

# LATS Paratransit Riders Guide

## **1. What is ADA Paratransit Service?**

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all public transit operators to provide Paratransit Service to eligible disabled individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using accessible public transit. LATS paratransit is a shared ride service. Shared rides lower the cost of paratransit service by increasing system productivity.

## **2. Who is Eligible for Paratransit Service?**

All Paratransit passengers must complete a Paratransit Eligibility Application and must be ADA certified by the Director of Operations. To determine your eligibility for paratransit services, contact LATS at (580)248-5252 ext. 103 or TTY (580)248-3940 (for hearing impaired). LATS has 21 days after receiving a complete application to make ADA eligibility determination. You will be notified by letter of the determination.

## **3. What are the Service Area Limits for Paratransit?**

LATS paratransit service travels anywhere that the fixed route bus system travels, including a distance of three-fourths of a mile on each side of the fixed routes.

## **4. What are the Paratransit Fares?**

The one-way fare for paratransit service is an exact fare of \$3.00, payable at time of boarding. Fares are subject to annual review and potential increase. Fares for companions are the same as for ADA eligible passengers except there is no charge for a personal care attendant or service animal.

## **5. Who can Accompany Eligible Passengers?**

One personal care attendant, who provides individual assistance to the qualified passenger, and one guest may accompany an eligible passenger. Additional companions may also travel on space available basis. Children 5 and under shall be accompanied by an adult. Personal care attendants and guests must board and disembark at the same locations where the eligible passenger boards and disembarks. To avoid delays, when scheduling a ride, inform the scheduler if anyone will accompany the passenger on the trip.

## **6. What are the Service Hours for Paratransit?**

Paratransit trips are available Monday-Friday, 6:00 am to 7:00 pm and Saturdays, 9:00 am to 9:00 pm. Service is not available on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

## **7. How Do I Schedule a Trip?**

Advanced reservations are required. To reserve a trip, call LATS between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday-Saturday at (580)248-5252 ext. 102 or TTY (580)248-3940 (for hearing impaired). LATS will accept trip reservations no less than 1 day and no more than 14 days prior to requested time. All reservations will be scheduled within 1 hour of requested time unless an alternate time is mutually agreed upon with the passenger or demand requires the trip be placed on stand-by. Be sure to advise LATS of your total travel needs so that schedulers can best coordinate services and advise you of your total fare. Be prepared to provide the scheduler the following information:

- Name of passenger and address
- Day, date, and time you would like transportation
- Whether you will be accompanied by a personal care attendant or companion(s)
- Whether you will be using a mobility device (wheelchair, walker, cane, etc.)
- Destination

## **8. What Are Stand-By Trips?**

LATS makes every effort to accommodate trip requests within 1 hour of the requested time. Occasionally, demand will prevent the scheduler from accommodating the ride. When this occurs, you have two options: accept an alternate time and book your ride or request that your trip be recorded as a stand-by trip request.

## **9. Change Procedures:**

When making a change to a scheduled pick-up please call LATS at (580)248-5252 ext. 102 or TTY (580)248-3940 (for hearing impaired) at least 2 hours prior to your trip. LATS will try to accommodate requested changes, but cannot guarantee that all changes can be accepted.

When changing a trip, passengers should provide the following information:

- Name of passenger
- Time and date of scheduled pick-up
- New destination address and telephone number if applicable
- New time of scheduled pick-up
- Status of any other scheduled trips for that day

## **10. Cancellation Procedures:**

Paratransit is a vital community resource and there is limited public funding to support it. Trips cancelled too late to schedule another trip in their place result in wasted expenses and capacity. Please cancel trip reservations at least 1 day in advance whenever possible. A cancellation made less than 2 hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time will be recorded as a 'no show.'

When canceling a trip please provide the following information:

- Name of passenger
- Time and date of scheduled pick-up
- Exact destination address
- Status of any other scheduled trips for that day

### **11. What is the Penalty?**

It is expected that the user will handle cancellations in a timely manner in order to provide LATS the opportunity to schedule a replacement rider. The following situations will create presumption of a no-show:

- Cancellation of a scheduled trip less than two (2) hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time, situation dictates; or
- Failure to meet the vehicle within five (5) minutes from the time of arrival, depending on the situation.

Any combination of the above identified situation which equal 25% of your rides. 25% of trips missed in a calendar month, creates a presumption of a pattern or practice of missed trips. When you receive two (2) no-shows in a calendar month, you will receive a written notification that could be suspended from riding the paratransit service, if no-show practice continues. Once again situation dictates. Due to the fact that you have sixty-days (60) after to appeal the decision to suspend. Your suspension will not take place until sixty-days (60) days after the final determination has been made on your appeal.

### **12. How Can I Appeal Suspension or Denial of Eligibility?**

After receiving a letter denying paratransit eligibility or suspending service above, you may submit an appeal. All requests for appeal must be received in writing by LATS within 30 days of issuance, notification of penalty, or service suspension or within 60 days for denial of eligibility.

- Written appeals should be addressed to: General Manager, LATS, PO Box 286, Lawton, OK 73502.

### **13. What About Arrival Times?**

Passengers may call the LATS dispatcher at (580)248-5252 ext.102 any time after their scheduled pick-up time to inquire about the expected arrival for the vehicle. Passengers are responsible for providing the following information when requesting information on the arrival of the vehicle: Passenger name, scheduled pick-up time, address of pick-up site, telephone number where passenger can be reached. Operators will utilize the following guidelines concerning a person's failure to meet the vehicle:

- Operators will wait no longer than 5 minutes from the arrival time for clients to board the vehicle. If the vehicle arrives within the 30-minute window (15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time) the client must board the vehicle within 5 minutes of arrival time. Passengers or their associates may not ask operators to delay this 5-minute interval under any circumstances; this is to assure the timely pick-up and transportation of all clients.
- Failure to meet the vehicle within 5 minutes from the time of actual arrival will result in a 'no show.'
- If the vehicle arrives late (more than 15 minutes after scheduled pick-up time), passengers will not be charged as a 'no-show.'
- A scheduled trip is considered on time when the vehicle is within 15 minutes before or 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.
- Arrival time is the time when the driver is at the curb ready to receive the passenger.

**14. What About Passenger Safety?**

Passengers are encouraged to wear seat belts or safety lap belts secured to the floor of the vehicle (for passengers using wheelchairs). If you use a three wheeled mobility device, for your protection, the driver will ask you to transfer to a regular seat. If you are not able to comply with this request, you may decline and the driver will secure you in your mobility device.

**15. Can I Ride if I am From Out of Town?**

If you are ADA qualified in the area in which you live and can prove your ADA eligibility, then you qualify to use the local paratransit system. If you cannot prove that you are eligible for paratransit services in the area where you live, LATS will require documentation of your residence and of your disability, but must accept your word that you are unable to use fixed-route service. You may use the local paratransit system for up to 21 days. After that period of time, LATS will require you to go through their paratransit eligibility procedures.

**16. What About Lost and Found?**

Passengers are responsible for all personal items. Passengers can call LATS at (580)248-5252 ext. 102 or TTY (580)248-3940 (for hearing impaired) to find out about any personal items they may have left on the vehicle. LATS will hold personal items for 30 days prior to disposal.

**17. Passenger Behavior?**

It is requested that passengers refrain from eating, drinking, and smoking while on the vehicle. Also, passengers are requested not to wear strongly scented personal care products. This will provide accessibility to passengers with chemical sensitivity or environmental illnesses.

**18. How Long is the Trip?**

One hour has been established as the goal for the maximum length of time for a trip. However, extenuating circumstances do occur creating exceptions, i.e., traffic conditions, road construction, weather, etc. Passengers are advised to discuss their travel times with LATS if they feel their trips take too long or they experience consistently greater travel times.

**19. How to Contact Us?**

Your feedback is appreciated. Comments or complaints may be made directly to LATS, PO Box 286, Lawton, OK 73502. All vehicles are equipped with an accessible courtesy card. Comments or complaints must be submitted in a written format whenever possible and submitted within 3 days of occurrence. Serious problems should be reported immediately.