

Brookings Area Transit *Passenger Handbook*

“The mission of Brookings Area Transit is to provide coordinated transportation services for all citizens of the Brookings area and foster independence by providing mobility options.”



BataBus.com

Contact BATA

Office: 605-692-5416

Dispatch: 605-692-2222

Dispatch Toll-Free: 855-962-9120

Fax: 605-692-9120

Email: bata@batabus.com

Website: BataBus.com

“No one shall be denied a ride based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, political affiliation, or belief in any other consideration prohibited by law.”

Updated February 2021

Intent of Passenger Handbook

Brookings Area Transit Authority (BATA) is pleased to serve the Brookings County area with a demand response public transit system. Our passengers are the most important part of our agency and keeping you safe is our number one goal.

This booklet provides a reference to your responsibilities as a passenger of our service. These policies serve as a guide for making decisions that affect your responsibility and safety. All policies will be enforced in a consistent manner.

Service Hours

**Please refer to BataBus.com
for BATA's hours of service.**

Service may be limited or suspended on these holidays:

New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Labor Day
Christmas Day

Easter Sunday
Independence Day
Thanksgiving Day

Service hours and holiday schedule are subject to change. Updates are posted in vehicles, on our website, and on our [Facebook page](#).

Scheduling Rides within Brookings County

Call dispatch or visit BataBus.com to schedule a ride. Reservations must be made within dispatch hours at least one business day before the ride is needed. Same day rides will be accommodated as possible for eligible passengers at a higher fare.

Passengers who need a recurring ride may create a standing reservation that can last up to a year. It is the rider's responsibility to notify dispatch of changes or cancellations to a ride. Drivers will not make unscheduled stops.



Scheduling Rides out of Brookings County

Travel outside of Brookings County must be arranged by calling dispatch. Please refer to BATA's website for information regarding out of county transportation.

Travel outside of Brookings county will be contingent on demand for service. Because of this, we do not allow out of county travel to be scheduled online.

Pick Up and Arrival Times

Our buses serve many passengers within very small-time frames. Please schedule pickup times for 30 minutes before your appointment to allow our buses to serve multiple passengers and get everyone to their destinations on time.

Arrival times may vary. Buses may arrive 10 minutes before or 10 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. Drivers will wait for 5 minutes past your scheduled pickup time. The driver will then leave and list you as a “no show.”

Example: If you schedule a 9:00AM pickup, the bus may arrive as early as 8:50AM or as late as 9:10AM. Prepare to leave at any time within this 20-minute window and schedule your rides accordingly.

If you anticipate being late for your scheduled ride, please call dispatch to see if we may be able to accommodate you later for a same-day fare. If you have waited more than 10 minutes after your scheduled pickup time, please contact dispatch to inquire about the ride.

Please make every effort to cancel rides as soon as possible. If repeated “no shows” occur, reservations may be cancelled. If the bus must go back for a passenger after they have been listed as a “no show,” the same day fare will apply.

Return Trips

Riders can also schedule a ‘will call’ or a set time for return trips. ‘Will call’ rides require the passenger to call dispatch when they are ready for their return ride. We make every effort to pick up our ‘will call’ passengers in a timely manner, however, if a bus does not arrive after 15 minutes, please call dispatch.

Fares

Fare is due upon entering the bus. Contact BATA's dispatch or go to our website for BATA's fare structure.

Fares can be paid using cash, check, credit card, or tokens. Tokens may be purchased from BATA's office, BATA drivers, and multiple locations within Brookings county (call dispatch for details).

Children age 12 and under can ride to the same destination as a parent free-of-charge.

Fare structure is subject to change, as necessary.

Door to Door Service

Private homes/Apartment Buildings: Drivers are unable to enter past the first door of these locations for any reason.

Businesses/Medical Facilities/Public Buildings: Drivers will not go past the lobby area to drop off or pick-up passengers at public locations.

Refusal of Service

BATA reserves the right to refuse service to passengers who:

- Are intoxicated or belligerent towards drivers or passengers.
- Pose a safety or health threat to themselves or others.
- Have unreasonable personal hygiene, open wounds, or contagious diseases.
- Has repeated "no shows."
- Transports pets without a designated carrier, other than service animals. ***Transportation of pets must be declared to dispatch at the time the ride is scheduled.***

Medicaid Recipients

BATA is a Medicaid provider. Dispatch will need to verify travel expenses are covered before your ride will be scheduled. Transportation not covered by Medicaid is your responsibility.

Medical Emergencies

BATA is not an ambulance service. If you require emergency medical attention, please call 911.

If you have a medical emergency while on the bus, medical personnel will be notified.

If you have a medical condition which you feel BATA should be aware of, let dispatch know prior to scheduling services.

Escorts & Personal Attendants

Drivers will provide reasonable assistance to all passengers; however, BATA drivers are not licensed medical professionals. Drivers will not assist with dressing passengers.

If BATA determines that you require an escort for transportation, you will be required to utilize one before further transportation will be provided.

Escorts can ride free of charge but must be picked up and dropped off at the same location as the passenger. Escorts **MUST** be willing and able to assist you with mobility, personal and/or medical needs.

Transportation for ages 3-18

- **No child will be transported unless a current Emergency Contact Form is on file at BATA.**
- **Rides cannot be charged.** If your child does not have the bus fare, they will not ride. There are no exceptions!
- Schedule changes must be made by a parent or guardian. We cannot take ride information from children.
- K-12 passengers should start looking for the bus at 7:10am. Bus schedules change daily so riders must be ready when the bus arrives each day.
- Preschool passengers should be ready for pickup 30 minutes before the class start time. The bus will arrive within that 30-minute window.
- There are no guarantees on pick-up or drop-off times. Routes are determined based on the fastest order for that day's scheduled rides.
- Buses will arrive at the schools at dismissal time and will depart no more than seven minutes later. Rides required after the bus departs will cost a same day fare.
- An adult must wave at the driver indicating he or she is home before a child can be dropped off.
- Negative behaviors will not be tolerated and will result in removal of your child from the bus schedule.
- Contact BATA if your child is not home within 45 minutes of their pick-up time.



Vehicle Backing Policy

BATA has a NO BACKING policy. Drivers will not pull in residential driveways or put themselves in a position which requires backing up.

Items on the Bus

There is a 5-bag limit per rider. Please place your items on the floor of the bus. Passengers are responsible for loading and unloading their own items.

Transporting a bike is allowed, but you are responsible for its transfer. Please notify dispatch if you need to transport a bike. If you cannot carry larger items yourself, they cannot be transported.

BATA is not responsible for lost or stolen items! Items found on the bus are placed in the lost and found at BATA's office. Unclaimed items will be donated periodically.

Not Allowed on the Bus

There is **NO** eating or drinking allowed on BATA vehicles. Smoking, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, and alcohol are not permitted on BATA vehicles.

Seat Belt/ Riding Policy

All passengers are required to wear a seat belt. If you refuse to wear a seatbelt, you may be denied service.

BATA does not provide car seats for youth passengers. If your child requires a car seat, it is your responsibility to provide and secure one.

You must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before leaving your seat. You must remain seated with your seat belt on while the bus is in motion.

Lift Capability and Services

BATA vehicles are equipped with lifts which are available for use by anyone. BATA complies with ADA requirements for accessible vehicles. To access these requirements, please visit www.transit.dot.gov.

BATA's staff is specially trained to operate the bus and all equipment. Please follow your driver's instructions on how to board and disembark a vehicle. For safety reasons, passengers or escorts are NOT ALLOWED to assist with operating lift procedures or any other functions of the transit vehicles.

If you cannot be properly secured, you will be given the option of whether you would like to proceed with the ride.

Service Suspensions

If travel is unsafe due to inclement weather, BATA reserves the right to suspend service until conditions are favorable. If service is suspended, all rides, regardless of trip purpose, will be cancelled.

Appropriate announcements will be made to the local media and on BATA's Facebook page.

Winter Access to Private Homes

For your safety and the safety of BATA staff, it is your responsibility to ensure sidewalks and driveways are accessible and free of ice and snow.

Severe Weather Guidelines

Severe weather may affect BATA's service. Buses will run slower to be safe in adverse weather. The following service changes may occur at any time hazardous road conditions exist.

- Travel time may increase if streets are icy.
- Non-essential trips may not be provided.
- Bus service on impassible streets will not be provided.
- Absolutely no alley travel will be allowed.
- Passengers who are on buses when severe weather occurs unexpectedly, will be taken home immediately or to the nearest shelter.

Donations

Brookings Area Transit Authority is a non-profit organization. All donations are appreciated and can be made in person, by mail, over the phone, or on our website.

Your support through donations, memorials, estate planning, etc. are humbly appreciated and accepted.

BATA's actual cost per ride is considerably higher than our fare structure, however, we can lower the passenger cost because of donations, Federal & State funding, and local support.



Complaint Process

BATA is committed to providing non-discriminatory service. To request more information or to file a discrimination or service complaint, visit our website or contact this transit agency at (605)692-5416.

A written complaint can also be initiated by writing to:

**Brookings Area Transit Authority, Inc.
418 Western Avenue
Brookings, SD 57006**

Complaints may also be presented in person at the above address. Please call the office in advance if special accommodations will be needed.

