



ADA PARATRANSIT



PASSENGERS HANDBOOK

**Springfield City Area Transit:
100 Jefferson Street
Springfield, Ohio 45506
www.scatrideline.com**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Springfield City Area Transit's specialized paratransit transportation service. Whether you are a regular user or a new rider, we continually strive to give you safe, affordable and reliable transportation. We have developed these procedures and guidelines over many years based on the changing needs of the passengers and our operation. This document also incorporates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as many additional Federal and State guidelines.

Our services are designed for *you* the rider. Please let us know of any suggestions you may have while using any of our services. Our goal is to provide you with exceptional service. We use highly trained drivers and specially equipped vehicles to provide the safest and quickest shared-ride possible for our paratransit service.

Most paratransit passengers can and do use the fixed route bus service for some trips. The paratransit service complements our fixed route bus service by providing a comparable service to those individuals who can not use the regular buses for some or all trips, due to one or more disabilities. This program is an individualized service in which the cooperation of each passenger is essential. It is necessary that both passengers and staff make the service the best and most effective for everyone by observing the following guidelines.

We're on the Internet!

Our address is: www.scatriline.com

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. It provides the general framework and approach for ending discrimination for persons with disabilities. The stated national goals of the ADA are to guarantee that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, ability to live independently and be economically self-sufficient. Section 223 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that public entities that operate non-commuter fixed-route transportation service also provide complementary paratransit service for individuals unable to use the fixed-route system. ADA complementary paratransit eligibility standards are provided for in 49 CFR §37.123 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

In general, the law prohibits public transit systems from denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to use public transportation services, if the individuals are capable of using the system. It also prohibits public entities from providing services that discriminate against persons with disabilities. The ADA is an opportunity to develop programs that will ensure the integration of all persons into not just the transportation system of America, but all of the opportunities transportation makes possible. The goal is to ensure non-discriminatory, equitable, accessible and safe public transportation, enhancing the social and economic quality of life for people with disabilities. Specific actions must be taken by public transit agencies to avoid discrimination. For example, the law requires that:

1. All newly purchased or leased vehicles used in fixed-route service must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
2. Public agencies which provide fixed-route public transportation service also must offer similar complementary paratransit services to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed-route system.
3. New facilities must be accessible.
4. Alterations to facilities must include features to make them accessible.

Springfield City Area Transit complies with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ADA Eligibility for Complementary Paratransit Services

ADA complementary paratransit service must be provided to all passengers described as being ADA eligible under 49 CFR §37.123. ADA eligibility includes the following:

1. The first eligibility category included, among others, persons with mental or visual impairments who, as a result, cannot “navigate the system”. This eligibility category includes people who cannot board, ride, or disembark from an accessible vehicle “without the assistance of another individual.” If an individual needs an attendant to board, ride, or disembark from an accessible fixed route vehicle (including “navigating the system”), the individual is eligible for paratransit. Eligibility in this category is based on the ability to board, ride, and disembark independently.
2. This category applies to person’s who could use accessible fixed route transportation, but accessible transportation is not being used at the time, and on the route, the person would travel. This concept is route based, not system based. For purposes of this standard, a route is accessible when all buses scheduled on the route are accessible.
3. The third eligibility category concerns individuals who have a specific impairment-related condition which **PREVENTS** them from getting to or from a stop. Difficulty in traveling to or from boarding or disembarking locations is not a basis for eligibility.

In order to be eligible for this service, your origin and destination must be within 3/4 mile of our fixed route corridor and the time of your trip must fall within the hours of the closest bus route. If you do not reside within the 3/4 mile radius, than you must have the means of getting within our service area before transportation is provided.

How to Become Certified as ADA Eligible for Complementary Paratransit Service

Applications for certification as being ADA eligible for Springfield City Area Transit's complementary paratransit service are available at Springfield City Area Transit's offices located at 100 Jefferson St. or a request for a copy to be mailed can be made by calling the Springfield City Area Transit office at (937)328-7228. Applications are also available for download from Springfield City Area Transit's website located at www.scatrieline.com by clicking on the Accessibility tab. This site also includes hours of operation, holiday schedule, ticket information, bus route map, and weekly fixed-route schedule.

Once the application is received, Springfield City Area Transit will notify the applicant within twenty-one (21) days of his/her eligibility status. If a determination has not been made within 21 days of receiving the completed application, the applicant will be treated as eligible and will be provided service until or unless Springfield City Area Transit denies the application. The applicant will receive a letter verifying whether eligible for service or not. If denied, Springfield City Area Transit will state specifically the reason for the denial. Certification applications are available to anyone who requests them and are made available electronically at www.scatrieline.com.

Temporary Disability Eligibility For Complementary Paratransit Service

Any individual with a temporary disability, for the purpose of determining ADA will be subject to the same standards as those with permanent disabilities. Certification of eligibility in such cases will be subject to a specific expiration date. Non-residents and visitors to the City of Springfield may write or telephone for an application, and if eligible, they will be issued temporary service. Non-residents and visitors will be subject to the same operating standards as City residents. Non-residents' and visitors' eligibility will be validated for the expected length of stay in town. An individual may apply for recertification before their eligibility expires if more time is needed.

Appeals Process for Denial of ADA Eligibility

Springfield City Area Transit has established an administrative appeals process through which an individual who has been denied ADA complementary paratransit eligibility can obtain review of the denial.

1. Appeal of the denial to certify an individual as ADA paratransit eligible must be filed within 60 days of written notification of the determination.
2. Upon receipt of the denial, Springfield City Area Transit will provide the individual with the opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments to an individual not involved with the initial decision to deny eligibility. Springfield City Area Transit will again provide written determination as to the decision made upon completion of the appeals process and the reasons for it.
3. Any person aggrieved by the decision of the initial decision maker may appeal to Springfield City Area Transit.
4. Springfield City Area Transit will provide complementary paratransit service to the applicant pending the final determination of the appeal.
5. If a customer appeal is denied and the applicant thinks the ADA paratransit eligibility process was unfair, the applicant can file a complaint with the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE,

Washington D.C. 20590 1-888-446-4511 (Voice) 1-800-877-8339 (TTY)
FTA.ADAAssistance@dot.gov (Email).

How Springfield City Area Transit's ADA Complementary Paratransit Service Meet the Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act Regulations

Under Springfield City Area Transit's Complementary Paratransit Service Plan, the level of service provided to persons determined to be ADA eligible is similar to Springfield City Area Transit's fixed-route bus service. Six service criteria are included in the regulations. The following is a description of how Springfield City Area Transit's complementary paratransit service meets or exceeds the six service criteria:

SERVICE AREA:

ADA complementary paratransit service is provided to all origins and destinations within the service area defined as the City of Springfield. For Springfield City Area Transit, the basic service is centered on each fixed-route bus route and extending 3/4 mile to either side of the fixed-route.

RESPONSE TIME:

As stated in the regulations, pick up times will be negotiated with ADA eligible passengers to make scheduling more efficient. As a ride-sharing service, Springfield City Area Transit can require a change in the requested pick up time of up to one hour. Any changes in pick up time beyond one hour must be negotiated with the ADA eligible passenger.

FARE STRUCTURE:

Fares charged for an ADA eligible complementary service trip to ADA eligible users will be twice the amount of the off route cash fare paid by passengers of the Springfield City Area Transit fixed-route system. Personal Care Attendants (PCA) traveling with the ADA eligible passengers will not be charged, as defined in the regulations. Passengers must be listed as having a PCA when filing the necessary application for ADA eligibility.

TRIP PURPOSES:

Requests for all types of ADA eligible trips will be accepted and provided within the service area.

HOURS AND DAYS OF SERVICE:

Service Hours - Monday – Friday 6:40 am–5:40 pm

Service will not be provided on the following holidays:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS:

Springfield City Area Transit does not maintain waiting lists which would constrain demand on paratransit capacity.

Springfield City Area Transit does not limit the number of ADA eligible complementary paratransit trips to ADA eligible passengers of the public transportation system.

Since paratransit is a shared ride service, paratransit rides between Point A and Point B will usually take longer, and involve more intermediate stops. However, Springfield City Area Transit does not intentionally schedule excessive trip lengths.

How Do I Schedule a Trip?

Eligible riders may schedule all their trips by calling the SCAT paratransit office at (937)328-7228 between the hours of 6:30 am and 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The office is not open on weekends; passengers will be able to make reservations using the automated voice mail system. To assure your request can be taken properly, please call during business hours Monday through Friday.

Trips during the day should be scheduled, one business day to two weeks in advance. Same-day requests will be considered upon availability. Trips scheduled on the previous business day or up to two weeks before, are scheduled within one hour before or after the requested time. We cannot prioritize trips for any reason; they are scheduled on a first come-first served basis.

Return trips must be scheduled when the “going” trip is scheduled. Only medical trips may have unscheduled returns and will be completed within an hour of SCAT paratransit being notified of the passenger being ready.

Paratransit staff will give you a pick-up time and a return time (if requested) for that trip. The paratransit driver may arrive up to 10 minutes before that pickup time or 10 minutes after that time in order to serve other passengers. Once the driver arrives, they will wait up to 5 minutes for the passenger for unexpected delays before leaving. Please begin looking for the driver at least 10 minutes before your pick-up time. The same goes for the return trip.

Pre-Trip Planning

Passengers with a cognitive disability or otherwise require a personal care attendant must have a responsible adult at the origin and destination if no one rides on the vehicle with them.

The pathway between our vehicle and your pick-up point, i.e., entryways, sidewalks, ramps and driveways, must be clear of ice and snow for paratransit drivers to safely assist you. Some of our vehicles are very wide and tall. Any obstructions that we cannot avoid must be cleared before we pick up or drop off any passenger. Service may be denied if branches or obstructions damage our vehicles and are not removed or if we determine it is unsafe to complete a trip due to weather related concerns.

Passengers should call ahead to their destination to determine if a location/building is accessible before scheduling a trip. If a driver determines a passenger's trip location cannot be entered or is unattended, the passenger will be returned to the origin at the next convenient time. Repeated occurrences (three times within 90 days) may result in suspension of service.

Attendant Policy

Personal care attendants (PCA) will be permitted to accompany ADA eligible riders on ADA eligible trips at no charge. Springfield City Area Transit will require that passengers state the need for a PCA when they request ADA eligibility certification. One guest will be allowed to accompany an ADA eligible

complementary paratransit passenger on their ADA eligible paratransit trip. More than one guest will be allowed on a space available basis. The PCA is not considered to be a “guest”. A guest is required to pay the applicable paratransit fare.

Springfield City Area Transit’s Driver Origin to Destination Assistance Policy

It is the policy of Springfield City Area Transit to provide complementary paratransit services within the city limits of Springfield. Transportation service is provided by ADA accessible vehicles. Drivers are trained to provide minimal assistance only. Drivers are not trained to provide medical assistance. To ensure timely service, Springfield City Area Transit’s complementary paratransit services are considered Origin to Destination.

Shopping Trips

To ensure timely service, passengers are encouraged only to bring what they can carry on their own or with assistance of a personal care attendant (PCA). Passengers are welcome to bring a collapsible shopping cart on board the vehicle to assist them with their purchases.

Recurring Subscription Trips (Weekly Trips)

A Subscription service is provided for the convenience of riders desiring service on a regular basis for work, school, medical, grocery and similar recurring weekly trips. This service eliminates the need for you to call daily or weekly to schedule a trip. We can also schedule trips that occur periodically every month i.e., 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Subscription scheduling may be requested by calling the paratransit office at (937)328-7228 during business hours. These trip requests will be accepted on a continual basis. After requests are received, passengers will be contacted and a pick-up time confirmed. If SCAT paratransit receives a subscription request that conflicts with the current schedule, the passengers affected may be contacted

and asked for their cooperation in accommodating the new request. Whenever possible, necessary schedule changes will be handled in this manner. If no agreement is easily reached, Springfield City Area Transit reserves the right to assign new pick-up times within 30 minutes of the original pick-up times in order to accommodate the most passengers. Passengers wishing to change a subscription must give two weeks notice to the paratransit office. Permanent schedules may be reevaluated at least once per year so that all passengers will have an equal opportunity for busy time slots. Any changes in a passengers' schedule, i.e. vacation or break, must be called into the paratransit office at least two weeks in advance. This will allow other passengers to schedule trips in those time slots. No trip(s) will be cancelled automatically due to weather or school closings, unless SCAT fixed route is *not* running. Passengers are responsible for calling the office to ensure each cancellation.

Cancelling Subscription Trips

Because we have such a high demand for subscription trips, passengers calling one-third (33%) of their Subscription trips in one month may lose the time slot. Consideration will be given for vacations, illnesses, and work/school-related meetings, unplanned and unusual circumstances. Springfield City Area Transit will not *automatically cancel* any passenger trips, i.e. due to school closings, bad weather, etc., unless SCAT fixed route is *not* running. Passengers must call in to report their individual cancellation(s).

Trip Cancellation Policy for a Scheduled Trip

There is no penalty for a cancellation as long as notice is given at least one (1) hour in advance of the scheduled pick up time. Passengers are encouraged to give as much notice as possible if unable to make the appointment. We ask that passengers be cooperative in reducing cancellations. Cancellations are disruptive to the overall operation and the time could have been scheduled by another passenger. If a passenger cancels a trip less than an hour before the scheduled pick up time, it will be a late cancellation and treated the same as a No Show. Passengers should call Springfield City Area Transit at (937)328-7228 as soon as known to cancel any trips. Cancellations can be made by leaving a message on the answering system 24 hours a day 7 days a week, but every effort should be made

to call during business hours which are between 6:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

No Show Definition and Policy

We request that passengers be ready to be transported a few minutes ahead of schedule. Springfield City Area Transit defines a No Show as occurring when all of the following circumstances have occurred:

1. The customer (or the customer's representative) has scheduled ADA paratransit service. There has been no call by the customer or his/her representative to cancel the scheduled trip one or more hours before the start of the pick-up window. The paratransit vehicle has arrived at the scheduled pickup point by the scheduled pick up time.
2. The driver has waited at least 5 minutes beyond the scheduled pick up time, but the customer has failed to board the vehicle or refuses a trip. The driver cannot reasonably see the customer approaching the vehicle.

It is important to note that if a No Show occurs, the return trip is automatically cancelled unless otherwise specified by the customer. This prevents the customer being charged two No Show fees in one day.

The Following is the “No Show” Policy for Complementary Paratransit Service

1. If a passenger is not ready at the scheduled pick up time or refuses a trip, the driver will be instructed by dispatch to continue with his/her regular schedule and the trip will be considered a No Show.
2. The drivers have been instructed to radio dispatch in the case of a No Show. When the driver notifies the office of the pending No Show, it must be verified by dispatch or a supervisor. Dispatch or the supervisor will then

enter the information on the dispatch screen in the transit dispatching system.

3. The driver must mark the Driver Manifest as a No Show with the correct time of pick up and mileage. The driver will mark his/her manifest as “No Show”. Information will also be displayed in verification for office staff to view.

Policy Relating to No Shows

Any rider who fails to notify the paratransit office of a cancellation (No-Show) will be charged the full amount for the trip scheduled. Payment can be made to the driver before leaving, at the SCAT administrative office, or to the driver picking you up on your next scheduled trip. Payment must be made before any other trips are taken. We understand that unforeseen circumstances occur to all of us. If you do not show for a trip, *all remaining trips for that day will be automatically cancelled*, unless you call and request that your remaining trips be provided.

It is also considered a no-show if the passenger is not ready to board the vehicle within five (5) minutes of the scheduled pick-up time (ten minutes before and after the scheduled time) and the driver must leave in order to continue on schedule.

Pick-Up Times

Passengers will be given an approximate time of pick up when calling to make an appointment. Passengers must be ready to go at the pre-arranged time and place. Passengers are encouraged to be ready to be transported a few minutes ahead of schedule. There may be times when traffic, road conditions and/or weather conditions may delay your vehicle. Our drivers have been instructed to wait at a residence for a period not to exceed five (5) minutes from the scheduled pick up time.

Return Trips after Appointment

When arranging for transportation, passengers are encouraged to schedule a return time at a pre-arranged location. This will help eliminate waiting for a driver to become available to transport the passenger home. If an approximate return time is not known, passengers can call (937)328-7228 when ready to return. A driver will be dispatched to pick up the passenger.

Lift and Securement Use Policy

In accordance with the regulations, Springfield City Area Transit will provide service to all common wheelchairs and their users. A common wheelchair is a wheelchair that does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied. Wheelchairs are defined to include three-wheeled and four-wheeled mobility aids. Three-wheeled scooters and other non-traditional designs will be transported. Passengers are advised that drivers are not permitted to operate a scooter or electric wheelchair onto the lift. The passenger is responsible for getting onto the lift with minimal driver assistance.

Use of the Securement system on Springfield City Area Transit's vehicles will be a required condition of service. Passengers must allow the driver to secure the chair per the manufacturer's Securement recommendation.

When transporting passengers using three-wheeled wheelchairs or other mobility devices, Springfield City Area Transit can request that the passenger transfer into a bus seat. The passenger, in this case, has the final decision as to whether a transfer is appropriate given the passengers' particular disability.

As the regulations require, a passenger who cannot enter the vehicle using the stairs or ramp, but who does not use a wheelchair, will be allowed to enter the vehicle using the lift.

Accommodating Other Mobility Devices, Life Support Equipment or Services Animals

In accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all paratransit passengers will be permitted to travel with a service dog trained to assist them. The ADA defines a service dog as any guide dog or signal dog. Dogs that meet this definition are considered service animals under the ADA, regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government.

People with disabilities who use service animals will not be charged extra fees, isolated from other patrons, or treated less favorably than other patrons. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his/her service animal from the premises unless: (1) the animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it (for example, a dog that barks repeatedly) or (2) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

Springfield City Area Transit will not provide care or food for a service animal or provide a special location for it to relieve itself.

Allergies and fear of animals are generally not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service animals.

Passengers will also be permitted to travel with respirators, portable oxygen and other life support equipment. Travel with this equipment will only be denied if it violates rules concerning the transportation of hazardous materials.

Riding the Fixed-Route

Most paratransit passengers are able to ride the SCAT fixed route buses for some trips. The buses offer more flexibility and more independence to those who are able to use it. All of our buses allow persons using wheelchairs and persons with other mobility impairments greater access to them.

Many of our buses can “kneel.” This means the bus can be lowered a few inches in order to reduce the height of the step into the bus. This will help those passengers who are limited in their mobility, but do not use a wheelchair. This may also help those passengers who use other types of mobility devices by reducing the step up into the bus. The buses also have a ramp that unfolds for people using wheelchairs or anyone else requesting it.

All bus drivers will, unfold the ramp, kneel the bus, tie down wheelchairs, announce any specific bus stops, and help passengers with transfers and route information. However, the bus driver *cannot* provide assistance after you exit the bus onto the sidewalk.

Other Assistance

Note: All material made available to applicants and passengers of Springfield City Area Transit’s complementary paratransit service will be provided in accessible formats upon request.

Those persons who would like to learn how to use the lift-equipment on an accessible fixed-route bus can practice on a vehicle that is not in regular service. Whenever possible, Springfield City Area Transit will try to make available a demonstration, which can be attended by all interested persons, and will arrange specialized transportation services to such sites for those who need it. Springfield City Area Transit staff may be able to accompany you on all or part of your first trip if advance arrangements are made. Springfield City Area Transit will make mobility training available upon request. Contact **Springfield City Area Transit** at 100 Jefferson St. or by phone at (937)328-7228.

Safety

No tobacco products, alcohol or illegal substances will be consumed on SCAT vehicles. No open alcoholic beverages are allowed on board the vans.

Passengers carrying hazardous materials (i.e., kerosene, gasoline, firearms, and explosives) will not be allowed on SCAT vehicles.

If a passenger's behavior disrupts the driver or other passengers the passenger will be suspended from the service.

Wheelchairs must be clean and in good working order (i.e., brakes work, frame and wheels are secure) to ensure safety of all passengers and the driver.

SUMMARY OF TELEPHONE NUMBERS

ADA information and general inquiries:

937-328-7228

ADA complaints:

Ron Macaluso: 937-328-3592

Cheryl Dover: 937-324-7379

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights:

Voice: **1-866-377-8642**

TTY: **1-800-877-8339**

VCO: **1-877-877-6280**

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