

ADA PARATRANSIT

APPLICATION AND GUIDELINES

CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

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EFFECTIVE DATE

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INTRODUCTION

The Central West Virginia Transit Authority (CENTRA) is the public transportation provider for Harrison County. Our goal is to provide the best possible transportation service to county residents. Our vehicles are clean, safe, comfortable and well-maintained, and our drivers are trained to serve you.

CENTRA is pleased to provide for the public transportation needs of all the area's citizens, including those with disabilities. To accomplish this goal, CENTRA operates two types of service:

Accessible fixed-route bus service

ADA paratransit service

CENTRA's fixed-route buses are lift- or ramp-equipped so they are accessible for individuals who use a mobility device or cannot climb stairs. Our drivers receive special training in assisting people with disabilities. Drivers announce stops at key destinations and upon request to assist passengers with visual or mental impairments. You may travel with your respirator, concentrator, and portable oxygen. Service animals are welcome on board buses. Our goal is to make our fixed-route service accessible to and convenient for everyone.

CENTRA's ADA paratransit service provides comparable service to our fixed-route service for individuals whose disabling conditions prevent their use of the regular bus service. The service is provided according to the guidelines set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and as outlined in this handbook. Persons who use this service must be certified as ADA paratransit eligible for all or some of their trip needs.

If you have any questions on this handbook or our services, please call CENTRA at (304) 623-6002.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Any individual wishing to apply for ADA paratransit eligibility may:

Pick up an application at CENTRA's office at 208 North 4th Street, Clarksburg

Call (304) 623-6002 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, to obtain an application by mail

Download the application from our website, www.centrabus.com

Each applicant must provide the name and address of a health care professional who is familiar with the applicant's disabling condition, and how that condition prevents

the applicant from using fixed-route service. CENTRA may mail a Professional Verification Form to the health care professional for additional information regarding the functional limitations due to the applicant's disability.

Under the ADA, the standard for determining eligibility is not whether a disabling condition exists, but whether (or under what circumstances) the applicant's disabling condition prevents them from using the fixed-route bus service. In some cases, eligibility is established for certain circumstances only.

After both the properly completed application form AND the Professional Verification Form have been received, a decision will be made within 21 days. If you are granted less than unconditional eligibility, the letter will state the reason for the determination.

If you are dissatisfied with your eligibility determination, you may appeal within 60 days of the date of the letter notifying you of your eligibility status. Please review the section on how to file an appeal later in this document.

VISITORS

Visitors from out-of-town who are certified ADA-eligible by another transit provider or provide documentation of a disability may use the ADA paratransit service for up to 21 days in a year without going through the full application process. CENTRA may request proof of residency. Please call (304) 623-6002 to register. If you are already certified, CENTRA will request a photocopy of your ADA paratransit ID. If you are not already certified, CENTRA may request proof of your disability by asking you to have a health care professional complete the Professional Verification Form. A visitor who needs ADA paratransit service for more than 21 days in a year must apply for eligibility.

SERVICE AREA

CENTRA provides ADA paratransit service within $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile off a CENTRA route. All pickups and drop-offs must take place within the defined service area. We will determine whether your trip is in the ADA paratransit service area when you call to schedule a ride.

SERVICE HOURS

CENTRA's ADA paratransit service operates the same days and hours of service as our fixed-route service.

On Mondays through Fridays, trips can be scheduled for pick-up as early as 6:30 a.m. and as late as 5:15 p.m.

On Saturdays, trips can be scheduled for pick-up as early as 8:15 a.m. and as late as 3:15 p.m.

No service is provided on Sundays and the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Veteran's Day
Martin Luther King Day	Thanksgiving Day
President's Day	Christmas Eve (1/2 day)
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
4 th of July	New Year's Eve
Labor Day	

TRIP RESTRICTIONS

CENTRA's ADA paratransit service is designed to be comparable to fixed-route service. Just as with our fixed-route service, there are no trip restrictions or ranking of trips by trip purpose.

FARES

As allowed by ADA regulations, the ADA paratransit service fare is twice the fixed-route. A fare is charged for each leg of a trip. Payment is required at the time of boarding.

Fares may be paid with cash or tickets. Ten-ride tickets may be purchased on board the bus, at the CENTRA offices at 208 North 4th Street, Clarksburg, or by calling (304) 623-6002. Please have the exact fare. CENTRA does not give refunds and our drivers do not make change. If a passenger does not have cash or a ticket, service will NOT be provided.

CURB-TO-CURB SERVICE

CENTRA's ADA paratransit service is curb-to-curb service. CENTRA asks that passengers be ready for pick up **at the curb**. However, if you require assistance to and from the van to the door, please let us know and the driver will assist you. Drivers will NOT assist passengers using wheelchairs to go up or down steps. Please arrange with someone else to assist you.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS and COMPANIONS

If you require the assistance of a personal **care** attendant, the attendant travels with you for free. At the time of scheduling a ride, please indicate if you will have a personal care attendant with you. Of course, the attendant must get on and get off at the same locations as you.

At least one companion, more if space is available, may accompany you. Each companion will pay a fare. At the time of scheduling a ride, please indicate the number of companions who will accompany you. Of course, companions must get on and get off at the same location as you.

A person requiring the services of a personal care attendant may also be accompanied by one or more companions.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Service animals are always welcome. The passenger must have the service animal fully under control at all times so as not to disrupt other passengers or the schedule. Drivers cannot and will not assume any responsibility for service animals. At the time of scheduling a ride, please indicate if a service animal will accompany you.

SCHEDULING RIDES

Rides on the ADA complementary paratransit service can be scheduled the day before the trip or up to 14 days in advance. To schedule a ride, please call **(304) 623-6002**. To speak to a dispatcher, call Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A telephone answering service is available on Sundays and holidays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

To help serve you better, we ask that you observe the following 4 tips:

1. Prepare for your call
2. Have your trip information ready and organized
3. Schedule the return trip up front
4. Be ready to go at the scheduled time

Prepare for Your Call

Please have the following information ready when you call:

Name

Date of travel

Origin address

Destination address

Desired pick-up or arrival time

Whether you use a wheelchair or walker

Whether a personal care attendant, one or more companions, or a service animal will accompany you

The dispatcher will let you know your pick-up and return times. CENTRA will make every effort to schedule your trip at the desired times. The ADA allows the ride to be scheduled up to 1 hour before or 1 hour after the requested times.

Note Your Trip Information

Have a pencil and paper ready to write your pick-up and return times down. This will help you remember them. If you have a calendar, write the times on it.

Schedule Your Return Trip Up Front

CENTRA requires return trips to be scheduled at the time original trips are scheduled. Passengers should anticipate the latest possible time needed for their return and schedule a return trip for that time. If you are ready to return before your scheduled time, or if you will be later than your scheduled time, please call CENTRA immediately and we will do all we can to accommodate your request.

Be Ready to Go at the Scheduled Time

Please be ready to go 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. CENTRA makes every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. However, CENTRA may arrive up to 10 minutes before or 20 minutes after the scheduled pick up time.

Example: If you schedule a 9:30 a.m. pick-up, the vehicle may arrive between 9:20 a.m. and 9:50 a.m.

This 30-minute time period (of 10 minutes before to 20 minutes after the scheduled time) is called the pick-up window.

Drivers, after arriving within the pick-up window, will wait up to 5 minutes. Any passenger not at the scheduled pick-up point and ready to go by that time will be considered a no-show, and the driver will leave to pick up other riders. The driver will NOT return for a second attempt. The only exception will be passengers who have been detained during a medical appointment. If you know that you will be detained during a medical appointment, please call CENTRA at (304) 623-6002 as soon as soon as possible. When you are ready, call CENTRA and we will dispatch the next available van to pick you up.

CANCELLATIONS

If you are unable to make your scheduled ride for any reason, please call the office at (304) 623-6002 no later than 4:00 p.m. the day before to cancel your ride. CENTRA drivers cannot make schedule changes for you. Cancellations made after two hours before the scheduled trip will be considered a no show.

NO-SHOW POLICY

A no-show occurs when:

You fail to show up for your scheduled trip

You fail to cancel 2 hours before your scheduled trip

You are not ready within 5 minutes of the driver's arrival during the pick-up window

Riders will be suspended for no-shows if the following criteria are met during a 3-month period:

1. No-shows represent 10 percent or more of their scheduled trips, AND
2. The rider has three or more no-shows.

Only no-shows under the passenger's control will be counted against the rider. The passenger will be given an opportunity to appeal the suspension before the suspension takes effect.

After a second no-show, CENTRA will send you a warning letter. If you are suspended, CENTRA will notify you by registered mail of the date on which the suspension will begin. The date for the beginning of the suspension of service will be no less than 10 days from the date the letter is sent. The letter will indicate the times and dates of the no-shows that have occurred and your rights of appeal.

The length of the suspension depends on the number of offenses:

First offense: 5 days

Second offense: 10 days

Third offense: 15 days

Fourth or higher offense: 30 days

WHEELCHAIRS

The ADA defines a wheelchair as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. We will make every effort to transport you and your wheelchair. However, if you and your wheelchair weigh more than what our wheelchair lifts are rated to carry or the wheelchair is too big for the lift platform, we will be unable to transport you. If it appears that the vehicle lift is strained, CENTRA will not be able to provide service until we have on file the actual weight of the passenger and the chair. Please call CENTRA for an evaluation to determine whether we can accommodate your mobility device.

DRIVER ASSISTANCE

CENTRA drivers are specially trained to serve you. Drivers will:

- Deploy lifts and ramps for persons using mobility devices and those without mobility devices who cannot navigate the bus steps upon request

- Secure your wheelchair

- Assist you to and from the van to the first door of the building

To ensure your safety and the safety of our drivers, drivers will NOT:

- Assist passengers using wheelchairs up or down steps

- Carry packages

- Dress passengers

- Search a passenger's body for the appropriate fare or ticket

- Clear pathways of ice, snow or other barriers

Please arrange with someone else to assist you.

GENERAL RIDERSHIP POLICIES

CENTRA has established the following general ridership policies for ADA paratransit service. Many of the policies also apply to fixed-route service.

- If a passenger uses oxygen, the tank must be portable, i.e., the passenger must be able to carry the tank into the vehicle themselves, even if the

passenger is in a wheelchair. Once on board, the portable oxygen tank must ride in a secure location, for example, in the passenger's lap, strapped to the wheelchair, in front of the passenger on the floor between seats, or on the floor behind the modesty panel.

All passengers must wear seatbelts.

All passengers using a wheelchair or scooter must use the restraint system that is used to secure the wheelchair or scooter to the floor of the vehicle.

The number of packages a passenger can have along is limited to the number of packages that the passenger can carry.

Drivers cannot accept tips.

For safety reasons, CENTRA may request that passengers be accompanied by a personal care attendant.

CENTRA may suspend or refuse service to any individual whose behavior and/or actions are violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal; cause a service interruption; or raise safety concerns.

APPEALS PROCESS

You may appeal your eligibility determination or suspension from the program for violating CENTRA policies. Your request must be in writing and must describe why you disagree with the determination or suspension. You may also ask to present your case in person. You or a representative of your choosing may present on your behalf. A written decision will be made within 30 days the information for the appeal was received or the hearing was held.

Send appeal requests to:

CENTRA
208 North 4th Street
Clarksburg, WV 26302

Thank you for riding CENTRA.