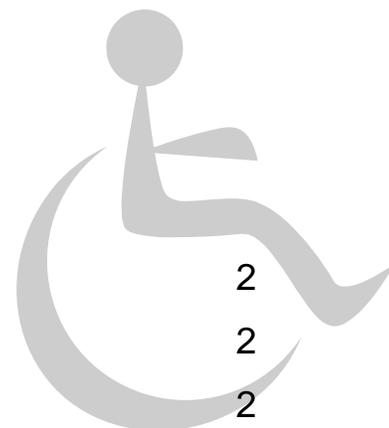




ADA Paratransit Service Guide

Effective 06/08

Table of Contents



Summary	2
Mission	2
Basic ADA Information	2
Eligibility Classifications	3
ADA Identification	4
Where COAST ADA Paratransit Service is Available	4
When COAST ADA Paratransit Service is Available	4
Limited Passenger Assistance	5
Personal Care Attendants and Companions	6
Service Animals and Pets	7
Fares	7
How to Schedule an ADA Ride	7
Punctuality: Passengers & Operators	9
No Show and Cancellation Policy	10
Special Requirements for Mobility Devices	10
Safety	11
Appeals Process	13
Client Complaints, Compliments or Comments	13
Advocacy	14

Revised 06/17/08

COAST ADA Paratransit Service Guide

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992

Summary

COAST ADA Paratransit service is transportation for individuals with disabilities who cannot use the COAST fixed route system. This Guide describes how the COAST ADA Paratransit Service program works and the guidelines for using it.

COAST ADA Paratransit Service is a convenient way to make trips to the doctor or other medical providers, to go shopping, and to travel to work, school or recreational activities.

Mission

The mission of the COAST ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Paratransit Service is to provide safe, low cost, origin to destination transportation for individuals with disabilities who live in our service area. The ADA requires COAST, as a public transportation entity, to provide this type of transportation to eligible passengers who are unable to ride the regular COAST buses.



Basic ADA Information

All COAST Operators are trained company employees, operating accessible COAST vehicles. Most ADA rides are on small buses or vans with wheelchair lifts or ramps.

Rides are scheduled in advance. Rides may involve traveling with other passengers.

For eligible passengers, COAST does not limit the number of ADA rides nor the reasons for these rides. Service is provided within $\frac{3}{4}$ (0.75) mile radius of a fixed route bus stop during the time those routes operate and a bus is in the area.



Personal care attendants (PCAs) ride at no additional charge. Clients may be accompanied by another person who is not considered a PCA. This companion must pay the same fare as the client. Additional companions may also ride when space is available.

To ensure continuous service, clients are responsible to notify COAST of changes in address prior to moving, or changes in phone number.

Eligibility Classifications

There are 3 basic classifications.

1. Temporary Eligibility – You may qualify for temporary eligibility when you have a short-term illness or injury that prevents you from using a fixed-route bus for a limited time, usually one to 12 months. If you have temporary eligibility, your eligibility letter will include the date your eligibility expires; you will need to reapply if you still need the service beyond that date.
2. Conditional Eligibility – You may be conditionally eligible when your disability prevents you from using a fixed-route bus under certain conditions (e.g., inclement weather, lack of accessible facilities, etc.). If you have conditional eligibility, you are expected to use a fixed-route bus when the circumstances allow. The eligibility letter you receive from COAST will indicate under what conditions you can use COAST ADA Paratransit services.
3. Unconditional Eligibility – You may be fully eligible when, because of your physical and/or cognitive disability, you are unable to use any fixed-route buses. Under full eligibility you can use COAST ADA Paratransit for all of your rides. You can not use fixed route buses.

COAST may require periodic re-certification to ensure the appropriate service is provided based on your functional capabilities. This usually occurs 1 year after initial eligibility and every 2 years thereafter.



ADA Identification

Upon the approval of your application for ADA Paratransit Service, you will receive a “COAST Certificate of Eligibility for ADA Paratransit Service” ID card. You should carry this card with you, and Operators may ask to see it when they pick you up. This requirement is comparable to a passenger showing a pass when boarding a fixed-route bus.

Clients who are eligible for Conditional ADA Paratransit Services can show their ID card when they ride fixed route buses and their PCAs will pay half the regular fare.

If you travel to another city that provides ADA services showing this card will enable you to use complementary ADA paratransit service in that city for up to 21 days per year.

Where COAST ADA Paratransit Service is Available

ADA service is complementary to COAST fixed routes. The ADA service area is defined as a $\frac{3}{4}$ (0.75) mile radius from any COAST fixed-route bus stop. People living outside this service area are eligible for service, but they must travel to and from origins and destinations within this corridor.

When COAST ADA Paratransit Service is Available

ADA rides are available on the same days and during the same hours as COAST’s fixed route service in your area. Early morning, evening or weekend service is available only where fixed route service is provided during these periods. In the case where the closest fixed-route bus is in your area at limited times during the day, rides will be negotiated within a 30-minute window before or after the time the fixed-route bus is actually in your area.

ADA service may not be available at certain times because fixed-route buses are not in the desired pick-up or drop off areas near the times requested.

COAST does not provide service (Fixed-route or ADA Paratransit) on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas Day.



Limited Passenger Assistance

COAST ADA Paratransit service is an origin to destination service. The basic mode of paratransit service defined by COAST is curb-to-curb service. However, based on the needs of the individual particular to that trip, passenger assistance may include a service level beyond curb-to-curb service.

The COAST Operator will assist an individual onto or off the lift or ramp and to or from the securement area. He/she will also secure a passenger's wheelchair or other mobility device using the securement system onboard the vehicle. When requested, the Operator may provide additional assistance to a passenger, if, in the Operator's best judgment, this enhances the safety of the passenger and the safety of the Operator and other passengers will not be compromised. At no time may the Operator leave sight of the vehicle. At no time are Operators allowed to lift or carry passengers.

As with COAST fixed-route services, paratransit passengers are to travel only with parcels/bags that they can manage. It is COAST's policy that an Operator may choose to assist a client with loading or unloading small parcels into and off the vehicle. Beyond that level of assistance passengers must be able to manage on their own or with someone else's assistance. To determine if an item or items will be permitted on a COAST vehicle, please first verify by calling the COAST office.

Personal Care Attendants and Companions

If you need help while traveling or after you arrive at your destination, a personal care attendant (PCA) may ride with you for no additional cost. Your PCA need not be the same person each time you ride. Your eligibility for using a PCA will be outlined in the letter confirming your ADA eligibility. COAST does not provide you with a PCA.

You may not always need to travel with a PCA. You must, however, inform COAST if you will be traveling with a PCA when you schedule your ride so we can ensure there is enough space on the vehicle.

Please remember, COAST Operators may not be able to provide the additional assistance you need if your PCA is not available.



If your PCA will not be available for a particular ride, either find a substitute PCA or contact COAST to cancel your ride at least two hours before your scheduled pick-up time. Otherwise you may be considered a “No-Show”.

You may also travel with a companion, who is not considered a PCA, on each ride. Additional companions may be accommodated if space is available. Companions pay the same fare as the client. When requesting your ride you must tell the COAST representative if you plan to travel with companion(s) so that we can ensure there is enough space on the vehicle.

Children are considered companions and must be supervised and accompanied by a responsible adult while riding COAST. You must provide an approved car seat for children who are 5 yrs. and younger and a booster seat for older children who are less than 55" tall. Children age 5 and under may accompany an adult free of charge. All other children pay the full ADA Paratransit Service fare.

Clients, PCA's and companions need to be picked-up and dropped-off at the same location, unless the COAST office approves other arrangements.

Service Animals and Pets

Service animals that provide assistance to persons with disabilities, such as guide dogs or animals trained to detect seizures, are allowed to accompany their owners on COAST vehicles. Service animals are trained specifically to assist with tasks or to provide guidance related to a disability. Owners are responsible for the animals' behavior and cleanliness. A specific service animal that is destructive or poses a threat to others may be denied access.

Companion animals are considered pets. Small pets are permitted on the vehicle only when in an approved carrier, which must be handled by the client, PCA or companion.



Fares

The base one-way fare for ADA Paratransit Services is \$2.00 (which is twice the full fare on COAST's regular fixed route service). Since COAST does not allow free transfers between regular fixed routes, any ADA Paratransit service that travels from one fixed route corridor to another must pay the additional one-way fare. This is similar to how fares are paid on the fixed-route system. Unless other arrangements are made, payment of the exact fare for the one-way trip is required at the time of boarding.

How to Schedule an ADA Ride

To schedule an ADA ride, call the main COAST telephone number during normal business hours, Monday – Friday, 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM. After hearing the automated greeting, choose the “Schedule an ADA ride” menu option to get a scheduler. Calls are answered in the order they are received and trips booked in order of calls received. If a scheduler does not answer, it may be because they are already assisting another client. Please leave your name and a phone number and a scheduler will return your call within a reasonable time.

When calling to schedule a trip, be ready to provide the following information:

- Name.
- Date of the trip(s).
- Requested pickup time(s)
- The exact street address (and building entrance) of each location, pickup and drop off.
- If the passenger will require use of a wheelchair lift or other assistive device.
- If a companion or personal care attendant will also be traveling and if the companion uses a mobility device.
- If there is a specific time you must be at your destination, state required arrival time.
- A phone number where you can be reached before pickup.

COAST attempts to schedule rides within 15 minutes of the desired time. As allowed by the ADA, COAST reserves the right to negotiate earlier or later times (up to 1 hour before or after the requested time) depending on schedule demands.



Requests must be made by the day before the ride date. Requests made on the ride date may be honored only as schedule permits.

Messages left on voice mail are considered as made on the day the call is received.

Requests for rides that are received during normal business hours on the day before the ride date will be scheduled, whether they are made in person or by voice mail. Normal business hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

Voice mail requests that are made on Sunday for rides on Monday will be given a high priority. Other voice mail requests for the rides on the next business day, which are received after normal business hours, will be honored only if our schedule permits.

Rides may be scheduled up to 14 days in advance.

Clients needing to change the time or destination of a previously scheduled trip should notify COAST as soon as possible. We do the best we can to accommodate a request for a change, but this is not always possible. The sooner the client calls to request the change, the more likely it is that we will be able to accommodate it.

Operators are not authorized to make changes in pickup or drop off time or locations or to make intermediate stops. All requests for changes must go through the COAST office.

Punctuality: Passengers & Operators

Passengers are asked to be ready prior to the scheduled pickup time. You should wait at the exact doorway and address indicated when scheduling the ride. Whenever possible, please wait where you can see the vehicle's arrival and where the driver can clearly see you. COAST may attempt to contact you if you do not present yourself after a few minutes of arrival for your pick-up. If you are more than 10 minutes late for a scheduled pickup time (i.e., you do not present yourself or are not ready to go), COAST management may direct the Operator to proceed to the next ride. If this happens, you will have to wait until the next available trip can be scheduled.



Rides are scheduled to allow the Operator to be at the pickup point on time, but traffic or weather conditions or passenger delays can affect travel and arrival times. COAST policy is that the ADA Operator is on time if he/she arrives at the pick-up point within 10 minutes of the scheduled time. If the Operator arrives more than 10 minutes after the scheduled time, the trip is considered to have been provided late and you may cancel with no consequences to you.

No Show and Cancellation Policy

COAST recognizes that your schedule and needs change and that it may be necessary to cancel a scheduled ride. You may also wish to cancel rides due to inclement weather. After-hours voice mails are considered to be made on the day and time recorded on the answering system.

The following cancellations will result in no consequences to you:

1. When possible, cancellation should be made on the day prior to the scheduled ride.
2. Although cancellations can be made on the same day as the ride, but more than 2 hours prior to the pick-up time, they are not encouraged.

Cancellations made less than 2 hours prior to the pick-up time or failure to meet the vehicle within 10 minutes after that time may be classified as an No-Show. These cost COAST money and may have a negative effect on other riders.



COAST will discuss all late or possible No-Show cases with the client and will determine if the incident will be classified as a No-Show. COAST reserves the right to temporarily suspend service to a client who has developed a pattern of No-Shows.

Special Requirements for Mobility Devices

Although COAST ADA Paratransit vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps, the following are maximum specifications for the size and weight of powered chairs, three-wheel scooters, manual wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

Length	48 Inches
Width	30 Inches
Combined Weight	750 Pounds

COAST will discuss your mobility device during the application process. In the case of an unusual device, we may require a test run to ensure our vehicles can accommodate your equipment. Also, on request, you must provide COAST with the specifications for your mobility device and the combined weight of you and your chair.

Safety

1. **Seat belts** - The Operator will not leave the pick-up location if a passenger does not comply with one of the following COAST policies.
 1. Passengers in a fixed seat in a van are required to use seatbelts. Seatbelts are not required on buses.
 2. Passengers in a mobility device and in a van must wear either a seatbelt attached to the device or a belt attached to the van. If you refuse to use a belt, you must initial the appropriate location on the ride sheet.
2. **Securement devices** - Passengers using a powered chair, three-wheel scooter, manual wheelchair or other ride-on mobility device must allow it to be secured with the vehicle's floor restraint system. Normal securement is done with 4 straps attached to the frame of the device. Unless approved in advance, or at the direction of the rider, wheel assemblies are not considered appropriate attachment points. If the Operator cannot comply with the above, he/she will need to get approval from the Supervisor prior to departure.
3. **Inclement Weather** - COAST will make every effort to accommodate life-sustaining medical trips (such as dialysis, radiation, and chemotherapy) as long as vehicles are allowed on the roads and it does not compromise the safety of the client or the Operator. COAST will notify you when service is cancelled due to weather conditions.



4. Behavior - COAST expects passengers to behave appropriately during ADA rides. To ensure the safety, security and comfort of the Operator and passengers, COAST reserves the right to refuse service to anyone who poses a safety or security threat or persists in an offensive behavior. The following are some examples of inappropriate behavior.

- Fighting or other violent or threatening action or language
- Carrying hazardous materials such as gasoline
- Carrying firearms, explosives or fireworks
- Smoking
- Vulgar or offensive language
- Other vulgar or offensive behavior
- Unacceptable personal hygiene standards

The Operator, with advice from a Supervisor, may decide to terminate a ride for inappropriate behavior. Continued inappropriate behavior may result in suspension or revocation of ADA service.

COAST will not refuse service to an individual with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy or inconvenience other persons.

For additional details please refer to the enclosed COAST's Passenger Code of Conduct.



Appeals Process

You have the right to appeal the following decisions directly to the COAST Executive Director.

1. Your application is denied.
2. You have been given Conditional Eligibility.
3. Your service has been suspended or revoked.

A written appeal and request for a hearing must be submitted to:

**Executive Director
COAST
42 Sumner Drive
Dover, NH 03820**



Client Complaints, Compliments or Comments

COAST monitors all services with the goal of continually improving quality. COAST also relies on our passengers to help with monitoring, so we welcome passenger comments – including both criticism and praise.

COAST management takes customer complaints very seriously and has a process for documenting and investigating complaints and providing feedback to the client. Complaints about actual service may be made directly to the Supervisor of Operations at

Phone: 603-743-5777, ext. 101

TDD/TTY Access: 1-800-735-2964

Complaints can also be made in writing and mailed to

**Supervisor of Operations
COAST
42 Sumner Drive
Dover, NH 03820**



COAST staff is best able to investigate and resolve complaints or problems when the passenger notifies us promptly after the occurrence and provides specific information as to date, time, and other relevant details. Upon request and when feasible, COAST will do its best to keep the name of the complainant confidential from the person against whom the complaint is made.

Compliments about a COAST employee's performance are also greatly appreciated, both by management and by the employee. Compliments can be made the same way as complaints.

Advocacy

COAST is a non-profit organization that relies heavily on federal and local municipal dollars to support our operations. Please let your elected officials know how important COAST is in meeting your transportation needs. The following are some examples of the many ways that you can support COAST.

- Attend public hearings regarding transportation services.
- Write to elected officials in support of COAST.
- Talk to family and friends about what the service means to you.
- Let your Operator know that their service is appreciated.