

ADA RIDER'S GUIDE

Paratransit and Fixed-Route
Accessible Services



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**PARATRANSIT AND FIXED-ROUTE
ACCESSIBLE SERVICES**

**IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS
WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

Dear Rider:

Welcome to RTA! This Rider's Guide introduces you to RTA Paratransit and Fixed-Route Accessible Services and provides information you need to use these services. This guide describes the policies, procedures, rules and regulations that are designed to enhance accessibility for seniors and persons with disabilities.

RTA is committed to providing all riders the highest level of safety, comfort and service possible. It is important that RTA riders understand what transportation services are available and how to best use these services. Please read this guide carefully to become familiar with the type and level of services that RTA provides and refer to it whenever questions arise.

Don't hesitate to call the ADA Compliance Office at (504) 827-8345 or call the Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (504) 827-7833.

Thank you and happy riding.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contact Information	6
Customer Service Mailing Addresses	7

Fixed-Route Service

What is Fixed Route Service	8
Reasonable Modification/Accommodations of Service	8
RTA's Discounted Fare Program	9
Operating Hours of Fixed-Route Service	10
Planning My Ride	11
Simple Steps for Riding Fixed-Route Vehicles	11
Responsibilities of the Operator	12
Responsibilities of a Rider	13
Seating	13
Non-Working Lift	14
My Comments	15

Paratransit Service

What is Paratransit Service	16
Eligibility and the Certification Process	18
Eligibility Appeals Process	19
Operating Hours of Paratransit Service	19
What is the Fare	20
Companions and Personal Care Attendants	20
Wheelchairs and Mobility Devices	21
Making My Reservation	21
Subscription Service	23
Changing a Reservation	23
Canceling a Reservation	24
No-shows	24
Service Appeal Process	28
Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures	29
Responsibilities of the Operator	30
Responsibilities as a Rider	30
Transporting Oxygen Supplies, Packages, and Service Animals	32
Out of Town Visitors	32
Paratransit Service Airport	33
Paratransit Customer Service	35
ADA Discrimination Complaint Process	36

Appendix

Airport Paratransit Service Pamphlet	i
Airport Paratransit Service Map	ii

CONTACT INFORMATION

Fixed Route/Services:

Rideline/General Information	(504) 248-3900
ID Cards	(504) 827-8345
Discount Fare Applications	(504) 827-8345
Telecommunication Device for the Deaf	(504) 827-7833

Paratransit Services:

ADA Eligibility	(504) 827-8345
ADA Eligibility/Applications	(504) 827-8345
Paratransit Applications	(504) 827-8345
Temporary Visitor Status	(504) 827-8345
Trip Reservations/Cancellations	(504) 827-7433
Where's My Ride	(504) 827-7433
ADA Compliance/Appeals	(504) 827-8323

Complaints/Concerns:

Paratransit/Fixed Route Service	(504) 248-3900
Telecommunication Device for the Deaf	(504) 827-7833

For life threatening emergencies, always call 911.

CUSTOMER SERVICE MAILING ADDRESS

PARATRANSIT/FIXED ROUTE

2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119
Office: (504) 827-7433 • Rideline: (504) 248-3900

ID CENTER/ADA OFFICE

2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119
(504) 827-8345

WELCOME ABOARD

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted in 1990 so that individuals with disabilities would be afforded the same opportunities for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as those without disabilities. RTA is committed to being ADA compliant!

What Exactly is Fixed-Route Service & How Does It Work?

The Regional Transit Authority (RTA) provides public transit within Orleans Parish and the City of Kenner in Jefferson Parish. Buses that are accessible to clients with disabilities serve all regularly scheduled routes. For your convenience, the Riverfront and Canal Street streetcars are also fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

RTA fixed-route buses are accessible to persons with disabilities. Features such as kneeling capability, lifts, wheelchair securement areas and priority seating areas, ensure equal access on fixed-route buses. Our buses are equipped with a kneeling feature that allows the vehicles to be lowered to enable easier access for ambulatory riders with disabilities, or those using devices such as walkers, canes and crutches. To use the kneeling feature or the lift assist, please ask the operator to deploy one of these devices.

In addition to the mechanical devices, fixed routes provide the flexibility to travel at any time during RTA's regular hours of operation without first having to make a reservation. Riders must pay with exact cash, ticket, or token.

Reasonable Modification Accommodations of Service

RTA's Reasonable Modification Policy provides for reasonable modifications/accommodations to its policies, practices and services to ensure accessibility for all riders. Upon request, individuals with disabilities will be considered for modifications and/or accommodations. To view the full policy please visit our website at www.norta.com.

How Can I Qualify for RTA's Discounted Fare Program?

By utilizing the RTA Discounted Fare Program, senior citizens and individuals with disabilities who use fixed-route service also enjoy a monetary incentive—the fare is only 40 cents and transfers are free. To get your discount if you are a senior, show the driver your RTA Senior Citizen ID card, State ID or a Driver's License. The RTA Senior Citizen ID card is optional; any person 65 years of age or older may obtain an RTA senior citizen ID card by simply bringing proof of age and a picture ID to the:

RTA ID Center
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

Medicare Card recipients must bring their Medicare Card and a State ID or Driver's License to receive a RTA Reduced Fare Card.

To have your picture taken for your RTA ID, please come to the RTA ID Center between the hours of 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

Individuals with disabilities who are interested in utilizing the Discounted Fare Program and do not receive Medicare, need to complete an easy, one-page application and have a doctor fill out the required medical form to verify the disability. Applications may be picked up at the:

RTA Eligibility Department
RTA ID Center
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

You may also write to this address or call one of the telephone numbers below for an application or for additional information:

Phone: 827-8345

Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD): 827-7833

Please inform the staff if an application is needed in an alternative accessible format. Accessible formats available include TDD, large print, braille, audiotape or pdf.

The first picture ID is free. The first replacement ID is \$2.00; subsequent replacements are \$5.00. All ID cards will have an expiration date of three years from the date of issuance.

Riders from another city can use their Medicare card and a picture ID on RTA vehicles.

What are the Operating Hours of Fixed Route Service?

The RTA fixed-route service operates seven days a week, including on all federally recognized holidays. RTA fixed-route schedules can be picked up Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM at the following location:

Regional Transit Authority
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

Schedules may also be viewed and/or downloaded from our website at <http://www.norta.com>.

You may also write to the RTA Customer Service, 2817 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70119 or call (504) 248-3900 to obtain a schedule.

A bus schedule explains when the bus arrives at major stops or time points along the route. The schedule for weekdays may differ from the weekend schedule. Please use the proper schedule for the day of the week on which you are riding. RTA's schedules change three times annually: summer, winter and fall. Please remember to obtain the latest schedule to ensure that it is current.

How Can I Plan My Ride?

A Customer Service Representative can advise a rider about their trip - which buses to board and transfer to as well as if a transfer is necessary to reach a destination.

For this service, please call the Rideline at (504) 248-3900 with the following information:

- Present location (major cross street or address)
- Destination
- Time of departure and/or arrival
- Travel date and day of week

Simple Steps for Riding Fixed-Route Vehicles:

Ambulatory Riders

- Arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes early
- Have exact fare ready, along with the RTA ID or a picture ID
- Step aboard the bus, or request that the operator “lower the bus”
- Show the operator the proper discount fare card
- Place the fare in the farebox
- Ask for a transfer if changing buses

- Ring the bell, or the bus chime, just before the desired stop
- Exit through the rear door, unless the lift or kneeling feature of the bus is required

WHEELCHAIR AND SCOOTER RIDERS

- Arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes early
- Have exact fare ready, along with RTA ID or a picture ID
- Position the wheelchair or scooter to board the lift
- Show the operator the proper discount fare card
- Place the fare in the farebox
- Ask for a transfer if changing buses
- Follow the directions of the operator *(To ensure your safety and the welfare of other riders, you must be properly secured in the tie-down area; your refusal may result in a denied ride)*
- Ring the bell, or the bus chime, just before the desired stop
- Exit vehicle on the lift

What are the Responsibilities of the Operator?

- Operate vehicle safely
- Be on time
- Be in uniform with a visible ID
- Treat riders with courtesy
- Allow riders time to get on and off vehicle
- Announce transfer points, major intersections, points of interest and any stop requested by the rider
- Adhere to the same standards of common courtesy and personal hygiene as those required of a rider
- Ensure that rider seat belts and other safety/security devices are properly fastened
- Transport riders with oxygen supplies and/or service animals

What are My Responsibilities as a Rider?

- Read all sections of the Rider's Guide
- Be at pick-up location on time
- Pay fare with exact cash, ticket or token
(Operators do not make change)
- Carry bags or packages on and off the vehicle
- Avoid distracting the operator
- Maintain wheelchairs or other mobility aids in accordance with manufacturer's specifications
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene
- Follow these common rules of courtesy:
 - No eating, drinking or smoking on board
 - No verbal or physical abuse of other riders, operators and/or transportation staff
 - No littering in the vehicle
 - No radios or other sound-generating equipment are to be played aloud on board (*headphones are required*)
 - No pets (*except service animals*)

RTA's Transportation Department reserves the right to suspend or terminate transit privileges of riders who threaten the health and/or safety of other riders, operators or transportation staff.

Seating

The usual seating area for senior citizens or individuals with disabilities is in the front of the vehicle. However, these are not reserved seats. If the seats are taken, the operators can only ask that nondisabled riders move from the seats. The operator cannot order non-disabled riders to move from the seats.

Non-Working Lift

Should the lift mechanism fail on a route and that bus is unable to accommodate riders:

- The operator will notify the RTA dispatch about the reason why the rider could not ride in that vehicle.
- The next vehicle on that line should be able to provide service.
- Should the wait exceed 30 minutes, the Communication Dispatcher will send a service supervisor to call for one of the Paratransit buses that are equipped to transport individuals with disabilities.
- This vehicle will transport the rider to their desired destination, or to another fixed-route bus to complete the next part of their trip.

If a rider cannot be accommodated because the bus has a standing load, or another problem arises (passenger refuses to leave the tie-down seat area), the operator will notify the dispatcher that he or she was not able to accommodate an individual with a disability and make arrangements for the next bus on that route to accommodate.

How Can I Provide RTA with My Comments?

If you have any suggestions, comments or complaints about service or an employee, please note the time and the date, vehicle number, vehicle location, and then call:

RTA Rideline/Customer Service

6:00 AM – 8:00 PM Monday through Friday

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Saturday, Sunday and Holidays

(504) 248-3900

You may also write to:

RTA Rideline/Customer Service

Attn: Rideline/Customer Service

2817 Canal Street

New Orleans, LA 70119

ADA related matters should be addressed to:

ADA Compliance Officer

Regional Transit Authority

Attn: Compliance Officer

2817 Canal Street

New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 827-8323

We appreciate and value your input. Your comments will help our staff improve service and will be treated confidentially.

RTA (PARATRANSIT SERVICE)

What is RTA Paratransit Service & How Does It Work?

Paratransit Service operated by the RTA provides origin-to-destination public transportation service for individuals with disabilities that prevent them from boarding, riding, or disembarking from a fixed-route bus, even if that bus is equipped with a wheelchair lift.

The RTA uses modern wheelchair lift-equipped or ramp-equipped vehicles to provide paratransit transportation. A vehicle appropriate for the individual's disability will provide service. The RTA determines the type of vehicle used for transport.

A vehicle will pick up and drop off a rider at a safe location—one that is as close as possible to the rider's point of origin and destination. Due to safety reasons, our drivers are not permitted to escort riders into buildings. They will, however, provide limited assistance, including helping into and out of the vehicles, to and from the curb and door-to-door if requested. Our drivers are not allowed to leave their vehicles to assist riders into and out of buildings. Any rider that needs more than limited assistance should make arrangements with his or her own caretakers to receive additional aid at pick up and drop off locations. RTA will make reasonable modifications and/or accommodations to ensure accessibility for riders upon request from an individual with a disability.

Paratransit is a shared ride service, meaning that a rider will be in the vehicle as the operator drops off and picks up other passengers along the route until the vehicle reaches the designated destination. Shared ride service offers the most

efficient service for the greatest number of riders. Please remember to allow sufficient time to stop, for pick up and drop off of other riders. The duration of your trips may vary, and direct service to your destination may not be available. A maximum of 90 minutes travel time should be allowed for a trip. Riders are asked to advise the scheduler of appointment times, thus aiding the RTA in getting you to your appointment on time.

A turnaround time of an hour is required between trips and between your drop-off locations. For example, a rider cannot book a pickup from a previous drop off location within the same hour.

If a rider is unable to be left unattended (based on age, diminished mental capacity or special request of the responsible party), arrangements must be made to have someone meet the paratransit vehicle at each location. The driver will wait five minutes for the attendant to meet the vehicle. If no one arrives, the driver will notify RTA and continue his/her route. The RTA will attempt to reach the emergency contact person. If the rider is not met by the end of the route, the police will be notified to assist in locating the responsible party. Riders who must continue a route beyond their scheduled destination because of the failure to be met by a responsible party will be subject to suspension and/or termination of service.

For the safety of RTA riders and operators, RTA reserves the right to refuse transportation or service to anyone whose conduct is or has been known to be offensive, intimidating, violent, or hazardous, or otherwise could result or has resulted in the disruption of transit operations or compromised the safety of others.

Who is Eligible and What is the Certification Process?

Individuals interested in using RTA Paratransit services need to complete and submit an eligibility form for certification. Please complete your personal information on the form, including your signature. Your doctor or licensed healthcare professional must complete and sign the medical eligibility form. *Remember, the actual processing of your application does not begin until RTA receives the eligibility forms completed in their entirety.*

DO NOT separate the application forms. The sooner you can deliver to RTA all the necessary information, the more expediently RTA is able to process your application.

An eligibility review considers each applicant's functional ability to use fixed-route bus service. Applicants become paratransit eligible on a "conditional" or "unconditional" basis. If a disability or health condition prevents a rider from using fixed-route buses under any condition, that individual will have "unconditional eligibility" to use paratransit services. Should a person be able to use fixed-route buses some of the time, but not at other times, the rider will be "conditionally eligible" for those trips which he or she cannot take by fixed-route service.

Applications can be picked up in person at the:

RTA Eligibility Department
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

You may also call 504-827-8345 (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD): 504-827-7833) and ask that an eligibility form be mailed.

The Eligibility Department office hours are 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Please inform the staff if an application is needed in an alternative format. Riders should expect to receive an application within 14 days of a written or telephone request.

Decisions regarding eligibility will be furnished in writing within 21 days, provided the RTA has received the completed application and the information from your doctor or healthcare professional.

An ID card will be issued once the rider is certified to use the paratransit service. To have your picture taken for your RTA ID card, please come to the:

RTA ID Center
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM Monday through Friday

All cards will have an expiration date of one to three years from the date of issuance. Please remember to apply for recertification prior to the expiration date.

Eligibility Appeals Process

Should you wish to appeal an eligibility decision, please do so within 60 days of receiving the determination by filing a written appeal with the ADA Compliance Officer at 2817 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70119.

What is the Service Area and what are the Operating Hours?

Complimentary paratransit service is provided 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

You can use paratransit service to travel within Orleans Parish, and Jefferson Parish.

The RTA paratransit service operates the same as our fixed route service seven days a week, including all federally recognized holidays.

RTA reserves the right to suspend, modify or cancel service during times of hazardous weather conditions.

What is the Fare?

- \$2.00 (Local trips scheduled at least 24 hours in advance)
- \$5.00 Service to the Union Passenger Terminal (Amtrak - Greyhound)
- \$15.00 Service to Armstrong International Airport

All fares are for one-way trips per person. Eligible riders and companions must pay with exact cash. On local trips only, Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) traveling with an eligible rider and children under three years of age ride free.

Companions And Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

Eligible riders may travel with one companion. Eligible riders may travel with an additional companion on a space-available basis. Riders planning to travel with a companion should notify the Reservations Agent when calling to reserve a trip.

A PCA is a person who has been designated or employed specifically to care for and to travel with an eligible rider. The PCA will ride free. Another paratransit-certified rider cannot be considered a PCA and will be requested to pay the appropriate fare.

At the time the eligibility determination is made, riders who travel with a PCA will be certified as requiring a PCA, and this requirement will be noted on the rider's ID card. Companions and PCAs must get on and off the vehicle at the same location as the eligible rider.

The eligible rider is responsible for any individual and/or approved apparatus brought aboard the vehicle.

Wheelchairs and Other Mobility Devices

Riders will be transported provided that the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate them, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements. Additionally, RTA can accommodate mobility devices that meet the following minimum standards:

- *Wheelchair* means a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or more wheels, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether manually operated or powered.
- Walkers must be collapsible and able to be stored between seats or in the vehicle's trunk.
- The mobility device must be in good working order; with batteries charged, tires inflated, footrests attached, and all parts secured. (49 CFR 37.3)

How Do I Make a Reservation?

To schedule a trip, please call the reservations telephone number: 504-827-7433 between the hours of 8:00 AM- 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday and 7:00 AM- 4:00 PM on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays.

Riders may reserve a trip from one to seven days in advance, up to 5:00 PM weekdays the night before the requested trip and 4:00 PM weekends and Holidays.

Same day service may be requested; however, it is based on service availability. Due to prior scheduled trips, service may or may not be available for times requested.

You may schedule trips up to five days in advance. The ADA allows RTA to negotiate a revised pick-up time with riders, which may be up to one hour before or one hour after the requested pick-up time.

If you want a return trip, you must book a scheduled time for your return. We understand that hospital, clinic and doctor's trips may be difficult for you to schedule, so please allow for extra time when booking those trips. If you find that you are going to be late for your scheduled time, please call our office at least one hour before your scheduled time so that adjustments can be made.

When calling to reserve a ride, please have the following information available:

- Rider's full name and ID#
- Date of travel
- Pick-up address, number, street, suite number, city, zip and entry code for any security entrances
- Requested pick-up and drop off times
- Requested return time if round trip
- Appointment time
- Destination address, number, street, suite number, city, zip and entry code for any security entrances
- Wheelchair or other mobility device requirement
- PCA and/or companion, including children, traveling with rider
- Notification of a companion or PCA who also uses a wheelchair
- Service animal traveling with rider
- Any other information the paratransit operator should know to provide transportation

Please record the name of the reservations agent who scheduled the trip, as well as the confirmed dates and times of the trip reservations.

Does RTA Offer Subscription Trip Service?

Subscription trip service is available to those riders traveling frequently from the same location to the same destination at the same time on a regular long-term basis—for example: to work, to dialysis appointments, etc. Once instituted, subscription users no longer need to call the reservation line.

Should you need to change the time or the location of a subscription reservation, please cancel the previous subscription, and make a new subscription.

Please cancel, in advance, any trips you will not be using. Subscriptions can be placed on hold for short intervals—for example, for vacations, hospital stays, etc. Please call RTA should you need to place your subscription on hold for any reason. Remember to state the date you would like your service resumed. Should you not place your subscription ride on hold, it will be canceled, and you will need to book a new one.

How Do I Change a Reservation?

Riders changing a trip reservation should do the following:

- Call (504) 827-7433 for a reservations agent
- Call by at least 4:00 PM the day before the scheduled trip to make a change

Same day reservations changes will be based on availability of service and subject to the \$4.00 fare.

How do I Cancel a Reservation?

Please cancel reservations at least three hours before the trip; otherwise, the trip will be marked a Late Cancellation.

To cancel a scheduled trip reservation, please do the following:

- Call (504) 827-7433 to speak to a reservationist.

Cancellation Penalties

- All cancellations are monitored.
- Cancellations in excess of 20 percent of an individual rider's scheduled trips in any calendar month are considered excessive.
- Cancellations of a subscription trip reservations in excess of 20 percent will result in the cancellation of subsequent trips.
- Late cancellations in excess of five percent of an individual rider's scheduled trips in any calendar month are considered excessive.
- Excessive cancellations in any calendar month will be cause for a warning letter.
- Excessive cancellations in two consecutive months will be cause for a (7) seven day suspension in service.
- Any actions taken by RTA with respect to paratransit service will be communicated to the rider by registered mail to ensure delivery.

No-Show Policy

RTA understands that because the LIFT service requires trips to be scheduled in advance, riders may sometimes miss scheduled rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. The RTA also understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely manner for reasons that are beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled trips or failing to cancel trips in a timely manner can lead to suspension of service. The RTA has an administrative policy to suspend for a reasonable amount of

time any ADA eligible individual who establishes a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips. All potential suspensions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Riders will be notified in writing that the RTA has reviewed their trips and plans to issue a suspension. *(See Attached No Show Policy Below)*

Definitions: No-Show, Pickup Window, and Late Cancellation

No-show

A rider is given a no-show when the vehicle arrives within the window time and the rider fails to board the vehicle within five minutes of the arrival. If the rider is not present for boarding, the driver will request the dispatcher make a good faith effort to call the rider before authorizing the driver to proceed to the next destination.

Pickup Window

The pickup window is defined as the time beginning 15 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time to 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. Riders must be ready to board a vehicle that arrives within the pick-up window. The driver will wait for a maximum of five minutes within the pick-up window for the rider to appear.

Late Cancellation

A late cancellation is defined as either: a cancellation made less than one hour before the scheduled pick-up time or as a cancellation made at the door or a refusal to board a vehicle that has arrived within the pickup window.

Definition: No-Shows Due to Operator Error or to Circumstances Beyond a Rider's Control

The RTA does not count as no-shows or late cancellations any missed trips due to our error, such as:

- Trips placed on the schedule in error
- Pickups scheduled at the wrong pick-up location
- Drivers arriving and departing before the pick-up window begins
- Drivers arriving late (after the end of the pick-up window)
- Drivers arriving within the pick-up window, but departing without waiting the required five minutes

The RTA does not count as no-shows or late cancellations situations beyond a rider's control that prevent the rider from notifying that the trip cannot be taken, such as:

- Medical emergency
- Family emergency
- Sudden illness or change in condition
- Appointment that runs unexpectedly late without sufficient notice

Hospital, Clinic, Doctor's Office

We understand that you may be delayed on these trips and have established the following policy:

- If you will be late, please call and we can adjust your pick-up time.
- If your driver arrives and you are not ready, we will reschedule your pick-up for one hour later and you will not be charged with a No Show.
- If you are not ready for your adjusted time, we will charge you with a No-Show.
- If you call for a later pick up, we will pick you up and the trip will be reclassified as fare.

Riders should contact the paratransit office when experiencing no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control.

Policy for Handling Subsequent Trips Following No-shows

When a rider is a no-show for one trip, all subsequent trips on that day remain on the schedule unless the rider specifically cancels the trips. To avoid multiple no-shows on the same day, riders are strongly encouraged to cancel any subsequent trips they no longer need that day.

Suspension Policies for a Pattern or Practice of Excessive No-shows and Late Cancellations

The RTA reviews all recorded no-shows and late cancellations to ensure accuracy before recording them in a rider's account.

Each verified no-show or late cancellation consistent with the abovementioned definitions counts. Any rider who has booked ten trips or more in a calendar month and has no showed at 30% of those trips will receive a suspension notice. A rider will be subject to suspension only if both the minimum number of trips booked and the minimum number of penalty points are reached during the calendar month.

If the no-show is beyond the rider's control, please contact the Paratransit office to explain the circumstance and request that the no-show be removed from their record.

A rider will be subject to suspension only if both the minimum number of trips booked and the minimum number of penalty points are reached during the calendar month. The RTA will notify riders by telephone after they have accumulated 20% of their trips and would be subject to suspension should they accumulate the additional 10% of no-shows and late cancellations that month consistent with the criteria listed in this section of the policy above.

All suspension notices include a copy of this policy, information on disputing no-shows or late cancellations, and how to appeal suspensions.

Suspensions begin on Mondays. The first violation in a calendar year triggers a warning letter but no suspension. Subsequent violations result in the following suspensions:

- Second violation: 5-day suspension
- Third violation: 10-day suspension
- Fourth violation: 15-day suspension
- Fifth and subsequent violations: 30-day suspension

Policy for Disputing Specific No-Shows or Late Cancellations

Riders wishing to dispute specific no-shows or late cancellations must do so in writing within 10 business days of receiving a suspension letter. Letters should be addressed to the RTA's Director of Paratransit Service at 2817 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70119. The letter must explain the circumstances for the no-show or late cancellation infraction and request the removal of the no-show or late cancellation(s) from their record. A complete investigation will be conducted and written notification forwarded to the rider after receipt of the written appeal.

Service Suspension/Termination Appeal Process

If a rider wishes to appeal after receiving notice of an action by the RTA with respect to paratransit service, the rider has ten days in which to file a written appeal to the RTA Director of Paratransit. A complete investigation will be made, and written notification forwarded to the rider within five working days after receipt of the written appeal request.

Pick-up and Drop-Off Procedures

RTA provides curb-to-curb paratransit service. This means that operators wait for riders at the curb of a public street, in front of (or as close as possible to) the rider's house, apartment building, or other designated pick-up location. Riders should be waiting at the sidewalk or another safe waiting area in front of (or as close as possible to) the entrance of the pick-up location. Operators are not allowed to enter a house or other building to pick up riders, or to escort riders from the curb to the door of the drop off location.

Operators shall position the bus to make boarding and de-boarding as easy as possible, minimize the slope of the ramp, and use the kneeling option as needed. Bus operators shall provide assistance to riders upon request. Individuals with disabilities shall be allowed adequate time to board and disembark the vehicle.

Some areas such as dead-end streets, narrow streets with parking on both sides and gated communities present unsafe or difficult areas to service. If the operator deems that the rider cannot safely get in and out of an area, they will attempt to get as close as safely possible. If the operator is not provided with the security code for a gated community, the rider can be dropped off at the gate.

The paratransit vehicle may arrive as early as 15 minutes before or up to 15 minutes after the reserved trip time. This is the "On-Time Window." If the vehicle arrives any time during this period, it is considered on time. Riders must be ready to travel anytime within the thirty-minute "On-Time Window."

If more than 15 minutes have passed after the reservation time, the rider may call (504) 827-7433 to get an update on the estimated arrival time of the vehicle.

Riders are transported to destinations as scheduled on the operator's manifest. A destination may not be changed once the rider has boarded the vehicle. Please do not request an operator to change your destination.

What are the Responsibilities of the Operator?

Operators are responsible for the following:

- Operate vehicle safely
- Be in uniform with a visible ID
- Announce that they are an RTA operator and give their name
- Be at pick-up locations on time and wait for at least five minutes
- Announce arrival at pick-up location
- Treat riders with courtesy
- Assist riders in a limited manner when boarding and alighting a vehicle, and to and from the curb
- Maintain the assigned service schedule (manifest) for the convenience of all clients
- Ensure rider's seat belts and other securement devices are properly fastened and operational

Operators cannot assist riders to their door or into houses, medical facilities or other buildings. A companion or a PCA must accompany riders who need such assistance.

What are My Responsibilities As A Rider?

Riders are responsible for the following:

- Read all sections of the Rider's Guide
- Make reservations one to five days in advance

- Provide security code for, or access to, gated community (if the vehicle is unable to enter the pick-up area and the client fails to meet the vehicle, the rider will be considered a No-Show for the trip)
- Be at pick-up location on time
- Call “Where’s My Ride” line if vehicle does not arrive 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time
- Call to cancel unnecessary trips, avoid Late Cancellations and No-Shows
- Pay fare with exact cash, ticket or token (Operators do not make change)
- Wear seat belts
- Provide car seats for children in accordance with state law
- Carry bags or packages on and off the vehicle (a limit of two bags)
- Avoid distracting the operator or other riders with inappropriate behavior
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene
- When necessary, have someone available at drop-off location to assist you in disembarking from the vehicle (failure to do so may result in suspension of service)
- Follow these common rules of courtesy:
 - No eating, drinking or smoking on board
 - No riding under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - No verbal or physical abuse of other riders, operators and/or other staff
 - No littering in the vehicle
 - No radios, cassette tape players, compact players or other sound generating equipment is to be played aloud on board

RTA’s Paratransit Department reserves the right to suspend or terminate riding privileges of riders who threaten the health and/or safety of other riders, operators, or paratransit staff. Any rider who physically abuses or causes physical injury to another passenger or any RTA staff person will be immediately and permanently terminated.

Transporting Oxygen Supplies, Packages and Service Animals

You may bring a respirator, portable oxygen and/or other life-support equipment if it does not violate law or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. Equipment should be small enough to fit in paratransit vehicles. You are responsible for oxygen equipment while traveling on RTA paratransit vehicles.

You may bring no more than two bags or packages on board the paratransit vehicle. The operators are not allowed to carry bags or packages.

You may travel with a service animal. Service animals are trained to work or perform tasks for persons with disabilities. Riders must notify the reservations agent when reserving a trip that they will travel with a service animal.

Out-of-Town Riders

RTA provides ADA paratransit service to visitors with disabilities who do not live in the New Orleans RTA service area. To ride with RTA's LIFT service visitors must, present documentation that they are ADA eligible for paratransit service in the jurisdiction in which they reside. To arrange for temporary visitor status for LIFT services, riders who are ADA eligible should contact RTA's ID Center at (504) 827-8345 or TTY (504) 827-7833. Visiting riders should be prepared to provide:

- The dates of travel
- The specific destination addresses
- Emergency contact information
- Mobility devices to be used if applicable

If a visitor is unable to present this documentation, RTA will require documentation of residency and disability. RTA must

receive documentation of eligibility for paratransit service for out-of-town riders prior to the first desired day of travel.

Out-of-town riders are encouraged to call three days in advance. Out-of-town riders should also be prepared to provide information regarding mobility devices to be used and emergency contact information for the trip.

RTA will provide eligible out-of-town riders with LIFT service for any combination of 21 days during any 365-day period starting with the rider's first use of the service during that period. Out-of-town riders who wish to receive service beyond this 21-day period must apply for eligibility with RTA's ADA Eligibility Department.

How Do I Get to and from the Airport?

RTA paratransit services will provide premium service to Louis Armstrong International Airport. This service will be provided by paratransit lifts buses and mini-vans.

A \$15.00 one-way fee will apply to riders, companions and Personal Care Attendants (PCA).

Reservations must be made five days in advance for this service. When calling to schedule a return pickup, please let the reservationist know if you are an out-of-town rider.

Each rider, companion and PCA will be allowed two bags each weighing no more than 30 pounds per bag.

Please make certain that you, and anyone traveling with you, are at the curb with all bags. The rider, all companions and PCA's are responsible for placing their bags on the vehicle. Each rider, companion and PCA will be dropped off with the bags at the curb nearest to your departure airline's designated

area. Please make arrangements for Sky Cap service at your own expense or with the airline for further assistance.

For return trip pick-ups from the airport, RTA paratransit services will place a vehicle on standby for the approximate time of your arrival. However, please remember to call dispatch upon arrival at the airport. Paratransit services will then dispatch the standby vehicle to pick you up.

The designated pick-up point for paratransit service (see map) is on the lower level across the drive-through in the parking area. The paratransit driver will wait there for you. The driver will place your bags on the vehicle and assist you in boarding the vehicle.

You must have Sky Cap service at your expense (or other assistance) to escort you and your luggage to the designated pick-up location.

All other paratransit procedures apply to this premium service, to and from Louis Armstrong International Airport.

Use the following number to book trips or to notify paratransit services about your return pick-up when you arrive at the airport:

Paratransit
504-827-7433

Paratransit Complaints

If you have any suggestions, comments or complaints about the service or an employee, please note the time and the date, vehicle number, vehicle location, and then call:

RTA Rideline: 5 am – 8 pm daily (504) 248-3900

You may also write to:

Attn: Customer Service
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

We appreciate and value your input. Your comments are confidential and can help our staff improve service.

Please be specific and provide the following information:

- Your name, ID #, address and phone number
- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Vehicle number or operator's name
- Suggestion, commendation or complaint

ADA Complaint Procedures

(REVISED 7/12/2018)

RTA is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of an individual's disability under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Any person who believes they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability by the Regional Transit Authority (hereinafter referred to as "RTA") may file a complaint under this procedure. It is against the law to retaliate against anyone who files a complaint or cooperates in the investigation of a complaint. The RTA investigates complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident.

The ADA Compliance Officer or designee shall be responsible for overseeing investigations and responses to complaints of discrimination based on disability.

How to File a Complaint

Fill out an ADA Discrimination Complaint Form. Forms and process information are available online at the agency's website www.norta.com or by request at RTA, 2817 Canal St., New Orleans, LA 70119, (504) 827-8345.

Complaints can be filed orally or in writing and should contain:

- 1) The name, address and telephone number of the individual or representative filing the complaint; complaints filed on behalf of third parties must describe or identify the alleged victims of the discrimination;
- 2) An explanation of the discrimination or denial of service;
- 3) The date the alleged violation(s) occurred; and
- 4) Signature of the person filing the complaint.

Complaints may be submitted to RTA as follows:

1. Mail completed form to RTA, Attn: Customer Experience Manager, Canal St, New Orleans, LA 70119;
2. Complaints may also be faxed to (504) 827-8428;

3. In person at RTA's main office, 2817 Canal St. New Orleans, LA 70119. Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM.
4. The complaint may be submitted over the telephone by calling (504) 827-8323.

If assistance is needed in filling out the complaint form or information is needed in another language or other accessible format, call RTA Administration at (504) 827-8345. The ADA Compliance Officer or RTA staff member will offer instructions on how to file a written complaint or provide other accessible format as requested.

Once the complaint is received, the RTA will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by our office.

Eligibility

All complaints are considered formal and shall be investigated unless:

- The complaint is withdrawn;
- The complainant fails to provide required information after numerous requests;
- The complaint is not filed within the 180-day time frame of the incident or event;
- The basis of the complaint is not covered by ADA Title II.

Complaint Review and Investigation

The RTA has 60 days to investigate the complaint from the receipt of the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, the RTA may contact the complainant. The complainant has 30 business days from the date of the letter to send requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 30 business days, the RTA can administratively close

the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case.

If the decision is made not to investigate the complaint, the complainant will be notified in writing within 20 calendar days and the notification shall state the specific reasons the complaint was deemed to not have investigative merit.

The investigation process will include review of any and all relevant documents, reports, video, etc. Focused interviews with key contacts will be conducted as applicable to obtain facts and evidence regarding the allegations in the complaint. The investigator will elicit information from all contacts and witnesses that can provide firsthand information about the incident, event or action specified in the complaint. All relevant documentation, including interview notes and/or recordings will be dated. Additionally, a chronological contact sheet will be maintained in the case file throughout the investigation.

The investigation will address only those issues relevant to the allegations of the complaint and confidentiality will be maintained to the maximum extent feasible.

Resolution

After the investigator reviews the complaint, they will be issued one of two letters: a closure letter or a letter of finding. A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title II violation and that the case will be closed. A letter of finding summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, they have 60 days after the date of the letter or the letter of finding to do so.

A person may also file a complaint directly with the Federal

Transit Administration, at FTA Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590

File Retention

The ADA Compliance Office shall maintain the files and records relating to the complaints filed, for a period of seven (7) years.

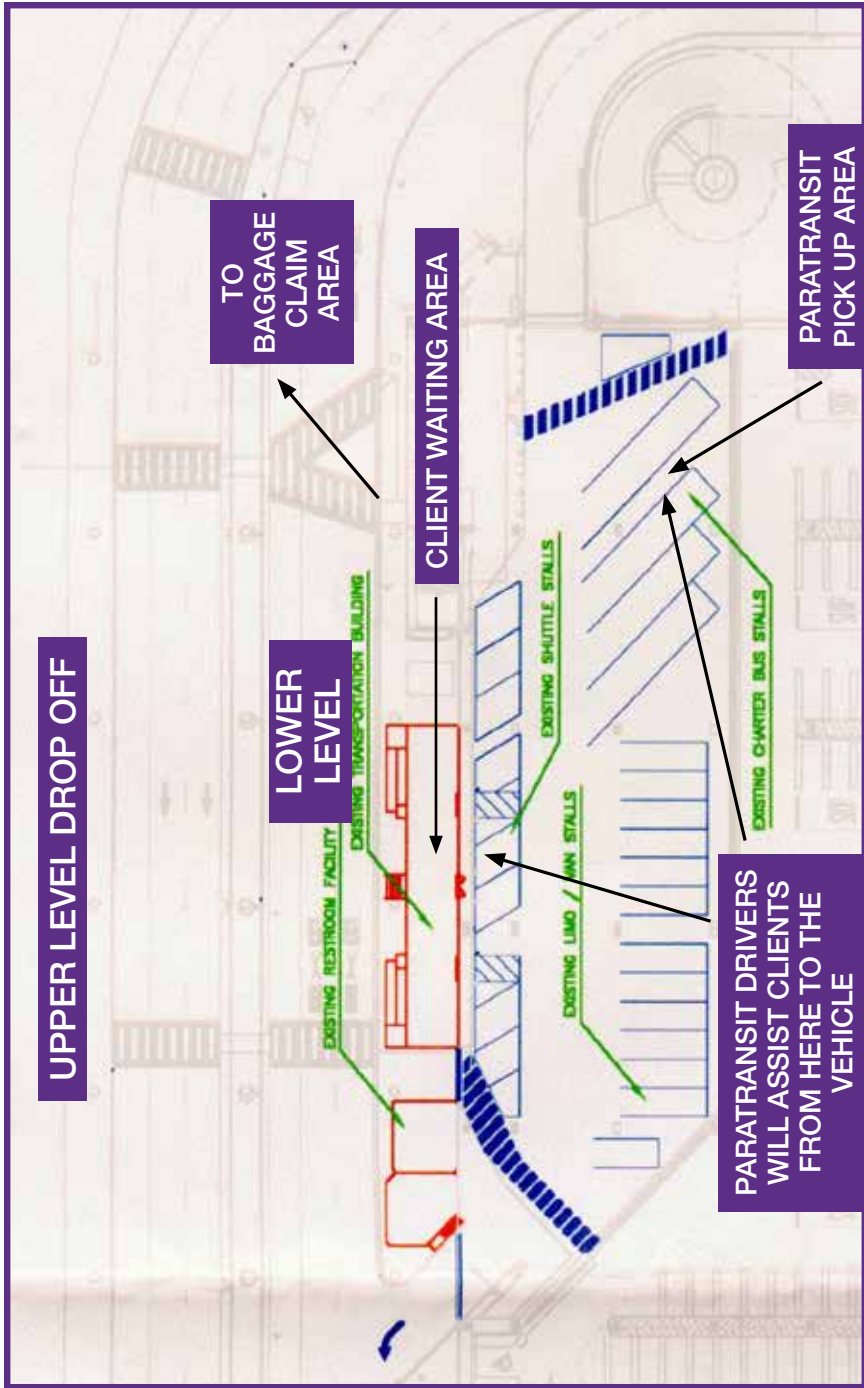
Premium Service to Louis Armstrong International Airport

Paratransit Services

RTA provides Premium Service to Louis Armstrong International Airport. This service is provided by Paratransit Lifts and Vans.

- A \$15.00 fee one way will apply to Riders, all companions and Personal Care Attendants (PCA).
- Reservations must be made five (5) days in advance for this service. When calling to schedule a return pick-up the Rider should let the Reservationist know when they are calling long distance.
- The Riders, companions and PCAs will be allowed two bags each weighing no more than 30 pounds per bag.
- The Rider and anyone traveling with the rider must be at the curb with all bags. The Riders, all companions and PCAs are responsible for placing their bags on the vehicle.
- The Rider, companions and PCAs will be dropped off with their bags at the curb nearest to their departure airline's designated area. The Rider must make arrangements for Sky Cap service at their expense or with the airline for further assistance if needed.

- For return trip pick-ups from the airport, the Paratransit Services of RTA will place a vehicle on standby for the approximate time of the Rider's arrival. However, it is the Rider's responsibility to call dispatch upon arrival at the airport. Paratransit Services will then dispatch the standby vehicle to pick up the Rider.
- The designated pick-up point for Paratransit Service (see map on reverse side) is on the lower level across the drive through in the parking area. The Paratransit driver will wait there for the Rider. The driver will place the Rider's bags on the vehicle and assist the Rider in boarding the vehicle.
- The Rider must have Sky Cap service at their expense or other assistance to escort them and their luggage to the designated pick-up location.



RTA



New Orleans Regional Transit Authority

2417 Canal Street • New Orleans, LA • norta.com • 504.248.3900