



We at Winnipeg Transit Plus (Transit Plus) are excited to introduce this new newsletter, which will be available twice a year in several accessible formats to help communicate exciting initiatives and updates directly to you, our valued customers.

In this first edition, we'd like to share some of the new and exciting changes within Transit Plus.

- Language Services
- Service Area Changes
- New Securement Systems
- New Trip Booking Process
- Travel Training Program
- Safety Protocols
- Keeping Your Account Active
- Manager's Message

## Language Services

In January of this year, Transit Plus added a new French language option to its Contact Centre phone line 204-986-5722. This offers customers the ability to select options, hear important messages and communicate with a customer service representative in both official languages. Customers who would prefer to communicate in a language other than English or French can also ask their customer service representative to contact an interpreter who can provide translation services for any call within minutes, in over 200 different languages/dialects. This service is also available for customers attending in-office assessments.

When calling the Contact Centre, you may also hear a prompt asking if you would like to participate in a brief survey at the end of your call. Transit Plus has begun using this feature to engage with and collect feedback from customers on current processes and upcoming changes. We invite all customers to take part; post-call surveys are brief, and your feedback will help Transit Plus improve and grow.

## Service Area Changes

On January 1st of this year, the Transit Plus service area was expanded to include all residences within city limits. The service area expansion comes as a result of the elimination of a policy stating that Transit Plus operates within the same geographical service area of Winnipeg's fixed route transit system, which required the origin and destination of a trip to be within 500 metres of an established bus route. City Council approved the change as part of its 2020 – 2023 Multi-year budget.

If you were previously notified that your address or a destination was outside of the service area and have not been contacted regarding this change, or if you have additional questions, please contact the Transit Plus Contact Centre at 204-986-5722.

# New Securement Systems for Mobility Devices

In April, Winnipeg Transit announced that two new securement systems would be available on the 32 buses it purchased for 2021 as part of its bus replacement program – the Quantum and the Q-Pod. The use of securement systems for wheelchairs and scooters helps keep all passengers safe, and all bus operators assigned to routes where the new buses will be used are trained and ready to assist passengers using the new securement systems.

Each new bus has both types of the new securements. The Quantum is rear-facing, located behind the operator's compartment, and holds wheelchairs and scooters in place with pressurized automated arms. The Q-Pod is a forward-facing three-point securement station on the other side of the aisle.

Operators on designated buses are trained and ready to assist passengers with securement using both systems, and with boarding and alighting the bus if requested.

## First-come, first served trip booking system now in effect

Transit Plus is now using a new system of booking trips after eliminating the Trip Priority System, an outdated practice no longer being used by other paratransit providers.

All trips are now being fulfilled on a first-come, first-served basis. Assigning trips this way is fair and equitable, and it is also more efficient because it makes it easier to shift resources in the case of cancellations or no-shows. This change will lead to a more flexible service that can better meet customer demand.

Customers who are unfamiliar with the new booking system should be aware of a few changes in how they book trips and plan their pickups:

- When you call to book a trip, you will be informed immediately if your trip request can be accommodated, and if it can, you will be provided with a 30-minute pick-up window.
- If you opt-in to receive notifications, you will also receive a call confirming the details the night before your trip.
- If your trip can't be accommodated based on availability at the time you make your request, you will be offered a different time or a spot on a waitlist.
- We will continually monitor trip demand and look to accommodate your trips based on the availability of our vehicles.
- If you are on a waitlist and your requested time becomes available and is booked for you, you will receive a call the night before your trip confirming details (if you have opted in for notifications), or you can contact Transit Plus to confirm.

Transit Plus is offering interactive virtual information sessions with our Travel Trainer to review this change, by request. If you are interested in attending a session, please call our contact centre and provide your name and email address. After you have registered, you will receive a log-in link for a Microsoft Teams meeting via email.

# Travel Training Program

Travel Training is a free program for customers of all ages and abilities who need knowledge and skills to use Winnipeg Transit Services and Transit Plus. Customized presentations and practical on-bus sessions are created to meet the needs of a group or individual.

Topics may include:

- Passenger information including fares
- Trip, planning, and routes
- Accessibility features
- Travelling with a mobility aid
- General tips for travelling with Winnipeg Transit



For more information about the Travel Training Program, please contact [311](tel:311).

## Safety Protocols

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Transit Plus has implemented a number of protocols as part of its commitment to keeping customers safe while using the service, including:

- Customers are required to wear masks while travelling on the service, however those who are unable to wear a mask while travelling on the service for any reason will not be refused service.
- Drivers are self-screening for symptoms prior to the start of every shift.
- Masks are required for drivers while providing service to Transit Plus customers and drivers are encouraged to wear additional personal protective equipment.
- Drivers continue to sanitize high touch points after each drop-off.

## Keeping your account active

Transit Plus policy requires customers to travel once every 18 months to keep their account active. We recognize the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted the use of the service for many customers. If you are uncertain of the last date you travelled, please call the contact center at 204-986-5722 and we will happily provide this information to you. If you have not travelled in 16 months or more, do not plan to travel in the near future, and are concerned about your file going inactive as a result, please speak to one of our customer service representatives. Transit Plus continues to be committed to keeping customers safe while using the service.

# Manager's Message

Thank you for taking the time to read all about what's new and exciting at Transit Plus!

As the new Manager of the Client Services Division (which includes Transit Plus), I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Teresa Platt and I've worked at Transit since 2007, gaining immense knowledge from customers and education in municipal leadership. My previous training and work experience was as an occupational therapist and I have also learned from my earlier years as a personal care attendant. Currently, I work alongside an amazing Client Services team, who is dedicated to identifying how best to serve you, our valued customers. I look forward to hearing from and working with you on how we can continue to enhance this important service.



Despite the impact of the pandemic, 2021 has brought many new exciting initiatives and projects to the division, including new language services, a new travel training program, a newly-expanded service area and a new trip booking system.

Recognizing the challenging past year, we want you to know that the Transit Plus team remains committed to your safety and transportation needs. I'd like to express a heartfelt thank you to all staff, drivers, and customers for the patience and perseverance during this time.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Platt".

Teresa Platt  
Manager of the Client Services Division



## We want to hear from you!



If you have any ideas for content you'd like to see in future newsletters, let us know by:

- Emailing [TRN-WTP-Project@winnipeg.ca](mailto:TRN-WTP-Project@winnipeg.ca),
- Calling the Transit Plus Contact Centre at **204 986-5722**,
- Sending your ideas in writing to **B-414 Osborne St. Winnipeg, MB, R3L 2A1.**