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FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

VAN TRAN

RIDERS

HANDBOOK

Scheduling & Dispatcher Phone: 459-1010
Van Tran Operational Supervisor: 459-1324

Fairbanks North Star Borough
Transportation Department
3175 Peger Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709-5499

Max C. Lyon, Jr., Transportation Director

Phone: 459-1002 Fax: 459-1004

Effective January 1998

OUR PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE YOU WITH TRANSPORTATION

WHY WE HAVE VAN TRAN SERVICE

The Fairbanks North Star Borough has been operating the Metropolitan Area Commuter Service (MACS) since 1977. This is the Borough's fixed bus route system. In 1985 the Borough began Van Tran service for the elderly and disabled. When the federal American With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) was passed, it required all communities with a fixed bus route system to provide comparable paratransit service for those who cannot (because of their disabilities) use the fixed route service. Van Tran then became the Borough's paratransit service to meet the requirements of the ADA and provide door to door service for its patrons.

Both MACS and Van Tran vehicles are wheelchair accessible and require anyone riding in a wheelchair to use a seat belt and have their wheelchair secured with tie down straps. The MACS buses have priority seating for senior and disabled citizens, we encourage riders to use the regular MACS system whenever possible.

ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for Van Tran service a person must meet one of the following criteria:

1. A person who because of their disability is unable to use the MACS Transit fixed route bus service.
2. A person who is at least 60 years of age.
3. People with temporary disabilities may be eligible for Van Tran services for the duration of the disability.

Visitors to Fairbanks are eligible to use Van Tran services with an ADA paratransit identification card from another city. However, if the person does not have a ADA paratransit identification card, they may ride Van Tran for 21 days without going through the application process under the terms of presumptive eligibility.

Information about Van Tran is available in large print, Braille or on audio cassette. Contact the Van Tran Operational Supervisor at 459-1324 and request the materials in the format you need.

SERVICE AREAS

Comparable paratransit service is prioritized according to the following eligibility categories:

- A People with disabilities living within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the fixed bus route.
- B People with disabilities that live beyond $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the bus route.
- C People over 60 years of age.

By law (ADA) people in category “A” receive the highest priority. All “A” rides must begin and end within the “A” service area. Any rides beginning or ending outside the “A” service area are considered “B” rides. **People in categories “B” and “C” ride on a space and time availability basis.**

HOW TO APPLY FOR SERVICE

Applications are available by either calling the Van Tran Dispatch at 459-1010 to have an application mailed to you or you may stop by the Transit Park at 501 Cushman to pick up an application.

Applications are also available at the FNSB Transportation Department Administration office at 3175 Peger Road or by calling 459-1002.

Applications will be processed in the order they are received. Completion of the process is anticipated to take 21 days. To avoid needless delays in processing please do the following:

1. Answer all questions completely.
2. Include an accurate mailing address and phone number so you can be contacted with further instructions.
3. Make sure to include your doctors information (name, address and phone number).
4. Be sure to sign the release form and the application.

Please feel free to call and check on the status of your eligibility with the Van Tran Operational Supervisor at 459-1324.

As soon as the application is submitted you may start scheduling rides and using Van Tran while the application is being processed. Please read this booklet before scheduling your first ride, it will help you understand the policies and procedures for using Van Tran.

After the application is approved you will be notified by mail where and how to get your ADA identification card (no charge for the card). If you need a ride to pick up your card let the scheduler know and there will be no charge for the ride there and back.

If the application is denied you will receive a letter stating why your application was denied. You may appeal the denial notification within five (5) days of notification date. Send appeals to:

Max C. Lyon, Jr., Transportation Director
F.N.S.B. Transportation Department
3175 Peger Rd.
Fairbanks, AK 99709-5499

Use of Van Tran services will continue until a final decision has been made on the appeal by the Transportation Director or the Transportation Advisory Commission. (See Appeal Process pages 9-10)

OPERATION DAYS & HOURS

	<u>OPEN/ FIRST PICK-UP</u>		<u>LAST DROP-OFF/ CLOSE</u>	
<u>MON.-FRI.</u>	6:30 A.M.	7:00 A.M.	8:45 P.M.	9:00 P.M.
<u>SATURDAY</u>	10:00 A.M.	10:15 A.M.	5:30 P.M.	6:00 P.M.
<u>SUNDAY</u>	9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	1:30 P.M.	2:00 P.M.

There is an answering machine on after hours to schedule rides or to leave cancellations or messages. On Sundays there is no dispatcher on duty. However, the Sunday driver will check the answering machine for cancellations or messages.

HOLIDAYS

Van Tran operates 7 days a week. Except the following holidays:

New Years Day

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

Van Tran may operate a limited schedule on holidays providing more than one request for service has been made.

FARES

VAN TRAN FARES

Per Ride (one way)	2.00
Personnel Care Attendant or Caregiver when accompanied by eligible rider.	Free

VAN TRAN FARES

Van Tran Pass	36.00
Personnel Care Attendant or Caregiver when accompanied by eligible rider.	Free

MACS FARES

Regular Fare	1.50
Senior Fare	.75
Grade K-12	.75
Disabled	.75
Tokens pkg. Of 5	5.00
Children under the age of 5 ride free	

MACS PASSES

Senior or Disabled Pass	18.00
Grade K-12 Pass	18.00
Adult Pass	36.00
Day Pass From Driver	3.00

All monthly passes are good from the first day of the month to the last day of the month. Van Tran passes may be purchased with multiple months on one pass.

Van Tran Passes may be used on MACS, but MACS passes may NOT be used for Van Tran.

Charter service is available on both MACS and Van Tran. Please call for current prices.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

Van Tran provides door to door service. This means that when the van pulls up to your location the driver will assist you on and off the van from your first entry way door to the drop off location's first entry way door. Curb-to-curb service is given if requested. The driver of Van Tran will still assist you on and off the van with curb-to-curb service but not escort you to your door. If you require more assistance then you need to have a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or caregiver (someone to assist you). Van Tran does not provide PCAs or caregivers.

HOW TO SCHEDULE A RIDE

TO SCHEDULE YOUR RIDES CALL 459-1010 DURING

THE FOLLOWING RIDE RESERVATION HOURS

Monday through Friday	8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	Answering Machine

Van Tran offers two types of rides. They are demand rides and subscription service.

DEMAND RIDES

A demand ride is when you wish to go to any location within our service area. This could be to the store, doctor's office, the movies, post office or for any purpose. No priority is given for trip purposes. Van Tran service can be used for any reason. However, there are some restrictions for trip purposes for subscription service.

Rides must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance of the requested ride time but you may schedule up to 14 days in advance. To help us help you have your ride request planned out before you call the dispatcher. Have the following information ready:

1. Your name.
2. Your first pick up address and destination address (including street names, numbers and building numbers).
3. The time of your appointment or the time you wish to be there.
4. The time you need to return (a new address if different from where you were dropped off).
5. The date of ride.
6. Will a personal care attendant be traveling with you or a guest?
7. Are you ambulatory or wheelchair rider, do you use any other aid you may need assistance with?

When requesting a ride, if the exact time you wish to ride is not available, the dispatcher may have to work with you to fit your trip in the schedule. You may

have to be scheduled up to one hour before your requested time (longer for North Pole). You will have the option of accepting that time or changing your requested time. Some rides will take longer than a direct trip so that we may provide more rides to others sharing the vehicle.

STAND BY REQUESTS

When a ride cannot be fit into a regular schedule or a request is made for same day travel the ride is then placed on a stand-by list. The ride request will be monitored for availability in the schedule. As space and time become available, the Van Tran dispatcher will call when the request can be scheduled. A Van Tran driver will be dispatched for the pick up only if the trip is verbally confirmed.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

Subscription service is when a rider travels to the same place at the same time one or more times a week. This service allows riders to take regular trips without telephoning to schedule or confirm each trip.

The ADA provisions on subscription service states that subscription service must not exceed half of the trips provided at any time, unless all non-subscription requests can be met. Requests for subscription service can be limited to specific trip purposes. Waiting lists, limits on the number of trips, and other forms of capacity constraints are permissible for subscription service.

Subscription service is available for medical (dialysis, physical therapy), education or training, or employment rides. Social and shopping trips are not eligible for subscription service and pick up and drop off times may be negotiated.

Due to the demand for and the limited availability of subscription service, numerous cancellations or no-shows may result in a suspension or outright loss of the subscription for that rider.

If a rider qualifies for the subscription service and no subscription service is available, they will be placed on a waiting list. Meanwhile we will try our best to give you the ride you need under demand ride service. As soon as subscription space is available these requests are added to the subscription schedule and the riders are notified.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Van Tran may arrive 15 minutes before or after a scheduled pick up time. It is the rider's responsibility to keep track of the schedule times for his/her scheduled rides and to be ready to board the vehicle any time within the 30 minute arrival window.

EXAMPLE: Your scheduled ride time is 3:00 p.m.. The driver may pick you up anytime between 2:45 p.m. and 3:15 p.m.

Drivers are tightly scheduled to accommodate as many patrons as possible therefore you should be ready to leave upon the drivers arrival.

Drivers may not be able to wait or come back if the rider is not ready.

If the vehicle is more than 15 minutes late, the dispatcher will try to notify the rider. If you are not notified and the vehicle is late please call the dispatcher to check on the rides status. The dispatcher should be able to give you an approximate arrival time for the vehicle. Things happen to delay a schedule such as traffic, weather, and riders.

RIDERS RESPONSIBILITIES

Write down every scheduled trip and check it daily

Be ready to board the vehicle when it arrives

Cancel trips early, so others can use the service

Keep Van Tran informed of any address, phone, or physical status, etc. changes.

CANCELLATIONS

A cancellation is when a rider cancels or changes a ride with less than 24 hours notice. To avoid being penalized for too many cancellations make sure you write down all your scheduled trips as a reminder when you are supposed to travel.

It is very important to cancel unwanted rides to allow others to use this time and not waste a trip. Someone on standby can use this spot only if you call in and give the dispatcher enough time to schedule another rider.

NO SHOWS

A No Show is when you are not at your designated pick up point or refuse a scheduled ride when the van arrives.

If you have a “No Show”, all of your other trips for that day are automatically canceled unless you immediately notify the dispatcher by calling 459-1010.

SUSPENSION POLICY

This suspension policy is designed to free up more opportunities for others to ride by imposing penalties on riders who repeatedly accumulate too many cancellations or no shows.

YOUR RIGHTS TO RIDE VAN TRAN MAY BE SUSPENDED FOR ONE MONTH IF YOU ACCUMULATE:

6 CANCELLATIONS IN A 6 MONTH PERIOD OR;

3 NO SHOWS IN A 6 MONTH PERIOD OR;

A COMBINATION OF 6 CANCELLATIONS AND NO SHOWS IN A 6 MONTH PERIOD.

YOUR RIDES MAY BE SUSPENDED FOR SIX (6) MONTHS IF YOU RECEIVE A SECOND SUSPENSION IN A 12 MONTH PERIOD.

If you are a subscription rider and receive a suspension, you will lose your subscription rides and your name will be placed on the bottom of the subscription waiting list. After your suspension period is up, you may request demand rides, but the rides will no longer be automatically scheduled and dispatched. Your subscription service will be reinstated only when your name works back up through the waiting list and your times again become available.

DENIED SERVICE POLICY

Occasionally it may become necessary to deny someone Van Tran service. Such reasons could be (but not limited to):

1. A person's disability may not meet our eligibility criteria.
2. A person may no longer reside in the service area.
3. Road maintenance prevents access for our van to your location.
4. Physical barriers at your address prevent the driver from safely moving you from your entry door to the van.
5. Displaying conduct or behavior that is unacceptable while using Van Tran services.
6. By not using a PCA or caregiver when warranted for your safety and convenience.
7. Failure to follow Van Tran rules and policy.

The amount of time you will be denied Van Tran service will be determined on a case by case basis.

APPEAL PROCESS

If your rights to ride on Van Tran are suspended or if you believe you have been improperly denied service, you have the right to appeal these decisions.

All appeals must be in writing and are made to the Fairbanks North Star Borough Transportation Director. Appeals must be received within five (5) business days after the date of your notification.

You may fax your appeal to 459-1004, or you may deliver or mail your appeal to:

Max C. Lyon, Jr., Transportation Director
FNSB Transportation Department
3175 Peger Rd
Fairbanks, AK 99709-5499

Your appeal must contain:

- A. Your name, address, phone or contact number.
- B. Date of suspension or denied service.
- C. Reason for suspension or denied service.

D. Your defense (or reasons) why you feel you should not be suspended or denied service.

A decision will be made by the Transportation Director within ten (10) business days after receipt of your appeal. The decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to you at the address provided in your appeal.

If you are not satisfied with the Transportation Director's decision you may appeal to the FNSB Transportation Advisory Commission. This request must be received by the Transportation Department within five (5) business days after service of the Transportation Director's decision. If no timely appeal of the Director's decision is filed, the decision will become effective on the sixth (6) day after service of the decision.

The Transportation Advisory Commission will schedule a hearing within thirty (30) days of the date of the appeal. Evidence or testimony may be presented at the hearing by the appellant, a representative(s) for the appellant, in person, or in writing.

The rider will be notified in writing within ten (10) business days of the Transportation Advisory Commission's decision.

You may continue to use Van Tran service while this appeal is pending before the Transportation Advisory Commission.

The penalty, if imposed, will become effective and enforceable ten (10) days after service of the Transportation Advisory Commission's final decision, unless stayed by order of court or agreement of the parties. If you wish to appeal the decision of the Transportation Advisory Commission you file the appeal in superior court within 30 days of the date the Commission's decision is mailed or otherwise distributed to you.

CHILDREN

Children requesting Van Tran service go through the same eligibility application process as adults. If a child obtains a Van Tran pass, an adult may travel with the child as a guest or personal care attendant, whichever is appropriate for the child. Personal care attendants ride with the ADA rider without charge. The ADA eligible child pays the same fare as any other ADA rider.

Van Tran eligible riders may have children accompany them as guests. Riders traveling with children as guests must notify the dispatcher when scheduling a ride. A guest must pay the regular fare. Young children riding Van Tran must follow the State of Alaska seat belt law, which requires an approved child safety device (car seat) for children under four years of age. Van Tran has toddler car seats available upon request. You must let the dispatcher know when scheduling if a car seat is needed. If you have a new born infant you will need to provide your own car seat carrier. The car seats Van Tran has are for the older toddlers.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough School District is responsible for providing transportation to and from public school (Refer to page 6). Van Tran transportation may be appropriate if Van Tran eligible children are involved in before or after school activities. Call the Van Tran Operational Supervisor to check on individual circumstances.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS AND GUESTS

Personal Care Attendant/Caregiver (PCA) - This is someone who is physically able to assist a Van Tran rider when he/she requires assistance beyond the first entry door or needs to travel with another person for safety or health reasons. The Van Tran rider must furnish his/her own PCA. The PCA can be any qualified person and does not necessarily have to be a certified Medical PCA.

The need for a PCA must be indicated on the Van Tran application. If a person needs to add PCA authorization contact the Van Tran Operational Supervisor at 459-1324. One (1) PCA can travel with the Van Tran rider at no charge.

Guests - Eligible riders are entitled to have guests accompany them on Van Tran in addition to the PCA. When scheduling a ride let the dispatcher know if you will be bringing a PCA and/or guests so that the dispatcher can reserve additional spaces on the vehicle for that trip. The guests pays the same fare as the Van Tran rider and must be picked up and dropped off at the same locations as the eligible rider.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

Wheelchairs and Scooters - Van Tran vehicles are lift equipped but wheelchair tie down spaces are limited so a rider must make sure to tell the dispatcher if they use a mobility device. Wheelchairs or scooters must fit on a 32" x 48" platform or Van Tran may not be able to transport them. Service may be refused if total weight of a wheelchair and passenger exceeds 600 pounds. All wheelchairs and riders must be secured with safety belts while riding in the vehicles.

Van Tran riders who use scooters must make a seat transfer. No sitting on a three (3) wheeled scooter is allowed while the van is in motion. There are four (4) wheeled scooters out now, so if you want to stay seated on the scooter during your trip you must get the scooter approved by the Van Tran Operational Supervisor before taking your scheduled trip.

Seat belts - All passengers and drivers are required to wear seat belts. Small children four years old and under must be in a child safety seat. Make sure when you are scheduling to inform the dispatcher that you will need to use a car seat. Drivers will not move the vehicle until everyone is safely secured.

Tipping or Gratuity - Borough ordinances prohibit drivers from accepting tips, gratuities or donations of any kind. Please do not offer the drivers any tips or gratuities.

Request for emergency transportation to or from medical facilities should be referred to the Fairbanks Police and Emergency "911" phone-line.

Oxygen Tanks - Personal oxygen tanks may be transported. The oxygen tanks must be secured on the wheelchair or if carried on aboard the vehicle the driver must secure it with a seat belt or wheelchair tie-down during the trip.

Animals - Only service animals are permitted on the vehicles. If a special trip to the vet is needed for your pet then the pet must be in a container during the trip. Call the Van Tran Operational Supervisor for more instructions on this type of trip.

Food and Beverages - Riders may not eat or drink on Van Tran vehicles. Food and beverages will be allowed only in unopened containers that remain unopened during the trip.

Smoking - Smoking is not permitted on Van Tran vehicles.

Radios - Radios, audio devices and musical instruments cannot be operated by riders, PCAs or riders guests on Van Tran, unless equipped with individual headsets.

Offensive Language/Behavior - No offensive language or disruptive behavior is allowed.

Driveways - Van Tran vehicles will not go into any driveway that does not allow sufficient access for a safe entrance and exit. In the winter months walkways and driveways must be plowed or shoveled to allow for safe access and a reasonable turn around area.

Packages And Groceries - Drivers are required to only make one trip to your door. If you have several packages and/or groceries that require more than one trip, you must make arrangements with someone else to help you carry them or to ride with you to help.

WEATHER

Scheduled rides may be altered and/or canceled due to weather, temperatures, or hazardous road conditions. Van Tran services may not operate vehicles under unsafe or hazardous conditions. If service is canceled or delayed due to weather, all those with scheduled rides will be notified by phone as soon as practicable.

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Transportation Department is committed to provide quality customer service and satisfaction for Van Tran riders. Pre-addressed comment cards may be found in the vehicles or ask the driver for one. Your compliments, suggestions or complaints are important and welcomed. Return the comments cards to the driver or mail them directly to Van Tran.

Complaints Process - If a rider has a complaint or concern that involves the service performed, a scheduled or requested trip, no shows or subscription cancellation call the Van Tran Operational Supervisor at 459-1324.

This handbook is not meant to be all inclusive. If you have a question or a situation that is not specifically addressed please feel free to call or write either the Van Tran Operational Supervisor or the Transportation Director.