

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Services

Origin-to-Destination - Curb-to-Curb Service

- **Who is eligible**
 - ✓ Any individual with a disability who is unable to use an accessible vehicle without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device).
 - ✓ An individual with a disability traveling on an otherwise accessible route but wants to use a stop from which boarding or disembarking from a Harford Transit LINK bus is not possible.
 - ✓ Any individual with a disability who has a specific condition that prevents him/her from traveling to or from a designated bus stop to board or get off a bus.
 - ✓ **Visitors:** An ADA eligible individual from another jurisdiction, including one in another state, shall be considered a visitor. A visitor may use Harford Transit LINK's ADA paratransit services, provided he/she submits either documentation that he/she has been previously certified as ADA eligible in the other jurisdiction or evidence that they qualify for ADA services. A visitor may use Harford Transit LINK's ADA paratransit services for any combination of 21 days in any 365-day period. The 21-day calculation will begin with the first date they use the service.
- **Service area:** The ADA paratransit service area extends $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile on either side of the fixed route bus services operated by Harford Transit LINK in Harford County. Trips requested by eligible persons that begin and end within this service area are considered eligible trips in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **Service hours:** The ADA paratransit service operates during the same hours as Harford Transit LINK's fixed route buses. Harford Transit LINK bus routes have different beginning and ending times. Most bus routes operate between 6:15 AM and 6:15 PM Monday - Friday. Determinations of eligible pick-up and drop-off time for an ADA paratransit trip will depend on the schedule of the bus route for which the paratransit trip is providing equivalent service.
- **Advanced reservations:** Passengers eligible for ADA paratransit may make trip reservations up to 14 days in advance of a trip. Harford Transit LINK will accept trip reservations up to 4 PM the day before the eligible person wants to travel. The definition of "the day before" includes Saturdays and Sundays when the day of travel is Monday and holidays, if the day after a holiday is a regular Harford Transit LINK operating day.
- **Scheduling Pick-ups Passenger Pick-up time Window:** Passengers may be picked up within an hour before or after their appointed time. Harford Transit

LINK will seek to pick-up passengers as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible.

When a driver arrives at the passenger's pick-up location, the passenger will have five minutes to get to the vehicle to board. The Bus Operator shall ensure that adequate time is provided to allow individuals with disabilities to complete boarding or disembarking from the vehicle. However, if the passenger does not appear before the five minutes are up, the driver will contact the Harford Transit LINK dispatcher and ask for permission to leave. Final decisions about leaving the location will be made by a dispatcher.

- **ADA Fares**

- ✓ Fares for ADA paratransit/demand response shall be twice the fare that is in effect for the general public on Harford Transit LINK's fixed routes.
- ✓ Fares for companions accompanying paratransit eligible individuals shall be the same as for the paratransit eligible individuals they are accompanying.
- ✓ A personal care attendant (previously registered with Harford Transit LINK) shall not be charged for paratransit service under any paratransit service operated by Harford Transit LINK.

- **Application Process**

- ✓ **Application forms:** Applicants for ADA Paratransit services shall complete a Harford Transit LINK Request for Certification of Paratransit Eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Part A of the application is to be completed by the applicant or his/her representative. Part B shall be completed by a physician, health care professional familiar with the applicant's condition. Parts A and B completed and signed shall constitute a completed application. (See Part B of the Application for a detailed list of Health Care Professionals).
- ✓ **Eligibility Determination:** The Administrator of Harford Transit LINK or his/her designee shall make a determination of eligibility within 21 days of receipt of the complete application. The Administrator shall inform the applicant in writing of the determination.
- ✓ **Issuance of ADA Paratransit Card:** If an applicant has been determined to be eligible; he/she is issued an ADA Paratransit Card, and can schedule service in accordance with service guidelines. Harford Transit LINK will determine ADA paratransit eligibility within 21 days of submission by the applicant of a complete application package.
- ✓ **Presumptive Eligibility** Applicants who have not received a determination within 21 days will be treated as eligible and provided service until and unless Harford Transit LINK determines that they are not eligible.

- **Appeals Process** A person having a complaint alleging action by Harford Transit LINK prohibited by the Americans with Disabilities Act, including improper denial of eligibility for ADA paratransit service, may appeal Harford Transit LINK's' action, in accordance with Harford County's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Grievance Procedure (see Appendix 3).
- **Other ADA Requirements:** Harford Transit LINK shall ensure that vehicle operators and other personnel will make use of accessibility-related equipment or features as required.

All Representatives of Harford Transit LINK shall make available to individuals with disabilities adequate information concerning transportation services. This obligation includes making adequate communications available through reasonable accessible formats and technology to enable users to obtain information and scheduled service.

Harford Transit LINK's policy is not to prohibit an individual with a disability from traveling with a respirator or portable oxygen supply, consistent with applicable Department of Transportation rules on the transportation of hazardous materials (49 CFR subtitle B, chapter 1, subchapter C).

Lift Accessibility and Maintenance

All Harford Transit LINK buses are equipped with wheel chair lifts or ramps. Harford Transit LINK deploys a vehicle only if the lift or ramp is functioning. If a lift or ramp breaks down while a bus is in service, Harford Transit LINK will replace the bus as soon as possible with a vehicle with a functioning lift or ramp. If a passenger on the bus or along the route or scheduled for pick-up by paratransit service requires the use of a lift or ramp immediately, Harford Transit LINK personnel will take all reasonable necessary steps to assure that the passenger gets to his/her destination in a reasonable amount of time.

Requirement for Securing Wheelchair and Related Devices

Harford Transit LINK requires that all wheelchairs, scooters, and similar mobility devices be secured in the securement area of the vehicle. If a passenger refuses to allow his/her device to be secured, Harford Transit LINK personnel will offer the passenger the alternative of transferring to a seat. If the passenger refuses, Harford Transit LINK may deny service to the individual.

The only exception to this policy shall be situations where, the mobility device meets the regulatory definitions set for by the Americans with Disabilities Act and despite the best efforts of Harford Transit LINK personnel, the mobility device cannot be safely secured in the securement area. In these situations, Harford Transit LINK will offer the passenger the alternative of transferring to a seat, but will provide the service, whether the passenger accepts the alternative or not.

Service Animals

Harford Transit LINK permits service animals to accompany passengers with disabilities on all modes of transportation. A service animal is any animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability according to federal regulations and/or guidance (including the latest ruling that a service animal is a dog). Harford Transit LINK personnel are not responsible for managing or handling service animals. The passenger is responsible for controlling and maintaining the service animal so that it does not jeopardize any other passenger, Harford Transit LINK personnel or interfere with the operation of the vehicle.

Fare Structure

Fares for fixed bus routes are as follows:

- \$1.00 for the General public (Three and Older).
- \$0.50 for a person 60 and over with a Medicare card or other identification indicating that he/she is 60 and over.
- \$0.50 for persons with disabilities who have a Harford Transit LINK half fare card or ADA certification.

Fares for paratransit service are as follows:

- \$2.00 for ADA/SSTAP paratransit services and other paratransit services.
- \$1.00 for persons 60 and over traveling to Harford County senior centers only.