

**ADA Complementary Origin to Destination
Paratransit Service**

Policies & Procedures



Capital Transit Bus Service

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**ADA Complementary Origin to Destination Paratransit
Service Policies & Procedures**

Table of Contents

I. GENERAL	3
A. GOAL.....	3
B. POLICY	3
C. PURPOSE	3
D. OBJECTIVES.....	3
II. OPERATIONS	4
A. GENERAL	4
B. SERVICE AREA	4
C. RESPONSE TIME/REQUESTS FOR SERVICE	4
D. FARES	5
E. NO TRIP PURPOSE RESTRICTIONS	5
F. HOURS AND DAYS OF SERVICE	5
G. NO CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS.....	5
H. COMPLIMENTARY PASSES	6
I. INCLEMENT WEATHER.....	6
J. LOST AND FOUND.....	6
III. PASSENGER RESPONSIBILITIES	7
A. GENERAL PASSENGER CONDITION	7
B. SCHEDULING RIDES.....	7
C. RIDING ADA COMPLEMENTARY ORIGIN TO DESTINATION PARATRANSIT SERVICE*	7
D. TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN	9
E. “NO SHOWS” AND CANCELLATIONS.....	9
F. ACCOMMODATION OF COMMON WHEELCHAIRS	10
G. PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS (PCA) AND COMPANIONS	10
H. SERVICE ANIMALS AND ACCOMMODATION OF ANIMALS	10
I. CARRY-ON PACKAGES.....	11
IV. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	11
A. GOAL.....	11
B. CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS	11
C. PUBLIC HEARINGS	11
D. FOCUS GROUPS	11
V. PUBLIC INFORMATION DISSEMINATION	12
A. GOAL.....	12
B. ACCESSIBLE FORMATS	12
VI. SERVICE COMPLAINT PROCESS.....	12
A. GOAL.....	12
B. SERVICE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE.....	12
C. APPEAL PROCEDURE	12

I. General

A. Goal

It is the goal of Capital Transit (CT), through its ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service, to design, implement, and maintain an efficient and effective transportation system for persons with disabilities who are “ADA paratransit eligible,” and to support its fixed route service. To determine ADA/Paratransit eligibility the applicant must complete and submit to Capital Transit the Transit Functional Needs Evaluation packet. If, ADA/Paratransit status is granted the ADA/Paratransit status is good for up to two years.

B. Policy

It is the policy of Capital Transit that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of a disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity undertaken by the Capital Transit that receives or benefits from federal financial assistance.

C. Purpose

The ADA complementary paratransit service was developed to provide safe and efficient transportation within the City of Helena to persons with disabilities who are “ADA paratransit eligible.”

Paratransit service is provided through the existing CAPITAL TRANSIT origin to destination service. The origin to destination service is designed to provide complementary service to the fixed route service and is available to origin to destination eligible persons. This policy documents how the origin to destination service operates to meet ADA complementary paratransit service requirements.

D. Objectives

The specific objectives of the ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service are to:

1. Provide origin to destination service to all eligible individuals on specially equipped vehicles designed to accommodate persons with disabilities as a complementary service to the fixed route service.
2. Maintain a trained staff for the operation and control of the service.
3. Provide on-going mechanisms for persons with disabilities to provide input on ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service, policies and procedures.
4. Provide all public information tools on Capital Transit in accessible formats.

II. Operations

A. General

ADA complementary para-transit service is provided through the existing CAPITAL TRANSIT origin to destination service in accordance with the six service criteria established by the U.S. Department of Transportation for ADA para-transit operations.

1. service area,
2. response time,
3. fares,
4. trip purpose restrictions,
5. hours and days of service,
6. capacity constraints

The complementary origin to destination service is a transportation service exclusive to ADA para-transit eligible riders.

B. Service Area

ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service shall be provided to origins and destinations within 3/4 mile of fixed route service.

C. Response Time/Requests for Service

Two types of service will be available: subscription and reservation.

Subscription service

Subscription service will be offered for any trip that occurs every week, originates and terminates at the same scheduled location, at the same hour each day. Requests for subscription service must be made at least one day prior to the first trip, and may be made up to 14 days in advance. The number of subscription service trips accepted shall not exceed 50% of the total trips scheduled by all passengers unless there is non-subscription capacity.

Reservation service

Reservation service shall be available for any trip. Requests for reservation service must be made at least one day prior to the desired trip time, and may be made up to 14 days in advance.

Requests for service shall be accepted from 8:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the day prior to the service day. The schedules for the next day are developed at 4 p.m. Reservations for service on Monday or the day after a holiday shall be received on the Capital Transit voice messaging system. All return trips must be scheduled regardless of whether the passenger knows the exact return time or not.

Passengers should estimate the return time, and call the office as soon as possible if they will not be ready at the scheduled time. Riders on the day of the scheduled ride wishing to change a scheduled ride will be subject to the scheduling criteria.

Trips shall be scheduled to begin no more than one hour before or after the desired departure time. The trip shall be scheduled so as to arrive at the pick-up location within a 30-minute time frame. Pick up and return trips are scheduled separately.

D. Fares

The City Commission sets the fare for ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service. The fare for ADA complementary origin to destination service may be twice the fee of the fixed route fare and will be the same amount for all individuals eligible to use the origin to destination service.

E. No Trip Purpose Restrictions

Trips for any purpose will be accommodated and will not be prioritized by trip purpose. Passengers will not be asked to provide information regarding trip purpose.

F. Hours and Days of Service

The ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service shall operate from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The first run starts at 6:30 a.m. and the last run ends at 5:30 p.m. No weekend service is provided.

Service is not offered on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day	Presidents Day
Memorial Day	Independence Day	Labor Day
Columbus Day	Veterans' Day	General Election Day
Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day	

G. No Capacity Constraints

The Capital Transit will not constrain capacity by:

1. restricting the number of trips an individual will be provided;
2. maintaining waiting lists for access to the service; or
3. any operational pattern or practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA paratransit eligible persons.

The following performance data will be collected and monitored by the Capital Transit for the purpose of establishing whether capacity constraints exist:

- number of late pick-ups or drop-offs for initial or return trips. A pick-up or drop-off is considered late when it is more than 30 minutes past the scheduled pick-up or drop-off time.
- number of trip denials or missed trips. Trip denials include rides that are accepted outside the hour scheduling window. Declined round trips will be counted as two (2) denials when one leg of a round trip cannot be scheduled within the hour window and the requester declines the round trip.

- number of trips with excessive lengths. Excessive trip length is defined as a trip that takes no more than two times longer than the trip would take on a fixed route.
- number of missed calls on the trip reservation line. Missed calls will be measured by the amount of reservation calls that roll over and go to voicemail.

If, after analysis of the above performance data, the Capital Transit determines that there are swings in demand when administering its ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service, the Capital Transit shall increase its capacity to respond to peaks in demand in a way that is comparable to dealing with changes in demand on the fixed route system.

H. Complimentary Passes

Whenever the Capital Transit or its service contractor makes an error that greatly inconveniences a passenger, a complimentary pass, good for one free ride, may be issued to the passenger. Circumstances that may warrant the issuance of a complimentary pass include:

- vehicle arrival more than 30 minutes beyond the scheduled pick- up time;
- passenger was inadvertently left off the schedule;
- passenger was stranded on a broken vehicle (longer than 30 mins.); or
- other incidents as approved by the Capital Transit Supervisor.

I. Inclement Weather

In the unlikely event of service cancellation due to inclement weather, Capital Transit personnel will attempt to contact all scheduled passengers listed on the reservations and subscription lists.

J. Lost and Found

Neither the Capital Transit nor its service contractor will be responsible for items left on vehicles. However, if found, the item(s) will be held for 14 days. If an item is not claimed within 14 days, it may be donated to a local charitable organization.

Passengers attempting to locate lost items should call the Capital Transit office. If a lost item has been located, every effort will be made to return the item to the passenger.

III. Passenger Responsibilities

A. General Passenger Condition

All passengers must be able to sit in a bus seat or wheelchair in order to be transported.

Any passenger whose medical condition is such that the passenger is incoherent or requires immediate medical attention to sustain life may be denied service. ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service is to be considered a “common carrier” and does not perform ambulance or emergency service.

If the driver reasonably believes a passenger’s physical condition or conduct is hazardous, unsanitary, or if a passenger possesses weapons, instruments, or equipment that are reasonably believed to be dangerous, service may be terminated immediately. The passenger will be notified of the right to appeal the termination and Capital Transit will hear the appeal as soon as reasonably possible.

B. Scheduling Rides

Scheduling rides must be made at least one day* or up to 14 days prior to the desired trip time. Rides are scheduled on a first come, first served basis. In order to schedule a trip, a passenger must speak either in person or via telephone messaging with Capital Transit staff who will require the following for scheduling a trip:

1. Name
2. Phone Number
3. Date and Day of the week of your ride request
4. Origin Address
5. Destination Address
6. Desired Pick-Up Time
7. Desired Drop-Off Time (Appointment Time)
8. Number of Passengers
9. If Round Trip, Approximate Time of Return Trip

Passengers can schedule service by calling the Capital Transit at 447-8080 from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. the day prior to your ride. Reservations for rides for Monday or the day after a holiday will be received on the Capital Transit voice messaging service.

*Riders scheduling rides for same day rides or changing either the scheduled pick-up location or drop off location may be subject to an increased fare.

C. Riding ADA Complementary Origin to Destination Paratransit Service*

Capital Transit (CT) only provides origin to destination * service. Please be ready for pick up at the origin. Passengers shall be ready to go fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. The Capital Transit makes every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. However, Capital Transit may arrive up to 15 minutes before or 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

Example: If you schedule a 9:30 a.m. pick-up, the vehicle may arrive between 9:15 a.m. and 9:45 a.m.

This 30-minute window of 15 minutes before to 15 minutes after the scheduled time is called the “pick-up time period.” Drivers, after arriving within the pick-up time period, will wait up to 3 minutes. Any passenger who is not at the scheduled pick-up point and ready to go by that time will be considered a “no show” and the driver will leave to pick up other riders. The driver will not return for a second attempt. **The only exception will be passengers who have been detained during a medical appointment.**

If a passenger knows that the passenger will be detained during a medical appointment, the passenger shall call Capital Transit at 447-8080 as soon as possible. When the passenger is ready, the passenger shall call Capital Transit and the next available bus will be dispatched to pick up the passenger.

Service will not be provided if the vehicle cannot access the origin or destination location or if the location does not provide safe passage for the vehicle or safe access to the vehicle by the passenger. The driver shall immediately call the dispatcher for further instructions in such cases.

Drivers are not permitted to enter a passenger’s home under any circumstances.

Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a wheelchair up or down steps. This rule is provided for the safety of the passenger and the driver.

Drivers are not permitted to lift passengers.

Passengers must pay their fares upon boarding the bus. Failure to do so may result in no service for that trip and the recording of a “no show” or cancellation (see Section III, E, “No Shows” and Cancellations).

All passengers on the ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service vehicle are recommended to wear a seat belt. Seat belt usage is not a requirement.

Profanity or abusive conduct are not permitted and may result in suspension or termination of service.

Eating or smoking is not allowed on the Capital Transit or contractor vehicles. Drinking is permissible only from a container with a Snap-on lid.

*If assistance is needed from the building door to our CT vehicle, you may call to request door-to-door service. You will need to request this premium service from CT dispatchers. The CT dispatcher will discuss your particular situation and location to determine if door-to-door service *may* be provided based on safety for our drivers, passengers and public. If necessary, a Capital Transit staff person may make an on-site examination.

The guidelines below need to be followed to allow door-to-door service to be provided safely, effectively and efficiently. Other conditions may also apply.

Private Residences

If requested at the time of the reservation, door-to-door service provides you with driver assistance from the ground floor exit door of your origin to the CT vehicle. It also provides for assistance from the vehicle to a ground level entrance door of your destination.

If further assistance is necessary through the doors of your origin or destination you will be responsible for arranging a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to assist you beyond the threshold of the door.

DRIVERS WILL NOT ENTER PRIVATE HOMES FOR ANY REASON.

Business / Medical Facilities / Public Buildings

If necessary and requested, drivers will assist passengers into and from the main entrance door. When picking up passengers from a business / medical facility / public building, drivers will go through the second door of a foyer. Drivers cannot go beyond this point.

Drivers will not enter nursing homes, medical facilities, shopping centers, businesses or other public buildings in an attempt to find passengers. Passengers should be waiting at the entrance at least fifteen (15) minutes before their scheduled pick up time. CT is a shared ride. Delays are unacceptable because they cause the vehicles to get off schedule and inconvenience other passengers.

Please note also that the ability to safely provide door-to-door service may involve issues such as stairs, ramps, doors, handrails, pathways, etc... as well as clearing and maintenance of the above during the winter months. This includes such times as when there has been a significant snowfall or drifting condition in the hours prior to the scheduled pick-up. Safety will be determined by CT staff. If an unsafe condition is present we may only be able to do origin to destination service (NOT door-to-door service). Your ride could be canceled due to any of the above conditions.

D. Transportation of Children

The minimum age for a child to travel alone aboard the ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service vehicles is 6 years of age. Children under the age of 6 must have an adult accompany them during transport. Only the Capital Transit Supervisor may grant exceptions.

E. "No Shows" and Cancellations

If riders are unable to keep the scheduled appointment time, they should notify Capital Transit at least two hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Failure to do so may result in the recording of a "no show." A record of all "no shows" will be maintained at the Capital Transit office.

Three (3) “no shows” within a one-month time period, counting from the last incident, for reasons other than those of a necessary or emergency nature, as determined by the Capital Transit Supervisor, shall result in suspension of service for a period of 30 days. The passenger will be notified in writing and given an opportunity for a hearing prior to the suspension.

Three or more 30-day suspensions within a year period will result in the loss of eligibility for one (1) year or 365 days from the board’s determination. If you have been suspended from the program, you have the right to request an appeal of the decision. Appeals must be filed, in writing, within sixty (60) days of the date of the letter of suspension. Appeals should be addressed to:

Steve Larson, Capital Transit Supervisor
1415 N. Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

F. Accommodation of Common Wheelchairs

The Capital Transit ADA Complementary Origin to Destination Paratransit Service will accommodate common wheelchairs that do not exceed 32 inches in width and 48 inches in length when measured two inches above the ground, and do not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied. Regardless of these measurements CT will make every attempt to transport the rider and their wheelchair unless we are prevented due to legitimate safety reasons.

Any passenger who utilizes a lift to enter a bus must be properly secured to prevent the person from falling off the lift.

All wheelchairs and other mobility devices must be secured to the floor of the vehicle using the securement equipment. The drivers will make every effort not to damage wheelchairs or mobility devices with the securement straps and hooks.

G. Personal Care Attendants (PCA) and Companions

A personal care attendant (i.e., someone designated or employed specifically to help the eligible individual meet the individual’s personal needs) always may ride with the ADA paratransit eligible individual at no cost.

As part of the subscription service or reservation of a ride, an individual must inform the dispatcher they will be traveling with a personal care attendant. If someone does not indicate the use of an attendant, then any individual accompanying any person would be regarded simply as a companion and charged the rider fare. Your PCA must get on and off at the same location as you do.

H. Service Animals and Accommodation of Animals

Animals other than service animals as described below are allowed to ride only if in a secured pet travel carrier.

It is the policy of Capital Transit to allow service animals to accompany their owners without restraint. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, a service animal means a guide dog, signal dog, or other animal that is required to aid its owner and that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or other sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 allows for the imposition of legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for the safe operation of ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service. The Capital Transit can generally require use of a secured pet travel carrier for any animal that is a health or safety hazard regardless of the kind of training it has received and the function it serves for its owner.

I. Carry-On Packages

Drivers will help passengers take lightweight items off the vehicle and set them on the curb. If additional assistance is required, this assistance may be rendered on a case-by-case basis.

IV. Public Involvement

A. Goal

The Capital Transit is committed to providing on-going mechanisms to involve the public in decisions regarding its services, policies, and procedures.

B. Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

Consumer satisfaction survey forms will be mailed one time each year to all service passengers that are on the subscription list. These surveys will measure customer satisfaction with aspects of Capital Transit services including prompt telephone answering, scheduler courtesy, ability to get requested pick-up time, timeliness of pick-ups and drop-offs, response time for return trip, amount of time traveling, courtesy of drivers, level of assistance by drivers, safety of service, and general satisfaction with service. The results of these surveys will be compiled and reported to the Capital Transit oversight entity.

C. Public Hearings

Public hearings will be held on an as-needed basis to obtain input from persons with disabilities on such topics as proposed service changes, proposed fare increases, and other similar topics.

D. Focus Groups

Focus groups made up of persons with disabilities and representatives from agencies serving the needs of persons with disabilities will be held on an ad hoc basis to deal with specific service and policy issues that require in-depth discussion.

V. Public Information Dissemination

A. Goal

The Capital Transit is committed to providing information about its services, policies, and procedures to the public in accessible formats for persons with disabilities.

B. Accessible Formats

The Capital Transit shall provide a TTY number (or make use of an operator-assisted RELAY service) so that persons with hearing or speech impairments may communicate with and receive information from Capital Transit staff.

VI. Service Complaint Process

A. Goal

The Capital Transit has adopted the following service complaint process as the mechanism for resolving complaints relative to the origin to destination ADA complementary paratransit services, policies, and procedures.

The following administrative procedure has been established to insure prompt and equitable resolution of the situation any person who has been denied service for origin to destination ADA complementary paratransit service. The same appeal procedure will be used for appeals filed by persons who have been notified of a pending subscription termination.

B. Service Complaint Procedure

1. Title VI complaints are handled by the State of Montana, Department of Transportation, Civil Rights Bureau. Forms are available on the buses, in the lobby and on the CT web page.
2. Service complaints are handled by the CT supervisor. Forms are available on the buses, in the lobby and on the CT web page.
3. Loss of service due to “no show” or denial of ADA eligibility situations are handled by the CT review committee. No loss of service will be implemented till the individual has had their opportunity to explain the situation and the review committee has informed the person in writing of the final determination.

C. Appeal Procedure

A passenger who wishes to appeal denial of service or termination of subscription service must address an appeal, in writing, to the Capital Transit within 60 days of the denial of service or termination of subscription service. The appellant is entitled to be heard in person and to have necessary support, such as a sign interpreter, or may choose to be represented by another person. The appellant will be notified in writing of the Capital Transit decision as soon as possible.