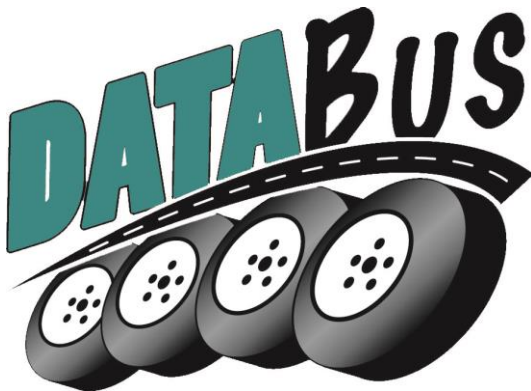




Delaware County



# COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT PLAN USER GUIDE



**Delaware Area Transit Agency  
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# COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT SERVICE

Welcome to the Delaware Area Transit Agency's Complementary Paratransit Plan User Guide. We hope after reading this you fully understand the purpose of the Complementary Paratransit service.

## **Introduction**

As a "safety net" and for eligible riders who have a disability that prevents them from making some or all of their trips on fixed route buses. DATA bus offers a shared-ride, origin to destination service called Paratransit service. Paratransit service operates in the same areas and during the same days and hours as the fixed route bus.

All DATA buses have lifts and are 100% accessible to serve riders who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs, or have difficulty walking up and down steps. Every bus is equipped with securements for mobility devices. Operators are responsible for securement.

## **Who Can Use Paratransit Service?**

DATA's Paratransit service is available to people who have a physical and/or cognitive disability that prevents them from functionally using DATA's fixed route buses for some or all of their rides.

You are not required to live in the service area; however, the trip origin and destination must be within the DATA's fixed route service area. This means you will need to meet the Paratransit vehicle inside the service area.

Many Paratransit approved riders find that fixed route service is their preferred choice for some rides. This choice does not affect your Paratransit eligibility.

## **When and Where Does Paratransit Operate**

DATA will provide Complementary Paratransit service to qualifying individuals with a disability within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the Fixed Route paths that have been established.

DATA will provide next-day service to all qualifying passengers.

Paratransit service runs during the same days and hours of the fixed bus route in that area.

DATA reserves the right to establish service points if needed based on safety concerns for the operator and/or rider.

Paratransit service is not available when DATA bus is closed such as major holidays.

## **How to Schedule Paratransit Trips**

Rides are scheduled by advanced reservation.

Paratransit service will operate the same days and during same hours of DATA's Fixed Route time.

Advanced reservations will be taken Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am-4:00 pm and up to one (1) week in advance. Trips for Monday may be scheduled on Sunday calling the paratransit line: 740-513-2599 by leaving a message with your full name, phone number, requested origin and destination and the requested pick up or appointment time and return time if there is one. Also include if anyone will be riding along with you. If a Personal Care Attendant will be accompanying you, please specify if they will be using any mobility aids, i.e. motorized wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, etc.

Travel time will vary depending upon the ride distance and stops made to accommodate other riders during the ride. Other riders share the vehicle so vehicles may stop and travel in other directions during your ride.

Drivers are permitted to stop only at the location designated during the reservation. Travel arrangements with more than one destination will be scheduled as separate trips and will require a separate fare.

## **Are There Any Size Restrictions for Mobility Devices?**

The platform on the DATA vehicle measures 48" long and 34" wide. Most types of mobility devices including wheelchairs and three-wheeled scooters can be accommodated. The device, when occupied by the user, should be no more than a maximum weight of 800 pounds. The mobility device must be fully operational and must be operated solely by the user of the device or their designated personal attendant.

A wheelchair is defined 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." Passengers with mobility impairments who do not use a wheelchair may be assisted both on and off the vehicle by the DATA drivers. However, the drivers are not permitted to enter private residences. Passengers with hearing or sight impairments may also be provided with special assistance upon request. Please advise the reservationist if you require door to door service. Additionally, Personal Care Attendants are welcome to accompany you at no additional charge.

## **Life Support Equipment**

You may bring a respirator, portable oxygen, and/or other life support equipment as long as it does not violate transportation related hazardous materials laws. Please tell the reservationist at the time of your call if you are bringing oxygen or other medical equipment.

## **Securement Devices**

All passengers are requested to use the securement devices (seat belts) provided by DATA BUS. DATA Bus does not require passengers to use seat belts, with the exception of 8 to 15 year olds, but it is highly recommended. Children from 8-15 years old who are not secured in a car seat must be secured by the vehicle's seat belt. Drivers will provide assistance to any passenger that requires or requests assistance with their seat belt.

## **Car Seats & Booster Seats**

DATA Bus requires that any child within the guidelines stated by the current laws must have a car seat, booster or other securement devices. The passenger is required to provide these in order to ride the DATA Bus.

## **What is a Personal Care Attendant?**

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone you may bring to assist you while traveling or with personal care or activities. You must tell the reservationist that your PCA is traveling with you when you schedule your ride. This ensures that there will be room on the vehicle for you, your PCA and the other scheduled riders. You may schedule only one (1) PCA and they may ride for free when traveling with you. A PCA must get on and off the bus at the same places and times as you.

## **Can I Bring a Companion?**

Yes you can. A companion is someone you want to bring along to share the ride. Family members and friends not designated to provide personal assistance to you are considered companions. Companions must pay a fare when accompanying you and must get on and off the vehicle at the same place and time as you.

You will need to tell the reservationist when you schedule rides that you will be traveling with a companion. This ensures that there will be room on the vehicle for you, your companion and other scheduled riders.

## **What is Door to Door Service?**

Under special circumstances, drivers will assist passengers from the entry door at their place of pick up to the vehicle and from the vehicle to the entry door at their destination.

Passengers needing help getting to the entry door at their place of pick up or beyond the entrance of their destination should arrange for someone else to assist them.

### **Drivers are not permitted to:**

- Enter or take riders beyond the front entrance of a destination.
- Lose sight of their vehicle.
- Handle a rider's personal property (e.g., go into pockets or purses to retrieve fares or house keys).
- Load or unload packages on or off the bus.
- Drivers cannot provide door-to-door assistance that may present a safety issue for the passenger and/or the driver. This includes assistance that may result in personal injury to the driver.

## **What Is a Service Animal and Can I Bring My Service Animal on the Bus?**

Yes, you may bring your service animal with you when you travel on the DATA Bus. A service animal is defined as any guide dog, or other animal individually trained to "work or perform tasks" for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimum protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items". Service animals are working animals, not pets.

- DATA may refuse to transport service animals that are deemed to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the driver's or other rider's, create a seriously disruptive atmosphere, or are not under the rider's control.
- Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
- A passenger's request that the driver take charge of a service animal may be denied. Caring for a service animal is the responsibility of the passenger or a PCA.

## **Can I Bring My Pet?**

Yes, other pets and non-service animals may be carried on DATA Bus; however, they must be properly secured in a cage or other container.

## **How Do I Check on My Ride?**

You may call to confirm trip times the day before the scheduled trip between the hours of 2:00 PM-4:00 PM.

If your bus has not arrived after your pick up window (15 minutes after your quoted scheduled time), contact the DATA office and they will give you an update on your ride.

## **How Do I Cancel a Scheduled Ride?**

If you have scheduled a ride that you no longer need to take, please call DATA office as soon as possible 740-363-3355. If it is after hours or if DATA is closed, you may call the Paratransit line 740-513-2599 to leave a message.

## **What is the Pickup Window?**

All paratransit trips are scheduled within a thirty-minute window time frame. This means that the Paratransit bus could arrive up to 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the quoted pickup time. For example, if you are quoted a 2:00 PM pick up time, you should expect the vehicle anywhere from 1:45 PM to 2:15 PM. You should be ready 15 minutes before the pickup time and prepared to leave immediately after the vehicle arrives. DATA will reserve the right to negotiate with eligible passengers to schedule a trip within one hour window (+/-) of the requested pickup time. For individuals with appointments, every effort will be made to ensure on-time arrival of the requested time at the passenger's destination. An example of this is; if you call and say you want picked up at 12:00 p.m. we will get you between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to take you to your destination.

## **DESTINATIONS**

The vehicle will only stop at locations designated in the reservation. Travel arrangements with more than one destination will require a separate fare. Please plan to schedule the appropriate number of reservations.

**Please be patient as traffic, weather conditions, riders that are not prepared, and other factors may slow the vehicle down and affect the driver's ability to stay on time. If your bus has not arrived within thirty (30) minutes of your scheduled pickup time, call 740-363-3355 option 1 to ask the dispatcher to give you the status of your ride.**

## **What is Reasonable Modification & How Can I Make a Request?**

Reasonable: fair and sensible; not extreme or excessive; possessing sound judgment.

Modification: the act or process of changing parts of something.

Reasonable modification means that "the nature of an individual's disability cannot preclude a public transportation entity from providing full access to the entity's service unless some exception applies." DATA Bus will make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when such accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability unless the recipient can demonstrate that making the accommodations would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity or result in an undue financial and administration burden. During your in-person paratransit assessment, you can speak to the Eligibility Coordinator about the request. You may also call DATA Bus 740-363-3355 to make a request. Reasonable Modification forms are found on DATA Bus vehicles and the website. [www.ridedata.com](http://www.ridedata.com)

## **How Long Will the DATA Bus Wait for Me?**

DATA Bus is considered on time as long as the bus arrives no earlier than 15 minutes before the scheduled pick up time and no later than 15 minutes past the scheduled pick up time. When the DATA Bus arrives to pick you up, it will wait for five (5) minutes. After waiting five minutes the driver will leave and go to the next scheduled pick up location.

\*DATA Bus will ensure adequate time for individuals with disabilities to board and disembark a vehicle\*

## **What if My Appointment is Running Late?**

Everyone has occasional circumstances outside their control that can cause delays at a scheduled appointment. If your appointment is running later than expected and there is a chance that you will not be ready for your scheduled return ride, (or you have missed the bus), contact the DATA office as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to adjust your return trip time and assign another vehicle to pick you up. Because scheduled are set the day before, there may be a delay of an hour or more before another vehicle is available to accommodate your request.

**Remember:** Allow extra time for medical appointments or other appointments that may take longer than expected. This will reduce the chance of you having to wait until another vehicle is available.

## **Groceries and Packages**

When making trips to the store, be mindful that DATA Bus is a shared ride service and that you may be on the vehicle up to one hour. You must be in control of your packages at all times. DATA Bus operators do not handle packages. The passenger must be able to carry all packages on and off the bus in one trip without assistance. You may consider using a collapsible grocery cart for your groceries.

## **Lost and Found**

DATA Bus is not responsible for items lost or stolen on the vehicle. Passengers must contact DATA Bus if they believe that they have left an item on a vehicle.



## Unacceptable Behavior

DATA reserves the right to refuse service to person's that engage in "violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct." This may include a person who assaults a driver or another passenger or persons who are in violation of established policies or law.

## What's the Cost to Ride?

Paratransit is double the base Fixed Route Fare per one way trip for the eligible passenger.

## How do I Pay For My Ride?

One-way fare for Paratransit service is \$2.00. Please have exact fare ready when boarding the vehicle. Riders who do not have the fare will not be transported. Fares can be paid in:

- **Cash:** You must have exact change because the drivers cannot give change
- **Check:** You may write a check for your fare, made out to DATA Bus.
- **Fare Card:** You can purchase fare cards in increments of \$.50 up to \$20.00. They are sold at the DATA office. You can come in person to purchase them or by mailing a check/money order to the DATA office. Be sure to include the person's name and mailing address where to send it to.

## How to Apply for Paratransit Service

If you wish to apply for paratransit service, you can call DATA's Mobility Manager to request an application: 740-513-2207 or you may visit DATA's website to print the application: [www.ridedata.com](http://www.ridedata.com). Part 1 will need to be filled out by the applicant and Part 2 of the application must be filled out by a licensed medical professional that is most familiar with the applicants current medical diagnosis. After both applications are **fully** completed, please call our Mobility Administrator at 740-513-2207 to schedule an appointment to submit your application and attend an interview/functional assessment. ***\*Please Do Not Mail the application\****

## **What Type of Eligibility Do I Have and What Does It Mean?**

### **Q: How long does the process take and how will I be notified?**

Your type of eligibility is determined by the DATA Eligibility Center and is based upon the result of your functional assessment. When you are certified as a Paratransit customer, you will receive a letter from the Eligibility Center. The determined eligibility is written on your certification letter. There are two kinds of eligibility possible:

- **Unconditional Eligibility** has no trip restrictions.
- **Temporary Eligibility** is given to individuals with short term conditions. Trips are provided for the duration of time during which the individual is unable to use fixed route bus service.

If you have questions about your eligibility or about your eligibility letter, please contact the Mobility Management office at 740-513-2207.

## **How Do I Appeal My Eligibility Decision?**

If you have been found to be ineligible for Paratransit service, you may appeal the decision. You must file your appeal within sixty (60) days of notification of your eligibility status. You can find the appeals process on the website [www.ridedata.com](http://www.ridedata.com). If you have questions about the appeal process, please contact the Mobility Management office 740-513-2207 for assistance.

### **Q: How will I know if I am approved for paratransit service?**

A: If your eligibility is determined by the Eligibility Administrator at the initial review, you will be given a paratransit ride card. If determination is not made during the initial review, you will receive a notification letter via mail. The review process can take up to 21 days.

### **Q: How long does the certification last?**

A: If you are approved for unconditional eligibility, this will be a permanent status. If you are approved with a temporary paratransit status, you will be eligible for the expected duration stated by your medical licensed professional.

**Q: For eligibility determination what are some of the criteria that are not considered?**

A: Eligibility is not based on the following:

- Your age, your income, or financial need
- Not having a car, being unable to drive, or inconvenient bus schedules
- Not being able to carry your books, groceries, children or other items
- Your particular medical diagnosis or name of your disability (merely having a diagnosis of “disability”)
- The reason or importance of your trips (the ADA prohibits restrictions or priorities based on “trip purpose”)

**Q: If I’m approved for Paratransit service, can I still take Fixed Route bus service?**

A: Yes you can. You may take the fixed route bus service anytime you wish. The cost for fixed route service for approved paratransit riders is half the base fare.

All DATA buses have lifts and are 100% accessible to serve riders who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs, or have difficulty walking up and down steps. Every bus is equipped with securements for mobility devices. Operators are responsible for securement. If the lift is not operating properly, DATA Bus will dispatch another vehicle within 30 minutes. If the bus is at full capacity, (i.e. cannot accommodate more passengers or mobility devices) you will have to wait until the next scheduled route vehicle

**Can I use an ADA card from another Transit Agency?**

Yes you can. If you have already been approved through another Transit System and have a current ADA paratransit card, you are automatically qualified for DATA’s Paratransit. We do require that proof of your qualification is on file with our office *before* you are permitted to use DATA’s Paratransit system. If you are a visitor in the area and have not been approved for paratransit service by another agency, you may call to request Part 2 of the application and DATA Bus will mail or fax it to your medical doctor or licensed professional to fill out on your behalf. Once this is completed, you will be given temporary paratransit status. You may also find Part 2 of the application on DATA’s website: [www.ridedata.com](http://www.ridedata.com) Temporary eligibility will be given for 30 consecutive days. On the 31<sup>st</sup> day, you will be required to go through the complete paratransit eligibility assessment process.

## How to Reach Us

For more information you can:

Visit our website at [www.ridedata.com](http://www.ridedata.com) OR

Call us at:

740-368-9383 Administration Line

740-363-3355 Scheduling and Dispatch

740-513-2599 Paratransit Line

## Compliment, Comment or Complaint

If you have a compliment, comment or complaint, we want to hear from you. Please call us at 740-368-9033 or write us at:

DATA Bus  
119 Henderson Ct.  
Delaware, Ohio 43015

### **Our Mission:**

To enhance the quality of life for all Delaware County residents by providing affordable and accessible public transportation.

DATA Bus is a Public Transit Agency owned and operated by the citizens of Delaware County. Funding for the DATA Bus comes in part from the Federal Transit Administration, the Ohio Department of Transportation, the Delaware County Commissioners, SourcePoint, the City of Delaware, the City of Powell, and other political jurisdictions in Delaware County.

### **Delaware Area Transit Agency complies with Title VI and Civil Rights Laws and Regulations**

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.**

**Equal Opportunity:** It is the policy of the Delaware Area Transit Agency to provide equal opportunity to all people who choose to ride any of the services DATA offers.

DATA does not exclude, deny services to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or on the basis of disability or age in admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services provided by DATA.