



PETERSBURG AREA TRANSIT
SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION



ADA **Transportation Policy Manual**

For information, please contact us at 804-324-5658

INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

Petersburg Area Transit's *Specialized Transportation Service* provides (door-to-door) transportation for persons who are specialized transportation clients (s) who are unable to use the fixed route bus system due to a disability. These services are provided within three-quarters (3/4) mile of fixed route service areas.

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ELIGIBILITY- WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION?

Eligibility *is* predetermined through an application process. Applications are reviewed to determine if the applicant is unable, due to disability, to use fixed route public transportation that is available to the public. The P.A.T specialized transportation coordinator will make a written determination of eligibility within 21 days of the date the completed application is received.

INTERVIEW POLICY

Once the applicant has received the application, filled out all required information and returned to our office, the specialized transportation coordinator will call and set up the interview time for the applicant. Applicants who need transportation to the in-person interview must be informed that transportation can be provided if needed to complete application interview process. This service is free for all applicants who request transportation. Applicants can schedule this after the specialized transportation coordinator schedules them for their interview.

TYPES OF ELIGIBILITY

Applications may be granted conditional or unconditional eligibility, based on the nature of the disability. The conditions which make the applicant eligible will be specifically listed in the "Eligibility Notification Letter" provided to the applicant.

ELIGIBILITY NOTIFICATION LETTER

All ADA applicants will receive an "Eligibility Notification Letter" indicating their eligibility type and the specific date this eligibility will need to be re-certified. Should the applicant wish to access ADA Specialized transportation service on another public transportation provider, the applicant can use a copy of this letter to verify their status as an ADA eligible client.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Petersburg Area Transit:
309 Fairgrounds Rd,
Petersburg, VA 23803
(804)324-5658.

RECERTIFICATION POLICY

All clients enrolled in specialized transportation will be recertified *every four (4) years*. Clients address, phone numbers, emergency information, medical certification, eligibility and other pertinent information will be updated.

DENIAL LETTER OF NOTIFICATION POLICY

Based upon a review of your application for certification of specialized transportation eligibility, (Petersburg Area Transit) has determined that you are not eligible for specialized transportation service. This determination based on the following factors: ***ALL FACTORS MUST BE NOTED ON DENIAL LETTER WITH APPEAL INSTRUCTIONS.***

DENIAL LETTER OF NOTIFICATION POLICY APPEAL POLICY

If you do not agree with the decision that has been made, you have the right to appeal this determination. Any quest for an appeal must be made in writing and must be mailed within 60 days of the date of this letter. The enclosed description of the appeal policy provides additional information about the process. Please also note that if there is any change in your ability to use the fixed route service in the future, you may submit a new application.

APPEALING ELIGIBILITY

PAT appeal policy requires all information concerning the process, materials necessary to apply for eligibility, and notices and determinations concerning eligibility shall be made available in accessible formats, upon request.

PAT must respond within 21 days following the submission of a complete application, if the entity has not made a determination of eligibility; the applicant shall be treated as eligible and provided service until and unless the entity denies the application. PAT determination concerning eligibility shall be in writing. If the determination is that the individual is ineligible, the determination shall state the reasons for the finding.

PAT must provide documentation to each eligible individual stating that he or she is "ADA Paratransit Eligible." The documentation shall include the name of the eligible individual, the name of the transit provider, and the telephone number of the entity's paratransit coordinator, an expiration date for eligibility, and any editions or limitations on the individual's eligibility including the use of a personal care attendant.

PAT may require recertification of the eligibility of ADA paratransit eligible individuals at reasonable intervals. That established recertification is four (4) years. PAT must establish an administrative appeal process through which individuals that are denied eligibility can obtain review of the denial.

PAT requires that an appeal be filed within 60 days of the denial of an individual's application. This process must include an opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments, separation of functions (i.e., a decision by a person not involved with the initial decision to deny eligibility), and written notification of the decision, and the reasons for it.

P.A.T is not required to provide paratransit service to the individual pending the determination on appeal. However, if the entity has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, the entity shall provide paratransit service from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

SERVICE ANIMALS

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The use of a service animal must be identified on the ADA application. In order to ride PAT Transit:

- The animal must be on a leash or in a container, remain under control of the owner, and behave appropriately.
- Birds, reptiles, amphibians, rodents, and cats must be kept in an enclosed carrier/container.
- The animal must remain at your feet or on your lap. It may not sit on a vehicle seat.
- The animal must not be aggressive toward people or other animals.
- You are responsible for any damage caused by the animal. (49 CFR 37.167 (d))

SECUREMENT POLICY

Operators will use front and rear tie-downs to secure mobility devices. Operators will secure mobility devices at the strongest parts of the device; however, the passenger can indicate the most optimal tie-down spot. The mobility device will be secured front facing unless otherwise requested by passenger. Drivers will assist passengers with securement systems, ramps, and seatbelts; however, drivers cannot assist riders using power chairs or scooters with the operation of their equipment. P.A.T Transit cannot refuse to transport someone whose mobility device cannot be satisfactorily restrained provided that mobility device fits within the definition described in Section 3. (49 CFR 37.165)

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

Subscription service is pre-arranged trip (s) clients arrange for a particular time. Such trips require no reservation since it is scheduled at a particular time. The service can't comprise more than 50% of available trip at any given time if there's a capacity constraint at that time of day.

Note: If the specialized transportation service operates without capacity constraints, then there is no limit to subscription service. Review this service to ensure it does meet capacity constraints!

TELEPHONE ACCESS POLICY

P.A.T standard for telephone performance that 100% of all calls be answered within 3 minutes. Due to only having two telephone lines for all of its specialized transportation service, hold times may be longer.

RESERVATION AND SCHEDULING POLICY

Trip reservations can be made up to fourteen (14) days in advance and no later than 5:00 pm the day before the trip. Clients are encouraged to make reservations ahead of time which assist us in providing a more efficient service. Reservations cannot be made on weekends or holidays when the Petersburg Area Transit offices are closed. However, messages can be left on P.A.T voicemail system 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

SCHEDULING TRIPS

After PAT has determined you are eligible for specialized transportation service, you can schedule a ride by calling PAT @ (804)324-5658. Clients may schedule trips up to 14 days in advance. Weekday office hours for trip scheduling are 8:30am – 5:00 pm. Trip requests left on the answering machine after 5pm, the client will be called before 9:00 am the next business day. When P.A.T offices are closed, your call will be routed to an answering machine. You will be asked to leave a message requesting your trip. You will need to supply:

- ❖ your name
- ❖ your phone number,
- ❖ exact address of pick-up,
- ❖ exact address of destination,
- ❖ date of desired trip,
- ❖ desired time of pick-up and/or drop-off, and
- ❖ The number of people traveling, including Personal Care Attendants.

Trip requests left on the answering machine on the weekends for specialized transportation services. The client will be contacted on the next day of business by 9:00am.

OPERATOR VEHICLE POLICY

All operators must maintain sight of specialized transportation vehicle whenever there is a client(s) on board. PAT drivers are experienced with passenger assistance, mobility device securement and the safe operation of the vehicle. The drivers will assist passengers with getting in and out of the vehicles as well as loading and unloading carryon items. Drivers are prohibited from carrying on with lengthy conversations while driving. If you have service related questions feel free to ask, but for safety reasons please keep distractions to a minimum. Drivers may come to the door or lobby of your home or the medical facility to let the customer know they are ready to transport them. Drivers may assist a client to/from the door of the origin/destination. A driver will not assist into individual rooms or other areas of a building. If a customer requires further assistance, a personal care attendant (PCA) must accompany the customer.

SERVICE AREA

PAT provides specialized transportation service to origins and destinations within a ¾ mile buffer from PAT's fixed route bus service stops. This ¾ mile service area also includes the end point of a route as well. Please remember that when PAT makes changes to fixed route bus services, this will affect the service area for the specialized transportation. Specialized transportation service is available during the same days and service times as the fixed bus route service.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

PAT's specialized transportation strives to meet on-time service performance goal of 90-95%. Pick-up times for clients can be from fifteen minutes (15) to and/or fifteen minutes (15) after scheduled pick-up time. Clients are asked to be ready for pick-up at least fifteen minutes (15) minutes before pick-up.

Pick-up times must be that the scheduler does not adjust the rider's schedule pick-up time (user time) or the pickup window without the rider's consent and must limit any changes to within one hour (60) minutes of the requested pickup time.

Travel times must be monitored by operators who must inform base operations if a client's travel time will be in excess of thirty (30) minutes, but no more than one hour (60) minutes.

Back up service for specialized transportation vehicles will be provided by other specialized transportation operators when needed.

SERVICE WAIT TIMES

Once the specialized transportation vehicle arrives at the pickup location, the operator shall wait a maximum of five (5) minutes for the client's arrival. If the client has not arrived, the operator shall call base operations informing them that the client has not arrived. Base operations will attempt to contact the client and if there is no answer, base will inform the operator to proceed on to the next scheduled pick up. This pick up attempt will be logged as a no show against the client. For weekend trips where base is not in operation, the operator will attempt to contact the client using their company issued telephone. If no contact is made, the driver will note this as a no show on their log.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Specialized Transportation Service is available the same days and hours that PAT's fixed routes operate. Service is available: Monday thru Friday, from 5:30am to 7:15pm. The earliest you can be picked up is 5:30am and you must reach your final destination by 7:15pm. On Saturday's specialized transportation service is available from 7:15am - 7:15pm. There is no service available on Sunday's.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

PAT'S Specialized Transportation and fixed route services do not operate on the following six (6) Holidays during the calendar year;

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

FARES

The fare for PAT's Specialized Transportation Service is \$1.75 each one-way trip. Clients are welcome to have one additional person to accompany them during their trip, if the origin and destination is the same as the scheduled clients. Persons traveling with you must pay full fare. A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or designated person who acts as a Personal Care Attendant is allowed to travel free of charge. All PCA's employed by a service company must have a valid I.D. w/picture from the agency that employs them in order to receive free travel. PAT drivers do not carry cash and are not allowed to search purses or other personal belonging for your fare.

COMPANIONS

A Companion may travel with a client and will be charged at the same fare price as the client (\$1.75). Children are able to ride with the client as long as they can be properly supervised. You must provide an approved car seat for children who cannot be safely secured with a seat belt. Children under four (4) years of age and under forty (40) pounds are required by law to use a safety seat. PAT does not provide safety seats and drivers are not permitted to secure them or the child in the vehicle. Children under six (6) can travel at no cost, however if they are over the age of six (6) they can travel for the same discounted fare as the fixed route.

VISITOR POLICY

A person visiting from out of town is eligible for service for up to 21 days in one (1) calendar year. **Note: The 21 days do not have to run concurrently.** Visitors who present documentation of eligibility from their home jurisdictions are entitled to visitor eligibility. For those visitors who do not present evidence of eligibility, documentation can only be required of visitors whose disability is not apparent. PAT must accept a signed statement from a visitor stating that he or she is unable to use the fixed route system. Reservations can be made by calling PAT at (804)324-5658. When scheduling a pick up you will need to supply:

- ❖ your full name and telephone number
- ❖ exact address of pick-up and drop off locations
- ❖ date of desired trip,
- ❖ desired time of pick-up and/or drop-off
- ❖ The number of people traveling, including Personal Care Attendants.
- ❖ Special instructions such as: wheelchair ramp, color of house and building or name of office etc.

NUMBER OF PACKAGES ALLOWED

Passengers are allowed to take up to five (5) standard size grocery bags or other items which take up an equivalent space (2x2x2 – a two foot cube). Each item must not weigh more than 25 pounds. Packages can only be put in seats if there's available space. Packages must be removed if it prohibits another client from having an available seat. Drivers are prohibited from carrying purchased items into a customer's residence. Drivers can assist you in loading and unloading your items to and from the curb.

SUBSIDY PROGRAM

To be determined at a future date.

COORDINATING WITH ADJACENT SERVICE PROVIDER

Contact GRTC Care Van service for information on this service.

NO SHOW POLICY

P.A.T currently does not have a no show policy. A no show is when the driver arrives at the customer home for their schedule appointment and the customer is not present. That will be consider a no show.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If you are unable to make your scheduled ride please call PAT dispatch as soon as possible. Early cancellations provide more service opportunities for all specialized transportation clients. To cancel a scheduled trip, the rider they must do so by calling PAT direct at (804)324-5658, preferably no later than one (1) hours before their scheduled pick-up time.

Cancellations that occur because of an emergency situation beyond the specialized transportation client(s) control will NOT be a "chargeable late cancellations", provided the specialized transportation client(s) provides an explanation with documentations or with a phone call.

Specialized transportation client(s) may incur penalties for repeated cancellations and cancellations called in less than one (1) hours before the scheduled pick up.

Note: Frequency of rides and cancelations will be considered to determine whether there's a pattern with client.

CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS

ADA paratransit service must not be operated with capacity constraints. Meaning, there can be no limitation on the number of total trips, or trips per person made available per day. Per the ADA, there must not be a pattern or practice of trip denials, missed trips, late pickups, or trips in length not comparable to the fixed route. Finally, there can be no operational practice that has the effect of limiting service to any eligible client. Providers of paratransit services must be able to ensure the FTA that rides are on time and are not excessive in length. As previously mentioned, acceptable trip length (in minutes) would be comparable to the longest trip on a non-commuter fixed route.

Therefore Petersburg Area Transit shall not limit the availability of complementary para transit to ADA eligible individuals by any of the following:

- Restrictions on the number of trips an individual will be provided;
- Waiting lists for access to the service: or any operation pattern or practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA eligible persons, such as, but are not limited to:
- A substantial number of significantly untimely pickups for initial or return trips;
- Substantial numbers of trips denials or missed trips;
- Substantial numbers of trips with excessive trip lengths; or operational problems attributable to causes beyond the control of the entity including, but not limited to, weather or traffic conditions affecting all vehicular traffic that were not anticipated at the time a trip was scheduled.

TRIPS DENIAL

PAT accommodates all requests for service. PAT does not deny trips for any para-transit clients within our service area.

CANCELING TRIPS

If you are unable to make your scheduled ride please call PAT as soon as possible. To cancel a scheduled trip call PAT direct at (804)-324-5658, but no later than one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time.



**PETERSBURG AREA TRANSIT
*SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION***

Procedures

