Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Mission:
We, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, in order to restore all rights previously held by our people and their descendants, promote peace, prosperity, happiness, and the general welfare of the citizens of our Tribe and our prosperity; to exercise home rule, to conserve and perpetuate all worthy traditions and cultural elements to our people long established by customs; to improve our social order; to protect our rights as individuals; to promote our economic welfare; to promote domestic tranquility; to promote business enterprise both cooperative and individual; to promote education opportunities for all Northern Ponca people; to consolidate our land holdings and to provide the inheritance of both real and personal property.

Ponca Express Mission:
The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska strives to encourage the improved use, and efficiency of the Ponca Express Public Transit System. The Ponca Express Public Transit System operates within a 200 mile, one-way radius of the five Ponca Tribe office locations, in order to enhance access of safe and reliable transportation for the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Citizens, and the general public, including persons with disabilities.

Statement of Policy:
Ponca Express may provide transportation for appointments, meetings or gatherings. Ponca Express operates a demand/response type transit system which means priority is given based on a first come, first serve basis. Ponca Express is also a Curb to Curb service.

Ponca Express services include but are not limited to the following:
- Health care
- Recreation
- Education
- Public services
- Gatherings
- Employment
- Social services and youth services for rural and metro residents within a three hour, one way radius of any Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Transit Facility.

Ponca Express serves residents within a 200 mile, one way radius of any Ponca Tribe office. The mileage begins at the home office of each driver.
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Curb to Curb Service:

The following examples are to explain the meaning and intent of curb-to-curb:

1. Private Homes
   - Passengers must enter and depart the transit vehicles at the designated pick-up/dropp-off points
   - Drivers will not enter any homes for any reason
   - Drivers may assist passengers to and from the vehicle only as requested
   - Drivers are not allowed to lift oversized packages weighing more than 15 pounds
   - Drivers are not allowed to lift passengers, he/she are only allowed to offer an arm to help assist
   - Drivers are not permitted to maneuver any mobility devices up or down anything other than a ramp that is intended to be used for such devices

2. Business/Medical/Private or Public Buildings
   - Drivers may assist passengers to and from the inside door
     Due to extreme temperatures, drivers may assist passengers through the second entry door when necessary but will not assist any further into the building
   - When picking up passengers drivers may go through the first door. Due to extreme temperatures, drivers may go through the second entry door when necessary but will not go any further into the building
   - It is the passengers responsibility to ensure he/she are at least at the entryway waiting for his/her ride
Title VI Notice to the Public:

This agency operates it’s programs and services without regard to race, color, or national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes he/she have been subjected to an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the agency. This form can be downloaded on the agency’s website at [www.poncatribe-ne.org](http://www.poncatribe-ne.org); additionally this form can be requested by contacting the agency at the address provided below. Title VI Discrimination Complaint Forms and additional information can also be obtained through the Nebraska Department of Transportation website at [www.transportation.nebraska.gov](http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov), or by contacting NDOT using the information provided below.

Ponca Express
Attn: Title VI Liaison
1800 Syracuse Avenue
Norfolk, NE 68701
402-379-2361
dannettew@poncatribe-ne.org

Nebraska Department of Transportation
Attn: Transit Liaison Manger
1500 NE-2
Lincoln, NE 68502
402-479-4694
Kari.ruse@nebraska.gov

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attn: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building, 5th Floor TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590
Notice of Nondiscrimination and Complaint:

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Ponca Express will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities.

Employment: Ponca Express does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with all regulations promulgated by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under Title I of the ADA.

Effective Communication: Ponca Express will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in the Ponca Express programs, services, and activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures: Ponca Express will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its programs, services, and activities. For example, individuals with service animals are welcomed in Ponca Tribal offices, even where pets are generally prohibited.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of Ponca Express, should contact:

   Dani Wright
   Transit Manager
   1800 Syracuse Ave
   Norfolk, NE 68701
   402-379-2361
dannettew@poncatrib
e-ne.org
The ADA does not require Ponca Express to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services.

Complaints that a program, service, or activity of Ponca Express is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the Coordinator listed above.

Ponca Express will not place a surcharge on a particular individual with a disability or any group of individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy, such as retrieving items from locations that are open to the public but are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs.

**Transporting of service animals and accomodations of other animals:**

Ponca Express allows service animals to accompany owners as per the ADA of 1990. Service animals are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities. The transit driver may ask if an animal is a service animal and what tasks the animal has been trained to perform. The driver may not ask for a demonstration of the animal performing the task or ask about the person’s disability.

Under the ADA of 1990, “comfort, therapy, or emotional support animals” do not meet the definition of a service animal.

Animals other than service animals as described above are allowed to ride in the transit vehicle in a secured pet travel carrier.

**Personal Assistants/Caregivers:**

Personal care attendants are persons who are directly involved in the mobility assistance of the passenger and will be allowed to ride free of charge while accompanying his/her attendee. Generally, the following conditions would warrant a fare free attendant: immobility, disorientation, non-comprehension and communication impairment. Any other peson riding with a passenger will be considered a guest and will have to pay the full fare.

Personal care attendants are required to specifically assist the passenger. This assistance includes, but is not limited to the following:
• Assisting passenger from his/her door to the transit vehicle and back
• Opening doors
• Pushing wheelchairs to and from the transit vehicle
• Transferring assistance from mobility device to a seat or help in tying down the mobility device with the proper straps
• Carrying packages
• Communicating with the driver if the passenger is unable to
Subject: Hours of Operation

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish operational hours for providing public transportation.

Norfolk Transit Facility
The Ponca Express public transit system will operate Monday through Friday with the following operating hours:

Monday: 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Saturday: No Service—Arrangements may be made with prior approval and driver availability
Sunday: No Service—Arrangements may be made with prior approval and driver availability

Ponca Express offers free transportation for human service agency events on a first come, first serve basis. Examples of these types of services are: community meeting, camps, youth event, conferences, workshops, and other similar type gatherings. Please contact the local scheduler for additional information.

Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center
The Ponca Express public transit system will operate Monday through Friday with the following operating hours:

Monday: 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday: 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Thursday: 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Friday: 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Saturday: No Service—Arrangements may be made with prior approval and driver availability
Sunday: No Service—Arrangements may be made with prior approval and driver availability
Niobrara, Sioux City, and Lincoln

All other Ponca Express transit systems in the offices will operate Monday through Friday with the following hours of operation:

- **Monday:** 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday:** 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Wednesday:** 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Thursday:** 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Friday:** 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Saturday:** No Service-Arrangements may be made with prior approval and driver availability
- **Sunday:** No Service-Arrangements may be made with prior approval and driver availability

Holidays

Ponca Express will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day (January 1st)
- Martin Luther King Jr Day (3rd Monday of January)
- Chief Standing Bear Day (May 12th)
- Memorial Day (Last Monday of May)
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day (1st Monday of September)
- Northern Ponca Restoration Day (October 31)
- Veterans Day (November 11th)
- Thanksgiving Day (4th Thursday of November)
- Native American Day (Day after Thanksgiving)
- Christmas Eve (December 24th)
- Christmas Day (December 25th)

Inclement Weather

Ponca Express will follow county government office closures. In addition, Ponca Express will follow the state patrol recommendations for all out of town travel, and operate under the local law enforcement recommendations for all in town travel.

If any Transit Staff feel he/she cannot complete the transport due to road conditions/inclement weather he/she have the authority to end the transport as safety is a priority Ponca Express pride themselves in.

Passengers are responsible for snow removal to make his/her homes accessible to Ponca Express drivers. Drivers are not allowed to assist passengers through un-shoveled snow or ice. If pathways are not shoveled the driver will attempt to
get as close as possible for the passenger to get entry into the vehicle. The driver will not pull into unshoveled driveways. Absolutely NO alley travel will be allowed during inclement weather.

Please note due to weather, travel time may increase and some routes may be cancelled. Arrival time may be earlier or later than scheduled due to road conditions.
**Subject:** Service Area

**Effective Date:** May 6, 2013

**Approved by:** Tribal Council

**Revised Date:**

**Directive:** To establish the area of operations for the Ponca Express Public Transit.

- Service area will extend up to 200 miles, one way radius in any direction of any Ponca transit facility
- The Ponca Express Public Transit system operates out of the following locations:
  - **Nebraska:** Norfolk, Omaha, Lincoln, Niobrara
  - **Iowa:** Sioux City
Subject: Scheduling Requests

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for scheduling reservations, referrals, cancellations, and revocation of services.

Scheduling On Demand Response

- All rides are on a “first come first serve” basis
- Pick up times are dependent on availability, inclement weather, and other scheduled transports
- All riders requesting transportation will call Ponca Express’ phone line to establish a pick up location and time frame of “ready for transport”
- All confirmed transports will be entered into the transit system software, which may only be updated by the approved scheduler
- Once the scheduler has confirmed and entered the transport into the transit system software he/she shall confirm the appointment with assigned transporter
- A minimum of 24-hour notice is encouraged for requesting a transport, depending on schedule and availability of Ponca Express
- All appointments shall be confirmed through the scheduler, and under no circumstance shall any riders contact individual drivers for scheduling purposes
- Medical supply and pharmaceutical transport requirements are as follows:
  - Supplies/medications must be confirmed by the client requesting pickup before transport is scheduled
  - If transporter arrives and supplies/meds are not ready it will be documented as a No Call/No Show
  - After two No Call/No Show delivery services will be suspended for one month.

Scheduling Subscription Service

Subscription service is the type of request where a client is requesting service on a daily basis i.e. employment. This type of service is limited to three times a week because of the demand of transports. Subscription service is only allowed to be scheduled quarterly. Should a client call in the middle of a quarter he/she may only schedule out until the end of that quarter. It is the client’s
responsibility to call to get on for the following quarter, no earlier than the last week of the current quarter. The quarters are as follows:

- January-March
- April-June
- July-September
- October-December

**Referrals**

- All incoming referrals from outside entities will be confirmed or denied by the approved Scheduler and returned; at which time the referring department will confirm the appointment with client
- It is the responsibility of a referring department to notify the Scheduler of any cancellations once notified by the client
  - **Example:** If a program has transportation scheduled for their clients i.e. behavioral health groups, elder meals, lunch and learns etc., and their clients call to cancel with their program, then the program or client need to call and cancel with Ponca Express
- For referral of transporting medical supplies and pharmaceuticals please see: Scheduling On Demand Response within this Policy and Procedure Manual

**Cancellations**

- If a client must cancel his/her scheduled transport, the client must call to cancel before the transporter leaves for the pickup
- Cancellations by Ponca Express are a last resort. Ponca Express will follow the steps below to prevent the cancellation of scheduled transports:
  - Rearranging the transports to other transporter’s schedules, as time allows
  - Utilize on-call transporters
  - Reschedule transport to a different day. Ponca Express will provide as much advance notice as possible if a transport will be cancelled
- All transports requiring travel greater than 30 miles must be confirmed with client prior to departure by the close of business (COB) the day before transport. If unable to confirm by COB the day before, the transport will be cancelled

**No-Show**

- It is the responsibility of the transporter to inform all appropriate parties (client, Ponca clinics etc.) of late arrival or provider cancelled transports
- Once the schedule is set with an estimated time of arrival, the transporter will wait five minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. If the
client fails to appear after five minutes, the transporter will then move on to his/her next transport

- If a client is a no-show the transporter will not return until a new appointment can be confirmed with the scheduler
- A no-show will be documented by the scheduler prior to transporter’s departure from pickup location
- Excessive no shows over three occurrences will result in a suspension from service
- Trips in which passengers will not be picked up due to circumstances related to service will not be considered a no-show
- Exceptions may be made based on unforeseen situations
- All fares will be charged for trips resulting in a no-show

**Rules for no-show appointments**

- 1st – Verbal Reminder
- 2nd – Written Reminder
- 3rd – 90 day suspension from service with a written letter stating dates of no shows and date the suspension will be lifted

After the suspension is lifted the Revocation of Service Policy will start fresh. If a client is suspended for a fourth no-show appointment in the same calendar year, then the client shall be suspended until the end of the calendar year (December 31st). At the beginning of the calendar year (January 1st) the no-shows are wiped clean so the clients may have a fresh start

**Revocation of Services**

Actions that will result in loss of transportation services, based on the severity of each incident. Revocation of services may be from 30-90 days

- No-show for three scheduled appointments
- Unruly behavior and/or abusive language towards staff or other clients
- Intoxication or being under the influence of illegal substances or use of tobacco products
- Excessive cancellations over five consecutive occurrences
- Misuse of food/beverage in the vehicle; drinks must be in a spill proof container
- Threats, or actual acts of physical abuse toward providers, staff, passengers, or one’s self
- The use of weapons or objects intended to be used as a weapon
- No obscene comments will be tolerated while scheduling, or questioning a transport either in person or via telephone
- Opening of any door while vehicle is in motion
- Passengers NOT wearing seat belts while vehicle is in motion
NOTE: Transportation staff will complete an incident report and give to his or her supervisor and Transit Manager on any actions that violate the above list.
Subject: Safe Driving Practices

Effective Date: May 5, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for keeping safety a priority.

Stay Safe
- Use a seat belt at all times – driver and passengers
- Be well-rested before driving
- Avoid taking medications that may make you drowsy
- Set a realistic goal for the number of miles that he/she can drive safely each day
- If you are impaired by alcohol or any drug, DO NOT DRIVE

Stay Focused
- Avoid distractions including cell phone use
- Continually search the roadway to be alert to situations requiring quick action
- Stop if needed for a break to stretch, walk, refresh

Avoid Aggressive Driving
- Stay calm and alert in traffic
- Be patient and courteous to other drivers
- Do not take other drivers’ actions personally
- Reduce stress by planning a route ahead of time
Subject: Vehicle Usage and Storage

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for proper usage and storage of vehicles.

Ponca Express Vehicles

- Vehicle usage will be given according to assigned priorities
- Vehicles are to be used in accordance with FTA 5311 policy
- All vehicle property including keys will be returned to the transit facility after each use
- Any driver assigned to a Ponca Tribe of Nebraska owned/operated vehicle will be responsible for ensuring that all vehicle doors and windows are locked and secured any time the vehicle is left unattended
- All drivers will be compliant with the FTAs rapid drug testing process
- Drivers may not leave passengers unattended in the vehicle except while assisting other passengers with boarding
- At the end of assigned shifts, drivers will return the vehicle to the transit facility/location and ensure that it is parked in a designated transit vehicle parking area
  - All doors and windows will be locked and secured
  - Any trash or debris will be removed and discarded

Drivers are required to keep track of the following information:

- Start and end odometer and time readings for each transport
- Gas receipts initialed by staff purchaser
- Punch cards used as fares
- All applicable passenger information to be transferred to Supervisor
Subject: Cell Phone Usage

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for personal/business phone usage.

• No employee will be permitted to accept personal calls except in the case of an emergency while transporting a client, in which case the employee MUST pull over
• No employee shall engage in distracted driving practices from cellular phone usage while operating a Ponca Tribe of Nebraska vehicle
  o Do not text
  o Do not talk on phone while the vehicle is in motion
  o Do not check email or other apps

Note: It is the responsibility of the Transit Manager to monitor prohibited activities

Business Cellular Phone Usage

• Any cellular phone assigned to an employee is intended for business use only
• Business cellular phone numbers are not to be distributed for purposes of receiving personal calls or communications of any kind
• All employees must ensure that the vehicle has come to a complete stop in an area not obstructing the flow of traffic before making or receiving a cellular phone call
• Employee and passenger safety should be the primary concern before conducting any business via a cellular phone
Subject: Transporting Children

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date: 

Directive: To establish a guideline for safely transporting children.

Children under the age of **NINE** must be properly secured in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions in a child restraint system (car seat) that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards/NE state law
- A parent or guardian will be responsible for properly securing the child restraint system in a passenger seat and ensuring proper fit
- The driver will then ensure that the child is appropriately secured before the vehicle is in motion

Ponca Express will provide transit services to children age five and under only while being accompanied by an adult
- Circle of Youth (COY) passengers will be permitted to transport without a parent or guardian if the proper child safety seat is provided. COY children will be granted a five minute window at each designated school location. If a child misses the transport it is the responsibility of a parent or guardian to schedule an alternate form of transportation

Adult passengers accompanying a child must properly supervise those children and ensure they remain quiet and seated at all times
- Exceptions to this policy can be made by the Transit Manager for youth events or transports involving multiple families
- Children under age 12 are not permitted to sit in the front seat
- Child safety seats will be approved for the age and weight of the child
- Adult lap and shoulder belt systems will not fit children that are smaller than 4’9” tall and weigh less than 80 pounds
Subject: Accident/Roadside Assistance

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for reporting an accident.

All drivers involved in an accident must perform the following actions:

- Check for personal injury
- Check all passengers for injury
- For all accidents involving secondary vehicles, check the driver and passengers of second vehicle for injury
- If the vehicle is in operational condition move to a safe area not obstructing the flow of traffic
- Notify law enforcement and emergency service of the accident
- Notify Supervisor/Transit Manager
  - Supervisor or Manager will arrange tow services for vehicle involved
- Complete required accident investigation documentation
- Report for any required drug and alcohol testing per FTa policy

Roadside

In the event of vehicle trouble the transporter will contact his/her immediate Supervisor, who will arrange for contracted roadside company to meet the vehicle

- All vehicles will include an emergency kit similar to:
  - AAA Emergency Kit
  - AAA Winter Safety Kit
  - AAA Road Warrior Kit
  - Biohazard Cleanup Kit
- Drivers will document items used from each kit and arrange replacements with his/her respective supervisors
Subject: Fares

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for fare collection.

The Ponca Express rural transit program is a fare collection program for public transportation services. We accept cash, check, money order, punch cards and charge accounts.

Cash Fares are accepted at the time of service. If paying with cash, EXACT change is required. Drivers do not carry enough cash to make change for riders.

Charge accounts will be provided only to those individuals whose rides are being charged to an agency who makes prior arrangements with the Transit Manager. The agency will call to give authorization for the ride to be billed to said agency and an invoice will be sent for the charged ride.

A punch card system has been established to allow passengers to purchase multiple transports
- Punch cards will be sold/used on a per ride basis
- Paying for multiple rides upfront will be allowed in ten dollar increments
- Purchased punch cards do not expire

Drivers will be required to punch the ticket for the amount of each trip upon passenger boarding
- Each passenger must present/purchase a valid Ponca Express punch card prior to transit
- Current pricing will be listed on the Ponca Express tab of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska website
- No fees will change without a Public Meeting being held to give the Community time for input. There will be a waiting period of 30 days before the fare changes become valid
Subject: Wheelchair Securement

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish a guideline for proper operation of the handicap wheelchair lift.

Lift Deployment
- Set the vehicle parking brake with the transmission in the park position and the engine running
- Ensure that the area is clear and the passenger is a safe distance from the extended platform
- Unfold the platform from the stowed position ensuring that, when extended, the lift is level with the ground
- Lower the platform to ground level until the roll stop unfolds to allow for loading

Loading/Unloading the Passenger
- Inform the passenger that loading will begin
  - It is important to communicate with the passenger at every point in the loading process to ensure that passengers are prepared for the movement of the lift
- Always hold the wheelchair handles when raising and lowering the lift platform
- Ensure that the passengers’ arms and legs are kept as close to the body as possible to avoid injury during operation
- Load the passenger onto the platform and secure the wheelchair brakes
- Stand alongside the platform while raising and lowering the platform
- Once the platform is level with the floor of the vehicle, release the wheelchair brakes and back the passenger into position for securement
- Secure the chair with vehicle securement system
- Return the wheelchair to the stow position before setting the vehicle in motion
- Close the lift doors
Subject: Vehicle Inspections

Effective Date: May 6, 2013

Approved by: Tribal Council

Revised Date:

Directive: To establish common vehicle inspection checks.

Transporters will follow guidelines for daily vehicle checks which include the following:

- Walk around vehicle to check for any damage and leaking fluids
- General check of tire condition
- Check of all lights to include interior and exterior for operation
- Check of all seat belts for operation
- Vehicle cleanliness to include picking up all trash
- Please report any vehicle issues to his/her immediate supervisor or the Administrative Assistant

Transit Maintenance will follow the checklist below during monthly vehicle checks:

- Check engine oil/fluid levels
- Check for coolant leaks
- Check windshield and mirrors
- Check tires, tread and pressure
- Vacuum the interior of vehicle
- Interior and Exterior Wash
**Ponca Express Pre/Post Vehicle Inspection**

MUST be signed off on daily. Report any issues to the administrative assistant.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>VEHICLE #</th>
<th>VIN#</th>
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**Pre-Trip Odometer:**

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<th>Post-Trip Odometer:</th>
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**EXTERIOR**

- Leaks under vehicle
- Fresh body damage
- Headlights
- Tail/brake lights
- Turn signals
- Hazard flashers
- Tires
- Tail pipe
- Windshield
- Mirrors/adjustment

**INTERIOR**

- Floor
- Seats
- Seat belts
- Brakes
- Steering
- Transmission
- Gauges/instrument displays
- Equipment controls (heater/ac/fan/lights)
- Radio
- Service doors
- Step wells

**SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

- Fire Extinguisher
- 1st Aid kit
- Horn
- Back-up alarm
- Emergency door

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESS EQUIPMENT**

(If applicable)

- Lift door
- Lift operation
- Hydraulic leaks
- Lift platform
- Front/rear safety guards
- Handrail
- Passenger belts

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Date: ______/______/______  
Driver Signature: ________________________

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Date: ______/______/______  
Driver Signature: ________________________