

Municipality of Souris-Glenwood
POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

Reference	Policy Number
Handi-Transit Policy	01-2026
Date	Resolution No.
2026-01-13	2026-005
Authority	CAO Signature
Council	<i>Pamela Pannagl</i>

1. POLICY FRAMEWORK

POLICY

The provision of flexible, supportive transportation service to persons who are mobility disadvantaged within the Municipality of Souris-Glenwood is our primary priority. This service shall be provided in a courteous and helpful manner, which promotes each client's dignity, integrity and independence.

A person with a mobility disadvantage is defined as follows:

An individual who by reason of illness, injury, age, congenital abnormality or any other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability is unable to utilize available transportation facilities.

CRITERIA: Anyone who meets at least one of the following criteria is eligible for this service:

- uses a wheelchair or mobility aid (walker, cane)
- is visually impaired to the extent that he/she cannot operate a motor vehicle
- is hearing impaired to the extent that he/she cannot operate a motor vehicle
- has lost his/her driver's license due to a medical problem (i.e. seizures, etc.)
- has physical impairment which prevents him/her from operating a motor vehicle either on a temporary, or permanent basis.
- has a mental impairment which prevents him/her from operating a motor vehicle either on a temporary or permanent basis.
- is a senior citizen – Subject to Provincial Guidelines – currently aged 65

The **order of priorities**, subject to the discretion of the dispatcher are:

1. Medical
2. Employment / Adult Day Program
3. Personal business
4. Social / recreational

APPOINTMENTS WILL BE TAKEN ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS.

Note: The following DO NOT qualify: Any individual who:

- lost his/her license for reason of driving infractions.
- does not own a car, unless he/she meets one of the above criteria.
- whose car has broken down, unless he/she meets one of the above criteria.

Client Transports fall into a number of categories based on the type of service required and the need of the client.

ADULT DAY PROGRAM

The Adult Day Program (ADP) or other pre-arranged group activities will be scheduled based upon specific information from the program facilitators. These programs will be given priority over all other transport activities.

Operators shall pick up clients and transport them to the programs at the time requested by the facilitator. The clients will be returned home at the time of the dismissal from the program. If a client requires a different pick up or drop off time, the cost of that stop will be at the client's expense.

In the event of a vehicle break-down ADP transportation may have to be limited or cancelled for a short period of time. If this occurs, the Handi-Van operator shall make every effort to provide ample notice to the program facilitator.

CONTRACT FOR SERVICES

The contracts will be honoured as per the terms outlined within the contract. When contracts are entered into, all aspects of service delivery will be considered to ensure all clients receive fair and equitable treatment.

GROUP EXCURSIONS

If the Handi-Van is not booked for any mobility disadvantaged client, it may be made available for group excursions on a fee for service basis in accordance with the following priorities:

- a) seniors who are not mobility disadvantaged
- b) not-for-profit organizations which provide financial support through other means to the Handi-Van program
- c) other not-for-profit organizations and groups
- d) individuals and for-profit organizations or corporations

FOR ALL GROUP EXCURSIONS, AN AUTHORIZED DRIVER MUST BE APPROVED BY THE MUNICIPALITY AND THE FEES COLLECTED MUST COVER ALL SALARY AND OPERATING COSTS FOR THE TRIP

INTERFACILITY PATIENT TRANSPORTATION

Any patient who is being transferred from one health facility to another or who is receiving treatment in another facility or clinic must be stable in nature. Under no circumstances will a non-stable patient receive transport via the Handi-Van. A non-stable patient will include those riders who are not stable in their ability to walk on their own or a rider who is unstable due to their medical condition. An escort must be provided if a patient requires assistance.

Transports of this nature will be arranged on an “as available” basis.

2. AUTHORIZATION TO DRIVE THE HANDI-VAN

POLICY:

Only those individuals who have satisfied the conditions below and received approval from the Handi-Transit Board representative (President or other designated member) will be allowed to drive the Handi-Van.

PROCEDURE:

Each Handi-Van driver MUST provide the Supervisor with the following items to be kept in their Handi-Van Driver’s file:

- Copy of Valid Class 4 driver’s license
- Copy of Driving Record
- Copy of Vulnerable Sector Check¹ from the RCMP
- Copy of a First Aid Certificate or be willing to take this training.

The Driver’s License and driving record must be updated yearly and a copy placed on file. The Vulnerable Sector Check¹ and Emergency First Aid Certification must be updated every 3 years.

Regardless of the above update schedules each driver must inform the Handi-Transit Board

representative IMMEDIATELY if their driver's license is revoked or suspended, if their driving record changes, or if any criminal charges are laid against them.

The Board will provide or will reimburse reasonable costs for First Aid Training. The Board will also reimburse actual costs for obtaining copies of the Driving Record and Vulnerable Sector Check, to be added to the Driver's initial pay cheque, as per Municipal Employment Standards.

A current list of all approved drivers will be maintained at the Municipal Office.

The Handi-Van phone should go with the driver on each trip. If the designated phone is not available for a trip, approved drivers must have a personal cell phone for use while driving the Handi-Van and care must be taken to ensure that the Dispatcher has the correct contact number.

¹ A Vulnerable Sector Check is an enhanced criminal record check, which includes any record suspensions (formerly pardons) for sexual offences and local police records for information relevant to the VS check. This type of record check is provided through the RCMP and may require fingerprinting through the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires.

3. ORIENTATION TO THE HANDI-VAN

POLICY:

Every driver of the Handi-Van will have completed and signed the Orientation Checklist.

PROCEDURE:

A senior driver (designated by a member of the Personnel committee) with usually 2 years of experience will attend the Handi-Van with each new driver and go over the checklist. The Orientation Checklist includes policies, procedures, required forms and logs, operation of restraints and wheelchair lift and operation of Handi-Van. The new driver may be required to read or watch training materials as a part of this training as required by the Handi-Transit Committee.

The driver will sign the checklist to indicate the understanding of the contents. The driver should not sign the checklist unless all items are understood.

The completed checklist will be kept in the driver's file.

In the event that there are any changes to the Handi-Van, the checklist will be updated and every driver will be obliged to go over the new checklist.

4. HANDI-VAN INSPECTION

POLICY:

The Handi-Van will be inspected by the driver before each trip to ensure the vehicle and all the equipment is in proper operating condition.

PROCEDURE:

The vehicle and equipment is to be inspected as per the Vehicle Inspection Report.

The driver will complete the Inspection Report and deliver it to the Co-Ordinator on a weekly basis.

Repairs or maintenance, if required, must be reported to the Supervisor before trip.

Driver and Supervisor will decide together whether trips can still occur with the defect noted.

If a defect renders the vehicle unsafe for use, the Handi-Van should be pulled over immediately. Handi-van Supervisor must be contacted to recover the Handi-Van safely. If necessary, arrangements should be made with the Handi-Transit Board representative to return any passengers safely to their home.

Repairs or maintenance will be attended to by the Public Works Department and then as authorized by the Handi-Transit Board or its representative.

The driver will be responsible for cleaning the inside of the van at the end of each day and washing the outside if required.

Vehicle Inspection Reports will be kept for the life of vehicle.

The Handi-Van wheelchair lift will be inspected annually or more frequently, if necessary, by a business experienced with the operation of the lift.

A Vehicle Inspection Report Template is provided at the end of this document.

5. SAFETY PROCEDURES WHILE OPERATING THE HANDI-VAN

POLICY:

Safety of the driver and passengers is the first priority of the Handi-Van driver!

PROCEDURE:

To meet working alone regulation requirements, at intervals of no greater than 2 hours, make contact with dispatch or a Handi-Transit Board representative. In their absence drivers are to make alternate contact arrangements such as a family member.

The driver will be knowledgeable about all first aid and emergency equipment.

The driver will wear a Safety Jacket (High Visibility) before leaving the garage and wear at all times while operating the van.

Smoking and alcohol consumption is not allowed at any time in the Handi-Van.

The driver will not operate a cell phone while the Handi-Van is moving. If your cell phone rings with an incoming call or text message, pull over as soon as it is safe to do so and then respond to the call or text.

There are to be NO outgoing calls or text messages when operating the vehicle, its lift or when accompanying a passenger who requires assistance, i.e. pushing a wheelchair.

The driver will not consume alcohol or cannabis during or twelve (12) hours before operating the Handi-Van.

The speed of the Handi-Van will be limited to posted speed limits and consideration for road conditions (gravel, ice, and snow).

A maximum of 9 passengers will be transported at any one time.

The driver will ensure there is adequate fuel for the trip.

All passengers must be seated and belted into approved chairs. No lawn chair or make-shift seating is allowed. The restraint system will be utilized on all wheelchairs.

Battery operated scooters cannot be safely secured with a Handi-Van and will not be transported. A scooter is a battery-operated mobility aid, with tires of 12 inches or less in diameter, a pedestal seat and usually a 3 wheel tricycle configuration.

Passengers with a mobility scooter that has 4 wheels will be asked to transfer to a seat for safety purposes due to the instability of the rider on the scooter.

The maximum weight capacity of the lift is 800 pounds. Riders may be asked to annually provide, or at the discretion of the driver, the combined weight of themselves and their wheelchair to ensure they are within the capacity of the lift. All information provided will be kept strictly confidential. The onus will be on the rider to provide the information if requested and service may be suspended until the information is provided.

Hydraulic Lift Safety

Safe use of hydraulic lift for passengers in wheelchairs:

- Ensure the lift door is secured in open position.
- Check for obstructions or impediments.
- Lower lift until platform rests on ground
- Push wheelchair and occupant onto the platform, so that wheelchair faces away from the van.
- Engage wheelchair brakes
- Connect safety belt on the lift.
- Driver remains on the platform while operating the lift, only if space allows driver and passenger to ride safely. Driver always stands to the rear of the wheelchair facing away from the van. Otherwise stand safely to the control side of the platform.
- Ensure that the client is prepared for the lift elevation, by asking clearly and directly.
- Never leave a client standing on the elevated lift platform unattended. Operate the lift.
- Disengage the bakes carefully; pull wheelchair into the van and secure wheelchair restraint system. Stand by while client enters van and is securely restrained, if client is walking.
- To disembark wheelchair and occupant, reverse this procedure.

The driver is responsible for checking weather, wind-chill and road conditions.

The Handi-Van will not operate during the following conditions:

- Environment Canada Severe Weather Alert depending on severity, impact on road conditions and visibility, anticipated onset and duration of severe weather conditions, etc.
- If temperature is -32 degrees Celsius or lower with or without wind chill, van will operate within Souris only.

- If MB Highways reports road unsafe/closed by way of snow covered, icy, reduced visibility.
- If driver deems the conditions unsafe.
- If temperature is -40 degrees Celsius or below, vehicle will not operate at all.

Riders must be warmly dressed for cold weather conditions when boarding the Handi-Van and may be refused entry if deemed unsuitably prepared for the conditions.

6. EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

POLICY:

Drivers are expected to know when and how to implement emergency equipment.

PROCEDURE:

Fire extinguishers – become familiar with location and how to activate.

Cell Phone – Every driver must carry the Handi-Van cell phone or their own personal cell phone. Emergency numbers will be displayed in the Handi-Van. Stop the vehicle before operating the cell phone.

Warning triangles – become familiar with location and how to set up the triangles. Use the triangles to give other motorists advance warning if the vehicle has to stop on the shoulder or travelled portion of the road for an emergency situation.

Wheelchair lift, manual lift and emergency exit – become familiar with how to get passengers out of the vehicle quickly.

All drivers must watch the wheelchair and emergency exit video and be familiar with emergency procedures listed in the training manual.

The Handi-Van will be equipped with a winter and summer survival equipment (dependent on season) in case of emergency. Drivers must be familiar with location and contents of survival equipment. If equipment is used, driver must inform a member of the Personnel committee so materials can be promptly replaced.

7. BOOKING AND USE OF THE HANDI-VAN

POLICY:

Passengers in the Handi-Van are to be treated like customers with an “inside door to inside door” service.

PROCEDURE:

The Handi-Van contact phone number will be advertised.

The Dispatcher (Municipal Office Staff) will take the bookings². Bookings can be made from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday. Weekend and after hours may be accommodated if there is driver availability and approval of Dispatcher. Pre-booking is required.

The Dispatcher is responsible for ensuring a qualified driver is available for all trips.

The driver will have a charged cell phone.

All passengers on every trip will be recorded on the trip log.

The Handi-Van Service is available as required on a first come first served basis. Bookings of the service are required to provide for the most efficient use of resources and to ensure as often as possible that we meet the needs of all clients.

Clients will be required to book the Handi-Van by contacting the Municipal Office. Clients must provide the following information:

- Date and time of service required
- Nature of the trip (medical appointment, etc.)
- Pickup location
- Destination
- Call back number

It is required that clients book transport at least 24 hours in advance. Charters require at least one week’s notice.

Handi-Van Fees Updated 2025

One Way Trip – in Town	\$5 (\$10 return trip)
Additional Stop	\$5
Out of Town Trip	\$10 round trip plus mileage
Wait Time	\$16 per hour after first 3 hours on personal trips
Weekend or after-hours trips	\$25 plus \$10 return trip and mileage charge, if applicable.
PCH drives	\$10 per person (within Municipality)
Brandon Shopping Trips (SOS or PCH)	\$25 per person, Minimum 6 riders
Seniors Excursions	Call for quote based on # of riders and mileage

PAYMENT IS TO BE MADE BY THE CLIENT AT TIME OF SERVICE UNLESS INVOICED TO AN AGENCY. (EIA, HEALTH AUTHORITY, ETC.) The driver shall collect all fees and submit them to the dispatcher at the end of each day.

Drivers will only be reimbursed for a meal if they are away from Souris for more than 5 hours. Being away over the lunch hour does not constitute a reimbursable meal. If the group wishes to cover the cost of the driver's meal on an excursion trip, a driver can accept that courtesy.

CANCELLATION BY CLIENT

It is required that when trips which have been previously booked are no longer required by clients that they must provide a notification of cancellation. If no notification is provided, the client will be charged for the trip.

CANCELLATION BY HANDI-VAN DRIVER

If transportation service must be cancelled by the Handi-Van staff due to dangerous road conditions, weather or mechanical breakdown, the Dispatcher will make every effort to provide as much notice as possible to the Client.

Clients serviced by this Handi-Van Service will be primarily residents of the Municipality of Souris-Glenwood. Guests of residents will also be eligible. Trips will be within 120km of Souris. Consideration will be given to travel to Portage La Prairie for Medical Specialist Appointments.

Client escorts

If a client requires more assistance than the Handi-Van driver is required to provide, the client must enlist the aid of a friend/family member/volunteer to accompany them. The escort assisting the client is not charged for the transportation service. Health centers must provide an escort for clients who are not able to travel on their own for medical transfers.

DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS:

- Clients' dignity and need for independence shall be respected at all times by Handi-Van staff.
- Handi-Van drivers shall assist clients from the door where they are picked up to the door of their destination if any assistance is necessary. Drivers shall not provide assistance if the client wishes to ambulate independently.
- Handi-Van drivers may, at their discretion, assist clients with carrying small personal belongings or packages to and from their door. However, if a client needs assistance with numerous or larger items, they would need to arrange an escort as noted below.
- If a client needs more assistance than the driver is required to provide, the client must enlist the aid of a friend/family/volunteer to accompany her/him. The escort who is assisting the client is not charged for the transportation service.
- Drivers shall ensure that clients' seat belts are secured prior to all trips unless the client carries a physician's written order that she/he not use a seat belt.
- Drivers shall ensure that any loose items are secured in the Handi-Van while travelling.

²If a new booking is requested directly from a driver, he/she must apply the eligibility policies noted in section 1 above, and he/she MUST notify the Dispatcher as soon as possible.

- Drivers shall use the approved devices provided to secure any wheelchairs while travelling.
- Drivers will ensure that clients can gain access to their destination. If access is not available, they shall be transported to a pre-determined alternate destination.
- Drivers will use their discretion to refuse transport to or remove clients whose behavior is endangering the safety of others.

**Drivers are not allowed to accept cash gratuities under the Municipal Act

8. RECORD KEEPING

POLICY:

Accurate records to be kept of all Handi-Van trips and vehicle maintenance.

PROCEDURE:

Daily record keeping logs will be provided to the drivers.

The Driver will be expected to return a completed trip log.

The Driver will ensure the Dispatcher/Finance is provided with the completed forms.

The Municipal Finance Department will be responsible for invoicing as well as paying the bills and wages accumulated for the operation of the Handi-Van.

The Bookkeeper will provide a monthly summary of the operation of the Handi-Van to the committee.

The fee schedule will be reviewed annually by the Handi-Transit Board and provided to the Dispatcher, drivers and the public.

9. ACCIDENT/DAMAGE REPORTING AND TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

POLICY:

Vehicle accidents, incidences and vehicle damage must be reported by the driver to a member of the Operations committee of the board.

PROCEDURE:

The person who is driving or is in care of the Handi-Van at the time of the accident or when any damage is sustained will:

- Ensure passenger safety and provide first aid if required.
- Contact Emergency Services, if necessary
- Contact Supervisor
- Complete the Vehicle Incident Report and deliver it to the Co-Ordinator.
- File a claim with MPI, if required.

Current accident/damage reports will be kept on file.

An incidence is when something unusual occurs on the trip. Some examples may include: passenger falls, passenger violence, or failure to follow posted rules (alcohol consumption, etc.).

Traffic violations, speeding tickets, parking tickets etc. which require payment of a fine are the responsibility of the driver to pay.

A Vehicle Incident Report template is provided at the end of this document.