

## WEST OAKLAND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Website: [www.RideWOTA.org](http://www.RideWOTA.org)

Mailing and Physical Address (offices are at end of the building):

205 W. Livingston Road

Highland, MI 48357

(248) 887-4979

### BECOMING A RIDER:

1. You must be a tax-paying resident of the Townships of Highland, White Lake, Waterford, or the City of Walled Lake, with proof of residency.
2. You must be either a senior (55+ years old) or disabled (18+ years old, with professional verification).
3. The following items are necessary to qualify:
  - a. WOTA Application Passenger Information Form,
  - b. Proof of residency (driver's license, current utility bill, etc.) with your name and address,
  - c. If disabled, a Professional Verification Form is to be completed by a health professional for instance a doctor, counselor, physical therapist, etc., proving your disability. We allow up to 60 days to have this completed,
  - d. The process will generally take 2-4 days to be registered once all documents have been received via general mail. If registration is emailed, we can complete the process within 24 hours.
4. The Registration Form may be completed online at [www.ridewota.org](http://www.ridewota.org). You may also download a copy of the form from our website and emailed to: [info@ridewota.org](mailto:info@ridewota.org). If you do not have internet access, forms are available at the WOTA office or may be mailed to you.

### RULES TO FOLLOW ONCE YOU ARE A RIDER:

1. *WOTA is NOT meant to be your only means of transportation.*
2. ***NO ride is guaranteed.***
3. ***There will be times that we cannot accommodate your schedule.***
4. WOTA is demand response public transportation; schedules change daily based on rides, how many people are on the vehicle, traffic, weather, late passengers, issues with passengers, etc. We have no fixed routes. Please be patient and understand your ride will not be the same every time. We have different drivers and new routes daily.
5. Rides are based on a first-come, first-serve basis, with priority given to:
  - a. Work rides (available from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Monday through Friday)

- b. Medical appointments (as early as 7:00 am for tests)
  - c. Shopping for food
  - d. Leisure Activities
  - e. Second-stop rides (must be prescheduled)
  - f. Other types of rides are available but may not be guaranteed at time of call. You may be put on a waitlist until the day before if the schedule is busy. It is best to give Dispatch a wide time frame to accommodate lower-priority rides.
6. **Inclement Weather:** WOTA will consult with local authorities to determine if the roads are safe in each community. If we must cancel trips for inclement weather, we will leave a message on the phone system, post on our website and on our Facebook page. Since WOTA covers a large area, we reserve the right to close specific areas or limit rides to work and medical appointments due to weather.
7. All driveways, walkways and private roads must be clear of debris, overhanging trees, ice, and snow. WOTA buses cannot drive under overhangs.
8. WOTA is supported in part by our non-profit 501c(3) organization Ride with Pride, and gladly accepts tax-deductible donations. You may either give a check donation to the driver or send a check directly to our offices: Ride with Pride, 205 W. Livingston Rd., Highland, MI 48357. Receipts will be mailed.
9. **Hours of Operation:**
- a. Driver - Monday through Friday      7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - b. Office – Monday through Friday      8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
10. **Scheduling Policy – Call (248) 887-4979**
- a. **Scheduling Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.**
  - b. You may schedule up to 1 year in advance with up to 2 appointments per day. Note: second stops are lowest priority and will be permitted when time allows. You must schedule a second stop before your ride if you think you will need one, such as going to the doctor then stopping at the pharmacy. You may always cancel that second stop. There is a \$2.50 charge for a second stop.
  - c. **Must call 48 hours ahead of appointment**, no later than 3 p.m. 2 days prior. Weekends are NOT included in the 48 hour time period. Appointments made after 3 p.m. on Friday will be for the following Tuesday or later.
  - d. Riders must clearly identify:
    - i. Destination address
    - ii. Specific times: always give appointment time, dispatcher will determine your pick-up time
    - iii. Number of passengers (ALL passengers must be 18+ and registered)

- iv. Specify if the wheelchair lift is needed
- e. **Voicemail is not available to schedule rides.** You must speak to a dispatcher between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- f. Dispatcher will give you a time for pick up when you schedule your ride and will not call back to confirm your appointment unless you are on a waitlist.
- g. Day of pick up: We have a 15-minute window of time either before or after a scheduled time that you may be picked up; please be ready early. If you are not ready when the driver arrives, we will contact you. If you do not answer or do not come out, we cannot wait, and it will be counted as a no-show. Continued tardiness or not cancelling will result in warnings and possible loss of service.
- h. Driver will wait up to 5 minutes for rider acknowledgement and a call will be attempted before leaving. If the driver arrives and you must be delayed, call Dispatch at (248) 887-4979 and notify them of the delay. If the driver can wait, s/he will; if not, another driver may/may not be sent.
- i. Standing appointments may be scheduled. Remember to call and cancel if not going.
- j. All WOTA's vehicles are handicap-accessible with wheelchair lifts.
- k. WOTA cannot schedule a return ride from any procedure that involves anesthesia.

#### 11. **Cancellation Policy:**

- a. You may call (248) 887-4979 to cancel rides 24 hours a day.
- b. Voicemail is available to cancel rides at any time.
- c. **You must cancel at least 4 hours ahead of your scheduled time or it will be considered a no-show.**
- d. If you have 3 no-shows (or late cancels) in a one-month period, this may result in a loss of riding privileges and being put on probationary status for 30 days.

#### 12. **Fare Policy:**

- a. The amount charged per ride (one way) is \$2.50.
- b. If rider is not ready when the bus arrives, the bus will leave, and the rider will be charged \$2.50 for a no-show. If Dispatch can send another bus to pick up the rider, they will be charged \$2.50 again for that ride. All riders must be ready for their ride 15 minutes AHEAD of scheduled pick-up times.
- c. There is a \$2.50 charge for each time you get on the vehicle. So, if you are scheduled for two stops you will have to pay two fares, plus your return home for a total of \$7.50.
- d. Late cancellations (less than 4 hours) will not be charged but will count as one of the three late/no-shows allowed in one month. Three no-shows or late cancellations in one month may lose service the following month. The Director will make determinations regarding extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- e. Aides or companions ride free and **MUST** be registered.

### 13. How to Pay for your ride:

- a. Riders may pay with:
  - i. Checks made out to WOTA.
  - ii. Exact cash fare only. **No change is given by drivers.**
  - iii. Pre-paid tickets. Tickets are available for purchase on the bus or by contacting the office at 248 887-4979. Tickets are available to purchase individually (\$2.50 each) or in packs of 10 (10 packs include a free bonus ticket) for \$25.00. Refunds will not be given for lost tickets. There is no cash value for tickets once purchased.
- b. **Invoiced Riders:** Workers and frequent riders (pre-scheduled routine appointments) may use invoicing to pay for rides. WOTA bills monthly; if you are behind more than two months, no rides may be scheduled until the balance has been paid.
- c. **Pre-Payment:** Pre-payment may be paid with cash or check by mail or in-person at our office from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. (Monday through Friday) at 205 W. Livingston Rd., Highland, MI 48357. Payment for credits may also be given to the driver in a sealed envelope with the rider's name on it.

### ACCESSIBILITY REQUIRMENTS:

- a. Please specify when scheduling if you have a walker, cane, scooter and/or travel cart AND if you need additional assistance to allow enough time between stops. Drivers CANNOT be at your location for more than 10 minutes.
- b. WOTA drivers are instructed to assist riders from door of pick up (not within door) to door of destination. Drivers are instructed in wheelchair handling and will be responsible to transport the rider into the vehicle with the lift and properly secure the chair and passenger. Passengers must follow WOTA's lockdown procedures for wheelchairs and scooters or they will NOT be allowed to ride.
- c. Riders in wheelchairs must have their wheelchairs locked down and they MUST have a seat belt on them. Anyone refusing to be belted will be escorted off the vehicle and the emergency contact will be notified.
- d. Disabled individuals who are not wheelchair bound must be able to board and exit unassisted, and control behavior to not endanger themselves or others. If this is not possible, an aide must accompany the rider.
- e. All pick-up and drop-off points must be handicap accessible.
- f. WOTA drivers cannot take wheelchairs or similar devices down the stairs or over door thresholds.
- g. Riders who cannot provide handicap-accessible pick-up or drop-off points must furnish their own assistance to and from the vehicle.

**OTHER RULES AND GUIDELINES:**

1. The driver can only take the passenger to the destination that was scheduled with the dispatcher. **Drivers cannot make scheduling adjustments;** these must be done ahead of time with Dispatch.
2. WOTA does not allow transportation for medical emergencies. Call 911.
3. WOTA drivers are not permitted to handle or deliver any medications of the riders.
4. Companion riders may ride WOTA vehicles free of charge, but they **MUST** have a registration form on file with the Dispatch office prior to riding and be 18 years old or older.
5. No guns, knives or weapons of any kind will be permitted on our vehicles.
6. No hazardous, explosive, or corrosive materials will be permitted on our vehicles.
7. WOTA does not transport any animals (except for service dogs), furniture or appliances.
8. WOTA drivers will assist passengers on and off the vehicles, as needed. Please report any driver that does not assist you if needed and requested. Drivers will assist with groceries; however, they are not expected to load/unload groceries by themselves. If you are unable to help load/unload, we suggest bringing a companion.
9. A one (1) cart limit of groceries is allowed per person on WOTA vehicles.
10. You must wear your seat belt while on the WOTA vehicle.
11. No smoking or use of electronic cigarettes is allowed on the WOTA vehicle.
12. No alcohol or drugs may be used on the vehicles at any time. Any passenger visibly inebriated will be escorted off the vehicle immediately.
13. No open containers or consumption of food and drink is allowed on the bus.
14. If a passenger is verbally or physically abusing or harassing any WOTA passenger and/or employee, that passenger creates an unsafe condition and is subject to probation and/or a loss of service immediately. Passengers will be immediately returned home or will not have a return ride home from their destination.
15. If a passenger does not use proper hygiene and it affects the driver or other passengers, they will be issued a warning and if it occurs again, they will not be allowed to ride for one week. A third occurrence will result in probation for 30 days with a possible loss of service.
16. Passengers are to refrain from advising, bullying, yelling, harassing or being argumentative with the driver, dispatchers, and other riders. Such behavior will result in a warning and/or an immediate loss of service if the action is severe. Drivers, dispatchers, and other riders are always to be treated with respect.

## CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

### a. Informal Complaint

- i. A customer who has a complaint may call the Dispatch office to try to resolve the matter.
- ii. If the matter is not resolved at this level, the customer may contact the Director via telephone. The Director will investigate and decide how to resolve the matter.

### b. Formal Complaint

- i. If the customer has gone through the informal complaint process and is not satisfied, the customer may file a written complaint with the Director within five (5) business days of the conclusion of the informal process.
- ii. The Director will, within five (5) business days of receiving the written complaint, conduct a hearing with the complainant, their representative, and any staff involved in the matter to seek equitable resolution of the matter. The results of this hearing will be communicated in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days of the hearing.
- iii. If the complainant remains unsatisfied, s/he may appeal through a signed, written statement to the WOTA Board within five (5) business days of the receipt of the Director's response in Step ii. To resolve the grievance, the WOTA Board shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within forty (40) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting.

## WOTA STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. To pick up riders within 15 minutes of scheduled time, to notify rider and/or office of anticipated pick up if not within the 15-minute window. The driver is not responsible for delays due to weather or traffic but does need to notify the office as soon as s/he suspects a delay.
- b. To provide safety-related assistance for boarding and exiting.
- c. To provide a generally safe, clean, and comfortable ride.
- d. To provide excellent and courteous customer service.
- e. To report any unusual or unauthorized activity.
- f. To provide clear communication if changes occur that may impact the rider.
- g. To provide on-time service if possible for appointments and work.

**NOTE:** *If we suspect something is amiss, we reserve the right to call for a non-emergent welfare check to ensure your safety and well-being.*