

BLACK RIVER FALLS PUBLIC TRANSIT - SHARED RIDE TAXI SERVICE

RULES OF CONDUCT

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Transit Provider

For the purposes of these rules of conduct, “Transit Provider” shall be defined as the third-party vendor contracted by the City of Black River Falls to operate Black River Falls Public Transit, the city’s shared-ride taxi service.

Trip Scheduling/Reservations

During periods of high demand, it may be necessary for dispatchers to negotiate pick-up times; however, the Transit Provider makes every reasonable effort to schedule trips and accept reservations at the request of riders. The dispatcher will not assign any rider exclusively to a specific vehicle or driver. The ADA prohibits restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose. All trips are served in the order received and as scheduled. Each trip includes only one destination. A brief stop or drive-through at another location is a separate destination. If multiple destinations are needed, each section of the trip must be scheduled as a separate trip, and the rider must pay a separate fare for each trip.

Pick-up Window

When a rider’s pick-up time is scheduled, the vehicle can arrive anytime within a 30-minute pick-up window, which will be provided to the rider at the time the ride is scheduled. It is the rider’s responsibility to be prepared to board the vehicle anytime within the pick-up window.

5-Minute Wait Time

Once the vehicle arrives for a pick-up, the driver will wait up to five minutes for a passenger. If the rider is not prepared to board within this wait time, the trip will be counted as a “no-show” and the vehicle will be dispatched to another location. It is the rider’s responsibility to have clear visibility of the area where a vehicle would arrive for pick-up. The rider should be prepared to approach the vehicle when it arrives, unless qualifying driver assistance was requested when the ride was scheduled.

Wheelchair Capacity

Black River Falls Public Transit has vehicles that can accommodate a combined person and chair weight of up to 800 pounds and chair widths of 33.5”. If the rider and his/her mobility device are beyond the maximum capacities, the vehicles cannot safely provide a ride. Riders that have questions about the weight and size of their wheelchair should contact the Black River Falls Public Transit, by calling the dispatch center at 715-284-4511, to determine if a ride can be provided.

Driver Assistance

If needed, drivers will assist a rider when boarding and alighting vehicles, including securement. Additional origin to destination service is provided to eligible riders when needed due to physical barriers (e.g., sidewalk construction or adverse weather) or the nature of the rider’s disability (e.g., a rider with visual disabilities may require driver assistance to the door). Origin to destination service does not include leaving the vehicle unattended or out of sight by the driver.

- As a general rule, driver assistance will not last longer than one (1) minute away from the vehicle.
- Drivers are not allowed to step inside residential, business or facility thresholds except to assist a client using a wheelchair out the door.
- Drivers cannot assist clients with putting on or taking off clothing or footwear.
- Drivers cannot assist clients to transfer into or out of wheelchairs or other mobility devices.
- Drivers may escort clients with arm support but cannot lift or carry clients into seats.
- Drivers will not provide assistance when there is a direct threat to the health or safety of the driver or to a passenger.
- Drivers will assess whether a particular level of assistance constitutes a direct threat on a case-by-case basis.

Prohibited Behavior

The following behavior is strictly prohibited at all times in all transit vehicles:

- Eating and drinking.
- Smoking, including vaping.
- Standing when the vehicle is in motion.
- Failure to wear a seatbelt (medical exceptions may apply with prior authorization from the Transit Provider).
- Behavior that unnecessarily or excessively distracts a driver.
- Harassment of a driver or another passenger.
- All criminal conduct including, but not limited to, the consumption of alcohol, disorderly conduct and littering.
- Minors under the age of six may not travel without the accompaniment of a responsible companion.

In all cases a driver may, based on the severity of the offense and/or the potential for risk to personal or property safety, immediately terminate a ride and/or contact the police. Each case of prohibited behavior will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Transit Provider and may result in the suspension of the rider’s future use of transit services or other penalties.

PCAs & Companions

One personal care attendant (PCA) per rider is permitted to accompany a rider at No Charge. A PCA is a person who provides physical and/or cognitive assistance necessary for a passenger to complete their trip. Companions may accompany a rider but must pay applicable fare, as long as space is available for safe transport. PCAs and companions must have the same origin and destination as the rider. Arrangements for a PCA or companions must be made at the time of reservation.

Service Animals

Service animals are allowed to accompany riders. ADA regulations define a service animal as “*dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.*” Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Black River Falls Public Transit does not allow non-service animals, including pets and comfort/emotional support animals, unless the animal is fully secured in a carrying cage and there is room in the vehicle to accommodate both the animal and its cage. Customers must provide notification of their intent to travel with an animal at the time of reservation.

Medical Equipment

Black River Falls Public Transit allows individuals to bring medical equipment such as respirators and portable oxygen tanks on board vehicles. Oxygen tanks must remain upright at all times and must be secured to the mobility device or held in an upright position.

Carry-ons

Each rider is allowed to carry-on up to four (4) carry-ons. This includes personal belongings and grocery bags. Bags should be no more than 20 pounds each. Basically, whatever the driver and passenger can carry to/from the van to/from the door in one load. Multiple loads are not allowed. Medical equipment, like oxygen tank and mobility devices, do not count toward the carry-on limit.

Title VI Notice

Black River Falls Public Transit, as a recipient of Federal Funding, assures that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its services on the grounds of race, color or national origin as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. For more information or procedures to file a Title VI complaint, visit the city’s website at <https://blackriverfalls.us/taxi-service/>, call 715-284-2315, email city.admin@blackriverfalls.us or visit City Hall at 101 S. Second Street, Black River Falls, WI 54615

Modifications

Upon request, reasonable modifications may be made to these Rules to ensure that our transportation services are accessible to people with disabilities. Riders can request reasonable modifications in advance by contacting the City of Black River Falls City Administrator at (715) 284-2315. The City of Black River Falls will review the written request and respond with a written decision within 10 business days. If the decision requires more than 10 business days, the written response will indicate when a decision can be expected.

No-Shows

A “no-show” occurs when a person who scheduled a trip changes his/her mind about making the trip, but does not cancel the trip reservation. If a trip is not cancelled at least one hour before the scheduled pick-up time, it will be considered a no-show. Incidents that are true emergencies, in the reasonable discretion of the Transit Provider, will not be considered no-shows. Scheduling problems, late pickups and other operational problems are considered beyond the rider’s control and will not result in a no-show. The Transit Provider will maintain records in order to keep track of no-show incidents.

- For the first no-show incident, the Transit Provider will send a written or text reminder to the person of the importance of canceling at least an hour before the scheduled pick up time.
- If a person has a second no-show within a one-month period, the Transit Provider will suspend the rider’s ability to use the service for one month.
- An attempt to provide written notice of the suspension will be made by the Transit Provider with an explanation of the appeals process.
- The Transit Provider reserves the right to require a rider who is a no show to pay for the trip prior to providing any additional services to the rider.

Complaints

Service related complaints must be made to the Transit Provider by completing the [Service Complaint Form](#). Copies of the form are available on the Transit Provider's website, the City of Black River Falls' website and at City Hall located at 101 S. Second Street. Complaints about anything other than service, and all Title VI complaints, must be made to the City of Black River Falls by completing the [General Complaint Form](#). Copies of this form are available on the City of Black River Falls' website and at City Hall located at 101 S. Second Street.

Appeals

Riders who have been suspended from the use of the service, or who are unsatisfied with the resolution of a complaint, may appeal. The appeals process will function as follows:

- Appeals must be made in writing (either on paper or by email) and sent to the Black River Falls City Administrator at 101 South Second Street, Black River Falls, WI 54615. The title of the appeal should include the words: "Appeal – Black River Falls Public Transit Shared Ride Service."
- Within ten days receipt of a written appeal, the City Administrator will convene an Appeals Panel comprised of the City Administrator, a member of the Service Provider, and a representative of the Black River Falls Police Department or the Black River Falls Common Council.
- The person making the appeal, or their legal representative, can present their case to the Appeal Panel either in person or in writing – the City Administrator will notify the person making the appeal of their right to appear in front of the Appeal Panel and the scheduled date and time the Panel will meet.
- The City Administrator, on behalf of the Appeal Panel, will convey the Panel's decision regarding the appeal to the person in writing within thirty days of the date of his/her request for an appeal.
- The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.