

# C.A.T.S. Nifty-lift Rider's Guide

On behalf of the City of Anderson Transportation System, we would like to welcome you to Nifty-lift paratransit service.

Nifty-lift serves the needs of customers who, because of a disability, are unable to use the C.A.T.S. regular fixed route bus system, and who meet the criteria established by the U.S. Department of Transportation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Throughout this guide you will find helpful information detailing trip planning, companion and PCA qualifications, and the Nifty-lift reservation and cancellation policy.

Nifty-lift paratransit is a **shared-ride, door-to-door** service. **Shared ride** means others may board and ride on the same vehicle that you are on and may be picked up and dropped off before you reach your destination. **Door-to-door** means the vehicle will only pick-up and drop off at the outside door of your pick-up and drop-off locations. **No other assistance** will be provided beyond the outer door.

Nifty-lift service is available within the Anderson Corporate limits and up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles of an operating fixed route.

## **Operating Hours**

6am – 6:30pm Monday – Friday

9am – 3:30pm Saturday's

Closed – Sunday's and the following Holiday's:

New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & The Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day.

## **Scheduling a Ride on Nifty-lift**

For Reservations & Cancellation's  
644-8312  
Nifty-lift is not for 911 calls

Hours of Reservations  
8am – 6pm Monday – Friday  
9am – 3pm Saturday

Closed Sunday's and the following Holiday's:  
New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & The Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day.

An Answering machine is available during Non-Business Hours to take Requests and Cancellations. A representative will contact you on the next business day to confirm your reservation or cancellation.

You must call and make a reservation to use Nifty-lift. You can arrange a trip up to fourteen (14) days in advance, or up to close of reservation hours the night before you want to travel.

When calling to reserve a ride, have the following information ready:

- ✓ Your first and last name.
- ✓ The date you want to ride.
- ✓ The time you want picked up at your point of origin.
- ✓ Where you will be going: number, street.
- ✓ The time you want picked up for your return trip. We urge you to schedule a ride for your return trip.
- ✓ Return trips that are requested as "Will Call" can result in a substantial wait.
- ✓ If there is no opening at the time you requested you may be offered an alternate time up to one hour before or after the original time you requested.
- ✓ Under normal circumstances, you must schedule your trip at least one day before you want to travel, however a limited number of "same day" trips MAY be available.
- ✓ Reservationists will assist you with scheduling your appointments.

**Note: You should schedule your pickup time for 45 minutes to 1 hour prior to your appointment time. A trip on Nifty-lift can take as long or up to twice the time it would on the fixed route service.**

## **Riding Nifty-lift**

### **Pickup and Drop off procedures**

#### **15 minute Pickup Window:**

When you reserve a ride, the vehicle may arrive 15 minutes before or after your scheduled pickup time. For example, if your pickup time is scheduled for 8am, the vehicle may arrive anytime between 7:45 am and 8:15 am. You should be ready to board the vehicle at the beginning of your pickup window.

You will be expected to board the vehicle within 5 minutes of its arrival within your pickup window. For the 8am pickup example, if your vehicle arrives at 7:45 am, you must be on board by 7:50 am. After the 5 minute wait, if you are not on the vehicle, the driver will mark you as a "No Show" and leave. If you are a "No Show" and have other rides for the day and need them, please call the dispatcher to confirm the remainder of your rides.

If you still need your ride after being declared a "No Show" we will make every attempt to pick you up, but the wait for the vehicle to return can be substantial.

Due to public safety drivers will not block crosswalks and/or entrances into businesses.

### **Fares**

The Fare for Nifty-lift is \$2.00 per person, per one way trip.

The fare can be paid in cash or with a Nifty-lift ticket purchased in advance by ordering them from the Nifty-lift office. The fare must be given in the exact amount. **The driver does not carry cash and cannot make change.**

Checks, Medicare and Medicaid are not accepted. Passengers will not be transported if he or she does not have the fare.

### **Companions**

You may have a companion ride with you, your companions' pickup and drop off must be the same as yours and they must pay the same fare as you.

## **Personal Care Attendants (PCA)**

A PCA may be a family member, friend or licensed professional, etc... Regardless of the relationship, a PCA is clearly defined to be someone whose services are required by the rider. Passengers that cannot operate their mobility device to and from the vehicle must have a PCA or companion to assist them.

PCA's whose services you require, ride for free, but their pickup and drop off locations must be the same as yours.

Should your condition of disability improve or deteriorate, C.A.T.S. management will re-evaluate your need for a PCA.

The decision as to **required** use of a PCA will rest solely on C.A.T.S. management.

## **Transporting Packages**

Packages that can be easily carried in one trip up the steps by yourself and/or the driver are allowed. The driver will assist with the loading and unloading of packages between the vehicle and the curb. **Customers are responsible for getting packages to and from the curb.**

## **Mobility Devices**

All Nifty-lift vehicles are equipped with passenger lifts that meet ADA specifications. They will accommodate mobility three or more wheeled devices up to 52 inches by 32 inches and do not have a combined passenger/device weight of more than 800 pounds. Mobility devices that exceed these specifications **will not** be transported.

For your safety, please be sure that your mobility device is maintained according to manufacturer's specifications.

**Nifty-lift will not transport gurneys.**

## **Service Animals**

Guide dogs and other service animals are allowed. Small domesticated pets are allowed but, must be in a pet carrier.

## **"No Show" and Late Cancellation Policy**

To cancel trips call the dispatcher at 644-8312. Please remember to cancel trips you cannot use as soon as possible. Due to excessive cancellations and no shows, which have caused lost trips and/or rides for other patrons, it has become necessary to implement a No Show and Late Cancellation Policy. The definitions are as follows:

**No Show:** Failure to give any notice of cancellation prior to a scheduled pick up time. No shows constitute a pattern of practice of abuse.

**Late Cancellation:** Less than 2 hours advanced notice.

### **Nifty-lift's Policy for Excessive No Shows and Late Cancellations**

"No Shows", "Late Cancellations" cause serious disruptions in service. Each verified "No Show", "Late Cancellation" counts as one (1) penalty point against the customer.

A customer will be subject to suspension if they accumulate eight (8) penalty points in one (1) calendar month. However, if a customer has used the service for more than 40 trips in a calendar month, then a suspension will take place only if they have a "No-Show", "Late Cancellation", or a "Cancel at the Door" for 20% or more of their trips.

Nifty-Lift will notify customers after they have accumulated four (4) penalty points as a warning that they may be subject to suspension should they continue to accumulate penalty points. A warning letter will be sent for the first violation. Subsequent violations are as follows:

- *Second violation:* seven (7) day suspension.
- *Third violation:* 14 day suspension.
- *Fourth violation:* 21 day suspension.
- *All subsequent violations:* 30 day suspension.

Violations accumulate during a 12 month rolling period. All suspension notices shall include a copy of this policy and how to appeal suspensions. An

appeal may be made in accordance with the process described in the "Appeal Process" section of this guide.

### **Appeals Process**

If you disagree with a decision made by Nifty-Lift regarding eligibility certification or a suspension, contact the ADA Paratransit Supervisor at (765) 648-6403 for an administrative hearing.

If you are still unsatisfied after an administrative hearing with the ADA Paratransit Supervisor, you may file a written appeal. An appointed panel of at least four (4) individuals (made up of transportation officials, medical or disability professionals, and rider representatives) will review your appeal. The appeal process will be carried out in accordance with the ADA regulations.

### **Notice of Right to Appeal**

Under the provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, customers and applicants have the right to appeal any determination stating that the customer or applicant is not eligible for Nifty-Lift ADA Paratransit Service, any suspension of service, or other restrictions which may have been placed upon the customer or applicant. Appellants must make their appeal within 60 days of receiving a notice of eligibility determination or suspension. Appeals should be submitted in writing to:

**City of Anderson Transit System  
Attn: ADA Paratransit Coordinator  
530 Dale Keith Jones Road  
Anderson, IN 46011**

Upon receipt of an appeal request, City of Anderson Transit System will schedule a hearing date. Service will not be rendered until a decision has been made except for "No Show Violation" appeals. Customers who appeal a "No Show" suspension will continue to receive service until a decision has been made.

Transportation to and from the appeal will be arranged by City of Anderson Transit System through the ADA Paratransit Supervisor at no charge to the

appellant. An advocate may be designated at the option of the appellant. The appellant, appellant's advocate, or other representative may make a presentation at the scheduled hearing. An appeal decision will be made no later than 30 days after the hearing date and the written appeal decision shall be mailed to the applicant within one (1) business day of the decision being made. If an appeal decision is not made within 30 days from the date of the hearing, the appellant will receive presumptive eligibility until such time that a decision can be made.

If there is any change in the customer or applicant's ability to use the fixed-route bus service in the future, the customer or applicant may submit a new application for ADA Paratransit Services through the Nifty-Lift Office.

### **Rules of Conduct:**

Failure to follow these Rules may be cause to deny your use of Nifty-lift services. Failure to follow Instructions from C.A.T.S. personnel may also be cause to deny your use of nifty-lift services.

- ❖ Behavior which is unsafe, causes damage or disturbs other passengers is not allowed on Nifty-lift.
- ❖ You may only bring on board 2 packages which you or the driver can carry in one trip up the steps. No packages shall obstruct an aisle, exit or interfere with the driver.
- ❖ All food and beverages must be in sealed containers and cannot be consumed on the Nifty-lift.
- ❖ Personal listening devices are permitted as long as they do not disturb the driver or other passengers.
- ❖ Weapons, explosives or incendiary devices are prohibited on Nifty-lift vehicles and property.
- ❖ Service animals are permitted.
- ❖ Small domestic pets can be transported in an approved animal container only. All other animals are prohibited.
- ❖ No smoking.
- ❖ Seat belts are to be worn whether you are traveling in a seat or with a mobility device.
- ❖ Shoes and shirts are required.
- ❖ Children must be accompanied by an adult.
- ❖ Loitering and solicitation are prohibited on Nifty-lift vehicles and property.

**To Purchase Tickets,**  
**Questions or Comments Contact:**

**Phone Numbers:**

Nifty-lift 644-8312  
Office 648-6403

**Mail:**

City of Anderson Transportation  
530 Dale Keith Jones Road  
Anderson, IN 46011

**E-Mail:**

[catsd@cityofanderson.com](mailto:catsd@cityofanderson.com)