

PARATRANSIT

A User Handbook



Welcome!



Spokane Transit is your public transportation provider in Spokane County. Whether you use the regular bus, a Paratransit van, or both, we are pleased to serve you. Our goal is to provide you with high quality, safe, and friendly public transit service.

STA Paratransit is not like regular bus service, and it is not like taxi service either. It is door-to-door, shared-ride transportation for people who are disabled and because of the effects of their disability are unable to use the regular bus some or all of the time.

This booklet is your guide to Paratransit services. It contains the information you need to use Paratransit and to help you understand your responsibilities as a Paratransit customer.

We hope the information here is complete, but if you have any questions, please call or send us an email. Our contact information is on the next page.

Welcome to STA Paratransit and enjoy the ride!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Susan Meyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

E. Susan Meyer, STA CEO

Spokane Transit's Mission & Vision

We are dedicated to providing safe, convenient, accessible, and efficient public transportation services to the Spokane region's neighborhoods, businesses, and activity centers.

We are leaders in transportation and a valued partner in the community's social fabric, economic infrastructure and quality of life;

We aspire to be a source of pride for the region.

Spokane Transit assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information, visit www.spokanetransit.com. All phone numbers are accessible for people who are deaf or hard of hearing through Relay 711.

Upon request, alternative formats of this document will be produced for people who are disabled.

Call 509-325-6094 or email STA's Ombudsman at: ombudsman@spokanetransit.com.

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Comments About Paratransit

Your comments, suggestions, complaints, compliments, and concerns are important. Please let us know what's on your mind. We will try our best to get back to you within 72 hours. The following options are available for you to provide comments about our service:

1. Call the Paratransit Rider Hot Line at:
509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711)
2. Send a letter to:
Paratransit Manager
1212 W Sharp Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201
3. Go to the website www.spokanetransit.com and click on "Contact Us" to send us your thoughts with an email, or
4. Contact the STA Community Ombudsman/
Accessibility Officer
509-325-6094 (TTY Relay 711)
Fax: 509-325-6036
E-mail: ombudsman@spokanetransit.com
Mail: 1230 West Boone Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201

You may remain anonymous if you wish.

Helpful Addresses & Phone Numbers

**Spokane Transit
Paratransit Services
1212 W. Sharp Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686**

To schedule, cancel or check on a ride, please call the reservations office at **509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711)** between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., seven (7) days a week, and choose one of the following options:

- **Option 1** - Make a reservation
- **Option 2** - Cancel a ride
- **Option 3** - Check on a ride
- **Option 4** - Request a standing ride
- **Option 5** - Eligibility information/ Request an application

To cancel or check on a ride before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m., choose Option 1.

If you do not have a push button phone, please stay on the line for the next available Reservationist to take your call.

If you have a smart phone or web access, contact the reservations department to find out how you



can check on your ride using our Mobi Link. To ask questions or make comments about the service, please call the Rider Hotline between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Choose one of the following options:

Rider Hotline: 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711)

- **Option 1** - Respond to a post card or letter
- **Option 2** - Eligibility information/Request application
- **Option 3** - Mobility Training
- **Option 4** - Provide feedback, compliment, complaint, or a concern
- **Option 5** - Questions about the service

If you do not have a push button phone, stay on the line for the next available staff member.

**Mobility Center – STA Plaza
701 W Riverside – Second Floor
509-232-6303**

Special Notes For Using This Book

For your convenience, and at the request of our customers, this document is printed in a larger type.

Upon request, this handbook is available in alternate formats by calling the Ombudsman/Accessibility Officer at 509-325-6094 (TTY Relay 711).

To Caregivers And Social Service Agencies

This handbook is phrased as if the Paratransit customer is reading it. We know that many caregivers and others will assume the responsibility for reading and understanding this information as well as making reservations and other arrangements for the customer.

Please keep in mind, if the person you care for will ride the Paratransit van without an attendant, he or she must be able to follow basic customer responsibilities and abide by Spokane Transit Authority's (STA) Rules of Conduct (see page 59).

Please take special notice of the Notes at the end of some sections. These passages contain important information that can affect your Paratransit service.

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LET'S GO!



Welcome To Paratransit Shared-Ride Van Service

This handbook provides you with step-by-step instructions on how to use Paratransit van service, along with policies, procedures, helpful contact information, and tips for our customers.

What Is Paratransit?

Paratransit is a wheelchair-accessible shared-ride transportation service for individuals when the effects of their disability prevent them from using the regular fixed route buses. This means that a person must be unable, because of the effects of their disability, to get to or from the bus stop, get on or off a ramp-equipped bus, or successfully travel by bus to or from their destination.



Paratransit van service is comparable to fixed route bus service, operated in the same service area, and the same service hours. Paratransit emphasizes safety, reliability, and customer comfort.



We take pride in offering the best possible van transportation to customers who are eligible for Paratransit service under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

The Paratransit fleet of more than 100 vans provides service to over 8,000 ADA-eligible customers, their guests, and personal care attendants. Paratransit van service operates 365 days a year and performs over 470,000 trips annually.

Eligibility

Spokane Transit fixed route buses are considered the primary mode of public transportation for everyone in our service area. Therefore, riders who

require Paratransit service must apply for eligibility. There are three types of eligibility, which are based on the applicant's specific disability: temporary, conditional, and unconditional (full) service. Because the effects of a disability can change over time, certification for Paratransit eligibility is not permanent. Most eligibility is granted for a period of one (1) to three (3) years. A notification letter and recertification form is sent at least 60 days before your eligibility is due to expire. You must be six (6) years of age or older to be eligible for Paratransit.

Paratransit Provides Three Different Levels Of Service:

- 1.** Unconditional (Full) service allows eligible customers to take the van for all of their trips during our service hours and within our service area.
- 2.** Conditional service is for customers who are able to take the bus some of the time and require van service at other times. Please see the section on Conditional Eligibility for more information.
- 3.** Temporary service is for people who have a temporary need for the service due to a catastrophic event such as a stroke, hip replacement, broken leg, etc.



Your ID card and letter will have the expiration date on it. If you feel you may be eligible for service after the expiration date, you will need to fill out a new application.

How Can I Get An Application?

Contact Spokane Transit Paratransit Services Eligibility department at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711) to request a Paratransit application or download an application from:
www.spokanetransit.com/Paratransit

Fill out the application with complete answers to each question and mail it to Spokane Transit. Be sure to sign the application and have the medical portion completed before you send it in. Spokane Transit will not process incomplete applications.

Determining Eligibility

All Paratransit applicants must complete the eligibility form and most applicants will be required to visit the Mobility Center on the second floor of the STA Plaza for an in-person assessment. If Paratransit needs you to complete an in-person assessment, we will contact you after the application

has been received to set up an appointment. We will provide free transportation to the Mobility Center for your in-person assessment if needed. After receiving all required information, Spokane Transit will determine your eligibility within 21 calendar days. You will be notified of the results in writing.

If we determine you are eligible for Paratransit services, you will receive a letter and ID card notifying you of the decision. The ID card will have your customer number, an expiration date and your eligibility level printed on it. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you may appeal within 60 days of the date of the letter. See Eligibility Appeal Process, page 20.



Conditional Eligibility

This level is customized to each individual's abilities based upon the information provided in the application and the results of a cognitive and/or physical in-person assessment. The letter notifying you of your eligibility will have an explanation of the conditions under which you can use van service. Abilities change over time and you can reapply to adjust the level of service at any time. This level of

service is for persons who are able to take the bus some of the time and require van service at other times. Your letter will contain an explanation of the conditions that pertain to you.

Path Of Travel Review

Some conditional eligibilities are based on the distance or condition of the path of travel to or from the nearest bus stop. If you have specific conditional eligibilities and take the same trip often, Paratransit will review the trip for eligibility. This is called a path of travel review. You will be notified by letter if the review indicates the trip is not eligible for Paratransit service. If you disagree with the results of the path of travel review, you may appeal the decision by contacting the Ombudsman/Accessibility Officer:

**1230 W. Boone Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com
509-325-6094 (TTY Relay 711)**

Eligibility Appeal Process

If you disagree with your eligibility determination, you may appeal within 60 calendar days of the date on your eligibility determination letter. A form to

request your appeal is included with your eligibility determination letter.

An appeal of your eligibility determination gives you the opportunity to present information and arguments regarding why you believe the determination is not correct. You will want to provide information that demonstrates how the effects of your disability prevent you from independently: (1) getting to the nearest bus stop; (2) boarding and riding the regular, fixed route bus; and/or (3) getting off the bus and successfully navigating to your final destination.

You can request an in-person appeal hearing to be held at Spokane Transit. If you wish, you can bring someone with you to the hearing. STA will provide Paratransit transportation to and from the hearing.



If you would rather appeal in writing, you may submit a letter of appeal.

Within 30 days after your hearing or after Spokane Transit has received all the information you want considered in your appeal, you will receive a written, final decision regarding your Paratransit eligibility.

Please submit your notice of appeal and any additional information to:

**Appeals, Paratransit Services
Spokane Transit
1230 W. Boone Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com**

Mobility Training

Spokane Transit's free Mobility Training helps seniors and persons with disabilities gain more independence by assisting them in becoming fixed route bus customers. Trainers familiarize you with how the system works, from bus routes to fares, and most importantly, how the system can work for your specific needs.

If you're hesitant to ride the bus, Mobility Training will give you the confidence you need to be

comfortable and in control of your schedule. Your mobility trainer has received specialized instruction on how to work with a variety of disabilities. The trainer will determine your needs and design an individualized training plan, including one-on-one instruction while actually riding the bus with you.

If you are interested contact the Mobility Training department at 509-232-6303 (TTY Relay 711).

Service Hours

Paratransit hours of service are comparable to the bus routes hours of service, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Paratransit van service is currently available seven days a week including holidays.

If your trip begins early in the morning or ends late at night, the Paratransit Reservationist will identify the pick-up/drop-off times that will most closely meet your travel needs. Please note that your reservation times also will depend on the length of your trip.

Please be aware that these are the current holidays that we observe. The hours of holiday service are restricted and may change in the future:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day

- Memorial Day
- 4th of July*
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day



*Special fireworks shuttles may be available to/from the downtown area.

Service Area

All of your Paratransit trips must begin and end within the Paratransit service area. Presently, this includes most areas in the cities of Cheney, Medical Lake, Airway Heights, Liberty Lake, Spokane, Spokane Valley, and Millwood. Fairchild Air Force Base and Spokane International Airport are also served.

The Paratransit service area is comparable to the area served by the regular, fixed route bus system and conforms to the Americans with Disabilities Act. The service area is a corridor which extends $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile around each fixed route. However, the Paratransit service area never extends beyond Spokane Transit's official boundary, the Public Transportation Benefit Area.

Changes that increase or decrease the areas and times served by the fixed route buses will result in comparable changes to the Paratransit service area and times.

If you are unsure if your home or destination is within the current Paratransit service area, please call the Eligibility department at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711).



Scheduling Your Van Ride

Spokane Transit Paratransit van service provides more than 1,800 trips each weekday. It is not a taxi service, but rather a shared-ride van service that carries multiple customers to different destinations. Your needs will be balanced with other customers' needs. Because there are a limited number of vans, it may not always be possible to schedule your trip at the exact time you request.

Matching rides is the most complex part of getting you where you need to go on time. When you call, the Reservationists will do their best to accommodate your request. The more flexible you can be about the time you request, the easier it is to serve a greater number of customers. Trips are scheduled to allow for adequate travel time between stops. Travel times are designed to be comparable to the fixed route buses.

Pick Up Window

When you schedule a van ride, you will be given a 30-minute range of time during which you can expect a Paratransit van to pick you up. This 30-minute period is called the “pick-up window.” Your van may arrive any time during this window and is not late until the 30-minute window has passed. The 30-minute window applies to all scheduled rides, including return rides. For example, if you agree to a 9:00 a.m. pick-up, the vehicle should arrive between 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. for an on-time pick-up.

When To Schedule A Ride

You can schedule your Paratransit van ride from one (1) to seven (7) days in advance of your trip.

The Reservations office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., seven days a week including holidays.

How To Schedule A Ride

Call the Reservations office at 509-328-1552, (TTY Relay 711). All calls are recorded for quality assurance purposes.

Our goal is to answer your call as quickly as possible. However, if you have to wait for a Reservationist, please be patient and stay on the line. Calls are answered in the order received and a Reservationist will be with you shortly.



The Reservationist will guide you through the process of scheduling your ride. Please have the following ready before you call:

- Your Paratransit ID number
- Your name and address
- Pencil and paper
- Your complete pick-up address, including apartment and/or building name or number
- Exact address and description of where you want to go (for example, Fred Meyer at 400 S. Thor- Grocery Entrance)
- Time(s) of and date(s) of travel
- Time(s) of any appointments you might have, so we can plan your drop-off and pick-up times
- If a personal care attendant (PCA) or guests will be riding with you
- If a service animal or pet will accompany you
- Whether you will be using a mobility aid (wheelchair, walker, oxygen)
- The form of payment you will use (cash or pass)

Confirming Your Ride Requests

When you are finished scheduling your trip, the Reservationist will review all the information with you. This is a good accuracy check for both of you. Have a pencil (or pen) and paper handy to write down the information the Reservationist gives you. We suggest you write down the name of the Reservationist who helped you plan your trip. All calls are recorded for quality assurance.

Faxing Or E-mailing Your Ride Requests

Please contact the reservations office for information about this option at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711).

Tips For Requesting Rides

These tips will help provide you with the best possible service:

Call Early - The earlier you call (up to seven (7) days in advance) for a ride, the more time Spokane Transit has for route planning.

Allow extra travel time - Trips are scheduled on a shared ride basis. The vehicle may stop to let other customers on or off before reaching your

destination. In addition, travel times may vary due to rush hour slowdowns, time of day, local events, road construction, traffic accidents, bad weather, or day of the week.

Be flexible - Paratransit may not be able to schedule a ride at the time you want. Because Paratransit is a shared ride service, we may need to schedule your pick-up time up to one (1) hour earlier or later than you request.

Remember the “pick-up” window - When you schedule a van ride, you will be given a 30-minute range of time during which you can expect a Paratransit van to pick you up. This 30-minute period is called the “pick-up window.” Your van may arrive any time during this window. Your ride is not late until the 30-minute window has passed. The 30-minute window applies to all scheduled rides, including return rides. For example, if you agree to a 9:00 pick-up, the vehicle should arrive between 9:00 and 9:30 for an on-time pick-up.

Be ready - When operators arrive within the pick-up window, they can only wait five (5) minutes after the vehicle arrives. To avoid delays, missed appointments, and no show penalties, please be ready to go when the vehicle arrives to pick you up. Please be aware that Paratransit operators will not help get you ready for your trip.

Consider a PCA - Be advised that you may be left alone on the Paratransit vehicle anytime that our operator assists other customers. The vehicle will not always be visible to the operator at those times. You will be dropped off at your destination, even if someone is not waiting for you. We cannot wait with you until someone arrives. If you cannot be left alone, please arrange for a PCA to travel with you.

Limit 5 trips per call - You may schedule up to five (5) round trips per call. We limit the number of rides you may schedule with one phone call to give others a chance to call. If you need to schedule more rides, you may call us back to schedule additional trips.

Multiple trips - you may schedule multiple trips for the same day. However, because this is a shared-ride service, it is important you allow ample time between drop-offs and pick-ups. We recommend you allow no less than one (1) hour and 15 minutes between each scheduled pick-up time. You cannot reserve more trips than you plan on using.

Choose stores and other locations close to your home - When you are going shopping or other places, choosing a location close to your home will reduce your travel time and costs, allowing Paratransit to operate more efficiently for the benefit of all customers.

Limit your onboard parcels - Operators are only allowed to assist the ADA-eligible customer with up to four (4) bags or items, (not to weigh over 25 pounds each), or one personal shopping cart (with no extra bags of groceries hanging on the outside of the cart).

Paratransit reserves the right to refuse transport of items exceeding the weight limit, or bulky items for lack of space in the vehicle.

Bring your ID - Fairchild Air Force Base requires special identification to enter the base. Please have your ID with you when you board the vehicle and ready when approaching the base.

Oxygen - if you are using oxygen, please bring an ample supply of oxygen.

Notify Paratransit of any change to your personal information - Call the Eligibility department at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711) if you move to a new address, change apartments, change your home telephone number, or emergency contact number.

It is important to keep your mailing address up to date and it can be different than your pick-up address.

Only ADA-eligible individuals are authorized to use a Paratransit ID card. If your ID card is lost or stolen, call the Paratransit Eligibility office immediately at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711). There is a charge for replacing lost, stolen, or damaged Paratransit ID cards.

Carry needed medication with you in case of delays. If you are diabetic or hypoglycemic, bring a small snack in case you travel longer than expected.

For medical emergencies CALL 911. Paratransit operators are not trained as paramedics and we cannot provide emergency transportation.

Standing Rides (Subscription Trips)

If you need a ride to the same place at the same time at least once a week for a period of at least three (3) months, a Standing Ride may be an option for you.

Once a Standing Ride is set up, you will not have to call to arrange this ride because the computer system automatically schedules these rides for you. However, you must remember to cancel any trip you are not planning to take. Standing Rides are meant to be long term with minimum changes and cancellations.

For information about arranging a Standing Ride, please call the reservations office at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711).

Standing Rides will be automatically cancelled on these major holidays:

New Year's Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

4th of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

Note: If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the standing ride will be automatically canceled on the federally observed holiday. If you want your usual trip on a holiday, you need to call at least one (1) day in advance to schedule the trip.

Canceling Your Trips

You must cancel a ride if you no longer require it. Please be sure to cancel both ends of your trip (pick-up and return) if appropriate. Customers must cancel their trip(s) a minimum of one (1) hour before the scheduled time to avoid a no-show penalty. If you need to cancel more than one (1) trip be sure to tell the Reservationist which trips to cancel. Paratransit van operators are not permitted to request, change, or cancel trips for you. It is your

responsibility to call the reservation office at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711).

Note: If you do not call to cancel your trip at least one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time, you may be considered a “No-Show.” See page 54 for more information on No-Shows.

If Your Appointment Is Running Late

If your appointment is running late and there is a chance you will not be ready at your scheduled return time, or if you have missed the van, call the reservations office at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711) as soon as possible. The Reservationist will help you schedule a return trip.



Same Day Service

Depending on the space available, limited same day trips may be accommodated. However, do not rely on same day service for your usual trip needs.

Note: If you have a medical emergency, you will be advised to seek another form of transportation. We are not able to accommodate medical emergencies.

When The Van Arrives

- When the van pulls up, please be ready to go. Every effort is made to pick you up within 30 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time.
- The van can arrive anytime in the 30 minute pick-up window and is still considered on time.
- The operator can only wait for you for five (5) minutes. If the operator arrives early you are not required to leave until your scheduled time.
- The operator's responsibility for your safety begins at the door where the trip begins, and ends at the door of your destination. That is door to door service.
- Operators are not caregivers and do not provide attendant to attendant service. If you need one-on-one service, a PCA or companion should travel with you.
- Operators are not required to approach a house where there is a risk of encountering an unrestrained animal.
- For safety reasons the pathway from the door to the van must be clear of ice, snow and debris.

- Have your fare ready and visible. Operators do not carry change and are not allowed to search purses, pockets, or backpacks for the fare. If you are using a pass, show it to the operator every trip.
- All Paratransit operators wear uniforms with the company name embroidered on them. They will identify themselves and will have their employee ID available.

Waiting Areas And Common Lobbies

- Operators will come into the common area of an apartment or office building to meet you.
- Customers will ONLY be escorted to and from the common areas.
- Operators are not permitted to go through facilities, up elevators, stairs or into individual offices to assist or locate customers.
- Operators are not permitted to enter your home, even to assist you with a wheelchair, carry your packages or groceries, or to help you with your coat.



Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

- A Personal Care Attendant is someone traveling with you who assists with your personal care and/or activities.
- If you require the assistance of a PCA and are not currently registered for a PCA, please call the Eligibility department at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711) and ask for information on how to register for a PCA.
- Your PCA rides free and must board and disembark board at the same location as you.
- Your PCA may also meet you at both ends of your trips.
- Your PCA may also accompany you on the regular fixed route bus and ride for free. Show the bus operator your Paratransit ID card with "PCA" printed on it.
- Paratransit employees cannot serve as a PCA.

A PCA Is Recommended Under The Following Conditions

- You are unable to be left alone.
- You are unable to travel independently beyond the door of the pick-up or drop-off
- You use a wheelchair and must travel up or

down more than one step.

- You are traveling on rough or uneven terrain, or any other conditions that present a safety hazard.
- You require supervision during transport on Paratransit.

Traveling With Guests (Companions)

- Each eligible rider may travel with one guest in addition to their PCA. Additional guests may travel if space is available.
- Your guest(s) must board and disembark at the same location as you.
- Be sure to tell the Reservationist you will be bringing a guest(s) with you when you schedule your ride.
- Operators cannot transport passengers who are not prescheduled for a trip.
- Guests pay the same fare as you pay when accompanying you on the van.
- In the event you have scheduled a ride for a guest to accompany you and they will not be taking the trip, please call a Reservationist at the reservations office at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711) to cancel their trip so we can offer that empty seat to another customer.

Transporting Children

- Children under six (6) years of age must be accompanied by an ADA-eligible customer.
- Up to three (3) children under six (6) years of age may accompany an ADA- eligible customer for free.
- Additional children or children six (6) years of age or older must pay the current Paratransit fare.
- Children under four (4) years of age (or under 40 pounds) must travel in an approved child seat. Children under one (1) year of age or under 20 pounds must travel in a rear facing approved child seat. Paratransit vehicle safety belts are compatible for use with child safety seats.
- You are responsible for securing the car seat and securing your child in the car seat.
- You are responsible for your child during trips.

Service Animals And Pets

- Service animals are animals that have been trained to perform specific tasks to assist the customer in their daily activities.

- Service animals are welcome on Paratransit vehicles.
- A service animal may travel on the floor near its handler, or if small, on the handler's lap.



- A service animal must be under your control at all times.
- The operators will not handle your service animal.
- If you need assistance getting on or off the van with your service animal, please plan to bring a PCA or guest to assist you.
- Any animal that is not controlled and/or exhibits vicious behavior will not be allowed to ride on the Paratransit vehicles.

Pets

- If you are traveling with a pet, it must be enclosed in a secured carrier.
- Your pet plus the carrier may weigh no more than 25 pounds and you must be able to handle the pet carrier by yourself.
- The pet carrier must fit under the seat or on your lap.

Wheelchairs And Other Mobility Aids

- The ADA requires Spokane Transit to transport manual or powered mobility devices (wheelchairs and scooters) used by people who are disabled and have a mobility impairment.
- A Paratransit customer and his/her wheelchair must fit on the lift and fit into the wheelchair securement area.
- If you are not sure if your mobility device will fit due to length, width or weight contact our Rider Hotline or Mobility department at 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711) for more information.
- If you and your mobility device together weigh more than 600 pounds, contact our

Rider Hotline or Mobility department at 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711).

- The operator can assist you in your manual wheelchair up or down one (1) step to a level surface. This rule also applies to unoccupied manual wheelchairs.
- For safety reasons, operators cannot assist people who use power wheelchairs or scooters up or down steps or curbs.
- Operators will not operate power wheelchairs or scooters.
- Operators will not transport you in a power wheelchair or scooter that is not operational.
- If your power wheelchair or scooter becomes inoperable while out in the community and you have a ride scheduled, please call the reservations office at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711) to advise Paratransit of the situation.
- If you have a ramp at your home site, it must meet ADA requirements for slope, be safely constructed and be cleared of any obstructions.
- If the operator determines that he or she cannot safely use your ramp, a Paratransit Supervisor will be notified. Operators will not escort you over the ramp until a supervisor has determined it is safe.

- If you have questions about the safety or design of your walkway or ramp at your pick-up or drop-off location, call the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711) for assistance.
- No one but the operator is permitted to operate the vehicle wheelchair lift or securement devices.
- If you use a wheelchair or other mobility aid, we ask that you keep it clean and in good working order.
- Some scooters and power chairs may be difficult to secure or are unsafe to occupy during transit. Because of this, the operator may recommend that you transfer to the passenger seat for your safety. You are not required to transfer to a passenger seat, but we encourage you to do so when your operator recommends the transfer.

Other Aids

- The operator will secure walkers inside the vehicle. Walkers, plus any attachments such as baskets, bags, or water bottles, should weigh no more than 25 pounds total.
- If you need to travel with an oxygen unit, a portable unit is preferred.

- If you have an oxygen cylinder, it must be transported in a cylinder holder and be attached firmly to a mobility aid or be in a cylinder cart on wheels. The operator will secure your cylinder cart inside the vehicle.
- The operator will load and secure your shopping cart on the vehicle. Items must be in the cart and not hanging from the cart.
- If the personal shopping cart has wheels and the lift is used the 25 pound weight limit does not apply.

The Lift

Customers who do not use wheelchairs may use the lift to board the van. Please tell the Reservationist that you wish to use the lift when you book the trip. This information will be given to the driver. If you have not made arrangements to use the lift, but need to, let the driver know and he/she will lower the lift for you.

Seatbelts

- For safety and security, all customers, guests and PCAs are required to wear seatbelts and remain seated with their seatbelt secured during transport.

- Seatbelt extensions are available for your comfort. Let the operator know if you would like to use one.
- Spokane Transit recommends that customers in wheelchairs use a personal lap belt in order to prevent a fall from the wheelchair seat during transport.
- Shoulder belts are available for customers traveling in wheelchairs. The shoulder belts are optional. Let the operator know if you would like to use one.

Fare Information

Please ask the Reservationist about the current fare for a one-way Paratransit trip. Fares are subject to change.

You can pay the fare using a variety of fare options. For information about the different fare options currently available, call the customer service department at 509-456-7277 (TTY Relay 711).

- Have the exact fare ready. Operators do not carry change and are not allowed to search purses, pockets, or backpacks for the fare.
- Put the fare in the fare box or hand it to the operator each time you board the vehicle.

- If you use a monthly pass, you will need to show it to the operator each time you board the vehicle.
- Guests/companions and children six (6) years of age or older are required to pay a fare.
- PCAs, and up to three children under six (6) years of age are not required to pay a fare.
- There is no charge for service animals and pets.

Paratransit Operators

Paratransit operators are trained in defensive driving, passenger assistance, disability awareness, and the safe operation of Paratransit vehicles. Please cooperate with the operators and follow their instructions.

- The operator's first responsibility is the safety and security of all the customers and vehicle.
- Minimize operator distractions. Operators will not engage in unnecessary conversation with you. In order to help the operator focus on his/her driving, please limit the conversation to questions or concerns about your trip.
- Operators, whenever possible, are encouraged to stay within sight of the vehicle, however, this is not always possible.

- Please be advised that you may be left alone on the Paratransit vehicle when the operator assists other customers.
- Operators are allowed to assist the ADA-eligible customer with up to four (4) bags, (not weighing over 25 pounds each), or one personal shopping cart (with no extra bags hanging on the outside of the cart).
- Operators cannot pick up packages (such as prescriptions) for you and bring them to you.
- Operators are not allowed to wait while you complete a quick errand.
- Operators are not authorized to handle medications or money, other than your fare.
- Operators cannot accept tips; they do appreciate letters of praise for good service.
- Operator will not approach a house where there is a risk of encountering an unfriendly or unrestrained animal. When the operator arrives, make sure your animal is contained or on a leash.

Travel To The Airport

When you are traveling to or from the Spokane International Airport, the operator will be happy to carry your luggage from your door to the van.

You may have no more than four items of luggage per ADA-eligible passenger, each item weighing no more than 25 pounds.

PCAs and companions are required to carry their own luggage and are limited to four (4) items, each one weighing no more than 25 pounds.

At Spokane International Airport, according to airport regulations, the operator must remain curbside. The operator will drop you and your luggage off at the curb nearest to the entrance to the airline on which you will be traveling.

On trips from the airport you must meet the operator curbside. Spokane Transit suggests you wait in the area by the luggage carousel and near a window. You must be able to see the van pull up and make your way to the curb.



NOTE: When you reserve a trip from the airport, you will be advised to call the reservations office at 509-328-1552, (TTY Relay 711) when your flight arrives to let Paratransit know you are waiting for your van ride. Because of the potential for delayed flights, a van will not be dispatched until you call.

Out Of Town Visitors

If you are planning to travel out of town and would like to use an ADA Paratransit service in another area, contact the STA eligibility department at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711) for assistance setting this up.

Visitors to the Spokane area, who are certified ADA eligible for Paratransit by another transit provider, or who provide documentation of a disability or self-certify that they have a disability that prevents them from using the regular STA buses, may use Spokane Transit's Paratransit service for up to 21 days in a year without completing the formal application process.

If more than 21 days of service in Spokane is needed in a year, visitors must apply through the Spokane Transit eligibility process. To request an application, contact the eligibility department, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at 509-325-6052 (TTY Relay 711).

Inclement Weather Or Local Disasters

Spokane Transit may delay or cancel public transportation service when adverse weather creates conditions hazardous for customers and operators, or when vehicles are unable to reach your residence

or destination safely.

Some trips may be canceled on short notice. Every effort will be made to provide life-sustaining trips such as dialysis or chemotherapy, as long as vehicles are able to safely reach your residence and destination.

Paratransit service announcements will be included with school closure information on the radio and television. If weather conditions deteriorate after Paratransit service has dropped you off at your destination, we will arrange a return trip home.

If your trip starts or ends on a hill or side street, Paratransit service may not be able to get there until the street is cleared of snow and ice and is safe to travel. Sidewalks, driveways, and ramps must be cleared of snow, ice, and debris so operators can safely assist customers to and from the van.

A Few Rules

Paratransit is a shared-ride service and our goal is to provide a safe, comfortable ride for all of our customers. Spokane Transit wants you to be aware of a few important rules for riding Paratransit. A complete copy of the rules regulating behavior on STA's vehicles, property, and in its facilities can be found under STA Rules of Conduct - page 59.

The following is a summary of activities which are not allowed:

- Drinking from non-spill proof cups, smoking, eating, and playing audio equipment without headphones or operating other noisy equipment in the van.
- Being noisy, seriously disruptive, violent, or threatening while in the van or during the boarding or disembarkment process.
- Engaging in behavior which is illegal or might cause harm to others.
- Refusing proper securement of a wheelchair or, refusing to wear the required seat belt.
- Possessing flammable liquids.
- Displaying a weapon in a manner that manifests an intent to intimidate another.
- Delaying or impeding the flow of transportation services.
- Removing a seat belt and/or walking around in the vehicle during transport.



Please Consider

- Perfumes and colognes may trigger allergic reactions resulting in cardio-respiratory distress for other customers. Avoid use of scented items when you will be riding the service.
- For the comfort and health of all customers, personal hygiene must be maintained within acceptable standards. Strong odor, animal dander and other allergens may cause distress for other customers.



Lost And Found

Spokane Transit is not responsible for items left on the van. Customers are responsible for keeping track of all personal belongings brought onto the van. If you discover you have left an item on a vehicle, call the reservations office at 509-328-1552, or the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711) as soon as possible. Items found on the van will be kept for no longer than 30 days.

No-Show Policy

A “No-Show” occurs when a customer:

- is not at the requested pick-up address, and the operator cannot locate the customer; or
- is not ready to board the vehicle within five (5) minutes of the arrival of the on time vehicle;
or
- Has not called to cancel the trip a minimum of one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time.

If you have requested a trip and cannot ride, it is your responsibility to cancel the scheduled trip. Failure to cancel rides delays the van, costs taxpayers thousands of dollars per year, and impacts customers who were scheduled to share the ride with you.

Excessive No-Shows may result in penalties, including suspensions of service.

Late Cancellation Policy

Last minute cancellations can slow down service and increase our costs. In the event of an emergency which forces you to cancel a ride on the day of your trip, call as soon as possible.

Paratransit services request a minimum of one (1) hour notice for cancellations. Cancellations with less than one (1) hour notice are considered a No-Show. When you call to cancel a trip be sure to cancel all of the trips you will not be taking on that date including return trips.

Cancellations At The Door

Cancellations made at the door for an on-time pick-up will be considered a No-Show. Cancellations made at the door because the van arrives after the 30- minute window will not be considered a violation.

NOTE: No-Shows or late cancellations that occur due to circumstances beyond the control of the customer should be reported to the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711) as soon as possible.

Warnings And Suspensions

Establishing a pattern or practice of No-Shows will result in warning and suspension penalties. Penalties are progressive, which means the severity of the penalty increases as long as the pattern and practice of No-Shows continues. Each penalty will be calculated based upon the customer's No-Show history over the previous 12-month period.

Administrative Review

Spokane Transit reserves the right to suspend your service for flagrant and/or repeated violations of the STA Rules of Conduct. You will be notified when any violations occur.

If you disagree with Spokane Transit's warning or decision to suspend service, you have the right to request an administrative review in writing or alternative format within 15 calendar days of the date of the warning or decision. To request an administrative review contact:

**Manager, Paratransit Services
Spokane Transit
1212 W. Sharp Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686
509-325-6015 (TTY Relay 711)**

NOTE: If you disagree with the result of the administrative review, you may request a formal appeal.

As soon as possible after you receive notice of the results of your administrative review, and no later than three (3) business days before the scheduled commencement of your suspension, contact the Ombudsman/Accessibility Officer at:

**Spokane Transit
1230 W. Boone Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com
509-325-6094 (TTY Relay 711)**

Spokane Transit Service Options

Based on operational needs, Spokane Transit Authority will determine whether your ride will be provided by STA or a transportation service provider under contract.

Let Us Know

We welcome feedback, suggestions, and comments about our service. Call us on the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 (TTY Relay 711) or write to:

**Manager, Paratransit Services
Spokane Transit
1212 W Sharp Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686
jstowe@spokanetransit.com**

When you contact the Paratransit office, please be specific and include the following information:

- Your name, ID number, address, phone number

- The date, time, and location of the incident
- The vehicle number or operator's name
- Your compliment, suggestion, or complaint

If you would like to contact someone at Spokane Transit who is outside the Paratransit Department or if you would like to remain anonymous, please contact:

Ombudsman/Accessibility Officer
Spokane Transit
1230 W. Boone Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201-2686
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com
509-325-6094 or TTY Relay 711

You can expect to receive prompt, accurate responses to your questions and concerns.

We hope this informational handbook has helped answer your questions about Spokane Transit's Paratransit shared-ride van service.

NOTE: If you have questions after reading this handbook, please call the Paratransit office at 509-328-1552 (TTY Relay 711) and choose Option 5. Our staff will be happy to assist you.

STA's Rules Of Conduct

SPOKANE TRANSIT ARTICLE III -- REGULATION OF CONDUCT



A. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

The following conduct is prohibited on STA Transit Vehicles, within or upon STA Facilities and Properties, and in connection with STA's provision of public transportation services:

1. Engaging in any conduct prohibited by RCW 9.91.025 or Spokane Municipal Code (SMC) 10.10.100;
2. Use of chewing tobacco except at a designated place; use of any nicotine or smoking device which causes any smoke, mist, vapor or the like to be emitted through

its use, within twenty-five (25) feet of any STA Transit Vehicle, shelter, or other public transportation facility, or within twenty-five (25) feet of any entrance, window, or air intake opening of STA buildings; smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar, or cigarette within twenty-five (25) feet of any STA Transit Vehicle, shelter or other public transportation facility, or within twenty-five (25) feet of any entrance, window, or air intake opening of STA buildings (RCW 9.91.025, RCW 70.160.020(1) (2) and RCW 70.160.030);

- 3.** Discarding litter other than in designated receptacles (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 10.10.100);
- 4.** Dumping or discarding, or both, any materials on transit property, including but not limited to hazardous substances and automotive fluids (RCW 9.91.025);
- 5.** Playing any radio, recorder, or other sound-producing equipment, except that nothing herein shall prohibit the use of such equipment when connected to earphones or an ear receiver that limits the sound to individual listeners or the use of communication devices by STA Employees, STA contractors or public safety officers in the line of duty, or the use of private communication devices used to

summon, notify, or communicate with other individuals (e.g., pagers, beepers or cellular telephones) (RCW 9.91.025);

- 6.** Spitting, expectorating, urinating, or defecating, except in the appropriate plumbing fixtures in restroom facilities (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 10.10.100);
- 7.** Carrying or having on their Person any flammable liquid, explosive, acid, or other article or material likely to cause harm to others except that nothing herein shall prevent a Person from carrying a cigarette, cigar, or pipe lighter or carrying a firearm or ammunition in a way that is not otherwise prohibited by law (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 10.10.100);
- 8.** Obstructing or impeding the flow of STA Transit Vehicles or passenger movement, hindering or preventing access to STA Transit Vehicles or property, including causing unreasonable delays in boarding or alighting, blocking or partially blocking an aisle or stairway with a package or object, reclining in more than one seat, or in any way interfering with or seriously disrupting the provision or use of transit services (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 10.10.100/ADA);
- 9.** Disturbing others by engaging in loud, raucous, unruly, aggressive, violent, harmful,

or harassing behavior (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 10.10.100/ADA);

- 10.** Destroying, defacing, or otherwise damaging STA property or any signs, notices, or advertisements on transit property (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 10.10.100);
- 11.** Consuming an alcoholic beverage, or in possession of an open beverage container holding alcohol in any Transit Vehicle. Carrying any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance in any Transit Vehicle, unless otherwise authorized by law (RCW 46.61.519);
- 12.** Consuming an alcoholic beverage, or in possession of an open container of alcohol on STA Facilities and Properties, except where permitted to do so by virtue of possession of a valid state and/or local liquor license and authorized by STA (RCW 9.91.025);
- 13.** Consuming, opening, having an open package containing marijuana, useable marijuana, marijuana-infused products, or marijuana concentrates on STA Facilities and Properties or in Transit Vehicles; including possessing marijuana or marijuana products in Transit Vehicles except in a package, container or receptacle that has not been opened or the seal broken or contents

partially removed. (RCW 46.61.745/RCW 69.50.445/SMC 10.15.220)

- 14.** Carrying, exhibiting, displaying, or drawing any firearm, dagger, sword, knife or other cutting or stabbing instrument, club, or any other weapon apparently capable of producing bodily harm, in a manner, under circumstances, and at a time and place that either manifests an intent to intimidate another or that warrants alarm for the safety of other Persons, unless otherwise authorized by law (RCW 9.41.270);
- 15.** Throwing an object at Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and Properties, or at any Person on STA Facilities and Properties or using a Transit Vehicle (RCW 9.91.025);
- 16.** Allowing any animal, including service animals, to occupy a seat on Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and Properties, to run at large, to unreasonably disturb others, leave waste matter on STA Facilities and Properties, or interfere with Transit-Related Activities. Except for service animals, animals are not allowed in STA Facilities and Properties or Transit Vehicles unless the animal is in a carrier designed specifically for animals, with absorbent material on the carrier floor;

- 17.** Roller-skating, rollerblading or skateboarding on STA Facilities and Properties (RCW 9.91.025/SMC 16.61.787);
- 18.** Riding bicycles, unicycles, mopeds and motorcycles, except where vehicle travel and access is permitted (SMC 16.61.787);
- 19.** Using STA Facilities and Properties for residential or commercial parking purposes except as authorized by STA or its designee;
- 20.** Operating, stopping, standing or parking a vehicle in any roadway or location restricted for use only by Transit Vehicles or otherwise restricted;
- 21.** Eating on Transit Vehicles or in prohibited areas of STA Facilities and Properties; STA permits transportation and consumption of beverages on Transit Vehicles when the beverage is in, a container with a lid. Using a public address system, loudspeaker or other sound amplifying device, except as authorized by STA or its designee (RCW 9.91.025);
- 22.** Sitting or lying on floors of Transit Vehicles, planters, handrails, stairs, counters, window sills, or any other area or fixture not specifically designed for seating purposes, or floors, sidewalks, asphalt, or other ground covering in or on STA Facilities and Properties;

- 23.** Sleeping, camping or storing personal property on benches and floors on or within Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and Properties, unless otherwise authorized by law;
- 24.** Entering or remaining upon any nonpublic areas of STA Facilities and Properties, including, but not limited to, staging areas, work areas and equipment rooms, except when authorized by STA or its designee;
- 25.** Entering or remaining in an area marked as reserved for senior citizens or Paratransit customers without proof of age or a ride booked on Paratransit;
- 26.** Entering Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and Properties without wearing a shirt and shoes or failing to maintain a level of personal hygiene that is not offensive to other customers;
- 27.** Engaging in commercial activities on STA Facilities or Properties or Transit Vehicles, except as such activities are authorized by STA or its designee in a written Permit, license, concession contract, lease or other written authorization;
- 28.** Engaging in Public Communication Activities on STA Facilities or Properties or Transit Vehicles, except as such activities are authorized by Articles IV and V herein;

- 29.** Engaging in any civic, cultural and other special event not included in the definitions of commercial or Public Communication Activities in Article II herein, except as such activities are authorized by STA or its designee in a written Permit, license, concession contract, lease or other written authorization;
- 30.** Committing any act which tends to create or incite, or creates or incites, an immediate breach of the peace, including, but not limited to (a) fighting, (b) racing, (c) obscene language or conduct tending to cause a breach of the peace, and (d) personally abusive epithets, or words or language of an offensive, disgusting or insulting nature, which epithets, words or language when addressed to the ordinary citizen are, as a matter of common knowledge, inherently likely to provoke a violent reaction of fear, anger or apprehension;
- 31.** Engaging in sexual activity with self or others while accessing or riding a Transit Vehicle; or on STA Facilities or Properties;
- 32.** Engaging in gambling or any game of chance for the winning of money or anything of value on STA Transit Vehicles or on STA Facilities or Properties (RCW 9.91.025);
- 33.** Use of Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and

Properties for non-Transit-Related Activities, except as authorized by STA (RCW 9.91.025);

- 34.** Use of electric charging stations [or outlets] located in The Plaza for periods in excess of thirty (30) minutes per day or blocking access to electric charging stations [or outlets];
- 35.** Entering Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and Properties when lacking the ability, because of illness, intoxication, or medication(s), to care for one's self;
- 36.** Extending an object or a portion of one's body through the door or window of a Transit Vehicle;
- 37.** Hanging or swinging on bars or stanchions, with feet off the floor, inside a Transit Vehicle or other STA Facilities and Properties; hanging onto or otherwise attaching oneself at any time to the exterior of a Transit Vehicle or other STA Facilities and Properties;
- 38.** Engaging in any physical sport activity on STA Facilities and Properties;
- 39.** Failing to pay the appropriate fare as required by STA, including failure to display proof of payment when requested to do so by a Person designated to monitor fare payment or failure to depart the bus or other mode of public transportation when

requested to do so by a Person designated to monitor fare payment (RCW 36.57A.230/RCW 9.91.025);

- 40.** Falsely representing oneself as eligible for a special or reduced fare or using any Permit or pass related to a Transit Vehicle by making a false representation of eligibility (RCW 9.91.025);
- 41.** Falsely claiming to be a transit operator, other transit employee, or volunteer; or through words, actions and/or the use of clothes, insignia or equipment resembling department issued uniforms and equipment, creating a false impression that he or she is a transit operator, other transit employee, or volunteer (RCW 9.91.025);
- 42.** Refusing to allow proper securement of a wheelchair on Transit Vehicles;
- 43.** Refusing to use personal restraints/seatbelts on Transit Vehicles providing Paratransit Services, unless customer has previously provided STA with written notice of a statutory exemption from such use (RCW 46.61.688);
- 44.** Interfering or tampering with mobile data computers, camera components; fare boxes, or any other equipment on Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities and Properties (RCW 9.91.025);

- 45.** Exceeding the number of no shows allowed under the Paratransit procedures for shared-ride service, provided that trips missed for reasons beyond the customer's control shall not be counted as no shows;
- 46.** Impeding Paratransit Services through non-compliance with the procedures set forth in the Paratransit Rider's Handbook;
- 47.** Violating an exclusion order issued pursuant to B.2 of Article III herein; (RCW 9A.52.070/080);
- 48.** Engaging in other conduct that is inconsistent with the intended use and purpose of Transit Vehicles or STA Facilities or Properties and refusing to obey the lawful commands of an agent of the transit authority or a peace officer to cease such conduct (RCW 9.91.025);
- 49.** Making hostile, harassing, threatening or nuisance statements to STA Employees, including but not limited to telephone calls placed to 509-328-RIDE(7433) or STA's administrative, Paratransit or operational system telephone numbers; and
- 50.** Violating any federal, state, or municipal civil and criminal laws.

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