SEC. 37.121 Requirement for comparable complementary paratransit service.

REGULATION:

- (C) of this section, each public entity operating a special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system.

EXPLANATION

- Paratransit Service is a shared ride service, trips should be comparable in time length to an identical trip on the fixed route bus system including the travel, waiting, and actual riding time it will take from pick up to destination.
Free Ride. Certified.

Introducing free rides for certified Paratransit users (with photo ID) on all Hampton Roads Transit bus, light rail, and ferry fixed route services. Learn more at gohrt.com or call (757) 222-6100. Dial 711 for TTY/TDD.
Policy

Hampton Roads Transit’s policy is to strictly comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary Paratransit regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Eligibility

Eligibility for Paratransit Service is strictly limited to persons who, because of their disability, are unable to use the fixed route public transit service. If an individual meets the eligibility criteria for some trips but not for others, the individual will receive Paratransit Service only for those trips for which they are eligible. Persons accompanying an eligible individual will receive services as required by the ADA regulations.

Service Criteria

Paratransit Service is available only in strict compliance with the requirements of the ADA regulations

- Area of service must be within ¾-mile of the current fixed route service
- Service is provided on an appointment basis with limits on advance reservations. Reservations will be taken up to 7 days prior but not less than 5 PM on the day prior to the requested trip.
- Availability of Subscription Service will be maintained
- Current fare is $3.50 for each trip
- No trip purpose restrictions or priorities other than conditions specified within a customer’s eligibility assessment
- Daily hours of available service are regulated by the current operating schedules of HRT fixed route services
- No capacity constraints

- In the event a customer requests addition assistance in getting from their origin or to their destination, reasonable assistance shall be given providing the driver shall have a clear sightline to the vehicle and/or the other passengers left on board the vehicle would not be presented with a direct threat to their safety.
Passenger Rights and Responsibilities
This plan includes a policy statement on passenger rights and responsibilities.

Paratransit passengers have the following rights:

- Courtesy and respect from public transit personnel, including timely phone service and accurate information
- Service comparable to fixed route
- Information available in accessible format(s)
- Open public involvement process for changes in service or fares
- Reasonably well-maintained vehicles

Paratransit passengers have the following responsibilities:

- Respect for other passengers and public transit personnel
- Obey vehicle and service rules, including but not limited to:
  - No eating, drinking or smoking
  - Origin to Destination service
  - Comply with service rules for scheduled pick up time
  - Keep service animal under control
  - Schedule and use Paratransit Service only when fixed route service cannot be used because of disability
  - Limit "no shows" and late cancellations since these affect the availability and timeliness of service to others. Refer to HRT's Paratransit No Show and Late Cancellation Policy for definitions, guidelines, and applicable sanctions.
  - When using audio or video devices, please use earphones; loud music will not be tolerated on any HRT vehicle
  - When using cell-phones, please talk quietly

Appeals

Appeals for denials of eligibility or for suspension of Service will be handled by a volunteer three member panel, including not more than one member of HRT staff and at least one member of the Hampton Roads Transit Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities. Refer to HRT's Appeals Policies and Procedures for ADA Complementary Paratransit Services for applicable guidelines.

For more information call 757-222-6087

Reviewed 06/01/2020
Frequently Asked Questions About Paratransit

Is Paratransit a service for the elderly?
Paratransit provides public transportation service for persons with disabilities, who because of their disability cannot utilize fixed route bus service. A person’s age has nothing to do with their eligibility for Paratransit service.

How do I become eligible to ride Paratransit?
To use Paratransit one must become certified to use the service in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To become certified, call 1-(877) ADA RIDE 1-(877) 232-7433 between 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM (ET) to begin the application process; or access the application service online at www.adaride.com. 24/7

Is Paratransit available to all persons with disabilities?
If a person’s disability is determined to prevent one from being able to use fixed route bus transportation, Paratransit service is available. The disability may not always be apparent. More specifically, the disability must prevent or affect a person from being able to get to or from a fixed route boarding location, or it must require one to need the assistance of a boarding device and that device not be available (such as a wheelchair lift-equipped bus), or the disability must prevent one from boarding, riding or disembarking from an accessible bus.
Will Paratransit take me anywhere I want to go?
Once certified, you may use the Paratransit service for any purpose so long as you are traveling within the Paratransit service area. Some individuals may be certified to ride Paratransit only under specific conditions or for a specified length of time based on their abilities.

What is the Paratransit service area?
The Paratransit service area, mandated by the ADA is any location within 3/4 mile of any fixed route bus service, which in the Hampton Roads Transit region includes the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach. Areas outside of the 3/4 mile corridor are not serviced and if you are outside of the service area, you must come into the area to receive service.

Can I get Paratransit the day I am certified?
We do not offer same day reservations. Currently, you must reserve your ride by 5 PM the day before you wish to travel. For example, if you need a ride at 12 noon on Wednesday, you must call before 5 PM on Tuesday. You can also make reservations up to seven (7) days in advance. The reservation call center operates between the hours of 8 AM to 5 PM, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year including all holidays.

How much does it cost to ride Paratransit?
There is a $3.50 one-way fare

What are the days and hours of operation for Paratransit?
Paratransit hours of available service are regulated by the current operating schedules of fixed route service, if there is a change in fixed route bus schedules it will be reflected in Paratransit service also.
When I make a reservation, do I need to have proof that I am certified?
When you receive certification, you will be issued a Paratransit ID card with an identification number. You will be required to use this number when making reservations.

How Do I Board?
When boarding the vehicle, please have ready the exact cash fare, a Paratransit trip ticket, or you may establish credit card fare payments (through a linked account in advance). Paratransit is an origin to destination service. The drivers are required to assist the rider on and off at the curb which means you will need to meet the vehicle at the curb when it arrives. If you feel you need additional reasonable assistance to or from the vehicle, please let the reservationist know when scheduling your trip. Refer to our Unified Service Policy for more information. The driver will not announce upon arrival, it is the responsibility of the rider to be on watch for the vehicle when it arrives. Please be ready to board the vehicle immediately upon its arrival. The driver will wait no longer than 5 minutes for you at the pick-up location during your pickup window. Paratransit is public transportation and is a shared ride service; others may be sharing a ride with you. Your safety is very important to us. Please comply with the Paratransit rules and be considerate of your driver and fellow passengers. Each certified rider is limited to two (2) grocery bags or similar sized carry-on packages. The driver cannot carry packages for anyone. We welcome trained service animals, but they must be kept under your control.
What happens if I need to cancel my Paratransit reservation?
Paratransit pick-ups are based on a thirty (30) minute pick-up window. You will be given that pick-up window time frame when making your reservation. For example, if you have a 2:00 p.m. pick-up, the driver may arrive anytime between 1:45 and 2:15 and be considered on time. The wait time of five (5) minutes is allowed after the driver arrives within the pickup window. If you fail to board the vehicle after the waiting of five (5) minutes, a no-show violation occurs. As long as you cancel your reservation at least 2-hours before your thirty (30) minute pick-up window begins, there is no violation. If you do not call before that time, you will be charged with a late cancellation violation. It is also important to remember that if you “no show” or “late cancel” three (3) times in a 90-day period, your service could be suspended.

- To apply for Paratransit, visit www.adaride.com online or call toll free 1-877-232-7433 TDD Line (310)410-0985
- For Reservations and Operations Departments call:
  - 757-455-8010 (TDD Customers call 711 Virginia Relay)
  - Option 1 - Reservations
  - Option 2 - Check on a scheduled ride
  - Option 3 – Cancel a trip
  - Option 4 – Hampton Roads Transit Bus Information
  - Option 0 – All Other Calls

For questions about certification or services or to remove yourself as a Paratransit passenger call:

757-222-6087 OPT # 4 or TDD Customers call 711 Virginia Relay
Why are we using Taxis and TNC’s?
In response to increasing demand, HRT began using taxi as support for Paratransit services starting July 8, 2017. TNC’s will be utilized as needed starting June 1, 2020. Taxi and TNC services will be used as an addition to the current service fleet.

How will I know if I will be picked up by a Taxi or TNC vehicle?
You can review your trip online, sign up for the app (when it becomes available) or contact the call center to ask which type of vehicle your scheduled trip is assigned to about 30 minutes before your scheduled pickup window. Rest assured, no matter which vehicle (HRT or taxi/TNC) is coming for you, the driver will have your information as they currently do. Please note that there may be a change even after speaking with the call center, always verify your trip with the driver of any vehicle who arrives at your pickup location.

If a Taxi/TNC pulls up, how do I know it is for me?
The driver will already have your name and trip information and will announce who they are looking for, especially if it is a busy location.

Will the driver know if I need additional assistance?
The taxi/TNC drivers will have the same information our current drivers have for their customers.
Will it cost me more for a Taxi/TNC?
No, the fare is still $3.50 for your trip, exact cash fare, a Paratransit trip ticket, or you may establish credit card fare payments (through a linked account in advance). There are no additional charges.

Will there be other passengers in the Taxi/TNC?
The service provided is a shared ride service, it is possible there may be other customers riding with you. Be assured, any other passengers riding with you will be certified Paratransit clients (and persons accompanying them). Taxi/TNC drivers are not allowed to pick any other “fares” while performing Paratransit trips as they will be dedicated to our service.

Can I request to be picked up by a Taxi/TNC?
No, trips will be scheduled to the closest vehicle.

Can I request not to be picked up by a Taxi/TNC?
Only if your disability prevents your access to a non-ADA accessible vehicle, this will be handled on an individual basis.

How Do I Board?
Please have the exact cash fare, a Paratransit trip ticket, or you may establish credit card fare payments (through a linked account in advance) when boarding the taxi/TNC as you do now. Be sure to confirm your trip with the driver.

What happens if I have a problem with a Taxi/TNC driver?
Call the Paratransit administration office at:

757-222-6087 & select option # 4
TDD Customers call 711 Virginia Relay
§ I. The HRT “Unified Service Plan and Policy for Complementary Paratransit Services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)” adopted by the commission on July 12, 2001 requires the following composition and process for Appeals Panels:

“Appeals under this process will be determined by a three or five-member panel. One member shall be a staff member from HRT. A second member shall be a voting member of the Hampton Roads Transit Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities. The additional member(s) shall be from one of the member cities Advisory Committees, or Mayors Committees on Disabilities or Human Rights, agreed upon by the two other panel members, or, if none is available, another outside person(s) agreed upon by the two other panel members. A majority decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding.”

In the interest of fairness to all participants, all individuals who serve on an ADA Appeals Panel for HRT Paratransit must agree to abide by the following:

1. Receive Appeals Panel training from HRT and legal representatives before participating on a Panel. As the need arises, panelists will receive additional training.
2. Must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and agree to follow processes and procedures established.
3. No individual involved in the original determination to deny eligibility or to impose a sanction shall have a decision-making role in the appeal of that decision (this is also known as “separation of functions”).
4. All hearings, deliberations, and decisions must be conducted with strict compliance with the need for objectivity, confidentiality, consistency, and documentation regarding the process and all participants.
5. Panel candidates or Panelists must promptly disclose any known or potential issues relating to conflict of interest, bias, or anything that might have the appearance of impropriety if they were to participate on an Appeals Panel.
6. Members of HRT staff may only serve in that role on a Panel, even if they are eligible for “third party” category.
7. There are no quotas for Appeals outcomes, the critical issues are independent judgments by Panelists and the integrity of the decision process.
8. Service on any Appeals Panel is voluntary and appreciated.

§ II. General Rules for Appeals:
1. All information regarding appeals must be readily available, including the availability of accessible formats upon request.
2. To the extent feasible, Appeals Hearings will be conducted on both sides of the HRT service area.

§ III. Eligibility (full or partial):
1. HRT defines a complete application as the application form; and such outside professional verification and documentation (medical or otherwise) and if deemed necessary, an in-person interview and functional assessment; as is reasonably necessary for the eligibility determination. If, by a date 21 days following the submission of a complete application, HRT has not made a determination of eligibility, the applicant shall be treated as eligible and shall be provided Paratransit Service until and unless HRT denies the application.
2. An appeal must be filed within 60 days of the date of a decision or denial of an individual's application. No appeal requests will be accepted beyond 60 days after determination.
3. For denials of eligibility, HRT is not required to provide Paratransit Service to the individual pending the determination on appeal.
   Note: If an individual has been granted conditional, trip-by-trip, or temporary eligibility, but is appealing for unconditional eligibility, the individual will be provided Paratransit Service in accordance with their "limited" approved eligibility while the appeal is pending.
4. If HRT has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, the individual shall be provided Paratransit Service, upon request, until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.
5. If an individual who has been denied eligibility wishes to re-apply, they must identify those circumstances or condition(s) which they believe have changed their ability to use fixed-route public transit.

§ IV. Sanction(s) for Behavior:
1. Service may be suspended, for a reasonable period of time, for any individual who establishes a pattern or practice of missing or late-cancelling scheduled trips, or for conduct that is violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal or that is prohibited on fixed route vehicles.
2. Trips missed by the individual for reasons beyond his or her control (including, but not limited to, trips that are missed due to HRT error or because of the individual's disability) shall not be a basis for determining whether a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips exists.
3. An appeal must be filed within 60 days of the date of the Suspension Notice. No appeal requests will be accepted beyond 60 days after a Suspension Notice.

4. For suspension of Service, the sanction is stayed pending the outcome of the appeal.

5. For conduct that is violent, seriously disruptive or illegal, a requirement for the individual to use a personal care attendant may be mandated pending a determination from the Appeal Panel as a compromise in lieu of suspension or termination of Service.

6. If HRT has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, the individual shall be provided Paratransit Service, upon request, from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

§ V. Policies/Procedures for Appeals Hearings and Decisions:

1. Each individual who has the right to appeal any eligibility denial or sanction(s) will be notified, in writing, of that right, of the reason(s) for the decision, and of the appeal procedures.

2. Any eligibility determination or sanction may be appealed.
   - Request for appeal must be in writing
   - An "Appeal Request Form" will be made available with the Notice to help structure Appellant's explanations.
   - Upon authorization by the Appellant, another individual or organization may submit an appeal on their behalf.

3. Upon receipt of Appeal, HRT will assemble the Appeals Panel and schedule the hearing.
   - To the extent possible, include expertise on the Panel particular to the disability or situation claimed.
   - Hearings should be scheduled as promptly as reasonably possible.
   - HRT reserves the right to "expedite" the scheduling of a hearing, in its discretion (e.g., re-certification, sanctions for behavior)
   - If unable to contact Appellant, HRT must document attempts and process followed. It is the responsibility of Paratransit applicants and passengers to keep HRT informed of their current mailing address.
   - Appeals should be conducted in person.
   - The reason for this is to mirror substance and process of the initial determination as much as possible.
o Upon written request by Appellant, the Appeals Panel will act solely upon written materials submitted. This serves as a waiver of the right to an in-person hearing.

o For documented good cause, Appellant can request a postponement of the Appeal Hearing. However, if the individual requests such a postponement, they are not entitled to any further stay of sanction (e.g., suspension).

4. Appellant and Panelists should identify any "special needs" for hearing (e.g. accessible formats for materials, sign interpreter, audio-visual equipment, etc).

o Transportation to and/or from the hearing is the responsibility of Appellant (if subject of hearing is eligibility, Paratransit will provide transportation; if subject of hearing is sanction, Appellant may ride Paratransit services, at their own cost, within their eligibility limits).

5. Preparations-HRT is responsible for all records that have been submitted to HRT, for providing copies of Appellant submittals (if timely), and for ensuring logistics and accessibility of room. All hearings will be recorded.

6. Select Chairperson to conduct this hearing.

7. Call to order and introductions of persons present.

8. Present testimony and documents.

o Appellant has burden of proof to state their case; HRT will rebut only “as needed”

o Appellant has opportunity to present additional written materials and supporting information. Materials received by HRT five business days before hearing will be reproduced by HRT, including accessible formats if needed.

o If Appellant wishes to present additional written materials at, or less than five business days before, the hearing, he or she must provide copies for all Panel members (including accessible formats, if needed), for the HRT attorney and one “ for the recording secretary.

o Appellant has the opportunity to confront and present witnesses, within reasonable time limits.

o To reduce burden on Appellant and Panelists, public portion of the hearing should be concluded within one hour, whenever possible.

9. Deliberations

o Closed to public, including Appellant

o If additional information/review is needed, should minimize hardship to Appellant (including HRT to provide transportation to/from and subsequent meeting(s) deemed necessary, unless the continuance is at the request of the Appellant)

10. Panel will document findings and reasons.
11. HRT will correspond results to the Appellant in writing within 30 days of the hearing, with reason(s) for the final decision.
   o If unable to contact Appellant, HRT must document attempts and process followed. It is the responsibility of Paratransit applicants and passengers to keep HRT informed of their current mailing address.
12. As stated in paragraph 2 "A majority decision of the appeals panel shall be final and binding". Should the Appellant feel their case had not been treated objectively, they have the right to contact the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to file a complaint.

For more information call 757-222-6087
Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) Paratransit Service

No-Show Late Cancellation Policy

Effective April 15, 2002
Revised November 20, 2019

It is the policy of Hampton Roads Transit that Paratransit passengers who establish a pattern or practice of excessive "No-Showss" or "Late Cancellations" shall be subject to suspension of Service. This policy is necessary in order to recognize the negative impact "Late Cancellations" and/or "No Shows" have on the service provided to other passengers as well as the cost of providing Paratransit Services.

A passenger is considered a "No Show" if the passengers fails to board or fails to be ready to board at the scheduled pick-up location when the driver has waited 5 minutes during the Paratransit Service “on-time” window for service. An on-time window is defined as 15 minutes prior to or 15 minutes after the negotiated/scheduled pick up time.

For example, if the passenger has a 2:00 pm negotiated pick-up, the driver may arrive anytime between 1:45 and 2:15 and be considered on-time; the vehicle is required to wait up to 5 minutes for the passenger. Effective January 2002, passengers will be informed of the full "minus-and-plus" range for the on-time pickup when the trip is scheduled. In this example, assume the driver arrives at 2:12. The driver then waits a full 5 minutes. If the passenger is not on-board or ready to board by 2:17, the passenger is considered a No-Show. Similarly, the driver will only wait 5 minutes if the vehicle arrives on the “early” side of the window. For this same scheduled 1:45-2:15 pm pickup, if the driver arrives at 1:50, the passenger will be considered a No-Show if they are not on-board or ready to board by 1:55pm.

A passenger is considered a “Late Cancellation” if the passenger cancels scheduled Paratransit Service at any time two (2) hours or less before the beginning of the passenger’s scheduled pickup window.

Any combination of three (3) Late Cancellations or No Shows in any consecutive three-month period (calculated on a quarterly basis within the calendar year) will be deemed "excessive" and is defined as a “violation” of this policy. Passengers with excessive Late Cancellations/No-Showss will be subject to sanctions as described below. Please note considerations for the number of violations will be made for more frequent users of the service, providing the number of violations does not exceed 10% of the total trips taken.
If a passenger no-shows or late cancels for an “outbound” trip and has one or more other trips (e.g. return) on the same day, HRT will not automatically cancel the subsequent trip(s). It is the passenger’s responsibility to either take the later trip(s) or cancel it/them in a timely manner if they wish to avoid being charged with any additional No-Show or Late Cancellation.

A trip missed by a passenger for reasons beyond a passenger’s control, including Paratransit error or uncontrollable or unpredictable impacts of their disability, will not count as a No-Show. Documentation of impacts may be required.

HRT will notify individuals in writing of No-Show violations and/or Late Cancellation violations on a monthly basis to assist in the early resolution of misunderstandings and to identify conditions that were beyond the control of the individual to cancel their trip in a timely manner. Examples of situations beyond a rider’s control may be:

- Medical or Family Emergencies
- Sudden illness or change in condition
- Appointments that run unexpectedly late or are cancelled at the last minute

An individual with excessive No-Show/Late Cancellation violation(s) will:

- Receive written notice of the violations citing the specific trips missed over the specific time period of occurrence and the proposed sanction (if applicable). These notifications are sent monthly and quarterly.
- Within five working days (Monday-Friday, excluding holidays) of receipt of the notice, be allowed to present information and arguments to the Manager of Paratransit Services or designee. Failure to exercise this right will not preclude the individual from filing an appeal regarding the sanction imposed.
- Receive written notice of the decision and, if applicable, the effective date and duration of any suspension (the “Suspension Notice”).

The passenger may appeal the decision of HRT by filing an appeal within 60 days from the date of the Suspension Notice. Appeals will be handled in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Service Plan and Policy for Complementary Paratransit Services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If appealed, the sanction will be stayed pending the outcome of the appeal. HRT must continue to provide Paratransit Service, upon request, to the passenger until the appeal is resolved. However, if the passenger continues to accrue additional No-Show violations or Late Cancellation violations during the appeal period, these may be considered in the determination of the proposed sanction; the passenger will be so notified. If the passenger does not appeal or waives their right to appeal, the sanctions noted below will be imposed.
Any combination of excessive Late Cancellations or No-Show (minimum of three (3) violations and an amount greater than 10% of total trips taken) in any consecutive three month quarterly period is defined as a “violation” of this policy. Sanctions will be imposed as follows:

**First Violation**
Seven (7) day suspension of service.

**Second Violation**
Fourteen (14) day suspension of service.

**Third Violation**
Twenty-one (21) day suspension of service.

**Fourth Violation**
Thirty (30) day suspension of service.

If more than two years elapse between any two stages of violations, the progression of sanctions and suspensions would revert to the first violation step.

**Exception for Subscription Services:** Subscription Service is provided as a mutual convenience for passengers and HRT are not required by ADA regulations. If a person with Subscription privileges accrues three or more No-Show or Late Cancellations within any one-month period, the Subscription may be cancelled and the individual notified. The passenger must then use the standard Paratransit Service, daily reservation request and have two consecutive months with no more than one No-Show or Late Cancellation before Subscription Service may be restored. Restoration of Subscription privileges is at HRT’s discretion. In addition, other sanctions and/or violations described above also apply for the individual passenger.

**Exception for Contract Services:** Contract service is provided as a mutual convenience for passengers, agencies, and HRT, and is not required by the ADA regulations. Paratransit Service(s) must be notified of any cancellation(s) by 5:00 p.m. the evening before service is to be provided, or the contracting agency will be charged the fare(s) for each passenger(s), even if the trip is not taken. In addition, other sanctions and/or violations described above apply for the individual passenger.

For more information call 757-222-6087
PARATRANSIT WEB SERVICES

Use Google Chrome to login

GO TO HRT WEBSITE  www.gohrt.com  Select Paratransit tab
CLICK THE LINK ONLINE SCHEDULING FOR EXISTING CUSTOMERS

ONLINE SCHEDULING FOR EXISTING CUSTOMERS

Our new web portal is now live.

Paratransit services are federally mandated through the Americans...
USER NAME: FIRSTNAME.LASTNAME@VIAHRT.COM

- SELECT RETRIEVE PASSWORD
- YOU WILL BE PROMPTED TO ADD YOUR PHONE NUMBER

Paratransit

Please enter your username/email and password and don't forget to bookmark this link!

If you haven't retrieved your password for this portal (or if you've forgotten it), please press “Retrieve Your Password” below. You can still always call 757-455-8010 to book a ride or for support.

Email/Username

DONALD.DUCK

Password

Retrieve your password?

Log In
- ENTER YOUR PHONE NUMBER
- YOU WILL RECEIVE A TEXT MESSAGE AND PHONE CALL.

Enter your number above and we will text or call you with a new password.
• ENTER YOUR PASSWORD YOUR LOCATION SCREEN WILL APPEAR
• SELECT SCHEDULED RIDES

IF YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS CONTACT 757-455-8010