

## DART USER GUIDELINES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires transit agencies to provide paratransit services to people with disabilities who cannot use the fixed route bus service. Generally, paratransit service must be provided within 3/4 of a mile of the fixed route bus service, at the same hours and days, for no more than twice the regular fixed route fare.

To meet this requirement Gadsden Transportation Services provides the origin to destination Demand and Response Transportation (DART) service to ADA eligible persons with disabilities. This an advance reservation shared ride public transportation service. Passengers have to call in advance to make their travel arrangements.

Reservations for service can be made Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m to 6:00 p.m and on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For Monday reservations on Sundays customers are requested to leave detailed trip information on voicemail. Their trips reservations will be confirmed early on Monday morning. Make reservations in advance by calling 549-3278. Rides will be scheduled on a first come, first served basis. All reservation changes should be made by 4:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled ride.

For those no ADA riders who reside in the service area who wish to use the service, reservations will be accommodated on a space available basis and the fare will be twice the ADA eligible rate.

### DART ADA PARATRANSIT CERTIFICATION PROCESS

An ADA Paratransit Eligibility application is included at the end of this pamphlet or you can contact the DART office (256-543-3278) to get an ADA Paratransit application. This must be completed in full, cosigned by a Healthcare Professional and returned for review and eligibility determination. The application is also available at the Gadsden Transportation Services website [www.gadsdendot.net](http://www.gadsdendot.net) under **ADA & Elderly Services**. The certification letter you will receive after you apply will classify you as unconditionally eligible, conditionally eligible, or temporarily eligible. Unconditionally eligible means you can take all your trips on DART. Conditionally/Trip-by-Trip eligible means you can be reasonably expected to make some trips on the fixed route despite their being some barriers. You should use the fixed bus when those barriers are not there. Temporarily eligible applies when you have disabilities that prevent you from using fixed route for a limited period of time. You will receive a certification letter after you apply telling you when you can ride DART.

### SERVICE CRITERIA

ADA complementary paratransit service must be comparable to the fixed route service in a number of areas. Paratransit service criteria include the following (Section 37.131):

- Geographic area of service – transit systems that run fixed routes must also provide ADA complementary paratransit service within 3/4 mile on either side of the fixed route; this is considered to be the maximum distance a rider would travel to reach a bus or train stop.
- Response time –the paratransit ride may not be provided more than an hour before or after the requested time.
- Fare- the one-way paratransit fare may be no more than twice the full fixed route fare for a similar trip. A rider's personal care attendant may not be charged a fare. However, at least one additional accompanying individual must be permitted to board and will be required

to pay the same fare as the rider (additional companions may accompany the ADA-eligible customer, if space is available).

- Hours and days of service—ADA paratransit service must be provided on the same days and during the same hours as fixed route service.
- Trip purpose—there may be no restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose. Service must be provided regardless of the nature of the trip.
- Capacity constraints- These are operational patterns or practices that limit the availability of service to ADA paratransit eligible persons. DART operations are geared to mitigate these constraints Capacity constraints include:
  - i. Placing a limit on the number of trips an individual may make
  - ii. Maintaining trip wait lists
  - iii. Denying trips
  - iv. Lengthy telephone hold times
  - v. Substantial number of excessively long trips
  - vi. Substantial numbers of untimely pick ups

The following information is required when making a reservation:

- Passenger full name
- Pick and Drop off address information ( Apt #, Building, location)
- Telephone number for passenger
- Day and date service is required
- Time of pick up and Return
- Special accommodation needs (Wheelchair, other mobility devices, service animals; visual impairment etc.)
- Personal attendant requirements
- Total number of riders planned

Please note that we do not provide child restraints. Passengers must supply their own

### **GETTING THERE ON TIME**

Our goal is to provide the maximum number of customers with safe, punctual, efficient and friendly service. Following the simple steps listed below helps us serve you better:

Make reservations as early as possible

Avoid same day scheduling if possible

Ensure that you have the exact fare

Do not ask for unscheduled stops once on board

Do not try choose who can be your bus driver

Do not try to choose what types of passengers can ride with you

Because this is a shared ride the following tips are suggested:

- Allow ample time to reach your destination, say 30 minutes
- Be prepared for unforeseen delays due to traffic, bad weather etc
- Plan for a later pick up time to avoid exceeding the driver wait time

## **VISITORS**

Visitors with disabilities who are unable to use the regular fixed route system are eligible to utilize the DART ADA complementary paratransit service. If the visitor has ADA paratransit eligibility from another transit system, DART will honor that certification and will provide up to 21 days of complementary paratransit service. If the visitor has no eligibility certification from another agency but claims to be ADA eligible, they will be granted presumptive eligibility. The visitor will be granted 21 days of paratransit service. Visitors with presumptive eligibility may be requested to provide certain documentation, such as proof of place of residence or disclose the nature of their disability to DART staff. The 21 days of service provided to visitors with disabilities will be calculated as any combination of 21 days during any 365 day period beginning with the visitor's first use of the DART ADA service.

## **ADA ACCOMMODATION**

Passengers with disabilities will be offered assistance by the driver only upon request. Inform the office of any assistance requirements when you reserve your trip. The assistance includes but is not limited to:

- ❑ Loading, securing and unloading wheelchair users
- ❑ Announcing stops for individuals with disabilities
- ❑ Permitting passengers to bring portable oxygen tanks
- ❑ Permitting personal care attendants to accompany the passenger
- ❑ Permitting service animals to accompany passengers with disabilities
- ❑ Permitting passengers with disabilities to use the wheelchair lift to enter/exit the vehicle

## **WHEELCHAIRS**

DART drivers are responsible for the loading, securement and unloading of wheelchair passengers. It is DART policy that all wheelchairs be secured once in the transit vehicle. All wheelchair passengers must use seatbelts and shoulder harnesses once aboard the transit

vehicle. All DART vehicles have the capacity to load **'wheel chairs'** as defined by Section 37.165 of the USDOT regulations. "Wheelchair" is defined in this rule 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. **DART vehicles will transport a wheelchair and its user, as long as the lift can safely accommodate the size and weight of the wheelchair and its user and there is space for the wheelchair on the vehicle. If the wheelchair lift or vehicle is unable to accommodate the wheelchair and its user, the DART is not required to carry it.**

**CANCELLATION & NO SHOW POLICY**

Failure to provide a 2-hour reservation cancellation will be considered a late cancellation. Three late cancellations will constitute a no show

Passengers should come out of their pickup point within five minutes of the vehicle arriving. Failure to do so constitutes a 'no show' and the driver is under standing instructions to proceed to the next pickup. Five (5) no shows in a calendar month and if the number of No Shows exceed 15% of the trips booked by the passenger during that month will lead to suspension from the schedule as follows:

**Consequences for Pattern and Practice of No Shows**

Violations	Penalty (ADA Trips)	Penalty (Subscription & Demand Response Trips)
1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Letter of Warning	Letter of Warning
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	5 Day Suspension	5 Day Suspension
3 <sup>rd</sup> Violation	10 Day Suspension	Loss of Subscription Service
4 <sup>th</sup> and Subsequent Violations	15 Day Suspension	Loss of Subscription Service

A rider (or a rider's representative) may file a written appeal for an individual No Show Suspension. Please contact Transit Coordinator at: [kpayne@cityofgadsden.com](mailto:kpayne@cityofgadsden.com) or call (256)549-4863 for instructions on how to file an appeal

**CUSTOMER CONDUCT**

In order for GTS to be able to provide safe and efficient transportation, riders need to observe the following rules:

- Pay correct fare when entering vehicle
- Be seated promptly
- Buckle up, it's the law. No exceptions
- No loud or offensive language while on board
- No driver distraction while he is doing his job
- Be seated all the time when vehicle is moving

**The following acts will be construed as misconduct:**

- ❑ Creating a situation with a potential to cause injury or death ( yourself, other passenger, driver or the public )
- ❑ Action/behavior that interferes with safe vehicle operation
- ❑ Failure to control a service animal
- ❑ Verbal or physical action that invades the privacy rights of other passengers
- ❑ Physical contact with another person in a rude insolent manner

**CONSEQUENCES OF MISCONDUCT**

- ❑ Suspension of service for that day for the first offence
- ❑ Suspension for one (1) week for a second offence within one year
- ❑ Suspension for two (2) weeks for third offence within one year

**HELPFUL REMINDERS**

You may ride DART to any point within the City of Gadsden, City of Attalla and Rainbow City

The DART vehicle may arrive within 30 minutes of your pickup time. This is the pick up window. For a 9:00 a.m. scheduled pickup, the vehicle may arrive between 8:45 and 9:15 a.m.

After arrival, vehicle will only wait 5 minutes after scheduled pickup time before proceeding to next pick up. If this happens you are assessed a **"No Show"**

Be ready at least 10 minutes before your scheduled pick up time

If the vehicle has not arrived 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup, please call the GTS Office

The driver is required to collect the exact fare when you board. **Drivers do not make change**

Before departure fasten your seatbelt. It's the law. Ask for driver assistance if needed

**Absolutely No Eating, Drinking, Smoking or Chewing Tobacco**  
**Absolutely No radios, CD,MP3 or Cassette players and Video games without headphones. Most importantly no firearms, weapons or other dangerous objects.**

**Hours of Service:**

**Monday through Friday 6:00 A.M. to 6:00P.M**

**Saturday 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.**

**Fares:**

**\$1.50 each way for non-ADA Eligible Adults**

**\$0.75 each way for ADA Eligible, Elderly & Medicare**