

# **ADA Comparable Paratransit Service**

## **Policies & Procedures**



### **Capital Transit Bus Service**

**Updated 07/01/2021**

### **ADA Comparable Paratransit Service Policies & Procedures**

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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. ADA Paratransit service for the City of Helena and Deviated Fixed Route Service for the East Helena/East Valley Service Area is provided by CAPITAL TRANSIT (CT); eligibility for Paratransit Service is determined by the Capital Transit Administrative staff.

Federal regulations define the ADA paratransit service area as being within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile on either side of a fixed route when that route is in operation. CAPITAL TRANSIT'S Paratransit Service is available for those with physical, cognitive, or other disabilities that prevent them from using the fixed-route bus system for all their trips.

Paratransit trips may be scheduled for anytime during CT's normal administrative office hours.

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

The CAPITAL TRANSIT ADA Paratransit 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 Paratransit Service, along with answers to many questions about the program.

All CAPITAL TRANSIT paratransit 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-5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

## **ADA POLICY**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires complementary paratransit in view of the fact that there will always be people with disabilities who are unable to navigate fixed route bus systems on their own.

ADA regulations specifically define a population of customers who are entitled to this service as a Federally Protected Civil Right. CAPITAL TRANSIT provides paratransit service to people with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route system for their rides.

Additionally this policy and other relevant information for the general public regarding utilization of ADA paratransit services can be found on the CAPITAL TRANSIT website at [www.ridethecapitalT.org](http://www.ridethecapitalT.org) under the “Policies” tab and the City of Helena website at [www.helenamt.gov](http://www.helenamt.gov) under the “Community” tab, “Transit” link.

### **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 – ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE**

CAPITAL TRANSIT provides Fixed Route and Paratransit transportation services within the corporate City limits of the City of Helena (Service Area).

Both types of service offer transport for citizens with limited mobility due to a disability. The purpose and intent of this document is to provide policies and procedures for only those citizens who have been identified as ADA paratransit eligible passengers.

## **PARATRANSIT SERVICE TYPES**

CAPITAL TRANSIT's paratransit service is a demand-response, origin to destination public transportation system. Reservations are a day in advance. Persons who are deemed ADA eligible are provided **non-emergency transportation** within the City of Helena.

The paratransit service is designed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. All CAPITAL TRANSIT Paratransit 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's paratransit service:

### **Special service Types**

#### **14-Day Advanced Reservation Service:**

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

#### **Same Day Service:**

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:**

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

## **SERVICE AREA**

CAPITAL TRANSIT's ADA paratransit service is available within the corporate City Limits of the City of Helena's fixed route system. A map showing the fixed route network can be found at [www.ridethecapitalT.org](http://www.ridethecapitalT.org). Within this defined area trips will be provided by the paratransit service upon request.

Origins and destinations outside of this service area will not be served by the ADA paratransit service.

## **DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION**

### **Operations**

Days and hours of operations may change periodically. Therefore, CAPITAL TRANSIT will assess any changes and update this document as needed.

The hours of operation for ADA Paratransit 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**

**4<sup>th</sup> of July**

**Labor Day**

**Thanksgiving Day or the Friday after**

**Christmas Day**

**New Year's Day**

## **FARES**

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, CAPITAL TRANSIT fare for ADA paratransit service is allowed to be two times the comparable fixed-route fare (0.85 cents) one-way. 50. Currently user of CAPITAL TRANSIT's Paratransit Service is charged the same fare as a fixed route user (0.85 cents) for a one-way trip. However, Paratransit eligible riders can use the fixed route for (0.50 cents) one-way upon presentation of their Paratransit card to the driver of the fixed route bus. All customers using either Paratransit service or the Fixed Route service are required to pay the fare to the driver as they board the vehicle. Exact fare is recommended as drivers do not carry or make change.

A registered Personal Care Attendant may accompany their client at no additional charge. One other additional companion may accompany the individual with prior notice to the reservationist, the fare cost is 0.85 cents one-way. Additional companions may be transported on a space-available basis and must pay the same fare.

## **Eligibility**

Capital Transit Administrative staff determines the eligibility and process for ADA certification. This information shall be assessed annually and updated as needed.

## **ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

PLEASE NOTE: All ADA eligibility determinations are processed through Capital Transit Administrative staff. For information on CT's ADA Paratransit policy, application, and eligibility procedures, contact CT at (406) 447-8080.

Title 49 CFR Part 37 has established (3) three general eligibility categories or criteria for determining which riders are eligible for ADA paratransit services.

1) Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable individuals with disabilities.

2) Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a mobility device lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route on the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.

a. An individual is eligible with respect to travel on an otherwise accessible route on which the boarding or disembarking location which the individual would use is one at which boarding or disembarking from the vehicle is precluded.

b. An individual using a mobility device is eligible for paratransit service if the individual's mobility device cannot be accommodated on an existing

vehicle (e.g., because the vehicle's lift does not meet the standards of 49 CFR Part 38), even if that vehicle is accessible to other individuals with disabilities and their mobility devices.

3) Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system.

a. Only specific impairment-related conditions which prevent an individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location are a basis for ADA paratransit eligibility. A condition which makes traveling to boarding location or from a disembarking location more difficult for a person with a specific impairment-related condition than for an individual who does not have the condition, but does not prevent the travel, is not a basis for eligibility.

b. Architectural barriers not under the control of the public entity providing fixed route service and environmental barriers (e.g., distance, terrain, weather) do not, standing alone, form a basis for eligibility. The interaction of such barriers with an individual's specific impairment-related condition may form a basis for eligibility if the effect is to prevent the individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location.

### **Types of Eligibility**

The ADA requires consideration of eligibility for trips that an applicant or rider makes or might make. For this reason, different types of eligibility that have developed in the transit industry, including:

**Unconditional eligibility (all trips):** When it is not reasonable to use the fixed route service under any circumstances, regardless of weather, distance to the stop, etc.

**Conditional eligibility (some trips):** When an individual can be reasonably expected to make some trips on the fixed route service. For example, a person may be able to reach bus stops that are no more than three blocks away, and where there is a safe, accessible path of travel, but may require paratransit if distances are greater than three blocks, or if there are travel obstacles such as steep hills, deep snow or ice, or other obstacles. Another person may have a variable health condition; on some days fixed route use is possible and on other days, it is not.

**Temporary eligibility:** The ADA also includes temporary eligibility for individuals with disabilities that prevent them from using the fixed route system for a limited period. It may be given to those who receive travel training regarding how to use a fixed route system.



### **Paratransit for Visitors**

Visitors to the City of Helena who are disabled and require paratransit services, shall, for the period of their visit, have the same rights and privileges regarding ADA paratransit service as an eligible local user, without any higher priority being given to either. These requests will be reviewed and processed by CT staff within one (1) business day.

A visitor is defined as someone who does not reside in the jurisdiction or jurisdictions served by the public entity or other public entities with which it coordinates paratransit service.

A visitor can become eligible in one of two ways.

- 1) Present documentation from his or her “home” jurisdiction’s paratransit system. “Full faith and credit” to the ID card or other ADA documentation from the other entity.

- 2) If the individual has no such documentation, CT staff may require the provision of proof of visitor status (i.e., proof of residence somewhere else) and, if the individual's disability is not apparent, proof of the disability (e.g., a letter from a doctor or rehabilitation professional). No documentation of disability is being required if the visitor's disability is apparent, such as, for example, a person using a wheelchair, or an individual who is blind or has a vision impairment and travels with a guide dog. The transit agency must provide paratransit service to the individual.

CAPITAL TRANSIT is not required to provide paratransit service to a visitor for more than twenty-one [21] days per year; that is, per 365-day period from the first day of use.

The visitor does not need to take the days consecutively. A review of the history from the first date of service will be conducted to determine whether the visitor has additional days of remaining service available.

### **PARATRANSIT APPLICATION & APPEALS PROCEDURES**

**PLEASE NOTE: All ADA applications and appeals are processed through CAPITAL TRANSIT.**

To use CAPITAL TRANSIT’s ADA Complimentary Paratransit Services a person must complete an ADA application and submit to CT Administrative Staff. Because the ADA requires paratransit service only for people who are unable to use the fixed route service due to a disability, eligibility determination focuses solely on the person's functional ability to use the fixed route service.

The application process may include functional criteria related to the substantive eligibility criteria and, where appropriate, functional evaluation or testing of applicants. There are no fees associated with applying for ADA paratransit service.

## **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. ADA Paratransit 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 in accessing key functional areas of their destination. CT 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 and destination.

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

**ADA Paratransit drivers 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 are required to promptly provide assistance to passengers with disabilities who are not able to get on or off a vessel without assistance and may use any means to which the passenger consents (such as lifts, ramps, boarding chairs, or assistance by the driver).

However, 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.

ADA Paratransit is not a delivery service. Passengers are responsible for carrying their own belongings. Packages that cannot be stowed on a passenger's lap or under the seat are not permitted.

## **PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT**

CAPITAL TRANSIT Paratransit Service does not provide PCAs. 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 ADA Paratransit driver 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. Passengers needing the assistance of a PCA must indicate this on their ADA Paratransit eligibility application form. 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 ADA Paratransit with proper notification. Oxygen tanks must be secured 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**

All wheelchairs and mobility devices will be accommodated. CAPITAL TRANSIT's ability to accommodate the wheelchair will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. All wheelchairs must be secured to the vehicle in the designated area. The driver will provide assistance in securing the wheelchair.

Proper tie down of mobility devices is always mandatory. In the event that a wheelchair cannot be secured or an individual using a wheelchair 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 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.

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.

## **Seat Belts**

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.

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 seatbelts upon request.

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

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.

Comfort or therapy animals, which are used solely to provide emotional support, are **NOT** considered service animals under the ADA.

Be sure to tell the reservation agent when scheduling your trip that you will be traveling with a service animal. There is no fee to bring your service animal. Your service animal must be always under your control and cannot ride on a CAPITAL TRANSIT seat.

Your service animal can ride in an approved animal carrier or can ride on the floor at your feet. If your service animal displays any aggressive or disruptive behavior, CAPITAL TRANSIT can require that the animal be removed from the vehicle. Service animals ride fare free.

### **GENERAL POLICIES**

The following policies apply to all of CAPITAL TRANSIT's services, including ADA Paratransit.

- Passengers must pay the fare upon boarding the vehicle.
- For the comfort of all passengers, smoking (including 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 12 and under.
- During inclement weather, CAPITAL TRANSIT may have to limit ADA paratransit service. Specifically, service may be limited for those roads and corridor that pose a safety risk to the vehicle and driver. 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 ADA Paratransit curb-to-curb origin to destination service. 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 ADA Paratransit service rides are schedule in 30-minute windows for both pick-up and returns trips.

### **To Schedule a Trip**

Call CAPITAL TRANSIT's Reservation Office at (406) 447-8080 between 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, at least one (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 call to schedule a trip as soon as possible on the day before. If a passenger is scheduling a trip for the next day, CAPITAL TRANSIT strongly recommends a passenger call during office hours on the business day preceding the requested trip.

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 time.**

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, will only wait 3 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 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.

### **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.
- 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.
- Please provide a telephone number at which you may be reached at time of pick-up.
- CAPITAL TRANSIT does not provide driver or vehicle choice.

### **TRIP SCHEDULING 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.

### **How to Cancel a Trip**

Customers are expected to cancel trips at least two hours before the beginning of their pick-up window. Trips not cancelled within two hours are subject to the No Show/Late Cancellation policy. You may cancel a trip 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**

Each time a passenger boards the vehicle they must pay the fare in exact change (Drivers do not have the ability to make change) or by ticket/passes. The fare for ADA Paratransit services is \$0.85 cents each way.

### **How to Purchase Tickets**

Tickets/passes may be purchased by mail, online at [www.ridethecapital.org](http://www.ridethecapital.org) or in person at the CAPITAL TRANSIT Facility, 1415 North Montana Avenue, Helena MT 59601.

## **CAPITAL TRANSIT NO STRAND POLICY**

CAPITAL TRANSIT is committed to the safety and security of its customers. If we provide transportation for a customer to a given location, we will make every attempt to provide the return trip, even if the customer fails to appear for boarding within the scheduled pickup window.

Return service will be provided as soon as possible but may be delayed depending upon prevailing traffic conditions and scheduling considerations.

The exceptions to this policy include but are not limited to the following:

- The customer booked a one-way trip to a location and did not schedule a return trip.
- 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.

If a customer is a no-show for a trip originating from their home, no vehicle will be sent back to the home to perform the trip.

## **WILL CALL TRIP REQUESTS**

The ADA does not mandate this service, but CAPITAL TRANSIT chooses to offer it as a convenience to its passengers.

As a service to riders who may not be able to predict their desired pickup time for return trips from medical appointments, CAPITAL TRANSIT permits complementary paratransit riders to leave their exact pickup time for their return trips open (i.e., "will call"). When riders know the time that they will be ready for pickup, they should contact CAPITAL TRANSIT which will then dispatch a vehicle. CAPITAL TRANSIT reserves the right to limit this option due to capacity issues. CAPITAL TRANSIT does not charge anything additional for this 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.

If you need assistance boarding the vehicle, the driver will assist you. 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.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

CAPITAL TRANSIT is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please call CAPITAL TRANSIT at (406) 447-8080 to report a lost item. Staff members will do their best to assist.

## **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. 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.

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).

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 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**

#### **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 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 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 ADA complementary origin to destination paratransit service vehicles is 12 years of age. Children under the age of 12 must have an adult accompany them during transport. Only the Capital Transit Supervisor may grant exceptions.

### **Carry-On Packages**

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

## **CAPITAL TRANSIT ADA COMPLAINTS POLICY/PROCEDURES**

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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 complaint 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.

## **ADA PARATRANSIT NO SHOW POLICY**

CAPITAL TRANSIT provides ADA Complimentary Paratransit within in 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 comparable paratransit service to ADA eligible 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 paratransit system. However, as the cost for providing Paratransit service is growing and all eligible demand for paratransit 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,

### **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 Paratransit is a shared ride service that could be used by several passengers in the same time slot. Since daily passenger volumes vary from day to day 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 2 hours 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 7:00 AM the cancellation message must be made no later than 4:30AM.

**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. The driver will verify the need for any other trips scheduled for that day and advise Dispatch accordingly when calling in the cancel at door.

**Cancel Late:** When the customer (or the customer’s advocate/caregiver) does not call and cancel a scheduled trip at least 2 hours 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. In addition, CAPITAL TRANSIT will compare a short, medium, and long trip on the fixed route service provided by CT to its own comparable ADA trips to determine if the ADA service is 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 three (3) minute wait time has elapsed.

CAPITAL TRANSIT further defines a No Show when all the following criteria have occurred:

- The Driver will go to the door and attempt to make contact; Drivers are not permitted or authorized to enter residential or commercial buildings of any type.
- If no contact, the Driver will check the manifest to ensure correct location/address.
- The Driver will wait three (3) five minutes after arrival in the scheduled pickup window.
- The Driver will notify Dispatch that the customer is a No Show.
- Dispatch will verify all information and approve the no show.
- The Driver will tag the door with a “No Show” tag.

### **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 reasonable possible. Lack of any contact will result in a No Show being issued. To contact CAPITAL TRANSIT, call (406) 447-8080.

**Implementation**

A point system has been implemented that reflects less of a penalty for a Cancel Late than for a No Show or Cancel at Door.

- 1 No Show = 2 Points
- 1 Cancel at Door = 2 Points
- 1 Cancel Late = 1 Point

Below is a table indicating the volume of No Show / Cancel at Door / Cancel Late points 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

Number of Points in one (1) calendar month that Establishes that a Pattern or Practice Exists (Once this number of points has been reached, warning letter and/or suspension will occur)

1 - 14	4
15 - 39	8
40 - 59	12
60 - 79	16
80 - 99	20
100 or more	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 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.

### **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.

### **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.

## **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.