

Fort Smith Transit Charter Regulations

Fort Smith Transit, which provides fixed route and demand response service within the city limits of Fort Smith, will provide charter services incidental to its regular service provided that equipment and personnel are available. Fort Smith Transit operates incidental charter services in compliance with federal regulations set out in 49 CFR Part 604.

Charter service as defined under these regulations are as follows:

1. Transportation provided at the request of a third party for the exclusive use of a bus or van for a negotiated price. The following features may be characteristic of charter service.
 - a. A third party pays a negotiated price for the group;
 - b. Any fares charged to individual members of the group are collected by a third party;
 - c. The service is not part of the regularly scheduled service, or is offered for a limited period of time; or
 - d. A third party determines the origin and destination of the trip as well as scheduling
2. Transportation provided to the public for events or functions that occur on an irregular basis or for a limited duration and:
 - a. A premium fare is charged that is greater than the usual or customary fixed route fare; or
 - b. The service is paid for in whole or in part by a third party.

All charters require a minimum seven (7) day advanced notice); however, to insure availability, notification as soon as possible is recommended. At the time of the request, FST will begin the federal qualification process to notify registered private charter companies, unless there are allowable exemptions such as government officials, qualified human service organizations or emergency response. FST may provide a charter as long as staff and equipment are available and no registered charter provider is interested in providing the charter.

The federal qualification process requires 72 hours of registered private charter response time for charter requests received less than 30 days from the event. The process further requires 14 calendar days of registered private charter response time for charter requests received in 30 days or more from the event.

Fort Smith Transit will not provide the charter service if any registered charter company is interested in providing the charter regardless of price. If there is no interest from the registered charter companies, FST may provide the charter.

A charter application form must then be completed and submitted along with a required deposit. Deposit includes \$100.00 plus one-half (1/2) of the total estimated cost. Adjustments will be made to the final bill if the duration of the charter was actually longer or shorter than the estimated time.

FST may petition the Ombudsman Administrator for an exception to the federal charter service regulations only if the charter is for an event of regional or national significance, if the event is time sensitive (e.g., funerals of local, regional or national significance that are in public's interest), or if there is a hardship. A hardship is only considered if the registered charter provider had deadhead time that exceeds total trip time for initial pick-up to final drop-off, including wait time.

**Charter Rate Schedule
Effective January 1, 2014**

First Hour	\$200.00
Each Additional Hour	100.00

- A deposit \$100.00 plus one-half (1/2) of the estimated cost will be required
- Alternate rates are provided for City of Fort Smith departments - \$85.00 first hour, \$60 each additional hour (no deposit required)