



MUNICIPALITY OF
GREENSTONE

SPECIALIZED TRANSIT POLICY MANUAL

POLICY STATEMENT

The Municipality of Greenstone's Specialized Transit Policy is a door-to-door pre-booked shared ride accessible public transit service for seniors (55+) in Greenstone or a person with a disability.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair and equitable process by which specialized transit is offered to ensure a more accessible Municipality. Specialized transit is a shared ride, door-to-door, pre-booked service where registrants can book trips in advance, and are assigned on a first come, first serve basis. The Municipality of Greenstone operates an in-town transportation program in Geraldton and Longlac and a Medical Transportation program for eligible riders within the Municipality of Greenstone to in-town and out-of-town medical appointments within limitations as per the policy. Transportation of seniors to seniors' activities will also be provided within the limits as per the policy.

DEFINITIONS

"Companion" - In relation to a senior or a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the registrant to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to programs, services, or facilities

"Disability" - As per the Ontario Human Rights Code, disability means:

(a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d) a mental disorder, or

(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

"Municipal Driver and/or Driver" - A employee of the Municipality who drives the Specialized Transit Vehicle

"Medical Appointment" - a scheduled appointment with a regulated health professional

"Municipality" - The Corporation of the Municipality of Greenstone

“Registrant/Client/Applicant” - A Municipality of Greenstone Senior (55+) or a person with a disability

“Regulated Health Professional” - includes the following:

- i. A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
- ii. A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario
- iii. A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario
- iv. A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
- v. A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario
- vi. A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- vii. A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- viii. A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario
- ix. A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

“Service Provider” - The contracted external company that provides the operations, maintenance of the Municipality of Greenstone’s rural transportation para-transit buses, including scheduling, driving, vehicle maintenance, and customer service.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Municipality of Greenstone is responsible for service and contract management, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Administering registrations, including ensuring eligibility criteria is satisfied;
- Administering/monitoring the Service Provider’s performance, if applicable, with respect to all terms and conditions of the contract, including but not limited to, those issues dealing with service hours, vehicle utilization (dedicated and non-dedicated), vehicle maintenance, client service and system reporting;
- Administering a system for the processing of all related Client contacts, i.e. complaints, commendations, inquiries, etc.;
- Reporting on service performance;
- Completing all financial reporting, including preparation of annual budget and budget performance reports;
- Making recommendations respecting fare levels and the nature and extent of service to be provided;
- Keeping all personal information of registrants confidential in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFFIPA).

The Municipality of Greenstone may contract a service provider to operate vehicles and the booking system. The service provider shall also be required to provide operational data for reporting purposes.

PROCEDURES

Eligibility Guidelines

The program will provide transportation services to the grocery store, pharmacy, post office, etc. and transportation to in-town medical appointments to eligible Longlac residents on Mondays between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

The program will provide transportation services to the grocery store, pharmacy, post office, etc. and transportation to in-town medical appointments to eligible Geraldton residents on Fridays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

The program will provide transportation for seniors to senior's activities within their community if there is no ridership to out-of-town or in-town medical appointments; however, there would not be a guarantee for those seniors wanting to attend activities at seniors' centres. The hours of service would be Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Geraldton and Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Longlac.

The program will provide out-of-town medical transportation to eligible residents Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for appointments booked between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Bookings are done by calling, during business hours, the Community Services Administrative Assistant, Kathleen Emmans at (807) 854-1100 ext. 2010 or emailing kathleen.emmans@greenstone.ca

The scheduling of transportation will be reviewed monthly and available times will be adjusted accordingly.

Eligible residents of the Municipality of Greenstone must be senior 55 years of age or older; or

Residents of the Municipality of Greenstone with a disability may be eligible for specialized transit. Disabilities may be permanent and/or temporary and are those identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code. Qualification is not based on the registrant's income or age.

There are two categories of eligibility for which the applicant can apply for:

- Permanent - A person with a permanent/chronic disability
- Temporary - A person with a temporary disability who requires access for a defined time period

Eligible medical transportation trips are only for an appointment with a regulated health professional.

Eligible medical transportation trips are same day service, on a first come, first service basis with no guarantee for availability. At least 48 hours must be given for booking of transportation trips. To better accommodate out-of-town medical appointment time requirements, residents may be required to be picked up at a central location.

Registrations

Submit completed registrations including any related documentation to:

Community Services Administrative Assistant
Municipality of Greenstone
Box 70
Geraldton, ON P0T 1M0

Or via email to: kathleen.emmans@greenstone.ca

All incomplete registrations will be returned to the applicant and will not be considered until deemed complete. Eligibility will be determined within 14 calendar days of receipt of the complete registration form. If services are required earlier than 14 days due to an emergency, please contact the Community Services Administrative Assistant at (807) 854-1100 ext. 2010. No fee will be charged for registering for Specialized Transit.

Upon the request of the registrant, the Municipality of Greenstone will make available all registration forms and eligibility information in accessible formats.

Registration Form

The registrant or designate must fill out the Specialized Transit Registration Form.

Supporting Documentation is **only to be completed if under 55 years of age in order to determine eligibility to use service.**

Registrant must provide supporting documentation that can include one of the following:

- Proof of CPP Disability Pension
- Proof of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Proof of Personal Accessibility Parking Permit
- Proof of Access 2 Card (an Easter Seals Canada Program)
- Proof that registrant cannot obtain a driver's license for medical reasons
- Statement from a Developmental Services Agency regarding use of services
- Statement from Health Care Professional or Client Care Coordinator regarding use of services

Failure to completely fill out the registration form may delay the registration process.

Registrations only need to be submitted one time; however, if any updates need to be made clients are asked to contact the Community Services Administrative Assistant.

Travelling with a Dependent

Dependents will be allowed to travel with a person with a disability, who is the parent or guardian of the dependent if appropriate child restraint securement systems and equipment are available, if required.

Service Animals

Certified service animals that are needed to assist registrants will be accommodated. Riders are requested to advise the Community Services Administrative Assistant that a service animal will be accompanying them at the time of booking to ensure accommodation. Riders may be required to provide service animal certification upon request. Please ensure that you have this documentation with you when you travel on the specialized transit. Animals who pose a health or safety risk will not be allowed to travel.

Trip Cancellation

Given the high demand for the service, it is critical for registrants to call and cancel any trips they do not require. Registrants are encouraged to cancel a trip as soon as they are aware it will not be required. Cancellation is done by telephone (807) 854-1100 ext. 2010 or emailing the Community Services Administrative Assistant at kathleen.emmans@greenstone.ca.

Code of Conduct

This specialized transit service is a pre-booked, shared ride transportation service. Accordingly, all registrants and companions are expected to conduct themselves in a manner respectful of other passengers, the driver, and the safe delivery of service. Incidences of conduct or behaviour that is contrary to this will be brought to the attention of the Director of Community Services who will be responsible for the investigation of the incident and for taking the appropriate action which may result in the suspension from the service.

Service Area

The service area is defined as the area within the Municipality of Greenstone with out-of-town medical trips travelling to the City of Thunder Bay or similar distance. The Municipality reserves the right to require a pick-up at a set location such as Longlac or Geraldton.

The service area for in-town medical transportation and in-transportation is defined as the Ward of Geraldton and the Ward of Longlac for eligible residents.

SERVICE GUIDELINES

General Guidelines

The driver will knock or buzz when they arrive at a residence unless otherwise requested by the client. Clients are encouraged to board the vehicle as soon as possible once it has arrived so that the service can be as efficient and flexible as possible.

The service provider is allowed to arrive at a pick-up point up to 15 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time and up to 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

Waiting time: If a service delay exceeding 30 minutes occurs, the driver and/or the Community Services Administrative Assistant will call all affected clients to inform them of the delay. If a client does not wish to wait and makes other arrangements for transportation, they are asked to call and inform the Community Services Administrative Assistant.

Leaving Pick-Up Point: When a client is not at the designated pick-up area, the driver shall not leave a pick-up point prior to 10 minutes past the scheduled pick-up time unless the client has boarded.

No Shows

After two no shows, the client will be sent a warning letter from the Director of Community Services, that if they no show a third time, they will no longer be eligible for specialized transit services.

Clients with Scooters

Clients using a 3-wheel scooter with or without guide wheels are required to transfer to regular transit vehicle seats during transit. In the case where a client is unable to do so unassisted, the client must be accompanied by a companion to assist. Specialized transit drivers will not assist with the transfer. Clients using a 4-wheel scooter have the option to transfer to regular transit vehicle seats during transit as long as it is physically possible for the client to do so without assistance from the driver.

Wheelchairs and Other Forms of Equipment

Service will be denied to any client for the following safety reasons:

- Any wheelchair or similar type vehicle which, in the opinion of the service provider, cannot be accommodated safely on the ramp or in the vehicle;
- Any wheelchair or similar type vehicle that cannot be completely controlled by the client
- Any wheelchair or similar type vehicle which, in the opinion of the service provider, is in poor condition, e.g. flat tires.
- Mobility scooters larger than 0.76m (30 inches) wide or 1.23m (48 inches) long.

Fares

Fares for specialized transit service shall be charged in accordance with the Fees & Charges By-Law.

In-town trips fares can be paid with an exact amount to the driver.

In-town trip pre-paid cards (10 round trips) can also be purchased by contacting the Community Services Administrative Assistant or at the Longlac Ward Office or Municipal Administration Office.

Eligible riders to out-of-town medical appointments, seeking medical specialist services or procedures at a Ministry funded health care facility as per Northern Health Travel Grant Guidelines, are also permitted to submit the signed Northern Travel Grant Application to the Municipality of Greenstone for third party reimbursement. If riders are denied Northern Health Travel Grant reimbursement, the full fee will be expected to be paid in full.

Entitlement to Rate Reduction

The Director of Community Services is authorized and directed to allow a 10% fee relief for eligible low-income persons provided that the following criteria is met:

1. The client is a senior (55+) or has a disability; and
2. The client annually completes a Specialized Transit Registration Form; and
3. The client annually shows proof of Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP); and
4. The client is not eligible for the Northern Health Travel Grant Program.

Contact

Kathleen Emmans
Community Services Administrative Assistant
(807) 854-1100 ext. 2010
kathleen.emmans@greenstone.ca

Or visit the Municipal website www.greenstone.ca

The Specialized Transit Program will run as a pilot project for one-year (April 2024 - April 2025), after which time Council will determine if the program is viable.