



# Metro Paratransit Service Information

## Overview

Metro paratransit is a shared-ride service for individuals with disabilities who cannot use Metro's accessible fixed-route bus service. Metro uses a variety of companies and vehicles to respond to individual paratransit ride requests. Paratransit vehicles can be identified by a blue Metro Transit sticker near the entrance.

## Service Hours

The hours and days of service for paratransit closely match Metro's fixed-route bus service.

Approximate hours listed below:

- Weekdays: 5:30 am – midnight
- Saturdays & Sundays: 5:30 am – 11:00 pm
- Holidays: 5:30 am - 11:00 pm\*

\*Service times and schedules are dependent on fixed-route holiday service. In addition, all STANDING rides are canceled on holidays. Riders must call Metro Customer Service at (608) 266-4466 to schedule a casual ride to travel on these dates.

Paratransit service hours vary on Christmas Eve (12/24) and New Year's Eve (12/31). Call (608) 266-4466 for details.

## Service Area

Paratransit service area also closely matches regular fixed-route bus service. Generally, if you can get to a location using a fixed-route city bus, you should be able to get there using paratransit. However, there are some exceptions. Call (608) 266-4466 to see if your destination is eligible for service.

## How to Schedule Rides

Call (608) 266-4466 to book all paratransit rides. Reservations can be booked up to seven days in advance but no later than 4:30 pm the day before you wish to ride. Due to scheduling constraints, Metro cannot accommodate same-day requests.

When scheduling rides, state the paratransit client's name clearly. You may be asked to spell the rider's last name. When determining your pick-up time, make sure you include enough time to travel from the drop-off location to your final destination or appointment.

Your customer service representative will assist you in determining the best pick-up time for each specific ride based on distance and approximate times.



Once scheduled, the customer service representative will provide you a 20-minute timeframe of when your driver will arrive. Be prepared to board the vehicle during this time. Drivers will only wait five minutes after this timeframe before moving on to other rides.

The following key information should be provided when scheduling a ride:

- Full name
- Date of the ride
- Requested pick-up time or appointment time
- Specific address and phone number for each pick-up and drop-off location
- Whether you will travel with a guest, PCA, or service animal
- Any mobility devices needed during the ride
- Description of any assistance needed

## Ride Confirmations

Call (608) 266-4466 to confirm your reservation on the day of your ride. A customer service representative can also verify which transportation company is scheduled to pick you up.

## Standing Rides Reservations

A one-time, single ride reservation is referred to as a casual ride.

Another scheduling option are standing ride reservations which are recurring rides, such as weekday trips to/from work or weekly appointments. Once established, there is no need to call on a daily basis to schedule a ride. If you'd like to set up recurring rides, call customer service and specify that you'd like to set up standing rides.

Please note that all standing ride reservations automatically cancel on holidays. All riders must schedule casual rides to travel on those dates.

## Ride Cancellations

Notify Metro at (608) 267-1107 as soon as possible if you need to cancel a ride. Rides must be canceled at least 60 minutes prior to the ride reservation pick-up time to avoid a late cancellation. Late cancellations can lead to potential service suspension under Metro's no-show policy. Cancellation calls can be made 24/7, regardless of customer service hours.

Provide the following information when canceling a ride:

- Rider's name (please spell the last name)
- Time and date of the canceled ride
- One-way or round-trip cancel
- Phone number of contact person if we have questions about the cancellation

## How to Apply

Metro paratransit service is available to individuals who cannot use Metro's fixed-route service due to a disability. Those determined eligible for the service are prevented from getting to or



from a bus stop, or from riding a bus. This may include someone with physical, sensory, and/or intellectual disabilities.

Eligibility determinations are not based on symptoms, type of disability, use of a mobility aid, age, income, ability to drive, or access to a private automobile. Someone with similar circumstances may have a very different eligibility determination due to their functional ability.

A written application and an in-person assessment conducted by a trained paratransit professional is required to use our service. The functional abilities evaluated in the assessment may include the applicant’s gait and balance, bus route and landmark identification, short term memory and attention span, or other functions necessary for using a bus. In some instances, Metro will also contact your health care or social service professional for more information.

To apply, fill out an application form at [mymetrobus.com/paratransit](http://mymetrobus.com/paratransit). If you would like to receive an application through the mail, call (608) 266-4466.

**Completed applications can be sent to:**

Metro Transit  
Attn: Paratransit Eligibility  
1245 E. Washington Ave. Suite 201  
Madison, WI 53703

After applications are received by Metro staff:

- Metro will contact you to schedule a 30-minute in-person assessment. Metro provides transportation to and from the assessment if needed.
- A letter with an eligibility decision will be mailed within 21 days after completing the application process.
- You may file an appeal if you disagree with the decision. Information about the appeal process is included with your eligibility determination letter.

**Fares**

Fares are collected by the driver at the start of the trip. You must present a fare to ride. Cash fare has to be exact, as drivers cannot make change. Guests must pay a fare when riding, however, Personal Care Attendants (PCA) ride for free.

Cash	\$3.25
Convenience Tickets (Green or Gold)	1 per ride
Unlimited Ride Pass*	Show upon boarding
Agency Fare Tickets (Blue)	1 per ride

*\*Those using an unlimited ride pass from their employer or institution must contact Metro with the pass type and serial number prior to using the pass as valid fare.*



Buy tickets at Metro's Administration Office or through the mail by visiting [mymetrobus.com/buyonline](http://mymetrobus.com/buyonline). You can always contact Customer Service to request a ticket order form. Paratransit tickets are not available at Sales Outlets.

Paratransit convenience tickets are sold in booklets of six for \$19.50 a book. A single green or gold ticket is valid for one paratransit ride. Riders can purchase up to six booklets at a time (a total of \$117.00 for 36 tickets).

If you chose to buy your tickets through the mail, please note that it can take 8 to 10 business days for your tickets to arrive.

### **Paratransit Agency Fares**

The agency fare for paratransit service is established to cover the full cost of each ride. An agency fare is charged to an appropriate social service or other agency which has responsibility for various client services. An agency is an organization that serves persons who qualify for human service or transportation-related programs or services due to disability, income, or advanced age consistent with presidential Executive Order on Human Service Transportation Coordination.

Agencies may have responsibility to cover the cost of transportation. Rather than a paratransit passenger paying the passenger fare of \$3.25 per trip, an agency fare is paid by the agency on behalf of the passenger. If you are working with an agency, the agency can provide agency tickets for your paratransit rides so no out-of-pocket expense is necessary. Ask your agency for more details if you believe you qualify.

#### **2023 Agency Fare: \$34.25**

Blue agency tickets are available for purchase by agencies only, at a cost of \$34.25 per one-way trip. They are sold in four-ticket booklets at a cost of \$137.00 per booklet. Agencies can contact Metro at [metrotix@cityofmadison.com](mailto:metrotix@cityofmadison.com) for more information about their ticket purchase options.

## **Paratransit Rules and Expectations**

### **Travel Time**

Metro's paratransit service is a shared-ride transportation service. This means that other passengers may be picked up or dropped off on the way to your destination. This shared-ride service allows Metro to keep costs down and to provide a large number of rides in an efficient manner.

As a shared-ride service, expect the ride to take longer than a direct route ride. The total travel time includes the time it takes to provide rides to all passengers. Paratransit travel time is comparable to trips with the same origin and destination taken on regular fixed-route buses including transfers and wait times.



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## Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures

Paratransit riders should allow for a 20-minute pick-up window based on their scheduled pick-up time. This pick-up window is the 20-minute timeframe when the driver is expected to arrive. For example, a ride scheduled for 9 am has a pick-up window of 9 am to 9:20 am.

Be prepared to board the vehicle at any time during the 20-minute window, as the driver only waits five minutes after arrival before the driver leaves and it is considered a no-show. Vehicles arriving any time within the pick-up window is considered on-time.

During pick-up, drivers announce their arrival at the pick-up location, but may not go into a building to find you.

## Driver Assistance

A paratransit driver assists riders boarding and exiting the vehicle, but only offers assistance to and from the vehicle (i.e. from the vehicle to the building entrance) when asked. Riders may ask for this door-to-door assistance at the time of the ride, or when scheduling with a customer service agent.

Drivers may not assist passengers up steps. Drivers may carry only one small package with door-to-door service.

Drivers secure wheelchairs and scooters in the vehicle. Seatbelt use is required on Paratransit and drivers can assist. If you would like assistance with the passenger seat belts or shoulder straps, please ask.

During inclement weather, Metro may take you to an alternate location if your destination is not accessible due to snow or ice. For your safety, transportation may not be provided if snow or ice presents a hazard.

## Passenger Safety

Drivers may refuse to assist or transport a passenger if they determine the situation jeopardizes anyone's personal safety. Metro may suspend or refuse service to any individual who willfully:

- Abuses the policies of Metro
- Exhibits disregard for their own safety, or that of the driver or of other customers
- Interferes with the safe operation of the vehicle

## Oversized Mobility Devices

Metro will accommodate riders with mobility devices as long as the lift or ramp can accommodate the size and weight of the customer and his/her/their mobility device, and the device and customer can fit onto the vehicle. Metro will not be able to accommodate mobility devices if the combined size and/or weight exceed the capabilities of the vehicle equipment. This may affect riders using a mobility device that exceeds:

- 30" in width – 48" in length
- Exceeds 600 pounds when occupied



## Customer Information

Metro paratransit riders must keep their address, telephone numbers, emergency contact information, and mobility device information current with Metro. This important information allows Metro to better address issues that may arise during your use of paratransit service. Complete our Change of Address form online or provide updates over the phone at (608) 266-4466.

## Paratransit Additional Riders

Please note: When traveling with a PCA, guest or service animal, the trip pick-up and drop-off locations must be the same for both riders, and the rides must be scheduled together.

### Who Can Ride With an Eligible Passenger?

#### Personal Care Attendant (PCA)

The eligibility determination process considers and recognizes those who travel with a personal care attendant (PCA). A PCA is someone designated or employed to specifically help an ADA paratransit eligible person meet personal needs. They typically assist with one or more daily life activities such as providing personal care, performing manual tasks, or providing assistance with mobility or communication. The eligibility certification will indicate if an eligible paratransit rider uses a PCA. A PCA may ride for free when acting in that capacity.

#### Guests

Eligible riders may be accompanied by a guest or companion. A guest, such as a friend or family member is not considered a personal care attendant. One guest may ride with an eligible rider, and additional guests may ride on a space available basis. A paratransit fare does apply to all guests traveling with the rider. For example, if a paratransit eligible rider is able to bring two guests on their ride, three fares must be presented upon pick-up.

#### Service Animals

An eligible rider may be accompanied by a service animal at no additional cost. A service animal is identified under ADA as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. Riders may be asked about the tasks the service animal performs.

## Paratransit No-Show Policy

Metro's paratransit service requires trips to be scheduled in advance, however, riders may sometimes miss their scheduled ride or forget to cancel a ride they no longer need. The reasons for missing a ride may be beyond their control, however, repeatedly missing scheduled trips can lead to a suspension of service.

To ensure that the paratransit service is cost effective, Metro has an established "No-Show Policy."



A no-show occurs when a rider fails to appear to board the vehicle for a scheduled trip.

Cancellation with less than 60 minutes notice, or late cancellation, is also considered a no-show and can lead to service suspension if repeated.

## No-Show Notices and Suspensions

Metro monitors ride activity and will notify riders by postcard if they have received a no-show. The postcard lists the ride date, time and location of the missed or late canceled ride. If a rider exceeds the No-Show Limits per Month, they are then subject to the schedule for the Suspension of Service. Limits and suspension schedules are as follows:

### No-Show Limits per Month:

- 1 to 14 trips – maximum 2 no-shows per month
- 15 to 39 trips – maximum 4 no-shows per month
- 40 to 59 trips – maximum 6 no-shows per month
- 60 or more trips – maximum 8 no-shows per month

### No-Show Suspension of Service:

- 1st violation – letter of warning
- 2nd violation – 1-day suspension of service
- 3rd violation – 7-day suspension of service
- All subsequent violations – 7-day suspension of service

A record of no-show violations will be kept only for a six-month period of time. This ensures that someone with a no-show problem in January, will not be unduly punished in August unless the problem persists.

## No-Show Appeals

If you feel you received a no-show in error, please file a no-show appeal in one of the following ways. Written no-show appeals\* may be submitted on our website [mymetrobus.com](http://mymetrobus.com), by email to [mymetrobus@cityofmadison.com](mailto:mymetrobus@cityofmadison.com) or by mail to:

Metro Transit  
Attn: No-Show Appeal  
1245 E. Washington Ave. Ste. 201  
Madison, WI 53703

\*Make sure to include the time, date, the pick-up address of the no-showed ride you are appealing, and the reason for appeal - i.e. a health-related reason, vehicle arrived outside of pick-up window time, etc.

## Other Ways to Travel



## Accessible Fixed-Route Buses

Did you know that Metro operates accessible buses on all city bus fixed routes? Accessibility features include:

- Low floor buses with a boarding ramp that can be deployed
- A kneeling feature that lowers the bus closer to the curb
- Wheelchair securement locations
- Priority seating at the front of the bus
- Bus stop announcements that are both audible and visual

If you are able to ride Metro's fixed-route city bus service, you are encouraged to do so. Cash fare is \$1.00 for those who are 65 years or older, disabled, or eligible for paratransit services. Riders must show an ADA paratransit eligibility ID card or a Metro Senior/Disabled permit card when boarding. Discounted 31-day passes and 10-ride cards are also available.

## Mobility Training

Mobility Training may be right for you. Metro coordinates with Dane County Department of Human Services to offer training on how to use fixed-route buses. One program is geared to individuals with disabilities, while the other is geared to older adults who have not used transit for some time. Paratransit eligible individuals who successfully complete the training may receive a free Metro bus pass!

For more information on this program, call (608) 266-4466 or email [lsherrington@cityofmadison.com](mailto:lsherrington@cityofmadison.com).

## Other Transportation Options

Don't forget that there are other transportation options available in Dane County that may better suit your needs. One example is the Group Access Service, which provides regularly scheduled service to shopping destinations, nutrition sites, and special events. To explore your options and learn more about other community transportation resources, please contact Dane County Transportation at (608) 242-6489.