



Service Description and Rider Guide

Effective May, 2023

Hours of Operation

Mon – Fri: 7:15am to 9:30pm
Closed Weekends and CAC Holidays
419-423-7261

Welcome to the Hancock Area Transportation System, or, simply: HATS! To help ensure a better level of service, please review and understand the information in this document. It explains how our system works. We want you to have the best experience possible with us; and, you will learn what you can expect from us, and what we expect from each of our riders.

OVERVIEW

What is HATS Transportation? We are a publicly-funded, reservation-based, public transportation and paratransit organization providing rides to the general public with “first-come/first-served” curb-to-curb and door to door service.

For door-to-door service, our drivers offer assistance from the customer’s door to the vehicle and from the vehicle to the door at the destination. For curb-to-curb service, assistance is provided to the customer to enter and exit the vehicle at the curb. However, if a customer needs assistance due to disability, physical barriers in the walkway or adverse weather conditions, the driver may need to offer assistance beyond the curb to the door.

Unlike an “on-demand” service, such as a taxicab company, we schedule trips up to two weeks in advance, for travel anywhere in Hancock County. Unlike a fixed-route vehicle system, as seen in larger metropolitan areas, we arrive in front of the requested pick up location (without having to walk to a vehicle stop), and transport you to your destination, then, when you’re finished, return you to your home! Out-of-county trips are available on a contract and as needed basis. Out of county trip costs are calculated based on trip distance. Our hours of operation are 7:15am to 9:45pm, Monday through Friday. The first vehicle leaves our lot at 7:15am; due to travel times trip destinations before 8am are not guaranteed. One more important thing: We do not provide emergency medical transportation. If you need emergency medical assistance or emergency medical transportation, call 911.

FARES

The one-way fare is \$2 to anywhere within the city limits, and \$4-6 to anywhere within the county limits. A round trip consists of two one-way trips: the first part of the trip is the “drop;” the second part of the trip is the “return.” You will pay each driver for each part of your trip, as the driver that drops you off is seldom the driver that will return you. Please have exact change ready, as our drivers don’t carry change. Do not pay the first driver a round trip fare. If it’s more convenient for you, tickets may be purchased in appropriate denominations at our office, or by mail. All of our tickets are numbered, and the numbers are recorded at the time of sale. Should you find some of our tickets, let us know so that we can return them to their rightful owner. Please call our office for more information regarding ticket sales.

Children eight years of age, and younger, ride free, and must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian. Children nine and older may ride alone.

HOLIDAYS AND CLOSINGS

HATS follows the federal holiday schedule, and also closes for occasional in-house trainings, multiple times per year. Notices of HATS closings will be posted in each vehicle at least two weeks in advance.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

HATS reserves the right to modify or close services due to inclement weather, please listen to your local radio or television station for modification and closure information. If the HANCOCK, HARDIN, WYANDOT, PUTNAM/COMMUNITY ACTION COMMISSION / HHWP/CAC is closed, HATS will also be closed.

RIDER GUIDELINES

Please be considerate of those you meet when riding with us, those folks who are a part of our “transportation community!” Passengers must follow the HATS Rider Guidelines listed below and posted on the vehicles. Failure to comply with HATS rules may result in immediate expulsion from the vehicle and/or suspension of HATS service. HATS expects riders and drivers to treat everyone with consideration and respect.

HOW TO SCHEDULE A TRIP

All trip requests are scheduled on a first come, first served basis. We take reservations up to two weeks in advance, and you are **strongly** encouraged to schedule with us that far in advance. Same day/next day rides are often difficult to schedule but are accommodated as vehicle and driver capacity allow. Requests that are flexible with times have a greater chance of being accommodated. Same week trips can be accommodated easier than next day or same day requests depending on how many other people have already been scheduled to ride on the day and time that you are requesting. When scheduling for the first time, HATS will request personal information to establish your rider profile. The rider profile will allow HATS to schedule future trips more efficiently. When you call to schedule a trip, we'll ask you, "Where are you going?" and, "What time do you have to be there?" We don't need to know when you want to be picked up at your residence; we only need to know when you want to be at your destination. We'll also ask you if you need a return trip and the destination of the return trip. If so, we'll need to know what time you want us to arrive to take you to the desired destination. If you are speech or hearing impaired, you may schedule your trips through the Ohio Relay at 1-800-750-0750.

Our driver will arrive 30 to 60 minutes ahead of your appointment time. The driver will sound the horn; but, the driver will not come to your door unless you need and have made prior arrangements for door to door service; so, be watching for the vehicle, waiting outside if the weather permits. After the vehicle arrives, the driver has a five-minute wait window. If you're not ready to board the vehicle in that time, the driver will move on to other people needing trips. For your return trip home, our driver will arrive sometime between the time you requested and 30 minutes later; so, please be watching for our vehicle.

"What if I need to go somewhere for just a couple of minutes to pay a bill, or something?" At the driver's discretion, he may have time to stop, for five minutes, somewhere on the way to your final destination. The driver will wait for five minutes, after you exit the vehicle. If haven't returned to the vehicle within five minutes, you may be left behind. If you prefer, you may be able to schedule a "Five-minute Stop & Drop" with the office as you schedule your other trips. That way, the driver will know, in advance, of an additional short stop, on the way to your final destination, however, you'll still have only 5 minutes to return to the vehicle. Be prepared to pay another fare when you re-enter the vehicle, as you have added another destination to your trip. Drivers are not permitted to go through drive services for customers such as banks, restaurants, etc.

ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

HATS has a fleet of ADA accessible vehicles. Vehicle types and accessibility equipment varies by vehicle type. If you are traveling in a mobility device or need to use the lift, please notify HATS when scheduling your trip to ensure you are assigned to an accessible vehicle.

Ambulatory passengers should notify the driver of the need to use the lift upon arrival of the vehicle.

TRIP CANCELATIONS AND NO-SHOWS

To cancel your trip and avoid being registered as a no-show, call 419-423-7261, ext. 21 **at least 2 hours before your scheduled pick up, if you have a trip scheduled at 9am or earlier please call the office by 7am or leave a message on the HATS answering service prior to 7am.**

Simply state your name, the date, the time of the trip or trips, and trip destination(s) that you are cancelling as well as a phone number you can be reached at should we have any questions.

If you don't cancel in a timely manner, you'll be counted as no-show. A no show will also be counted if you are not ready and waiting for the driver within 5 minutes of arrival. Our drivers are instructed to proceed to the next destination if you're not on the vehicle within five minutes. So, be ready, waiting, and watching for us. Excessive no-shows, may result in a suspension of riding with us for two weeks or longer depending on prior no show history

RIDE NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The day before your trip, you will receive an automatic, electronic notification of your trip via your cell or landline phone. This will allow you to confirm or cancel your trip without penalty. Listen closely to the message, and confirm or cancel the trip according to the instructions that you will hear. It's easy!

SERVICE ANIMALS

HATS welcomes service animals on board our vehicles. Please notify the scheduler you will be traveling with a service animal at the time of scheduling. Service animals must be kept under the control of the passenger at all times. Passengers with service animals that are not kept under control and pose a safety risk to others will be asked to exit the vehicle.

PORTABLE OXYGEN

HATS permits the transport and use of portable oxygen devices on all vehicles. Individuals traveling with portable oxygen are required to secure the device on their person or permit the driver to secure the device to the seat or other appropriate area of the vehicle. Unsecured oxygen devices can be a safety hazard in the event of a sudden stop or accident situation.

SEATBELTS and CAR SEATS

All HATS vehicles are equipped with seatbelts. Passengers are required to use seatbelts at all times during transport. HATS encourages the use of car seats and other child safety seats. HATS requires that passengers to provide and install all child safety seats. Individuals who do not have child safety seats may contact HATS for a list of child safety seat resources.

PACKAGE/BAG LIMIT

You can arrange for grocery shopping, a night out, and other trips with HATS. When returning from a shopping expedition, **PLEASE LIMIT YOUR CARRY-ON BAGS AND PARCELS TO NO MORE THAN THREE STANDARD GROCERY BAGS.** All items must be secure in the bag and must be held on your lap or below your seat. Drivers are not permitted to assist riders with their carry-on items.

EATING OR DRINKING ON THE VEHICLE

Eating or drinking on the vehicle is not permitted, unless you it is necessary for a medical condition. Medical conditions requiring eating or drinking on the HATS vehicle must be accompanied by a medical provider statement and submitted to the HATS office. Liquids must be in a container with a secure lid such as a screw on or flip-up lid. Restaurant carry-out cups aren't permitted. The passenger is responsible for removing any packaging and other garbage from the vehicle.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS

If you're riding in a mobility device and/or need assistance getting on and off of the vehicle or other personal care services, you may also book a ride for an escort or personal care attendant (PCA), who will ride for free, as long as they provide some type of personal assistance to you. Your personal care attendant must be able to provide for your personal care needs. Personal care attendants provide services such as but are not limited to: assistance getting to the vehicle, assistance boarding and exiting the vehicle, assistance with ambulation, assistance with transferring to a seat, assistance with putting on or removing jackets, memory assistance, behavior assistance, and etc. Please notify the HATS office that you will be riding with a personal care assistant at the time of scheduling your trip.

LOST and FOUND

When you exit the vehicle, turn around, look back at your seating area, and make sure you haven't left anything behind. HATS is not responsible for items left on the vehicle. Any items remaining on the vehicle at the end of the driver's shift will be placed in the lost and found box at the HATS office. Passengers may collect lost items at the HATS office, however items must be identified prior to release of the item. In some instances and when possible, the driver may deliver to you on a subsequent ride.

TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

HATS complies with all Title VI requirements. Information on the HATS Title VI policy and instruction on how to file a complaint are posted on all HATS vehicles, at the HATS office and

at the HHWP office. To receive a copy of the HATS Title VI policy or information contact HATS at: 419-423-7261 or Ohio Relay TTY at 1-800-750-0750 or request in writing to: HATS 440 Scott Ave. Findlay, OH. 45840.

INFORMATION IN ALTERNATE FORMAT

If you need this information or other information in an alternate format, HATS will provide the information in the alternate format upon request. Please notify HATS of your alternate format need by contacting HATS at: 419-423-7261 or Ohio Relay TTY at 1-800-750-0750 or request in writing to: HATS 440 Scott Ave. Findlay, OH. 45840.

HATS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is Public Transportation?

Public Transportation is a shared passenger-transport service which is available for use by the general public, as distinct from modes such as taxicab, carpooling, or hired buses, which are not shared by strangers without private arrangement.

Q: Do I Have To Be A Senior Citizen Or Disabled To Ride The Service? Hancock Area Transportation Service (HATS) is county wide public transportation for anyone going anywhere in Hancock County. There are no eligibility criteria to use the service.

Q: What Type of Reservations Can I Make?(ie: same day, advance, # of days ahead?)

You can schedule a trip for the same day, next day or any day within a two week period. Trips cannot be scheduled more than two weeks ahead. Trips are scheduled on a first come, first served basis.

Q: What Are The Hours of Operation?

The first pick up is 7:15 am and last drop off is 9:45 pm, Monday through Friday. Office hours are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Q: What Does It Cost To Ride? Trips within the Findlay City limits are \$2 per trip. Trips outside of Findlay and within Hancock County are \$4-6 per trip depending on the pickup or drop off zone. Half price fares are available for individuals over 65 years of age and for people with a disability. Elderly and Disabled (E&D)

Q: How do I Make a Reservation? Call 419-423-7261 during regular office hours to schedule a trip.

Simply provide some information to the scheduler if this is your first time using HATS. Then we will need to know your pickup location, date, time for arrival and destination of your trip.

Q: Can I Get Help With My Groceries/Can I Bring My Own Assistant?

We ask that all carry-on bags be contained in the seating area. Wheeled shopping carts are permitted and will be secured by the driver. Escorts or Personal Care Attendants ride for free, please let the scheduler know if you have someone riding with you.

Q: Will You Get Me To My Destination On Time?

You will discuss the time you need to be at your destination with the scheduler. A 30 minute time window to be watching for your bus will be built into the trip to assure that you arrive at your destination on time. The driver will wait 5 minutes for you to board the bus. The largest percent of HATS trips are for employment so our drivers and staff understand how important on time service is to our customers.

Q: Do You Offer Any Special Services?

Veterans ride free every day in Hancock County with a valid Veterans ID through support from Hancock County Veterans Services. Other special programs include agency contracted trips in county and out of the county for medical appointments or special needs. HATS may also be contacted for shuttle services for weddings, open houses or other events. Call the office at 419-423-7261 to find more about these special services.