

Northern Health Connections

Frequently Asked Questions And More Information

What is the ticketing process?

Tickets must be booked by transition house/safe home staff by calling the Call Centre (1 888 647 4997). Ideally bookings made 48 hours in advance; there is no way to guarantee a seat on the bus is available without pre-booking a ticket. All passengers are prioritized the same (once a booking is made, a woman would not lose her seat to someone booking with a medical appointment). Tickets will be emailed to the organization after they are booked.

Do I need a printed ticket?

No. A woman does not need a physical copy of the ticket to board the bus. She can alternately give the driver her name or the name of the organization who booked the ticket. The driver can then confirm that this ticket has been booked and the woman will be able to board the bus.

Specific Needs

When booking a ticket, staff should check in with the Call Centre about accommodation possibilities for specific needs that a woman may have (i.e., pets, luggage, children, etc.).

Payment

Tickets can be paid for by credit card (over the phone), debit card (on the bus) or voucher (over the phone or on the bus).

Vouchers

You can pre-purchase a ticket book by calling the Call Centre. Each book costs \$100 and contains 10x \$10 tickets. Vouchers can be associated with your organization, and not a specific individual. If a ticket were cancelled, this voucher would go back to your organization's ticket book. The Call Centre can track the number of vouchers your organization has. A woman could arrive at the bus stop and let the driver know she is using a voucher from your organization to board. The driver would then call the Call Centre to double check that there are vouchers available from your organization.

Cancellations / Refunds

Cancellations and refunds are possible if a woman does not board the bus. If ticket is booked during a voucher, the voucher is returned to your organization. Otherwise, the refund stays with the name of the person for whom the ticket was booked.

Children accompanying a woman on the bus

There is no limit on the number of children allowed to accompany a woman on the bus (besides the number of seats available). Children pay the same fare as adults.

Luggage on the bus

Each passenger can bring one carry-on and up to two pieces of checked luggage. However, it may be possible to accommodate increased luggage needs of transition house clients. Staff should ask about this when reserving a ticket. More info at <https://nhconnections.ca/passenger-information/luggage>

Pets on the bus

Service animals and small dogs in kennels can accompany passengers. It is unlikely that other pets are able to join passengers but check with the Call Centre when booking.

Food and Drinks on the Bus

Food and drinks are allowed on the bus, but alcohol and illegal substances are not permitted. Passengers are responsible for cleaning any mess from spilled food or drinks.

What are the buses like?

The NHB system has 6 full sized coaches and 6 minibuses. All buses are wheelchair accessible, and all have washrooms.

Bus Waiting Areas

It may not be possible to wait indoors for the bus at all stop locations. Buses may arrive or depart prior to an indoor location being open. Also, many hospitals are not permitting passengers to wait indoors due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Is there any notification if the bus is delayed?

It's rare, but delay may happen due to accidents or weather. If this is the case, Health Bus Staff will call the contact and emergency contact info associated with each booking. This may be the contact info for the organization (it will depend on the numbers that are given when the ticket is booked).

Covid Updates

For the latest news and information please visit <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/covid-19-information#trusted-info#northern-health>.

How else can the NHB support women's safety?

NHB staff are very used to following strict passenger confidentiality protocols, as many people are travelling for sensitive reasons. Windows on the bus are also tinted.

Many women at risk bring with them histories of abuse, poverty, and violence. Are there practices or policies in place at the Northern Health Bus to manage these realities?

100% of drivers have completed the following trainings:

- San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Education
- First Aid / AED use
- WHMIS (Workplace hazardous materials Information System)

Drivers are also very sensitive to everyone's needs

Northern Health Bus has a zero-tolerance policy for illegal drugs and alcohol. What does this look like in practice?

There is a zero-tolerance policy for passengers whose behavior is impacted by alcohol or drugs. Illegal substances and/or alcohol are not permitted onboard Northern Health Connections buses under any circumstances.

Passengers found in possession of, or using, illegal substances and/or alcohol while on the bus may be asked to immediately depart the bus at the next safest location. The police may then be notified of the passenger's location and asked to pick up the passenger and take whatever actions they deem necessary. If illegal substance or alcohol is detected on the passenger and the passenger is too disruptive and/or has an impact on the safety of the passengers and driver, they may not be allowed on the bus or be removed at the next safest location. Note that a driver will contact Fiona MacPherson (Northern Health Connections Lead) or Rosalind Layton (Operations Manager) before any measures are taken.