

Demand Response / Curb-to-Curb Service

Policies & Procedures



Capital Transit Bus Service

Updated: 11/20/2023

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), public transit providers are required to provide ADA Complimentary Paratransit Service to those who, because of functional disability, are unable to independently access or use fixed-route system either all the time, temporarily or under certain circumstances. ***As of March 21, 2022, Capital Transit no longer operates a fixed route system and provides curb-to-curb demand response service to all ridership groups.**

CAPITAL TRANSIT'S Demand Response/Curb-to-Curb services are available for all ridership types inclusive of individuals with physical, cognitive, or other disabilities for all trip requests.

Trip requests may be scheduled one day in advance only, for anytime during CT's normal administrative office hours. **ALL RIDE REQUESTS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY for ALL RIDERSHIP GROUPS**

CAPITAL TRANSIT is committed to providing safe, reliable, and satisfying transportation options for our community which meet or exceed the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The CAPITAL TRANSIT Demand Response Policy & Procedures Manual is designed to inform Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Paratransit eligible consumers and CAPITAL TRANSIT's employees about CAPITAL TRANSIT's ADA transportation services.

This manual includes policies and procedures, rules and regulations, and guidelines for use of CAPITAL TRANSIT's Demand Response along with answers to many questions about the program.

All CAPITAL TRANSIT customers and employees should review this manual carefully and refer to it whenever questions arise. For additional information, please contact CAPITAL TRANSIT staff at (406) 447-8080 during the hours of 8:00am- 4:00pm, Monday through Friday.

POLICY

As of March 21, 2022, Capital Transit no longer offers fixed route bus service. Capital Transit will only operate Curb-to-Curb service for all ridership groups within the City of Helena Service Area and Commuter Bus Service in the East Valley/East Helena Service Area to the City of Helena Service Area. Door-to-Door service is a service provided only to passengers with a disability and is only available only by contacting the Capital Transit Dispatch Office at time of scheduling.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires complementary paratransit because there will always be people with disabilities who are unable to travel on their own.

ADA regulations specifically define a population of customers who are entitled to this service as a Federally Protected Civil Right.

Additionally this policy and other relevant information for the general public regarding utilization of Demand Response Services can be found on the City of Helena website at <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/capital-transit> under the “Policies” tab.

Accessible Formats

The Policy and Procedures Manual is available in large print, Braille, or audio file format upon request by persons with visual or other disabilities by calling 406.447.8080

DOCUMENT INTENT

DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE

As of March 21, 2022, Capital Transit no longer offers fixed route bus service. Capital Transit will only operate Curb-to-Curb service for all ridership groups within the City of Helena Service Area and Commuter Bus Service in the East Valley/East Helena Service Area to the City of Helena Service Area. Door-to-Door service is a service provided only to passengers with a disability and is only available only by contacting the Capital Transit Dispatch Office at time of scheduling.

The demand response service includes transport of citizens with limited mobility due to a disability. The purpose and intent of this document is to provide policies and procedures for all Capital Transit Ridership groups.

SERVICE TYPE

CAPITAL TRANSIT's demand response service is an origin to destination public transportation system. Reservations are recommended to be made a day in advance as same day ride request are subject to availability. **As a reminder Capital Transit is a non-emergency service transportation option provided within the City of Helena.**

Capital Transits Demand Response service is designed to be universally accessible by all ridership types and meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. All CAPITAL TRANSIT vehicles are equipped with accessibility features such as wheelchair lifts, these features allow for maximum mobility for customers with disabilities whose functional limitations prevent them from using the fixed-route service. The following two types of services are offered by CAPITAL TRANSIT:

Special service Types

1-Day Advanced Reservation Service:

Due to ridership demands CAPITAL TRANSIT only offers day in advance scheduling. All customers are encouraged to schedule their trips the day before which allows the dispatching software time to calculate and assign ride request based on passenger volume and ride types.

A ride scheduled the day before that is canceled or modified on requested date of service is considered a new ride request and is subject to the limitations for same day request service below.

Same Day Service: OFFERED BUT SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY

CAPITAL TRANSIT will make all reasonable attempts to provide same day service or a same day change in time of service. The Federal Transit Association (FTA) considers this to be a premium service that is not required but may be offered as a transit agency can accommodate a request.

Since service is provided on a first come first served basis, customers should make reservations as early as possible and give the reservationist specific times to be picked up for return trips.

CAPITAL TRANSIT will attempt to schedule a trip request for the time requested. However, the reservationist may alter the time, (with a variation of one hour before or after), to allow for other passengers to travel to a similar area.

Subscription Service: NOT OFFERED

Subscription service is a premium service. Due to ridership demand CAPITAL TRANSIT does not offer this service type as an option.

SERVICE AREA

CAPITAL TRANSIT's Demand Response service is only available within the corporate City Limits of the City of Helena.

Origins and destinations outside of the City of Helena service area such as the East Valley/East Helena Service Area is served by a commuter bus with limited hours of operation and pickup/drop off locations for service into the City of Helena Service Area.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Operations

Days and hours of operations may change periodically, including operational closures to conduct staff meetings and trainings as needed. Therefore, CAPITAL TRANSIT will assess any changes and update this document as needed.

Typical Operations:

The hours of operation are Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., CAPITAL TRANSIT does provide service during the same operational hours on the following Holidays:

Indigenous Peoples (Columbus) Day

Election Day

Veterans Day

Martin Luther King Day

Presidents Day.

No services are offered on the following holidays:

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

4th of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day or the Friday after

Christmas Day

New Year's Day

FARES

All ridership types are required to pay the appropriate fare for each leg of their trip to and from an origin or destination point. Exact fare is recommended as drivers do not carry or make change.

A Personal Care Attendant may accompany their client at no additional charge.

Children under 6 ride free

No guest rides provided, all users of the system must have a ridership profile setup using either the mobile app or by calling the dispatch center at 406-447-8080 to schedule a ride.

A ride scheduled the day before that is canceled or modified on requested date of service is considered a new ride and subject to the fare associated with same day service.

Fare Discounts are available for Day in Advance or Same Day scheduling for the following ridership groups:

Typical documentation to provide to qualify for a discount:

- **Seniors (60+): A document issued by a government agency listing your birthdate such as but not limited to a Birth Certificate or Drivers License.**
- **Military Veterans: Copy of DD-214 or Military ID**
- **Persons with a Disability: Valid ADA Paratransit Card, Medicaid Card**
- **Student (6 and older): Current School ID Card.**

ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY

Under the Demand Response/Curb-to-Curb service model Capital Transit provides rides for all persons with a disability type and does not require an application or proof of eligibility for ridership. However, discounted fares are subject to proof of eligibility.

PASSENGER ASSISTANCE

All CAPITAL TRANSIT drivers are trained in passenger assistance techniques and will provide passenger assistance, if requested, in boarding and disembarking the vehicle.

Passenger assistance may include guiding the passenger to the vehicle, lending a steady arm for balance in boarding the vehicle, finding a seat, or securing a wheelchair. The driver may refuse service if the passenger cannot safely travel to and from the vehicle without the driver lifting or carrying the passenger.

Individuals who need extensive assistance in traveling should arrange for a Personal Care Attendant to accompany and assist them. Capital Transit does not provide Personal Care Attendants.

CAPITAL TRANSIT will provide assistance requested by or on behalf of a passenger with a disability in moving between the entrance or other vehicle drop-off point and the location where passengers board and disembark from the vehicle.

This includes assistance to main entrance doors of their destination.

Capital Transit drivers are required to push manual wheelchairs up and down an ADA compliant ramp unless it poses a risk and harm to the driver. This also includes drivers opening the door for a wheelchair passenger who wishes to enter or exit the main entrance of their origin or destination.

To maintain continuing control, drivers may decline to provide assistance that causes them to lose sight of the vehicle.

Capital Transit Operator will not under any circumstances enter a passenger's homes. For the safety and protection of both drivers and passengers, it is against our policy to provide this type of assistance.

Drivers may provide assistance to passengers with disabilities who are not able to get on or off a vessel for which the passenger consents such as lifts or ramps.

Capital Transit does not require a passenger with a disability to accept assistance if he or she is readily able to get on or off the vehicle independently.

Capital Transits Demand Response Service is a passenger service only and does not have the capacity or equipment to transport large volumes of items, such as but not limited to packages, groceries and or freight items.

Passengers are responsible for carrying their own belongings. Packages, groceries, or other freight items that cannot be stowed on a passenger's lap or under the seat are not permitted.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT (PCA)

CAPITAL TRANSIT Demand Response Service does not provide PCA service. It is strongly recommended that a person who requires the use of a PCA always travel with their PCA since drivers cannot provide assistance beyond that which is described in the previous section.

Individuals who need extensive assistance in traveling beyond that which the Transit Operator can provide, including lifting, carrying, support during the ride, and behavior control, must arrange for a PCA to accompany and assist them.

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to help an individual with a disability meet his or her personal needs in daily living activities. A registered PCA may accompany the ADA passenger free of charge.

As part of the 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.

POLICY ON PORTABLE BREATHING AIDS

Portable oxygen supplies and respirators are permitted on board all Capital Transit Vehicles. Oxygen tanks must be secured/controlled by the passenger, so they do not move during transport. Information about the use of this equipment must be provided to the reservationist when scheduling service.

PASSENGER SECUREMENT POLICY

Wheelchairs

CAPITAL TRANSIT's ability to accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility devices will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. All wheelchairs or other mobility devices must be secured to the vehicle in the designated area. The driver of the vehicle must secure the wheelchair or other mobility device.

All wheelchairs and other mobility devices must be secured to the floor of the vehicle using the securement equipment as proper tie down of wheel chairs and other mobility devices is mandatory. The drivers will make every effort not to damage wheelchairs or mobility devices with the securement straps and hooks.

In the event that a wheelchair or other mobility device cannot be secured or an individual using a wheelchair or other mobility device makes a request, the passengers may transfer to a regular seat on the vehicle so long as they are able to accomplish the transfer independently or with the assistance of a Personal Care Attendant. Drivers will not lift passengers.

The Capital Transit's Demand Response Service will accommodate common wheelchairs or other mobility devices 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.

SEAT BELTS

All passengers are recommended to wear a seat belt. Seat belt usage is not a requirement on our ARBOC Buses, Cutaway Buses or Transit Vans. **However, use of a seatbelt by all passenger groups is mandatory in Capital Transit Mini Vans.**

Persons using wheelchairs should be secured to their chairs in addition to having their wheelchairs secured to the vehicle. The driver will provide assistance in fastening Capital Transit Vehicle seatbelts upon request.

All children five years old and under must utilize a child carrier or safety/car seat during transport. The customer is responsible for providing and securing the child carrier or safety/car seat.

Drivers are not permitted to move the vehicle until all passengers are secured.

LIFT USE POLICY

CAPITAL TRANSIT strongly recommends that persons who wish to use the lift to board do so only when seated in a wheelchair. Persons who do not use wheelchairs but wish to use the lift to board or de-board the vehicle should inform the reservationist when scheduling service. However, anyone wishing to use the lift will be accommodated by the Transit Operator. Standees with disabilities who do not use wheelchairs but have difficulty using steps (e.g., an elderly person who can walk on a level surface without use of a mobility aid but cannot raise his or her legs sufficiently to climb bus steps) may also use the lift by request. Any passenger who utilizes a lift to enter a bus must be properly secured to prevent the person from falling off the lift.

MOBILITY AID

CAPITAL TRANSIT will not deny service or restrict the use of any mobility aid, including, but not limited to walkers, crutches, canes, braces, or similar devices.

In addition, CAPITAL TRANSIT must also make reasonable modifications to these policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of other powered mobility devices used by persons with mobility impairments (e.g., Segway's), unless it can be demonstrated that a specific device cannot be operated or secured on board the vehicles consistent with legitimate safety requirements or potential damage due to inability to properly secure device to prevent damage to device.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) defines a service animal as 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. In addition, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 allows for the imposition of legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for the safe operation of Capital Transits Public Transportation Services. Therefore, in accordance with In Accordance with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular (FTA C 4710.1) requirements, it is the policy of Capital Transit that:

1. Only Service Animals are allowed on a transit vehicle or in the Capital Transit Facility. In addition, the service animal must be always under the passengers or a third party such as your PCA/ride assistant. **Capital Transit Staff cannot for any reason take control of your service animal.**
2. Passengers or their PCA should notify the reservationist/dispatcher at time of ride scheduling of their intent to ride with a service animal in order to help ensure adequate space is available for the animal.
3. There is no fee charged for your service animal.
4. Your service animal **cannot** ride on a seat.
5. Your service animal **can** ride on the floor at your feet.
6. Your service animal **cannot** obstruct /block walk isles of a transit vehicle.
7. Your service animal **must be** housebroken.
8. Capital Transit does not prescribe limits on the number of service animals that accompany passengers on a single trip. Different service animals may provide different services to a rider during trips or at the rider's destination.
9. Capital Transit shall not transport service animals that are deemed to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of drivers or other riders, create a seriously disruptive atmosphere, or are otherwise not under the rider's control. For example, a rider with a service animal is responsible for ensuring the dog does not bite the driver or other riders. Conversely, a dog that barks occasionally would likely not be considered out of the owner's control.
10. Capital Transit cannot deny a passenger with a service animal access to transit vehicles or facilities due to other riders' or agency personnel's allergies to dogs or other animals. The FTA and ADA regulations explicitly state *that service animals must be allowed to accompany individuals on vehicles and in facilities. Encountering a service animal in the transit or other environment is an expected part of being in public.*
11. Capital Transit recognizes that some persons with hidden disabilities do use animals that meet the regulatory definition of a service animal. This would include, for example, animals that are trained to alert individuals with seizure disorders to an oncoming seizure or respond to a seizure and animals that are trained to remind persons with depression to take their medication.
12. Capital Transit does not require passengers to provide documentation for their service animal before boarding a bus or entering the facility. However, Capital Transit staff may ask riders two questions: (1) is the animal a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform for you?

GENERAL POLICIES

The following policies apply to all of CAPITAL TRANSIT's service:

- Capital Transit does not have a customer tab account system and drivers cannot make change. Therefore, all passengers are encouraged to pay exact amount.
- All Fares are required to be paid before boarding the vehicle no exceptions.
- For the comfort of all passengers, smoking (including vaping or electronic cigarettes), eating, drinking, chewing, and using illegal substances in CAPITAL TRANSIT's vehicles are prohibited.
- When playing an audio device, use a headset and keep the volume low so that others are not disturbed. Also, be considerate of other passengers when using personal communication devices. Keep the conversation brief and your voice low.
- Limit your conversation with the driver to questions regarding CAPITAL TRANSIT services only, so the driver can focus his/her attention on safe driving.
- A driver may refuse to transport a passenger who appears to be under the influence of alcohol, illegal or dangerous substances, or whose behavior or language appears abusive, offensive, disorderly, or dangerous to himself, the driver, or other passengers.
- Passengers may not carry articles onto a CAPITAL TRANSIT's vehicle that cannot be held by the passenger or secured under the seat. Passengers shall not place articles in empty seats or the aisle of the vehicle.
- Strollers and Collapsible Shopping Carts permitted on CAPITAL TRANSIT vehicles only if folded. Non collapsible shopping carts, wagons, freight carts/hand trucks are not allowed on the buses.
- A parent or guardian must accompany children age 12 and under.
- During inclement weather, CAPITAL TRANSIT may have to limit demand response service. Specifically, service may be limited for roads and corridors that pose a safety risk to the vehicle and driver, such as but not limited to: unplowed private streets/drives/Lots or approaches or unshoveled or icy sidewalks or other walking path types . Passengers should contact CAPITAL TRANSIT's offices for service updates during known inclement weather occurrences.

TRIP SCHEDULING PROCEDURE

CAPITAL TRANSIT NOT A TAXI or UBER SERVICE. Capital Transit is a public shared ride service provider as such Capital Transit offers Demand Response service for all ridership groups. However, door-to-door service can be provided upon request, which must be made at time of ride scheduling.

Due to the shared ride nature of our Demand Response service all rides are scheduled to include a 30-minute pickup and 30-minute drop-off window for both pick-up and returns trips.

To Schedule a Trip

Passengers can download Capital Transits mobile app to their smartphone or tablet for either IOS or Android types or by calling Capital Transit's Reservation Office at (406) 447-8080 between 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, up to (1) business day before your appointment time.

Hearing-impaired customers can use TTY (for hearing impaired passengers), or 711 to contact CAPITAL TRANSIT to schedule a trip.

We strongly recommend that passengers to schedule their trips as soon as possible on the day before as the demand for the service is extremely high.

If calling in to schedule, please be prepared to give the reservation agent the exact addresses of your pick-up and drop-off locations. If your pick-up location is at a building with more than one entrance, please indicate which entrance you will use.

Tell the reservation agent if you will be riding with a mobility aid, companion, service animal, or personal care assistant (PCA). If travelling with a PCA/companion, please also notify the reservations agent if your PCA/companion will be travelling with a mobility aid.

Please be ready for pick up at the origin. Passengers must be ready to go fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled pick-up window begins as the bus can show up at any time during the window.

EXAPMPLE:

Passenger has a 10:00am appointment.

Your pickup window will be 9:00am-9:30am, from the time you are picked up in this window you could be on the bus for 30-minutes. If were picked up at 9:29am (still in the 9-9:30 pickup window, you should arrive on-time for your targeted time of 10:00am (9:59am arrival).

Attempting to schedule a 9:30am-10:00am pick up for a 10:00am could result in being as much as 30 minutes late since you could be onboard for 30-minutes from time of pickup.

Capital Transit strives to assure a passenger's time on the bus is no longer than 30- minutes and to assure you arrive at your requested location at your desired time when scheduling your ride please provide the dispatcher with your desired arrival time or actual appointment time for your destination and return trip, from there booking the pickup window and drop-off window can occur:

Buses cannot be held or delayed as other passengers are waiting for this shared ride service. If you are not prepared to depart within your scheduled window drivers that arrive within the pick-up time, **drivers will only wait 5 minutes then depart your location** to pick up other passengers waiting for their requested trip.

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 should reschedule their pickup by using their mobile app or by calling Capital Transit at 447-8080 as soon as possible.

Scheduling Tips

- Arrange your return trip at the same time you make a reservation for pick-up.
- If you need to arrive at your destination no later than a specific time, please tell the reservation agent you would like to book your trip by appointment time. Please take into account for traffic, shared ride with other customers, and other possible delays when booking by appointment time.
- If CAPITAL TRANSIT is unable to provide a trip at the time you request, the agent will help you select another time within 60 minutes before or after your originally requested time.
- Provide as much information as possible that can assist the driver in locating your exact pick-up or drop-off location. For example, appropriate entrance, color or type of building, store name, or any other specific description. Please be advised, Capital Transit is a curbside service and does not allow drivers to back a bus up nor does it allow for passenger pick-ups/drop-offs in alleys, or small residential/commercial parking lots.
- All trips are treated with equal priority. For example, a trip going to a sporting event has the same priority as a trip going to a dialysis treatment.
- CAPITAL TRANSIT does not provide driver or vehicle choice.

How to Cancel a Trip

Customers are expected to cancel trips at least 1-hour before the beginning of their pick-up window. Trips not cancelled within 1-hour are subject to the No Show/Late Cancellation policy. You may cancel a trip on your mobile app or by calling CAPITAL TRANSIT at (406) 447-8080 or TTY 711 and follow the prompts to cancel your trip. If a customer does not cancel the trip in advance, it will be considered a "no-show" (see "No Show" Policy).

How to Pay the Fare

Passengers can pay their Fare by using the mobile app or upon boarding the vehicle by paying the fare (Drivers do not have the ability to make change) or by /passes on line, from a driver or at the transit facility. The fares paid only cover the leg of your one-way trip.

How to Purchase Tickets

Bus Passes may be purchased online or in person at the CAPITAL TRANSIT Facility, 1415 North Montana Avenue, Helena MT 59601.

UNKNOWN RETURN TRIPS

Due to the high demand for service Capital Transit advises all passengers to schedule a return trip at time of booking as all rides request for day before and same day service are subject to availability. **If a customer is a no-show for a trip, no vehicle will be sent back to perform the trip, the passenger must schedule a new ride for same day service.**

No return trip will be provided including but not limited to the following:

- The customer requests to disembark from the vehicle before reaching his/her destination.
- The customer refuses to follow applicable operational and/or safety policies required for transport.
- The customer demonstrates inappropriate, aggressive, threatening, or abusive behavior toward others.
- At times when transportation is not possible due to weather conditions, Acts of God, acts of terrorism, civil disturbances, work stoppage or any other natural disaster outside of CT's control that may cause the suspension of service.

CAPITAL TRANSIT VEHICLES

- CAPITAL TRANSIT has lift and ramp equipped vehicles. CAPITAL TRANSIT does not accommodate requests for specific drivers or types of vehicles.

Accessible vehicles are used to transport both ambulatory customers and customers who use mobility devices that may require a lift to board a vehicle.

- In general, CAPITAL TRANSIT vehicles and lifts will hold wheelchairs and scooters up to 48" long, 30" wide, and weighing up to 600 pounds including the occupant.

Mobility aids beyond these specifications might not be transportable. We reserve the right to refuse transport if the mobility device is in unsafe condition due to broken, inoperable, or missing parts. CAPITAL TRANSIT will make every effort to accommodate larger, heavier mobility devices up to the capacity of the service vehicle provided.

Examples of mobility aids that are not allowed on CAPITAL TRANSIT vehicles are shopping carts and "Geri" chairs (chairs used in healthcare facilities to mobilize patients). For your safety, please make sure that brakes, batteries, and other parts on your wheelchair or mobility device are in good working condition.

All drivers are trained to operate a wheelchair lift and the mobility aid securement devices. Ambulatory customers utilizing the vehicle lift should use provided hand rails for safe boarding.

DIRECT THREAT AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR

CAPITAL TRANSIT service may be suspended or terminated due to inappropriate, aggressive, threatening, or abusive behavior toward other customers or CAPITAL TRANSIT employees, any illegal conduct, and non-payment of CAPITAL TRANSIT fare.

Service suspensions may also result from abusive behaviors such as verbal assault, intentionally tying-up CAPITAL TRANSIT telephone lines and repeat violations of CAPITAL TRANSIT policies.

This policy is not only limited to customers, but also to those acting on behalf of the customers, such as PCAs. If you dispute a suspension under this policy, you have the right to file an appeal. Appeal Requests must be filed in writing, by the deadline and per the instructions within the appeal packet. A copy of the appeal process will be sent to you with your suspension letter.

SEVERE WEATHER OR HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS

During severe weather, icy or otherwise hazardous road conditions or emergency situations, CAPITAL TRANSIT may make service modifications. Examples of severe weather or hazardous conditions are icy roads, snow accumulation, high winds, and tornados. During severe weather or hazardous conditions, door-to-door service may revert to curb-to-curb service as needed. CAPITAL TRANSIT service changes due to severe weather will be announced using a readily available public communications service such as but not limited to local radio, social media, television, the CAPITAL TRANSIT phone system, website.

PASSENGER RESPONSIBILITIES

General Passenger Condition

All passengers must be able to sit in a bus seat or wheelchair 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. Capital Transits Demand Response Curb-to-Curb service is to be considered a “common carrier” and does not perform ambulance or emergency services.

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.

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 or carry 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).

Profanity or abusive language or conduct towards drivers or other passengers is 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 must request door-to-door service from CT dispatchers at time of ride scheduling. The CT dispatcher will discuss your 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 before service can be provided.

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

DRIVERS WILL NOT ENTER PRIVATE HOMES FOR ANY REASON.

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.

BUSINESS / MEDICAL FACILITIES / PUBLIC BUILDINGS

If necessary and requested, drivers will assist passengers to and from the main entrance door. When picking up passengers from a business / medical facility / public building, drivers shall not enter the second door of a foyer. **Drivers cannot go beyond the main door for any reason.**

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.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

The minimum age for a child to travel alone aboard the Demand Response/Curb-to-Curb service vehicles is 12 years of age. Children under the age of 12 must have an adult accompany them during transport. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

CARRY-ON PACKAGES

Drivers when requested will help passengers take lightweight items off the vehicle and set them on the curb.

LOST AND FOUND AND UNATTENDED LUGGAGE/ITEMS

1. Federal Notice for Unattended Luggage or Items

In accordance with the Department of Homeland Security/Transportation Security Administration (DHS/TSA) *Federal Law prohibits passengers, guests or visitors from leaving baggage or other items unattended. Unattended baggage or Items left on a Capital Transit Vehicle, in the Capital Transit Facility or on Capital Transit property will be removed and disposed of or turned over to the City Helena Police Department. If you see any unattended baggage or other items, please notify the Driver or any Capital Transit Employee working in the Transit Facility.*

2. Turning in Abandoned Items

Abandoned items found on any Capital Transit vehicle or In the Transit Facility can be turned in to a bus driver, or any City Employee working within the Capital Transit Facility located at 1415 North Montana Avenue.

3. Transit Operator/Employee Reporting and Turning in Abandoned Items

As a driver/employee, any passenger that turns in any lost Item(s) of Value listed in Part 4 of this policy must complete an incident report indicating the following:

- a. who turned the item in
- b. who the driver/employee was that took possession or discovered item.
- c. number and type of item(s)
- d. date and time discovered or turned in.

- ❖ The incident report must be completed and turned in before driver/employee ends their operational day, **NO EXCEPTIONS**. All lost Item(s) of value will be logged by the Transit Coordinator or Transit Manager and turned over to Helena Police Department (HPD) as soon as possible.
- ❖ No item(s) of value will be retained overnight at the Capital Transit Facility unless HPD cannot secure the items until a later time or date, in these instances the item(s) of value will be secured in the Transit Managers Office.

4. Items of Value

- Keys
- Medication
- Cell Phones
- Laptops/Tablets
- Purses/Wallet
- Other high dollar items staff deems locatable.

5. Advisory Notes:

- **Staff cannot contact drivers actively driving if your item(s) are not one of those listed above. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.**
- **Due to limited storage, lost groceries and other food items, clothing, or unsanitary items can only be retained until 12:00pm on following day after which all items will be donated to local charities if possible.**

6. Drugs or drug paraphernalia

Capital Transit receives Federal Operating Funds and is subject to Federal law.

Marijuana is still considered illegal under Federal law and therefore cannot be kept on premises. Staff shall follow the procedure outlined in part 2 of the policy for immediate transfer to the City of Helena Police Department. Under no circumstances will drugs or other drug paraphernalia be retained on a bus or at the Capital Transit Facility.

7. Passengers attempting to find lost items of value

If you believe you have left an item of value on a Capital Transit bus or on Capital Transit Facility property, please contact Capital Transit at (406) 447-8081. We check to see if anything has been reported as found or advise you to contact HPD at (406) 442-3233.

8. Item(s) of value pick-up

- If a passenger contacts Capital Transit Administrative staff on same day the item(s) of value were lost, and it has not been turned over to HPD the owner or representative can make arrangements for retrieval but again it must be noted who picked up what item at what time and day. Failure to retrieve item(s) as arranged does not delay turning item(s) over to HPD. Capital Transit Office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- If items of value are not retrieved on the same day please contact HPD at (406) 442-3233.

CAPITAL TRANSIT COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURES

Goal

The Capital Transit has adopted the following service complaint process as the mechanism for resolving complaints relative to the demand response 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 demand response service. The same appeal procedure will be used for appeals filed by persons who have been notified of a pending subscription termination.

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” and other suspensions/terminations of service are handled by the CT review committee. Suspension/termination of service will be implemented immediately upon confirmation of a violation of Capital Transit Ridership Rules or Policies, a written notice will be sent to the passenger in violation advising them of the violation, length and duration of the suspension/termination of service and outline the appeal/contact process.

Appeal Procedure

A passenger who wishes to appeal a suspension of service must address an appeal, in writing, to the Capital Transit within 30 days of the suspension of service denial of service or termination of subscription service. A passenger wishing to appeal a suspension related to a violation of the “No Show” policy must contact the Capital Transit Supervisor within 24-hours of receiving written notice of the suspension. 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.

Record Keeping Requirement

1. The designated CAPITAL TRANSIT Customer Service Representative logs all customer complaints CAPITAL TRANSIT receives through voicemail, email, Facebook, and CT’s website.
2. The CAPITAL TRANSIT Customer Service Representative logs all ADA related complaints into CAPITAL TRANSIT’s central compliant log and forwards any ADA complaints to the City of Helena ADA Coordinator on the day of receipt or the following Monday if received on a weekend.
3. Complaint Record Retention – Details of complaints will be kept for 1 year and a summary for 5 years.

NO SHOW POLICY

CAPITAL TRANSIT provides Demand Response/Curb-to-Curb Service within the corporate city limits of the City of Helena.

Per FTA C 4710.1, CAPITAL TRANSIT may establish an administrative process to suspend, for a reasonable period, the provision of service to individuals who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips.

Sporadic passenger incidents of no showing, cancelling at the door, and cancelling late for requested trips are an expected cost of doing business for a transit system. However, as the cost for providing public transit service is growing and demand for trips must be met; excessive no shows, cancels at door, and late cancellations adversely affect the efficiency of service to other customers and significantly adds to the cost of operating the services Capital Transit provides.

Definitions

Pattern or Practice of Customer Missing Trips: When there are intentional, repeated, or regular actions, not isolated, accidental, or singular incidents of not canceling trips; only actions within the control of the individual count as a part of a pattern or practice.

Be Ready Time: When the customer calls to reserve their ride, they will be given a 30-minute “pickup window” in which the vehicle will arrive. If a customer requests a 7:00-7:30 AM pickup window. As a reminder the service Capital Transit provides for all ridership groups is a demand response shared ride service that could be used by several passengers in the same time slot. Since daily passenger volumes vary the order in which passengers are picked up will vary from day to day as well. Therefore, all passengers should anticipate being ready 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled pickup window. In the instance described above the bus is not late unless it has not arrived by 7:31 AM.

Advanced Cancellation: When the customer (or the customer’s advocate/caregiver) calls and cancels a scheduled trip at least 1-hour prior to the start of the scheduled pickup window. If a customer has an early morning trip scheduled at 6:30 AM, they will need to leave the cancellation message on the voice mail to be retrieved by the CAPITAL TRANSIT Reservation Center as soon as it opens at 8:00 AM the cancellation message must be made no later than 5:30AM.

Cancel at Door: When the vehicle arrives at the location designated for a specific scheduled trip within the 30-minute window of the Be Ready Time and the customer (or the customer’s advocate/caregiver) notifies the driver at that time that they no longer need the scheduled trip.

Cancel Late: When the customer (or the customer’s advocate/caregiver) does not call and cancel a scheduled trip at least 1-hour prior to the start of scheduled pickup window.

Missed Trip: A missed trip occurs when our bus arrives outside of the 30-minute pick up window and the passenger choose not to ride. A missed trip is not counted against a passenger because it was CAPITAL TRANSIT's error.

Excessively Long Trip: CAPITAL TRANSIT uses one (1) hour as a maximum ride length as a quick guide for our reservations, schedulers, and dispatchers. Any trip exceeding one (1) hour would be considered excessively long.

Denials: If CAPITAL TRANSIT is unable to provide a trip at the requested time, an alternative time will be offered 60 minutes before or after the requested time. If CAPITAL TRANSIT cannot offer the rider a time within the one (1) hour before or after the requested time it will be considered a denial.

No-Show: A no-show occurs when a rider fails to appear to board the vehicle for a scheduled trip. This presumes the vehicle arrives at the scheduled location within the pickup window and a five (5) minute wait time has elapsed.

Excused No Shows

No Shows are EXCUSED when the trip is missed for reasons beyond the customer's control.

- A No Show will not be issued for reasons beyond the customer's control, including situations such as sudden illness, family emergencies, weather conditions, or long medical appointments.
- The customer (or the customer's advocate/caregiver) should ALWAYS make every effort to cancel scheduled trips as soon as it is known that the trip is not needed. It is the customer's (or the customer's advocate/caregiver) responsibility to provide the reasoning for not canceling the trip when contacting CAPITAL TRANSIT so that it can be determined if it is an Excused No Show.
- Contact should be made with CAPITAL TRANSIT as soon as reasonably possible. Lack of any contact will result in a No Show being issued. To contact CAPITAL TRANSIT, call (406) 447-8080.

Implementation

Below is a table indicating the volume of No Shows that may be accumulated per calendar month before action will be taken. Please do not consider this justification for not canceling trips in advance. Number of Actual Trips Booked per Calendar Month and Not Cancelled in Advance

Once the following number “No Shows’ has been reached, a notification letter will be sent, and a suspension will occur.

Number of No Shows

5 - 15
16 - 40
41 - 60
61 - 80
81 - 100
101 or more

Days of Suspension

4
8
12
16
20
24

Public Involvement

Goal

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

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

Consumer satisfaction survey forms may be from time-to-time to passengers. 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.

Public Hearings

The Helena City Commission will conduct Public Hearings on an as-needed basis to obtain input from any member of the public, or representatives/advocacy groups for the senior/elderly, Military Veterans and disabled members of the community on topics such as proposed service changes, proposed fare increases, and other related topics.

Focus Groups

Focus groups made up of all ridership groups including persons with disabilities and representatives from agencies may be held on an ad hoc basis to deal with specific service and policy issues that potentially require an in-depth discussion.

Public Information Dissemination

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.

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.

