



Heart of Texas Rural Transit District *Blue Transit* Rider Guide



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Agency Overview

Heart of Texas Rural Transit District - **Blue Transit**

The Heart of Texas Rural Transit District (**HOTRTD**) is one of 40 Rural Transit Districts designated statewide by the Texas Department of Transportation (**TXDOT**). Our district operates under the name **Blue Transit** and we strive to provide you safe, affordable, and timely transportation anywhere in the Heart of Texas region.

We provide service to over 115,000 residents covering 4,500 square miles in **Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Limestone, and Hill Counties**.

HOTRTD Blue Transit is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

American Disability Acts Policy: HOTRTD follows the American Disability Act. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion.

Transportation Services

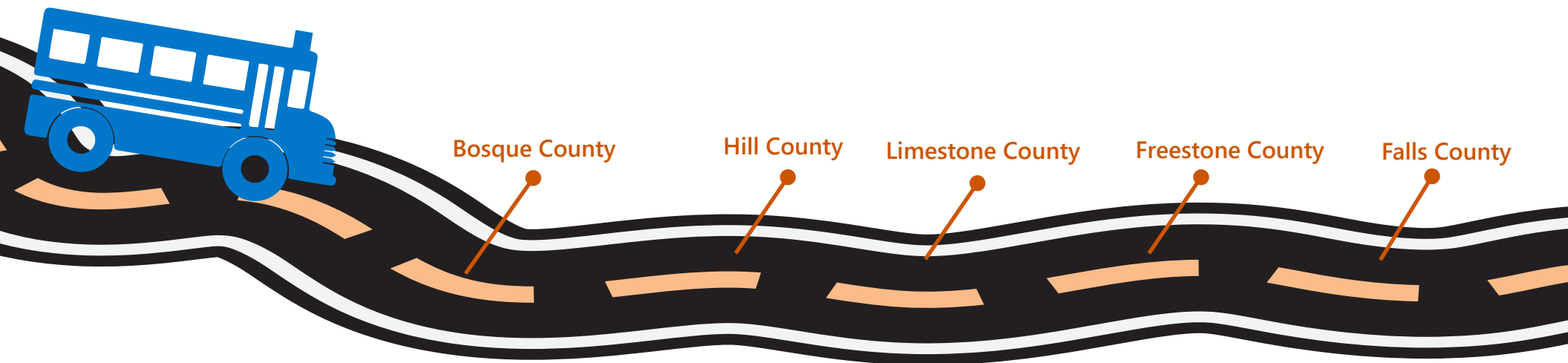
Transportation service is classified as “origin to destination” meaning the vehicle stops at the passenger’s address instead of the passenger being required to go to a pick-up location or hub of service.

Rural transportation is provided Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the rural areas of the **Blue Transit service area** consisting of **Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, and Limestone counties**.

Blue Transit makes getting where you need to go simple and stress-free. Whether you’re traveling within your county or planning a trip to a neighboring county, we’ve got you covered!

Local Travel: Need a ride to the grocery store, doctor’s office, or a visit with friends nearby? **Blue Transit** offers reliable service throughout your home county, helping you stay connected to the places and people that matter most.

County-to-County Travel: Planning a trip across county lines? No problem! **Blue Transit** also offers convenient transportation between counties in our service area, making it easy to get to appointments, work, or special events beyond your local community.



Fare Structure

Blue Transit provides affordable and reliable transportation across its rural service area. The fare structure is simple and based on whether your trip stays within a single county or crosses county lines.

Fare Structure

\$1.00 One-Way Fare - For trips that begin and end within the same county in **Blue Transit**'s service area.

\$2.00 One-Way Fare - For trips that cross county boundaries within the **Blue Transit** service region.

Fare Payment Guidelines

Exact Change Only. Drivers do not carry change. Please bring the exact fare in cash at the time of boarding.

Prepaid Trips Are Not Accepted

Blue Transit does not allow prepayment for trips. Each fare must be paid in full upon boarding the vehicle.

No Credit or Debit Transactions

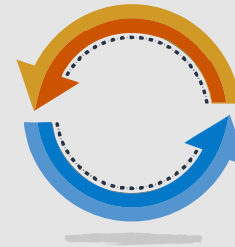
Blue Transit vehicles are not equipped to process card payments. Please plan accordingly.

Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

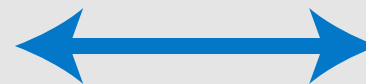
Approved PCAs traveling with eligible riders under ADA guidelines ride free.

Reminder: Riders who fail to pay the correct fare may be denied service. Please confirm your fare amount during the reservation.

Within Same County



To Another County





Scheduling Trips

Scheduling a *Blue Transit* trip reservation is just a call away! If you need to change or schedule a reservation originating from within the service area, please call the following numbers

For trips from Bosque, Falls, Hill, Freestone, or Limestone counties, call **254-292-1873**

Trips are reservation based and must be made **at least 24 hours in advance**. All trips are first come, first served, and based on availability.

Same-day trips are possible but dependent on availability. Call today to book a trip!

Reservation Requirements:

1. First and last name
2. Date and time that you wish to travel, including the appointment time at your destination if appropriate
3. Complete address of your pick-up location
4. Complete address of your destination, including the name of the business, the suite, or building number etc.
5. Time of your return trip. Please allow at least 90 minutes between trips.
6. Are you traveling with a Personal Care Attendant and/or guest?
7. Trip purpose (medical, work, education, personal etc.)
8. Any special instructions of additional information.

Please have this trip information ready before you call to help speed up the reservation process and reduce phone wait times.

Reservation and Scheduling Guidelines:

When booking your ride with **Blue Transit**, you will be given a 30-minute pickup window. For example, if you request a pickup at 2:00 p.m., you may be told your driver will pick you up anytime from 1:45 to 2:15 p.m. Your driver may arrive any time within this 30-minute window, so please be ready at the start of the window to ensure a smooth and timely trip.

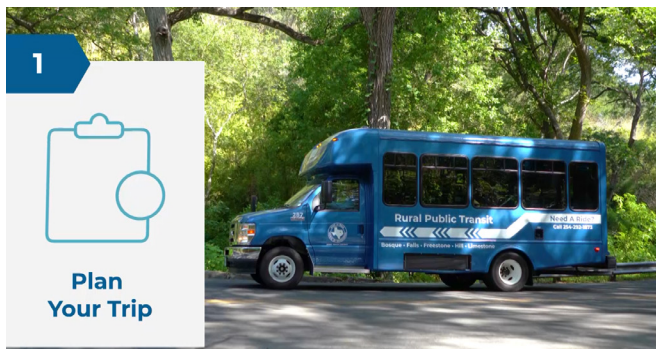
Plan Ahead for Appointments: If you have a specific appointment time, let us know when you schedule your trip. We will aim to get you to your destination before your scheduled appointment.

Allow Time for Your Return: Be sure to give yourself enough time to complete your appointment so you are ready during your return pickup window.

Consider Business Hours: Check the opening and closing times of your destination to avoid being dropped off too early or picked up too late.

Account for Shared Ride Travel: **Blue Transit** is a shared ride service, which means you may be onboard up to 60 minutes as we pick up or drop off other passengers.

Verify Trip Details: Listen carefully as the Customer Service Agent repeats your trip information during the reservation process to ensure everything is correct.



“Will-Call” Return Trips - Medical Appointments Only

If you’re traveling to a **medical appointment**, we understand it may be difficult to predict when you’ll be ready to return. In these cases, **Blue Transit** offers a “will-call” return option.

Here’s how it works:

During your initial reservation, **provide us a return pickup time as you would normally**, but let us know this time may change depending on the length of the medical appointment.

If your appointment is expected to go longer than your provided return pickup time, **call Blue Transit at 254-292-1873** as soon as you can to **update your return pickup time**. Once we receive your call, a vehicle will be dispatched to your drop-off location during your adjusted pickup window.

Please note:

“Will-call” returns are only available from the same location where you were dropped off.

If you need to be picked up from a different location, this must be arranged in advance during your original reservation. Same-day location changes cannot be accommodated unless pre-approved and documented by **dispatch**.

The vehicle will arrive within 5 minutes to one (1) hour after you call to activate your return trip.



Subscription Service Policy:

Blue Transit offers a **Subscription Service** for riders who travel consistently to the same location on the same days and times each week. This service is designed to reduce the need for repeat bookings while helping **Blue Transit** create more efficient and reliable transit schedules.

What Is Subscription Service?

Subscription Service is intended for riders who travel two or more times per week on a recurring schedule, such as trips to work, school, dialysis, or adult day care. To qualify, the trip must be identical each time, including:

1. Day(s) of the week
2. Pickup time
3. Appointment or arrival time (if applicable)
4. Number of passengers
5. Pickup and drop-off locations

Once enrolled, your trips will automatically be scheduled for you—no need to call each time.

Important Note: Monthly Renewal Required

Blue Transit's Subscription Service is approved one month at a time. Riders must call **Blue Transit's** Customer Service each month to renew their subscription. Failure to renew before the end of the current service period may result in loss of subscription scheduling, requiring you to book rides individually (subject to availability).

How to Apply

Subscription Service is provided on a first-come, first-served basis and is not guaranteed due to limited vehicle and scheduling capacity. Ask a **Blue Transit** Customer Service Representative for more information or to apply for the service.

Guidelines and Rider Responsibilities

To ensure fair and efficient service, riders using Subscription Service must follow these guidelines:

1. Cancel when not needed: If you will not be taking a scheduled trip, call to cancel in advance. All Subscription trips are subject to **Blue Transit's** No-Show and Late Cancellation policy.
2. Temporary suspensions: You may temporarily suspend your subscription for reasons such as vacations or hospital stays. However, you must call Customer Service to both suspend and resume your subscription.
3. Consistent use required: Repeated no-shows, frequent late cancellations, or inconsistent use may result in suspension or permanent loss of Subscription Service privileges.
4. Reminder: Subscription Service is a convenience offered beyond ADA requirements and may be modified or discontinued at **Blue Transit's** discretion.

Cancellations, No-Shows, and Appeals

Changing or Cancelling Your Trip

Blue Transit understands that plans change. If you need to cancel a scheduled trip, please call **Blue Transit** Customer Service at **254-292-1873** as early as possible.

Advanced Cancellation

Cancellations made by 4:45 PM the day before your scheduled trip are considered Advanced Cancellations. These cancellations help **Blue Transit** reassign resources efficiently.

✓ No penalties are assessed.

Same-Day Cancellation

Cancellations made at least two (2) hours before the start of your scheduled pickup window are considered Same-Day Cancellations.

✓ No penalties are assessed if cancelled within this time frame

Late Cancellation

Cancellations made less than two (2) hours but at least 30 minutes before the start of your pickup window are considered Late Cancellations and may result in service penalties.

✗ 1 point may be assessed.

What is a No-Show?

What Is a No-Show?

A No-Show is recorded if:

1. The customer cancels less than 30 minutes before the scheduled pickup window.
2. The customer declines the ride when the driver arrives ("cancel at the door").
3. The driver arrives on time but cannot locate the customer at the pickup address.
4. The driver arrives on time and waits five (5) minutes, but the customer is not ready and cannot board. Drivers must leave to stay on schedule.

✗ 2 points may be assessed per No-Show.

Note: If you miss the first leg of a round trip, all remaining scheduled trips for that day will not be automatically cancelled. You must call **Blue Transit** to cancel any additional legs, or risk further No-Show penalties.

Late Cancellation and No-Show Policy

Late Cancellation and No-Show Policy

In accordance with ADA Regulation 49 CFR § 37.125(h), **Blue Transit** may suspend service for riders who demonstrate a pattern or practice of missed trips.

Points System

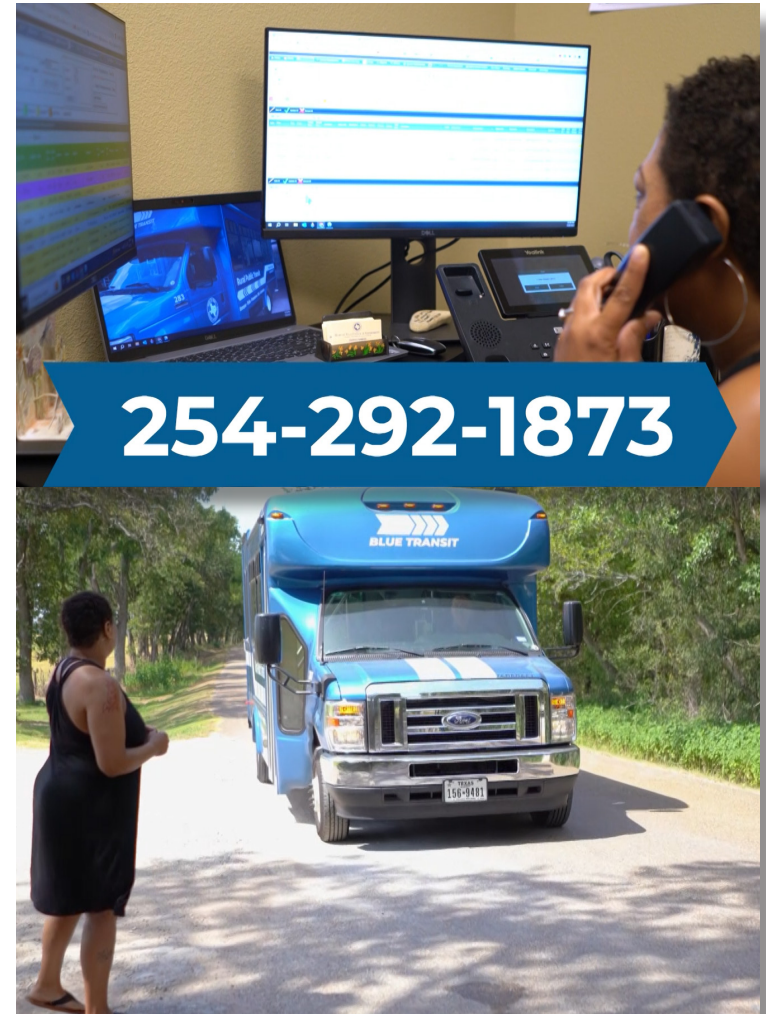
Types of Action	Points Assessed
1. Advanced Cancellation	✓ 0 Points
2. Same-Day Cancellation	✓ 0 Points (if less than 2 hours)
3. Late Cancellation	✗ 1 Point
4. No-Show	✗ 2 Points

Points are tracked during a rolling 30-, 60-, or 180-day period. Trips missed for reasons outside the rider's control (e.g., medical emergencies, vehicle error) are not penalized.

Penalties Based on Accumulated Points

- 6 points in 30 days: Warning Letter
- 8 points in 30 days: Up to 3-Day Suspension
- 24 points in 60 days: Up to 1-Month Suspension
- 48 points in 180 days: Up to 3-Month Suspension

Important: Riders will not be penalized if their total No-Shows and Late Cancellations represent less than 15% of all scheduled trips in the same period.



Suspension & Appeals Process

If a rider accumulates excessive points, **Blue Transit** will issue a written suspension notice, including the number of points, length of suspension, and appeal instructions. Riders have 14 days from the date of the notice to:

1. Appeal the decision, or
2. Arrange for alternative transportation during the suspension.

Appeals Process

Blue Transit provides a formal ADA-compliant appeals process:

1. Riders will receive instructions on how to appeal within the suspension notice.
2. Riders may present their case to an independent appeals board.
3. A written outcome will be provided within 30 days of the appeal hearing.
4. If the appeal is denied, the suspension will begin immediately. If upheld, the rider will automatically be cleared to resume service once the suspension period ends.

□ **Note:** Subscription service is not automatically reinstated after a suspension. You must contact **Blue Transit** to re-apply.

Customer Feedback and Complaints

If you experience a problem with **Blue Transit** service or wish to submit feedback:

How to File a Complaint

1. Call **Blue Transit** Customer Service at **254-292-1873**
2. Submit a written complaint through our website
3. Pick up a feedback form at our administrative office or request one by mail

Blue Transit will:

1. Acknowledge receipt of your complaint
2. Investigate the issue
3. Provide a timely and appropriate response
4. Our goal is to ensure a high standard of service and to continuously improve based on your feedback.

Attendants, Guests, and Animals

Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed to assist a passenger with a disability in meeting their personal needs during transit. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), **Blue Transit** allows certified riders to travel with one PCA at no additional charge.

1. Riders must indicate the need for a PCA during the eligibility and certification process.
2. When scheduling a trip, riders must inform the Customer Service Representative if a PCA will accompany them.
3. PCAs must board and exit at the same location as the rider and may not travel independently.
4. **Blue Transit** reserves the right to require a PCA in certain cases to ensure the safety of the passenger or others.

Guests and Companions

1. Riders may travel with up to two guests, one of whom may be a designated PCA. Additional guests will only be permitted if space is available on the vehicle at the time of the trip.
2. Guests must travel the full trip with the rider—from the same pickup to the same drop-off location.
3. Each guest is required to pay the same fare as the eligible rider.
4. Guests include friends, family members, children, or other individuals who are not serving as a PCA.
5. Important: Riders must notify the Customer Service Representative of any guests or PCAs at the time of booking. Every seat must be reserved in advance. Unregistered companions—including children—will not be permitted to board.

Attendants, Guests, and Animals Continued

Service Animals

Blue Transit welcomes service animals onboard in compliance with ADA regulations.

A service animal is defined as a dog that has been individually trained to perform specific tasks directly related to a person's disability. Animals providing emotional support or companionship without specific task training do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Passengers should notify the scheduler when reserving a ride if a service animal will accompany them. Service animals:

1. Must remain under the control of their owner at all times.
2. Must not pose a direct threat to the safety or health of others.
3. May not block vehicle aisles, exits, or entryways.

Pets

Non-service animals (pets) are allowed only under the following conditions:

1. Pets must be fully enclosed in an approved pet carrier.
2. The carrier must fit on the rider's lap or under the seat and must not occupy additional passenger space.
3. Pets must remain quiet, clean, and under control throughout the entire trip.

Blue Transit reserves the right to refuse transportation to any pet that is disruptive, aggressive, or poses a nuisance to other riders or the operator.

Passenger Code of Conduct

Violation of the **Passenger Code of Conduct** may lead to immediate removal from the **Blue Transit** vehicle and/or suspension of transportation services.

Customers in violation of the **Passenger Code of Conduct** may receive written warning of the violation depending on the severity of the situation and based on managerial discretion.

By using **Blue Transit** services, you are agreeing to uphold all rules mentioned in the Passenger Code of Conduct.

Please help keep our services as safe as possible for you and all of our passengers by following these rules at all times.



Code of Conduct

1. **Be Prepared** - Show your pass or pay using exact change for fare when boarding the vehicle.
2. **Be Timely** - Board the bus as quickly as possible and take a seat.
3. **Be Courteous** - Do not take more than one seat if the vehicle is crowded.
4. **Don't Forget Your Belongings** - Check that you have your belongings before exiting
5. **No Food/Drink** - Do not eat or drink on the vehicle.
6. **Keep Vehicles Clean** - Do not leave papers or trash on the bus.
7. **Clothing required** - All passengers must have shoes, shirt, and bottom covering at all times.
8. **Keep Quiet Levels** - Speak softly when talking to others or using cell phones.
9. **No Soliciting** - Passengers cannot solicit goods or services in **Blue Transit** vehicles or around the bus facility.

10. **Allow the Driver to do Their Job Safely** - Passengers are not allowed to interfere with the vehicle operator or operator controls at any time.

11. **Respect the Driver and Passengers** - Respect the driver and other passengers on board.

Profanity, teasing, sexual/ racial slurs or gestures, and/ or threatening/ offensive language will not be tolerated. No person shall intentionally or recklessly harass or annoy another person.

12. **No Drinking And/Or Smoking** - Alcohol and smoking, including electronic cigarettes, is prohibited in all **Blue Transit** vehicles. **It is against the law.**

13. **No Illegal Substances** - The possession of illegal drugs, dangerous substances, and/or weapons of any kind is strictly prohibited from all **Blue Transit** vehicles. **If intoxicated or inhibited by drugs, service could be denied.**

14. **Service Animals Only** - Passengers accompanied by a service animal are liable for any damages that may be caused. Service animals are not allowed to sit in a seat.

15. **Age Requirement** - You must be at least 16 years of age to ride the bus without the company of a parent or guardian.

16. **Keep Bags to a Minimum** - Please keep bags/packages to three or less so as not to take up too much room for other occupants.

Code of Conduct

17. Behaviors - Aggressive behaviors or inappropriate physical contact or displays of body parts by a passenger at any time **will** result in immediate removal from the vehicle/ facility and potentially result in permanent suspension from transportation services.

18. Medical Equipment - Medical equipment and supplies such as oxygen bottles, syringes, etc. will only be allowed on vehicles if they are prescribed by a physician and are properly secured or stowed while the vehicle is in motion

19. Mobility Devices - Drivers shall secure all wheelchairs tie downs for passengers utilizing wheelchairs. All wheelchairs must have their wheels locked and must be properly secured while on the vehicle. Drivers may also provide assistance securing lap and shoulder belts for passengers utilizing wheelchairs.

If a seat or wheelchair tie-down location has a seat belt that is not working or missing the seat or tie-down location, it cannot be used for seating passengers or securing passengers in wheelchairs.

Walkers, canes, and other mobility devices are allowed on vehicles. Mobility devices must be secured from movement while on the vehicle and must not block the aisles and walkways.



Severe or Inclement Weather Policy

At **Blue Transit**, the safety of our passengers and employees is our highest priority. During severe or inclement weather, **Blue Transit** Operations continuously monitors local road and weather conditions to determine if services should be delayed, modified, or suspended. Generally, **Blue Transit** service decisions during adverse weather conditions will align closely with local school district closures. If area schools are closed due to weather, it is likely that **Blue Transit** services may also be suspended for the safety of all.

Service Delay or Closure Procedure

1. **Blue Transit** staff will monitor weather forecasts, road conditions, and official warnings when severe weather is expected.
2. If a service delay or closure is necessary, **Blue Transit** will announce the decision through local media outlets, the **Blue Transit** website, and Customer Service phone lines.
3. Service may be delayed, modified, or suspended for part of the day or for the entire day, depending on evolving weather conditions.

Blue Transit will continue to reassess road and weather conditions throughout the day and will update service information as needed.

Passenger Responsibilities During Severe Weather

1. Check local media, **Blue Transit**'s website, or call Customer Service before traveling to confirm service availability.
2. Allow additional time for travel when services resume, as delays may continue even after road conditions improve.
3. Make sure your contact information is current with **Blue Transit** to receive notifications about any changes to your scheduled trips.

Reminder: **Blue Transit** reserves the right to cancel or adjust individual trips if road conditions are unsafe in specific parts of the service area, even if general operations resume.