

POINT PLUS

Central Transportation Paratransit Policies

Service Description

Central Transportation offers a Paratransit service program to individuals with qualifying disabilities. Paratransit is a demand response service where the vehicle does not follow a fixed route or schedule.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires federally funded public transit systems to provide a complementary Paratransit service for individuals with a disability whose condition prevents them from using the fixed route bus service.

This document is designed to provide information regarding Central Transportation's ADA Paratransit program. Some of the ADA standards cited in this document do not apply to non-ADA Paratransit programs.

Application Materials

The ADA Paratransit Eligibility Form and other information for Central Transportation's Paratransit services are available in print form at the Central Transportation office (2700 Week Street in Stevens Point). Forms are also available for download on Central Transportation's website, www.stevenspoint.com/transit.

Program Eligibility

Central Transportation determines eligibility upon review of a completed application form. The form contains information regarding the applicant's functional ability to board, ride or disembark from the fixed route buses.

Central Transportation, in accordance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, will determine eligibility no later than 21 days after receiving the completed application. This does not include time waiting for requests for more information from the applicant.

After the completed eligibility form is received, a Central Transportation staff member may call to schedule an in-person interview. Interviews are conducted by appointment. If necessary, transportation to and from the interview will be provided free of charge.

Within 21 days, a written response will be mailed to the individual notifying them of their eligibility status. If eligibility is denied, a reason for the denial will be included in the letter along with a copy of Central Transportation's Appeal Policy. Be advised that you have the right to appeal this decision.

Eligibility Criteria

Individuals meeting any of the following two criteria will be determined ADA Paratransit eligible as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

1. A person who cannot navigate the transit system without assistance. This includes an inability to board, ride, or disembark from a fully accessible Central Transportation bus.
2. A person who, because of a disability, cannot travel to or from the bus stop due to, for example, distance, terrain, weather, safety, or other obstacles that impede them due to their disability.

All Central Transportation buses are equipped with a ramp and other accessible features. All routes are served by accessible buses, so there is no eligibility based on inaccessible vehicles.

Type of ADA Eligibility

Unconditional (all trips) - An individual with a disability that cannot use the fixed route bus system under any circumstance.

Conditional or Trip by Trip (some trips) - An individual with a disability that can be reasonably expected to make some trips by bus, but requires Paratransit for trips under certain circumstances (e.g., deep snow or variable health conditions).

Temporary Disabilities - An individual with a disability that cannot use the fixed route bus system for a limited period of time.

Appeals Process

An appeals process will be available to those individuals wishing to dispute a conditional or denial of certification or service suspension. Appeal letters may be sent to:

Central Transportation
2700 Week Street
Stevens Point WI 54482

Appeals must be made in writing within 60 days of the decision date. Final decisions on all appeals will be made by the Stevens Point Transportation Commission.

Type of Service

Point Plus is a door-to-door service. Drivers are not permitted to enter beyond the threshold of any building. If additional assistance is needed, the rider must make arrangements to have a personal care attendant assist them.

Point Plus provides lift-equipped vehicles to serve the needs of riders who may need additional assistance getting on or off the bus. The service is shared ride, so riders may share the vehicle with other riders during their trip.

Service Hours and Days

When the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP) campus is in full session, trips can be scheduled for pick-up as early as 6:45 a.m. and as late as 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. On Saturday, trips can be scheduled for pick-up as early as 11:15 a.m. and as late as 4:30 p.m.

When the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP) campus is not in full session, trips can be scheduled for pick-up as early as 6:45 a.m. and as late as 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. No Saturday service is available when UWSP is not in full session.

No service on Sundays and the following observed holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Point Plus Paratransit service shall be available throughout the same hours and days as the Stevens Point fixed route bus service.

Service Area

Service is only provided inside the service area as defined by the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Central Transportation shall provide Paratransit service to origins and destinations within corridors with a width of three-fourths of a mile on each side of each fixed route. The corridor shall include an area with a three-fourths of a mile radius at the ends of each fixed route.

Levels of Service and Fares

The basic mode of service for complementary Paratransit is demand responsive, origin-to-destination. Door-to-door service is provided.

The Stevens Point Transportation Commission establishes fares for the Central Transportation system. The current Paratransit fare is as follows:

- Non-Agency Fare: \$2.00 per one-way trip
- Agency fare: \$10.00 per one-way trip

Non-agency fare riders can either pay the driver the exact fare at the time of the trip or establish a prepaid account.

Trip Scheduling

Paratransit riders reserve trips by calling the service provider's dispatch number during business hours of 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. On Saturday, when the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point campus is in full session, riders can call during business hours of 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

The caller should be prepared to provide the dispatcher the following information: first name; last name; phone number; how they intend to pay the fare; origin address; destination address; accompanying companion(s), if needed; accompanying equipment (e.g., oxygen tank and respirators); ambulatory or non-ambulatory and desired arrival time.

Next day or subscription service is available by contacting the provider's dispatcher. Trips can be scheduled up to 14 days in advance. The more notice given, the better the chance the requester has of obtaining a desirable pick-up time.

During periods of high demand, it may be necessary for dispatchers to negotiate pick-up times; however, the rider will not be required to schedule a trip more than one hour before or after the desired pick-up time.

Twenty-Four (24) hour advanced scheduling is encouraged, however same day call-ins will be considered on a space available basis. Central Transportation cannot guarantee same day ride requests, nor guarantee requested pick up times within the one hour window. Will-calls will be accepted, however the pickup time may need to be negotiated based on availability within the schedule.

Trip Purpose

The ADA prohibits restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose. All trips are served in the order received and as scheduled. For state and federal reporting purposes, riders may be requested to provide the reason for the trip, but will not be denied service based on trip purpose.

Service Reservations

There are two types of reservations: advance and subscription. Advance service includes trips scheduled for next day service. Subscription service is defined as trips that are set up for a rider to occur on a regular basis. The number of subscription rides is limited to 60 percent.

Subscription trips that are cancelled 25 percent or more within a 30 day period may result in the cancellation of subscription service. Subscriptions which have been inactive for longer than 30 days will be cancelled.

The rider is to be aware that subscription service will be automatically cancelled on all Federal holidays.

Multiple Destinations

Each trip includes one destination. Brief stops at locations before the scheduled destination will not be allowed. If multiple destinations are needed, each section of the trip must be scheduled separately and the rider must pay a fare for each ride.

Pick-Up Window

When your pick up time is scheduled, the vehicle can arrive within a 30-minute pick-up window. For example, if your pick-up window is 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Then we can pick you up anytime within that scheduled time frame. It is the rider's responsibility to be prepared to board the vehicle within the pick-up window.

5-Minute Wait Time

Once the vehicle arrives in the allotted pick-up window, the driver will wait for up to five (5) minutes for a rider. If the rider is not prepared to board within this five (5) minute period, the trip will be counted as a no-show and the vehicle will be dispatched to another location. It is the rider's responsibility to be able to clearly see the area where a vehicle would arrive for pick-up. The rider should be prepared to approach the vehicle when it arrives unless driver assistance was requested when the ride was scheduled.

Cancellations

When a rider needs to cancel a trip, the cancellation should occur at least one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time. A late cancellation (less than 1 hour) is considered a no-show (see the "No-Shows" policy below).

No-Shows

A no-show occurs when the Point Plus Paratransit vehicle arrives at your pick up location, waits the required five (5) minutes and the passenger does not board the vehicle. A late cancellation occurs when the scheduled trip is cancelled less than 1 hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time.

Three (3) no-shows within any 30 day period may result in suspended service. Any person suspended from service has the right to appeal the decision. ADA service may continue during the appeals process.

Prohibited Behavior

To ensure safety, our rider policy prohibits seriously disruptive behavior, public health threats, and refusal to comply with rules. If the prohibited behavior results from a disability, Central Transportation may require that a personal care attendant ride with the rider to control the prohibited behavior.

Personal Care Attendants and Companions

One personal care attendant (PCA) per ADA program rider is permitted to ride free.

One companion may accompany a program rider, but must pay the current cost for each one-way trip. Additional companions may ride and pay a fare, if space is available for safe transport. PCA's and companions must have the same origin and destination as the program rider. Arrangements for all additional companions must be made at the time of the reservation.

If a rider is being accompanied by a child who requires a car or booster seat it is the rider's responsibility to provide a car or booster seat that is age appropriate for the child. If the rider needs assistance to secure the car or booster seat, a personal care attendant is required. The rider or personal care attendant is responsible for the proper installation of the car or booster seat and proper securement of the child within the seat. Car or booster seats may not be left on the paratransit vehicle.

If you are traveling with a child who requires a car or booster seat, please inform us when you call to schedule a trip.

Visitors and Reciprocal Eligibility

Visitors are eligible for 21 days of service in a 365-day period beginning on the first day the service is used by the visitor. For additional days of service, the individual is expected to register under Central Transportation eligibility procedures.

For individuals who reside outside the Central Transportation service jurisdictions, Central Transportation shall certify an individual with a disability as a visitor when providing documentation of residence, a statement that because of their disability they are unable to access the fixed route, and, if requested, documentation of disability.

Central Transportation shall accept the certification of another transit agency for visitor service.

Medical Equipment

Central Transportation allows riders to bring medical equipment such as respirators and portable oxygen tanks on board vehicles. Oxygen tanks should remain upright at all times and must be secured to the mobility device or held in an upright position.

Carry on

Each eligible rider is allowed to carry on up to three (3) personal belongings and grocery bags.

Rider Policy

The purpose of the rider policy is to set guidelines for refusal or suspension of transportation services administered or provided by Central Transportation.

This policy applies to circumstances and/or behavior that occurs on Central Transportation property, vehicles, or while boarding any vehicle.

Services may be refused, suspended, or conditioned due to the following circumstances and/or behaviors:

- Documented Pattern of No-Shows
- Seriously Disruptive Behavior
- Public Health Threats
- Refusal to Pay the Applicable Fare
- Refusal to Comply with Safety Rules

Seriously Disruptive Behavior

Service may be refused to riders who engage in violent, illegal, or seriously disruptive behavior. Seriously disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Getting out of a seat while a Paratransit vehicle is in motion
- Leaving a Paratransit vehicle while it is parked to pick-up or drop off another rider
- Disturbing a vehicle operator while the operator is driving
- Violent behavior
- Physically or verbally threatening vehicle operator, dispatcher or other riders
- Smoking while onboard a vehicle
- Damaging or destroying vehicle equipment
- Engaging in conduct or activity that is a danger to the rider, other riders, or the driver
- Offensive language

Public Health Threats

Service will be refused to any rider who poses a potential public health threat. Examples of public health threats include, but are not limited to the following:

- The existence of excrement on clothes or on hands
- The existence of other body fluids, such as blood or vomit

Refusal to Comply with Safety Rules

A rider that refuses to comply with posted safety rules or driver instructions may be refused service.

Riders must be able to physically board and alight from the bus. If a rider cannot physically board or alight from a bus, the rider will need to acquire the resources needed to overcome their disabling condition, such as, a mobility device and/or personal care attendant.

Service Refusal Process

The vehicle operator has the authority to refuse service on the day of the violation. Violations of these rules will be reviewed by Central Transportation staff for further action.

The Transportation Manager, or the designee, is authorized to suspend or refuse the provision of service to riders who: (1) violate Central Transportation's no-show policy; (2) engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct; (3) pose a public health threat; (4) refuse to pay the applicable fare; or (5) refuse to comply with safety rules. The term of the suspension or refusal of service shall depend on the nature and seriousness of the prohibited conduct.

To the extent feasible, the rider shall be notified in writing. The written notification will state the specific basis for the proposed action, the proposed sanction, and the appeal process.

Central Transportation's Accessible Bus Service

ADA Paratransit programs are designed to provide transportation for individuals with disabilities that are unable to board, ride or alight from a bus; or when environmental or architectural barriers prevent a rider with disabilities from getting to or from a bus route stop. When these conditions are not present, riders with disabilities must utilize the fixed route bus to meet their mobility needs.

The fixed route bus offers a cost effective and accessible service. By presenting your Paratransit program identification card, you qualify for the reduced cash fare.

Each bus contains accessible features, including: kneeling capability (bus lowers to make the first step easier); a ramp for wheelchair boarding; on-board wheelchair securement areas; and stop announcements by drivers.

Travel Training is available upon request and is provided free to the rider. The Travel Trainer will assist the rider in planning their trip and will accompany the rider until such time the rider has the knowledge and confidence to ride independently.

Due to the high center of gravity of scooter-type mobility aids and the recommendation by scooter manufacturers, Central Transportation recommends that riders not be seated on the scooter while the vehicle is in motion. This recommendation is for the safety of the riders.

Central Transportation drivers are trained to safely secure wheelchairs. Mobility aide tie-downs are used to secure mobility devices. The vehicles are designed to utilize four (4) straps to secure the mobility device in a forward facing position. All four straps must be secured to the mobility device prior to the vehicle moving. Each vehicle provides seatbelts for all riders. It is required that all riders utilize them for their safety. Central Transportation drivers assist with the use of ramps and securement devices.

Central Transportation does not provide assistance when safety to drivers or riders is at risk. When a driver's or rider's safety is at risk, Central Transportation staff may recommend use of a personal care attendant or Paratransit service for the rider.

Central Transportation will provide to its riders, upon request, service materials including maps, applications and policies in an accessible format for disabled riders. If an accessible format is unavailable, Central Transportation will accommodate the rider's request to the best of its ability.