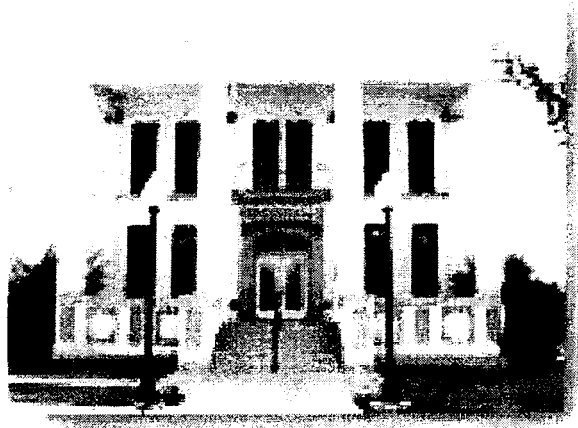


**JIM HOGG COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT
A.D.A.
POLICY**



**As approved By Jim Hogg County
Commissioners Court**

Originally Approved on: February 25, 2013

Revised and approved by Jim Hogg County Commissioners' Court on:

Revised April 3, 2019

Latest Revision 04-25-25


JIM HOGG COUNTY JUDGE
J. C. GUERRA

**Jim Hogg County Transportation
209 N. Oak Trl. #1
Hebbronville, TX 78361**

SECTION ONE: TRANSIT SYSTEMS

Summary of: Jim Hogg County Transportation

Jim Hogg County provides Demand Response Transit service under the rural transportation program. This service is a curb or curb service that utilizes relatively smaller vehicles to provide transportation at the user's demand. Jim Hogg County Transportation will provide service to any eligible person at any requested time on a particular day in response to a request for service made the previous day. Reservations may be made by reservation agents or by mechanical means. Demand Response service is open to the general public is helpful to seniors and individuals with disabilities. This service is available to all residents of Jim Hogg County.

SECTION 5310 **SENIORS & INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

Jim Hogg County

Jim Hogg County provides bus service for its public but in particular for seniors and individuals with disabilities residents. The bus was provided by Jim Hogg County was acquired utilizing Section 5310 funds. This service is offered free of charge to eligible riders and provides trips to Jim Hogg County. Trips must be scheduled in advance to use the service.

SECTION TWO: GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

It is the objective of Jim Hogg County Transportation to address the need for public transportation by administering and coordinating a public transportation program.

Inherent in this objective is the provision of transportation services to people with disabilities. The provision of transportation is undertaken within the framework and approach of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, related regulations issued by United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and any revision and/or updates issued subsequently.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities regarding use of public transportation service, providing access to related facilities, and telecommunications access. It is also a purpose to express rules that for safety and comfort should be observed when riding Jim Hogg County Transportation. Section Two of this policy conveys information that is applicable to passengers with disabilities who ride Jim Hogg County Transportation. It is intended that by means of this policy the mission of Jim Hogg County is "to make a positive difference in the region" (with regards to transporting persons with disabilities) will be served.

TRAINING

Jim Hogg County will ensure that personnel are trained to proficiency, as appropriate to their Duties, so that they operate vehicles and equipment safely and properly and treat individuals with disabilities who use the service in a respectful and courteous way with appropriate attention to the difference among individuals with disabilities.

LIFT AND SECUREMENT USE

All wheelchairs and their users shall be transported in the Jim Hog County vehicles. The wheelchair cannot exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 800 pounds when occupied. To ensure the health safety of customers, wheelchairs that exceed the weight limit and dimensions may be denied vehicle access. Wheelchairs are defined to include both three-wheeled and four wheeled mobility aids. Three-wheeled “scooters” and other non-traditional designs that fit within these standards must be transported. Jim Hogg County Transportation does not permit wheelchairs to ride in places other than designated securement locations. Jim Hogg County transportation may not deny transportation to a wheelchair user on the grounds that the device cannot be secured or restrained satisfactorily by the vehicle security system. Jim Hogg County may recommend to a user of a wheelchair to transfer to a seat and not require the individual to transfer. It is the passenger’s responsibility to insure that their personal wheelchair, scooter brakes are functional.

When necessary or upon request, the bus operator of Jim Hogg County Transportation personnel shall assist individuals with disabilities with the use of securement systems, ramps, and lifts. If it is necessary for the personnel to leave their seats to provide this assistance they shall do so. Jim Hogg Transportation shall permit individuals with disabilities who do not use wheelchairs, including standees, to use a vehicles lift or ramp to enter the vehicle.

LIFT MAINTENANCE

Jim Hogg County Transportation via the safety plan has established a system of regular and frequent maintenance checks of lifts sufficient to determine if they are operative consistent with this information found in the manufacture’s manuals, which should be adhered to with regard to maintenance. Through daily inspection the Jim Hogg County Transportation system ensures that vehicles operators report any failure of a lift to operate in service. When a lift is discovered to be inoperative, the Jim Hogg County Transportation system shall take the vehicle out of service before the beginning of vehicle’s next day service and ensure that the lift is repaired before the vehicle returns to service. If there is no spare vehicle available to take the place of a vehicle with an inoperable lift, such that taking the vehicle out of service will reduce the transportation service that Jim Hogg Transportation is able to provide, Jim Hogg County transportation may keep the vehicle in service with an inoperable lift for three days from the day on which the lift is discovered to be inoperative. In any case in which a vehicle is operating on a fixed route with an inoperative lift, and the alternative transportation to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the vehicle because its lift does not work.

PASSENGER ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES

Boarding and disembarking assistance may be required by any passenger, but most often is needed by the elderly and disabled. Adequate vehicle boarding and disembarking is provided as needed. Jim Hogg County Transportation operators learn and practice hand on passenger assistance techniques during the initial training process. The following simply presents basic Guidelines for all operators to remember. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure the safety of all passengers. Boarding/disembarking or on-board mishaps resulting in possible injury will be treated as accidents. Steps likely to prevent such mishaps include.

- Ensure a safe and well-lit entrance area. Keep the steps clean and the aisle clear of possible obstructions. Sweep steps and aisles free of sand, ice, mud, etc., periodically during inclement weather. If floors are slick, warn passengers to watch their step.
- Pay attention where you stop. Do not leave awkward spaces next to sidewalks, curbs, grates, etc., in which to trip or sprain an ankle. Make sure entrance is clear from signs, fire hydrants, mailboxes, etc.
- Observe the passenger and identify any potential conditions that might lead to problems. Offer assistance if it appears necessary. If accepted, await instructions from the passenger before proceeding. Do not interfere with movements that have already begun or startle the passenger. If the offer is declined, stand close by ready to assist as the circumstances warrant.
- Talk the passenger through the assistance process. Explain what you are doing and take their advice if they wish to be assisted in a particular way.
- Always place yourself on the downhill side of the person or the wheelchair to aid. This includes curbs, steps, ramps and wheelchair lifts.
- Treat all wheelchairs as if they had no brakes. If a passenger is going to stand or sit, you should always lock the breaks prior to the move. After the brakes are placed in a lock position, test to see if they are holding. Support the wheelchairs during all maneuvers, especially on lift platforms and during transfers to and from stationary seats.
- Use "body belts" before loading wheelchairs to keep the disabled passenger in the wheelchair. Make sure lifts standees hold handrails securely. Secure all mobility aids on board the vehicle properly.
- Brakes on the wheelchairs must be locked during lifts operation and transport.

- Do not attempt more than you can handle. Obtain additional assistance if necessary.

ATTENDANT POLICIES

A person employed by the ADA eligible customer as a personal care attendant is not considered a guest. In a very real sense, a personal care attendant is a “mobility aid”: to the eligible person, similar to a wheelchair or can. No fare will be charged for a personal care attendant.

DISORDERLY OR ABUSIVE PASSENGERS

This policy governs the procedures for dealing with unruly passengers affecting the safe operations of Jim Hogg County vehicles. Passengers governed by this policy are those who affect the safe operation of a Jim Hogg County vehicle. Passengers violating the safe operations of Jim Hogg County vehicle may be denied passage, requested to leave the vehicle, banned from further passage, or as a last resort arrested and charged. The following behaviors cover by this policy:

Intoxicated, disorderly, disturbing other passengers or the operator, creating a safety hazard, yelling, cursing, making obscene gestures, slapping or hitting fellow passengers or the operator, engaging in arguments with operator or other passengers, or otherwise creating a disruption, which could affect the safe operation of the vehicle.

Note: Conduct which is related to a person’s disability, and which annoys or offends is not to be considers “seriously disruptive.” Similarly, service cannot be refused based on an unfounded fear of a particular disability.

Steps to be taken by operations and/or Jim Hogg County Transportation personnel when dealing with disorderly or abusive passengers are as follows:

- Remain calm and professional in manner.
- Stop the vehicle in a safe area and request that the passengers cease and desist. Inform the Jim Hogg County Transportation office of the specific passenger and/or problem and the location.
- Inform the passenger that his or her behavior could result in loss of service.
- If the behavior continues, the passenger will be requested to leave the vehicle. The operator will remain in the location until the Supervisor/Director and/or police arrive.
- The passenger will be informed that he or she will not be eligible to use the Jim Hogg County Transportation services for three days.

- If after the three day period has expired and the behavior continues, the passenger will be ineligible to use service unless accompanied by and aid.
- If the aide is unable to control the behavior, the passenger may be ruled ineligible to use the services in the future.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Each Jim Hogg Transportation vehicle shall contain sign(s), which indicate that seats in the front of the vehicle are priority seats for persons with disabilities, and that other passengers should make such seats available to those who wish to use them. At least one set of forward-facing seats shall be so designated.

- Smoking of any kind of cigarette, cigars, or pipes is prohibited.
- Consumptions of any beverages (especially alcoholic) is prohibited.
- Consumption of any kind of food is prohibited.
- Riding as a passenger while possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted and transportation will be denied.
- Littering in the vehicle is prohibited.
- All passengers should use seat belts while riding in the vehicle.
- Jim Hogg County Transportation or any of its bus operators do assume responsibility for lost or stolen articles.
- Bus operators are not allowed to:
 - Enter rider residences
 - Perform any personal care assistance for riders, including assisting riders to dress
 - Lift or carry riders
 - Maneuver riders or wheelchairs up or down steps
 - Accept tips or gratuities

SECTION THREE: LEVEL OF SERVICE

SERVICE AREAS

Jim Hogg County's ADA service shall be provided to people who are determined eligible in accordance with the eligibility standards set forth by the USDOT regulations published in the Federal Register on September 6, 1991 (subpart F37,123).

DONATIONS

Donations accepted for transportation service.

The donations accepted for individuals accompanying ADA eligible individuals shall be the same as for the ADA eligible individuals are accompanying.

A personal care attendant traveling with an eligible rider shall not be charged for transit service.

TRIPS PURPOSE RESTRICTIONS

Jim Hogg Transportation shall not impose restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose.

HOURS AND DATES OF SERVICE

The transit service shall be made available Monday, Wednesday & Thursday. To start picking up passengers at 8AM and to return before 5PM that same day.

CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS

Jim Hogg County shall not limit the availability transit service to ADA Transit eligible individuals by any of the following:

- Restrictions on the number of trips individuals will be provided.
- Waiting lists for access to the services; or
- Any operational pattern or practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA transit people.

Such patterns or practices include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Substantial numbers of significantly untimely (more than one hour) pickups for initial or return trip;
2. Substantial numbers of trips denials or missed trips;
3. Substantial numbers of trips with excessive trips lengths.

SECTION FIVE: REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS & SERVICE PARAMETERS

Reasonable Modifications

Jim Hogg County Transportation does respond to a rider's need for reasonable modification even if the rider did not specifically use the term "reasonable modification" in their request for service. (49 CFR 37.169 (b)) Personal can make reasonable modifications determinations at the time of the request. All information regarding Jim Hogg County Transportation will be readily available upon request. Information can also be obtained through Jim Hogg County website: www.co.jim-hogg.tx.us or by calling Petra Garcia, Transportation Director at 361-527-5835.

Jim Hogg County Transportation will deny any reasonable modifications if it is determined that granting the request will; (49 CFR 37.169 (c))

- Fundamentally alter the nature of Jim Hogg County Transportation service
- Create a direct threat to the health and safety of others
- To ensure a safe and sanitary environment for all passengers, individuals experiencing unmanaged bowel incontinence may not be able to use transportation services. Appropriate medical management is recommended prior to using our service.
- Create an undue financial or administration burden to JHC Transportation
- Services or programs can be used without the request of modification

Should a request be denied Jim Hogg County Transportation will do the maximum extent possible, take any other actions to ensure that the individual with a disability received the services (49 CFR 37.169 (e))

Service Parameters

Jim Hogg County Transportation prohibits discrimination against an individual with a disability in connection with the provisions of transportation service (49 CFR 37.5(a))

Jim Hogg County Transportation does not, on the basis of disability, deny an individual the opportunity to use the general public service, if the individual is capable of using that service. (49 CFR 37.5(b))

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not require an individual with a disability to use designated priority seats if the individual does not choose to use these seats. (49 CFR 37.59 (c))

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not impose special charges, not authorized by this part, on individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs, for providing services required by this part or otherwise necessary to accommodate them. (49 CFR 37.5(d))

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not require that an individual with disabilities be accompanied by an attendant. Patrons will be encouraged to use personal care attendants in cases where patrons have difficulty getting to at least 10 feet within the Jim Hogg County Transportation bus. (49 CFR 37.5(e))

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not refuse to serve an individual with a disability because the entity's insurance company increases rate or denies insurance coverage because of the passengers with disabilities. (49 CFR 37.5(g))

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not refuse to provide service to an individuals with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of the entity or other persons.(49 CFR 37.5(h))

If an individual with a disability is denied service, the individuals has the opportunity to appeal the service suspension and present information demonstrating that previous issues have been resolved or present options to mitigate problems, so their service can be restated (FTA C 4710.Pg 2-6)

ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

All Information regarding Jim Hogg County Transportation Department services, including information contained in this policy manual, ride guides, maps, and other documents, will be made available in the following accessible formats upon request: computer disks, taped Audio cassettes, Braille, and large print [49 CFR 37.125 (B) & 49 CFR 37.167 (F)]

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not refuse to serve an individual with a disability because the entity's insurance company increases the rate or denies insurance coverage because of passengers with disabilities. (49 CFR 37.5(g))

Jim Hogg County Transportation shall not refuse to provide service to individuals with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of the entity or other persons. (49 CFR 37.5(h))

If an individual with a disability is denied service, the individuals have the opportunity to appeal the service suspension and present information demonstrating that previous issues have resolved or present options to mitigate problems, so their service can be restated.
(FTA C 4710)

SECTION SIX: OTHER MOBILITY AIDS & EQUIPMENT

Jim Hogg County Transportation Department will allow service animals on its vehicle and in its Facilities. [49 CFR 37.167 (d)] A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal trained to work for an individual with a disability. No other animals will be permitted.

Jim Hogg County Transportation Department will allow any reasonable breathing aid, including portable oxygen tanks and respirators, on its vehicles. [49 CFR 37.167 (h)]

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I, _____ hereby acknowledge that the
JIM HOGG COUNTY TRANSPORTSTION POLICY has been reviewed with and
explained to me, and that I have been given a copy of the **JIM HOGG COUNTY**
TRANSPORTATION ADA POLICY.

Employee Name _____
Please Print

Employee Signature _____

Date _____

Signature of *Jim Hogg County* Witness _____