to make changes to the schedule as necessary.**

CLIENT SERVICE AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Lac La Biche County Paratransit Service is a door-to-door service. This includes:

- ◆ Passengers requiring assistance will be helped from their front door to the bus on pick up and return. At destination drop-off, passengers will be assisted from the bus to inside the front door or main floor of the building, if assistance is required.
- ◆ Drivers will exercise discretion while assisting passengers so as not to give the impression of over-familiarity.
- ◆ Drivers must always make sure that the tie downs and safety belts are securely in place. Seat belts must be fastened unless there is a letter of exception from a doctor.
- ◆ Drivers will not be required to take wheelchairs up or down more than one step. Assisting with the wheel chair up or down a step will only be done provided conditions make it safe to do so.
- ◆ If an attendant is travelling with the passenger, there is no charge for the attendant unless s/he is picked up and/or dropped off at a different address.
- ◆ Animals are not permitted on the transit vehicle except for assistance dogs trained specifically to work with people who have disabilities.
- ◆ Drivers will ensure the safety of passengers when delivering them to their destination in extreme weather conditions. If the driver is concerned that the passenger has requested to be dropped off in an unsafe situation, they are to notify dispatch.
- ◆ All incidents with passengers, however minor they may seem, will be reported to the dispatch.
- ◆ If the time and schedule permits, the driver may allow up to 2 extra stops within a round trip before going back home, at no additional charge. This is an added value to the Paratransit service, and will be implemented at the driver's discretion. These extra stops may not be provided if the schedule is too full or if it is too close to the end of the day's service time. No additional stops will be scheduled after 3:30 p.m.
- ◆ The last half-hour of a day's service is for providing final destination service (4:00-4:30).

Policy on Escorts or Attendants:

The difference between the *Attendant* and *Escort* is the need of assistance, and is defined further below.

Escort: is a social companion travelling with the client passenger (i.e., visiting family member or friend). An *escort* pays full price and is dependent on space availability.

Attendant: travels with the client to ensure safe travel. Attendants are expected to deal with:

- ◆ Loading and unloading of the person with a disability
- ◆ Behaviour of the person with a disability
- ◆ Medical and hygienic issues of the person with a disability

Attendants travel free of charge

A passenger may be required to have an attendant if:

- ◆ Seizures or other medical conditions are uncontrolled
- ◆ Behaviour is a problem
- ◆ The passenger has limited personal accessibility (i.e., cannot open doors on their own)
- ◆ The passenger is not able to negotiate on their own from the front door of their home or destination.

Loading/Unloading:

Drivers will park the bus in an appropriate location after taking into account safety, proximity to the passenger door, security of the vehicle (and occupants) and other safety aspects. Please note that backing the bus up to the passenger's residence door is not permitted.

Drivers may assist with packages or luggage up to 10 kg. This assistance will be determined at the discretion of the attending driver.

Clients must advise the Paratransit System of all mobility aids that are to be taken and the size of wheelchairs being used. The Paratransit System reserves the right to decline service if the mobility device cannot be safely secured.

Standing on the bus while the vehicle is moving is not permitted.

Passenger Conduct and Responsibilities:

There are circumstances under which passengers may be denied service. As appropriate, these circumstances may address issues that include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Passengers must use courtesy and have consideration for others.
- ◆ Passengers shall respect the driver's authority (i.e., the driver is in charge, responsible for on-vehicle behaviour, and all instructions from the driver are to be followed by passengers, attendants and escorts).
- ◆ Passengers must use seatbelts and any other required safety devices.
- ◆ Passengers shall remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop at the location of their drop-off. Passengers who attempt to de-board at unsafe locations may be denied future service.
- ◆ Passengers shall dress appropriately for weather conditions (i.e. warm and layered clothing for cold weather).
- ◆ Passengers shall comply with the fare policy.
- ◆ Passengers shall secure all carry-on items and personal belongings.
- ◆ Passengers shall not request an unsafe location to board/de-board the bus. If the driver determines the boarding/de-boarding location to be unsafe, the passenger will be dropped at the nearest safe location.
- ◆ Passengers are responsible to maintain driveway/walks (e.g. snow clearing, attending to disrepair).
- ◆ Inappropriate on-vehicle behaviour may include: distracting the driver, eating, drinking, using tobacco products, foul language, lack of personal hygiene, bothering other passengers or driver, horseplay, fighting, carrying weapons, possessing illegal drugs, having open containers of alcohol on the vehicle, intoxication, threatening or harassing other passengers or the driver.
- ◆ Other inappropriate behaviour includes threats and harassment of dispatch or other office staff.
- ◆ When Lac La Biche County staff determines that a passenger poses a risk to themselves, the driver, other passengers, dispatch or office staff, the passenger will be denied access to the service.

The transit provider has the right to refuse service based on violation of one or more of the Passenger Code of Conduct and Responsibilities stated above.

Passenger Comment and Complaint Procedures

Paratransit has a commitment to respond to passenger perceptions and complaints.

The phone number and address for passenger commendations or complaints is:

Phone: 780-623-7979

Fax: 780-623-3510

P.O. Box 1679

Lac La Biche, AB T0A 2C0

Clients should submit major complaints in writing with the date of the incident, their name and phone number, as well as the particulars of the incident. Once a complaint is received, it will be kept strictly confidential. An investigation will be undertaken immediately and all necessary steps taken to resolve the problem. Paratransit will attempt to respond in writing to written complaints within 2 weeks.

Paratransit System Responsibilities:

- ◆ Paratransit is responsible for providing clean, on-time, reliable, safe and efficient service.
- ◆ Paratransit is responsible for providing equally respectful and courteous treatment to all passengers.
- ◆ Paratransit is not responsible for passengers' items left on its vehicles.
- ◆ Paratransit is responsible for abiding by the policies detailed in other sections of the service policy.
- ◆ Paratransit has insurance coverage meeting or exceeding legally mandated minimums.
- ◆ Paratransit abides by all applicable federal, provincial and local regulations.
- ◆ Paratransit maintains a workplace free of alcohol, drugs, harassment and discrimination.
- ◆ Paratransit is committed to keeping all vehicles and equipment properly maintained and in safe working order.

Safety

- ◆ Paratransit is committed to the safe operation of vehicles, including the safe boarding and de-boarding of passengers.
- ◆ Everyone must remain seated, with the seatbelt on (unless with a doctor's written exception), with wheelchair securement requirements adhered to.
- ◆ All drivers have either a class 2 driver's license or a class 4 driver's license, "S" endorsement, regular first aid upgrades, training and a police check.
- ◆ Wheelchair tie-downs, safety restraints and child restraint systems are to CSA standards.
- ◆ There are secure locations for passengers' packages and belongings.
- ◆ There are first aid kits, fire extinguishers, a shovel, blankets for emergencies and operational cell phone or dispatch radio.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If the driver does not feel safe on the road, they may contact dispatch and cancel the trip.

If there is an accident or on-vehicle emergency:

- ◆ Passengers shall follow the driver's instructions.
- ◆ Passengers should try to remain calm.
- ◆ Passengers should evacuate the vehicle in an orderly fashion only if warranted. In most situations, the safest place to remain is sitting in the bus with the seatbelt secured.
- ◆ If there is a need of an evacuation, passengers and the driver shall stay off the roadway in a safe location until further notified.
- ◆ Passengers shall not smoke inside or within five metres of the vehicle.
- ◆ The driver will call for emergency response if required. If the driver is incapacitated, a passenger should make the call, using either a personal cell phone, the driver's cell phone or the bus radio.

It is the responsibility of passengers to notify the driver if they or another passenger is ill, injured or in distress while on the vehicle.

DEFINITION OF URBAN/RURAL PERIMETERS AND PAYMENT FOR SERVICE

Registered Paratransit users will be invoiced on a monthly basis, for trips taken during the month.

See **Policy CS-10-012** Schedule of Fees and Charges

A perimeter to define the urban service area was mapped using a measure of approximately five kilometres from the intersection of 101 Avenue and 101 Street in the hamlet of Lac La Biche. The geography for this area is outlined below.

Urban Area: includes the following communities which surround the hamlet of Lac La Biche: Lac La Biche West, Sentinel Industrial Park (to include the Mission View Funeral Home), the hamlet of Beaver Lake, Holowachuk Estates, the community of Sunset Bay, and all points between the hamlet of Lac La Biche and these communities. Service will extend south to 66444 – Highway 36 (approximately five kilometres distance from the intersection of 101 Street and 101 Avenue), with an exception for travel to and from the community of Bonesville proper.

Rural Area: includes all points beyond the above named area to the geographical boundaries of Lac La Biche County.

DISPATCH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The dispatching clerk has a key role in ensuring that a quality Paratransit System is operating in Lac La Biche County. Dispatch will be responsible for:

- ◆ Managing the information coming from the public, including Paratransit Client Registrations, service bookings, and complaint/compliment forms.
- ◆ Entering client information and service bookings into the Paratransit Database.
- ◆ Calculating trip times and coordinating the schedule accordingly when booking clients for services. The dispatch clerk must allow enough time for the driver to get to the pickup point and allow time for the driver to get back from a rural drop off. For example, book a pickup from Owl River for no earlier than an 8:30 a.m. and no later than 3:45 p.m. pickup for a client's ride home to Owl River.
- ◆ Producing daily run schedules for the Transit Driver and other reports as requested.
- ◆ Producing data for monthly invoices to Paratransit clients, based on information provided by the Transit Driver.