



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 two transportation programs: Rural Transportation in Geraldton and Longlac; whereby, eligible riders are transported to the grocery store, pharmacy, post office, etc. and Aging at Home Transportation; whereby, eligible riders within the Municipality of Greenstone are transported, within limitations as per the policy, to in town and out of town medical appointments.

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 Aging at Home 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 nondedicated), 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

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 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

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.

Program will provide out of town medical transportation to eligible residents Tuesdays, Wednesday, and Thursdays for appointments booked between 12:00 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Bookings are done by calling, during business hours, the Community Services Administrative Assistant, Liette Cardinal at (807)854-1100 Ext 2010 or emailing at liette.cardinal@greenstone.ca

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

Residents of the Municipality of Greenstone who are seniors (55+).

Residents of the Municipality 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 applicant's income or age.

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

- Unconditional - 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

How to apply

The completed application including any related documentation is to be returned to:

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

Or via email to liette.cardinal@greenstone.ca

All incomplete applications 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 application 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 applying for Specialized Transit.

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

Application Form

Part A – Applicant Information (All persons requiring specialized transit will complete Part A)

- Applicant or designate needs to fill out of the Specialized Transit Application

Part B – Supporting Documentation **ONLY TO BE COMPLETED IF NOT 55 + TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY TO USE SERVICE**

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

- Proof of CPP Disability Pension
- Proof of ODSP
- Proof of personal accessible parking permit
- Proof of Access 2 Card (an Easter Seals Canada Program)
- Proof that the applicant cannot obtain a driver's license for medical Reasons
- Letter 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 application may delay the application process.

Applications 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.

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 854-1100 Ext 2010 or email to the Community Services Administrative Assistant liette.cardinal@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 behavior 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 pickup at a set location such as Longlac or Geraldton.

The service area for in-town medical transportation and rural 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 administrator.

Leaving Pick-Up Point: When a client is not at the designated pick-up area, Drivers

shall not leave a pick-up point prior to ten minutes past the booked 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. Client's 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 prepaid by contacting the Community Services Administrative Assistant or at the Longlac Ward Office or Geraldton Ward 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 for third party reimbursement. Riders will be expected to pay the difference between the eligible Northern Travel Grant and the full fare prior to the travel. Payment can be made at the Longlac Ward Office or the Geraldton Ward

Office. 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:

1. The client is a senior (55+) or has a disability;
2. The client annually completes an Accessible Specialized Transit Application Form; and
3. The client annually shows proof of Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

Contact

Liette Cardinal, Community Services Administrative Assistant
(807)854-1100 Ext 2010
Email: liette.cardinal@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.

