



DISABILITY LAW CENTER

Utah's Protection and Advocacy Agency

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Paratransit service

If the local bus service can't serve someone with a disability through its regular bus system, it must provide an alternative transportation system. In Utah this service is provided by the Utah Transit Authority (UTA). This alternative service is called a Paratransit system. Paratransit systems provide curb-to-curb service and respond to the individual transportation needs of their customers. In Salt Lake County, this service is known as FlexTrans.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires Paratransit rides be provided to all eligible riders within an hour of the requested pick-up time if that request was made the previous day. This means that you should be able to schedule a trip, be picked up at your door, taken to your destination and returned home. You should be able to schedule your ride just 24 hours in advance. Your pick-up time should be within one hour before or after your desired departure time.

The Disability Law Center (DLC) provides this fact sheet for information only. It is not intended to be legal advice. If you need help understanding information about Utah's Paratransit system, contact the DLC at 205 North 400 West, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103, or call 1-801-363-1347, or toll-free 1-800-662-9080 voice, or 1-800-550-4182 TTY or visit the Web at www.disabilitylawcenter.org. DLC materials are available in other languages and alternative formats such as large print, Braille and audio tape upon request.

Eligibility for Paratransit service

There are three categories of eligibility for Paratransit service.

1. People who can't travel on the bus independently even if the bus is accessible. This includes:

- people with cognitive and/or developmental disabilities if they do not know where to get off the bus or how to go to their destination from the bus stop
- people with visual impairments if they don't have the travel skills to navigate the route to their destination
- people with a visual impairment who see well enough to travel independently during daylight hours but can not see well enough to travel independently after dark

2. People who need an accessible bus. This includes:

- people who use wheelchairs and other people with disabilities who can use an accessible vehicle but who want to travel on a route that is not served by accessible buses

3. People who have a specific disability-related condition. This includes:

- people who have a specific condition that prevents them from traveling to or from a bus stop
- people who are prevented from traveling because of environmental barriers (such as distance, terrain, weather) – for example, a person who uses a wheelchair may be able to make a trip to the bus stop up a slightly sloped hill on a summer day, but could not make the trip in the winter after a heavy snowfall may be eligible for Paratransit
- people who are prevented from traveling because of architectural barriers that keep them from getting to or from the bus stop - for example, lack of curb cuts or other barriers that present safety hazards on the only route to the bus stop
- people who walk with a cane and would need to travel at least ¾ mile to the bus route but cannot walk that great of distance

Tip: All three categories can have people who are able to ride the mainline bus for some trips but are not able to ride the mainline bus for all trips.

How to apply for Paratransit service

Call the Paratransit office to schedule an in-person interview and assessment at a time that is good for you. If you need it, you can ask for free transportation to and from the interview.

Be sure to give detailed information and documentation that tells why you need Paratransit service. For example, you may be able to get to the bus stop near your home, but not the one near your workplace. Be sure to explain any problem you have riding the mainline bus because of your disability.

Documentation about your disability that you might want to include

- statement from a disability service provider about your need for Paratransit service
- statement from a medical professional about your need for Paratransit service
- personal journal that shows the impact of travel on your disability, health, energy stamina, etc.
- listing of the access barriers that prevent you from traveling to the bus stop – for example, no curb cuts, no sidewalks, an extremely busy intersection, no pedestrian signals, lack of snow removal, hilly terrain, or weather during portions of the year that makes it so you can't negotiate the distance
- information about other factors that would prevent you from riding the mainline bus service, for example, inadequate funding for personal assistance service that would allow you to be adequately dressed to be outside for a prolonged period of time
- information on other difficulties you may have such as disorientation, fatigue or problems with balance

Tip: You will need to show that you *cannot* ride the bus all or some of the time, not just that it is more difficult for you.

In-person interview or functional assessment

In-person interviews or functional assessments are ways to help determine the type of bus service you need. You can take someone with you to an interview or assessment to support you as you are assessed. This person could be a friend, family member, advocate, service provider, lawyer, therapist, etc.

- *Functional assessments* are tests that evaluate physical, visual, or cognitive abilities. They can include a simulated trip to and from a bus, a simulated bus trip, boarding a bus, negotiating a curb or curb cut, or crossing the street. Functional assessments can evaluate skills, such as balance, strength, coordination, range of motion, bus travel skills, community safety skills, and general orientation.
- *In-person interviews* are conversations about conditions or disabilities that may affect how you use the bus, and a description of your travel on the entire bus system during all seasons.

If you use a power wheelchair or mobility device, be sure to explain if your travel is still limited by other factors such as the lack of sidewalks or safe paths of travel, heat or cold, etc.

UTA should know that some disabilities cannot be evaluated by a functional assessment such as seizure disorders, psychiatric disabilities, or variable conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

Tip: If you feel that the problems caused by your disability are not being discussed, ask to talk to a supervisor.

Eligibility

UTA will tell you in writing if you are eligible for Paratransit service. You will get the notice within 21 days after the interview. If UTA does not make a decision within 21 days, they will give you Paratransit service until they make a final decision.

There are two types of eligibility – unconditional and conditional

- If a disability or health condition prevents you from using fixed route buses under any condition, your eligibility is unconditional.
- If you can only use fixed route buses some of the time but not all of the time, your eligibility is conditional.

If you are eligible for service, you will receive a Paratransit card. If you are not eligible for service, you *might* qualify for a reduced fare card. The Paratransit card or reduced fare card let you use UTA fixed route bus and TRAX services at a reduced cost.

How to reserve, cancel or change a scheduled ride

How to reserve a ride

To reserve a ride, call the Paratransit scheduling office from 1 to 7 days before your trip.

How to cancel a ride

If you need to cancel a ride, call the Paratransit scheduling office.

Tip: If UTA sends a bus and you are not ready, you will be assessed a “no-show.” If you call to change your scheduled ride because you are running late, you will be assessed a late cancellation for the scheduled trip.

How to change a scheduled ride

If you need to change a scheduled ride time, call the Paratransit scheduling office. Call at least one day before your trip.

Tip: If you need to cancel a trip on the day of your ride, call at least one hour before your scheduled pick-up time so that UTA does not consider you a “no-show.”

In order to reserve, cancel or change a scheduled ride, please contact Paratransit at:

Salt Lake and Davis Counties
UTA Paratransit Service
(801) 287-7433

All other counties
UTA Paratransit Service
1-877-882-7272

TTY
(801) 287-4657

Suspension / No-show policy

Paratransit services can be suspended for a variety of reasons including inappropriate behavior, toileting accidents, and no-shows. UTA will give suspension points for the following types of no-shows:

Same day notice = 1 point

- cancelled ride between 10 P.M. the day before and 7 hours before scheduled pick up time.

Late notice = 3 points

- cancelled ride between 30 minutes and 4 hours before scheduled pick up time.

No notice / cancel at door = 5 points

- cancelled ride less than 30 minutes before scheduled pick up time
- notice given to the driver when he/she arrives that you are not going to ride
- you are not present after the vehicle has waited 5 minutes, but you get there to take your ride before the driver leaves.

You may lose Paratransit service for a period of time based on the number of points you get.

Points	Time Frame	Suspension time
12	Within 30 days	15 days
24	Within 60 days	30 days
26	Within 90 days	90 days
48	Within 120 days	180 days

What to do if you are suspended from Paratransit service

You may appeal your suspension in writing or by telephone. Write or call within 7 calendar days after the date of the suspension.

Written appeal

Send a letter to:
ADA Compliance
Utah Transit Authority
3600 South 700 West
P. O. Box 30810
Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0810
Be sure to keep a copy of your letter.

Telephone appeal

Call Paratransit customer support at
Salt Lake and Davis Counties
UTA Paratransit Service
(801) 287-7433
For all other counties
UTA Paratransit Service
1-877-882-7272

TTY
(801) 287-4657

Note: Be sure to write down the date that you called, the person to whom you spoke and a brief description of the conversation.

Recertification of Paratransit service

Eligibility usually lasts for 3 years. You should ask for recertification before your expiration date. Your Paratransit card states the expiration date. **If you do not renew your eligibility, you may not get service until you get certified again.** UTA may also need recertification *before* your expiration date. This could happen if your condition or your disabilities change.

Tip: It is up to you to reapply for service before the expiration date!

How to appeal a denial of service or recertification

If your application for Paratransit service is denied or if you are denied recertification and you disagree with that decision, you may file an appeal.

You must file the appeal within 60 days to:

ADA Compliance Officer
Utah Transit Authority
3600 South 700 West
P. O. Box 30810
Salt Lake City, Utah 84130-0810

How to file a complaint if the appeal is denied

If your appeal is denied, you may file with the Federal Transit Administration. A Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights Complaint Form is attached to this fact sheet. You must have had your appeal denied before you file a complaint. You do not have to contact UTA before filing a complaint, but it is usually a good idea to do so in most cases.

Written complaint

Submit the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights Complaint Form to:
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Office of Civil Rights.
400 7th Street, S. W.
Room 9102
Washington, D.C. 20590

Telephone complaint

You may also contact the Federal Transit Administration by phone at:

FTA ADA Assistance Line
1-888-446-4511

TTY 1-202-366-0152, or through the Federal Information Relay Service 1-800-877-8399

The FTA can also be reached by e-mail at ada.assistance@fta.dot.gov

For more information

For questions about Paratransit or public transportation services, you may contact:

Rocky Mountain Disability & Business Technical Assistance Center

Jana L. Copeland Information Specialist
3630 Sinton Road, Suite 103
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
1-800-949-4232 voice & TTY
www.ada-infonet.org

Independent Living Centers

County	Independent Living Center	Telephone
Box Elder County	Options for Independence Northern Utah	435-753-5353
Davis County	Tri-County Independent Living Center	801-612-3215
Salt Lake County	Utah Independent Living Center	801-466-5565
Utah County	Central Utah Center for Independent Living	801-373-5044
Weber County	Tri-County Independent Living Center	801-612-3215

Disability Rights and Education Defense Fund (DREDF)

ADA Hotline 1-800-466-4232
<http://www.dredf.org>

Utah Transit Authority

Paratransit Contact Info
<http://www.rideuta.com/paratransit/>

Salt Lake and Davis Counties
UTA Paratransit Service
(801) 287-7433

For all other counties
UTA Paratransit Service
1-877-882-7272

TTY
(801) 287-4657

UTA Mobility Center
(801) 566-2334

UTA Paratransit Service ADA Program
<http://www.rideuta.com/paratransit/adaProgram.aspx>

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Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights Complaint Form

Section I

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Numbers: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Electronic Mail Address: _____

Accessible Format Requirements? Large Print _____ Audio tape _____ TDD _____

Other _____

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Civil Rights is responsible for civil rights compliance and monitoring, which includes ensuring that providers of public transportation properly implement Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (the ADA), the Department of Transportation (DOT) ADA regulations, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In the FTA complaint investigation process, we analyze the complainant's allegations for possible ADA deficiencies by the transit provider. If deficiencies are identified they are presented to the transit provider and assistance is offered to correct the inadequacies within a predetermined timeframe. FTA also may refer the matter to the U.S. Department of Justice for enforcement.

Section II

Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf? Yes _____ No _____

[If you answered "yes" to this question, go to Section III.]

If not, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are complaining:

Please explain why you have filed for a third party. _____

Please confirm that you have obtained the permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party.

Yes _____ No _____

Section III

Have you previously filed an ADA complaint with FTA? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what was your FTA Complaint Number? _____

[Note: This information is needed for administrative purposes; we will assign the same complaint number to the new complaint.]

Have you filed this complaint with any of the following agencies?

Transit Provider _____ Department of Transportation _____

Department of Justice _____ Equal Employment Opportunity Commission _____

Other _____

Have you filed a lawsuit regarding this complaint? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please provide a copy of the complaint form.

[Note: This above information is helpful for administrative tracking purposes. However, if litigation is pending regarding the same issues, we defer to the decision of the court.]

Section IV

Name of public transit provider complaint is against: _____

Contact person: _____

Title: _____

Telephone number: _____

On separate sheets, please describe your complaint. You should include specific details such as names, dates, times, route numbers, witnesses, and any other information that would assist us in our investigation of your allegations. Please also provide any other documentation that is relevant to this complaint.

Section V

May we release a copy of your complaint to the transit provider? Yes _____ No _____

May we release your identity to the transit provider? Yes _____ No _____

Please sign here: _____

Date: _____

[Note - We cannot accept your complaint without a signature.]

Please mail your completed form to:

Director
FTA Office of Civil Rights
400 7th Street, S.W., Room 9102
Washington, D.C. 20590

You may also contact FTA by phone toll free FTA ADA Assistance Line, 1-888-446-4511, TDD 1-202-366-0153, or through the Federal Information Relay Service, 1-800-877-8339.