



Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)	
Date adopted:	Date revised: June 9, 2023

Purpose

This policy is written to establish operating and service guidelines and procedures for the implementation of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations for implementing ADA (49 CFR Parts 27, 37 and 38), and applicable state laws and regulations. My Ride Rock Hill operates services on a fixed route basis, with complementary paratransit provided to those individuals who are unable to ride fixed-route due to a disability. My Ride complies with ADA requirements with respect to such services.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of My Ride to comply with all the legal requirements of federal and state laws and regulations as they pertain to individuals with disabilities. The transit system provides quality transportation services without discrimination to all persons including individuals with disabilities. Discrimination on the basis of disability against any person by transit system employees will not be condoned or tolerated.

Goals

Service is provided in a manner that meets these goals to:

- 1) Provide safe, accessible, and dignified services to all persons, including individuals with disabilities.
- 2) Ensure that eligible individuals who are unable to board, ride or disembark from the fixed- route service are provided complementary paratransit that is comparable in service availability and quality to the fixed route service.
- 3) Expedite the safe and efficient boarding, securing, transporting and alighting of all passengers, regardless of mobility status.
- 4) Accommodate a wide range of mobility aids within the confines of available vehicles and commercial standard equipment.

Applicability

This policy applies to all transit system employees, services, facilities and vehicles. It applies equally to all persons needing and/or using the services provided by the system.

Definitions

Wheelchair: a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.



Disability: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Fixed Route Service: Vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule.

Mobility Aid/Non Wheelchair Mobility Device: A device used by a person with a mobility impairment to assist with mobility but does not meet the requirements of a wheelchair as defined by ADA. These include but are not limited to canes, crutches, walkers and “segways” when used by a person with a mobility related disability.

Route Deviation Service: A system that permits user-initiated deviations from routes or schedules. Sometimes referred to as deviated fixed route or flexible route service.

Securement Equipment: Equipment used for securing wheelchairs against uncontrolled movement during transport.

Securement Station: Space specifically designed to secure and stabilize wheelchairs on transit vehicles.

Service Animal: An animal that is individually trained to perform a task or tasks for people with disabilities.



GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Recruitment and Employment

As stated in the Personnel Resolution, the City of Rock Hill is an Equal Opportunity Employer and fully complies with ADA in its recruitment, hiring and continued employment practices.

Facility and Vehicle Accessibility

The transit system administrative facility, passenger facilities and vehicles shall meet or exceed the requirements of 49 CFR Parts 27, 37 and 38. All vehicles purchased for fixed-route and deviated fixed-route service will be accessible. Vehicles purchased for demand-response service will only be non-accessible to the extent that the demand-response system, when viewed in its entirety, provides the same level of service to disabled persons as non-disabled persons.

Vehicle and Route Assignment

To the extent possible, the assignment of particular types of vehicles will be based upon rider needs. All vehicles assigned to fixed routes and deviated fixed routes will be accessible. For general demand-response service outside the ADA Complementary Paratransit described below, My Ride will make all reasonable efforts to make an accessible vehicle available through coordination with York County Council on Aging whenever requests are made. Trip denials will be tracked by disability to monitor whether trips are disproportionately denied to individuals with disabilities because an accessible vehicle is not available. Should this be found to be the case, inaccessible vehicles will be replaced with accessible vehicles until the demand-response system, when viewed in its entirety, is accessible.

Maintenance of Accessible Features

Accessibility features on vehicles, including lifts, wheelchair securement devices and public address systems, will be maintained in operative condition. The preventive maintenance program of My Ride provides for regular and frequent maintenance checks of these features, as well as preventive maintenance as recommended by the equipment manufacturers. In addition, the lift must be cycled as part of each pre-trip inspection.

Drivers are required to report lift failures as soon as possible. Vehicles with inoperative lifts will be replaced as soon as possible. Additional fixed-route policies related to inoperative lifts are discussed under "Policies Specific to Fixed Route Service."

Wheelchair Accommodation

Transportation providers are required to carry a wheelchair and its user, as long as the lift can accommodate the size and weight of the wheelchair and its user, and there is space for the wheelchair on the vehicle. If a vehicle lift/ramp and securement area can accommodate a mobility device, My Ride will transport the device (and its user).



Boarding

Drivers and scheduling practices will provide adequate time for a passenger with a disability to board and/or disembark the vehicle, which includes adjusting the schedule if necessary to accommodate slower passengers and waiting for passengers to be seated before moving the vehicle. It is the responsibility of the driver to determine the safest location for passenger boarding based on conditions and individual needs upon arrival at the pick-up site. The passenger and/or their guest, escort or attendant will maneuver the passenger and mobility aid to the vehicle. Only a properly trained transit system employee can operate the lift, secure the wheelchair on the lift and into the securement station.

Use of Accessibility Devices by Persons with Disabilities Not Using a Wheelchair

A person with a disability who is not using a wheelchair or other seated mobility aid may use the lift to board or alight the vehicle upon request.

Priority Seating

With the exception of the wheelchair securement stations, the transit system does not require any passenger to sit in designated seating. However, this does not supersede My Ride's right to require any passenger who has caused a disruption in the safe travel of other passengers and/or driver to be required to sit in a specific area of the vehicle as a condition of transportation.

Priority seating for people with disabilities is designated by permanent signage in each vehicle. In cases where a person with a disability requests use of priority seating that is currently occupied by another passenger, the driver will ask that passenger to allow the person with a disability the use of the seat.

Driver Assistance

Drivers will make themselves available for assistance to persons with disabilities and will assist upon request of the passenger. Drivers will leave their seat to assist a passenger with using the vehicle ramp, lift and/or securement systems. Drivers will use the accessibility-related equipment and features on their vehicles as described in these policies.

Securement

Securement of the wheelchair class of mobility devices is the responsibility of the driver and drivers will be trained in the proper operation of all securement equipment based on manufacturer specifications. Drivers should not allow a passenger to ride if they are not secured properly unless the securement system will not accommodate the wheelchair. If the tie-down system is not compatible for the wheelchair the passenger is using, the driver will still make an attempt to safely secure the wheelchair. If the wheelchair cannot be secured because of the wheelchair design, the passenger still has the right to ride the vehicle. Drivers



cannot deny a passenger a ride based on the inability to secure the wheelchair. However, drivers must warn the passengers of the danger of riding in a non-secured wheelchair. Passengers who refuse to allow their wheelchairs to be secured may be denied service. Drivers must secure wheelchairs in the designated securement area only, even if the passenger wants their mobility device to be secured in a non-designated area.

Seat belts and shoulder harnesses are recommended but not required for passengers riding in their secured wheelchair.

Non-Standard Mobility Devices

Mobility devices that are not wheelchairs will be accommodated to the extent that the ADA-compliant lift and securement areas can safely do so. However, these devices are the responsibility of the individual passenger, and must be secured in a manner that does not interfere with the safe operation of the vehicles and the transport of other passengers.

Accommodation of Portable Oxygen

Individuals are allowed to travel with respirators and portable oxygen supplies on board, consistent with applicable U.S. Department of Transportation rules on the transportation of hazardous materials.

Transfer to Fixed Seating

All passengers using seated mobility devices have an option of transferring to fixed seating once on board the vehicles. Drivers may recommend, but never require, users of seated mobility devices to transfer to fixed seating.

Service Animals

In compliance with 49 CFR Part 37, the transit system allows trained service animals to accompany passengers with disabilities. The driver *will not* ask for proof of the qualifications of the animal, but *may* ask what tasks the animal has been trained to perform. However, any animal which is not under the passenger's control or which becomes a threat to other passengers may be restricted from riding.

Alighting

It is the responsibility of the driver to determine that the location for passenger alighting is safe. For fixed route, the driver will allow a passenger who uses the lift to disembark at any stop, unless the lift cannot be deployed, the lift will be damaged if deployed, or conditions at the stop would present unsafe conditions for all passengers. Only the driver will unsecure the wheelchair, secure it on the lift and operate the lift to return the passenger to the ground level.

Staff Training

All drivers and transit system staff are trained to proficiency in use of accessibility equipment,



the operating policies related to each of the service requirements described, and in properly assisting and treating individuals with disabilities with sensitivity. Mechanics are also trained to properly maintain lifts and other accessibility equipment.

Rider Information

All printed informational materials are made available in accessible formats upon request, for example, large print for persons with low vision or audio for blind persons, as well as accessible electronic formats.

Complaint Procedure

All complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability will be promptly and objectively investigated and forwarded to the ADA Coordinator. Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator or their designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days of the meeting, the ADA Coordinator or their designee will respond in writing or in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of City of Rock Hill and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint. For more information please refer to the City of Rock Hill's Grievance Procedure under The American's with Disabilities Act document.

Modification of Policy

If a passenger requires modification of any of these policies to accommodate their disability, they may request such a modification by contacting the ADA Coordinator. The transit system will work with the individual to find an accommodation solution.



GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION SPECIFIC TO FIXED ROUTE SERVICES

Inoperative Lifts

Vehicles with inoperative lifts must be taken out of fixed route service as soon as possible (no later than the beginning of the vehicle's next service day) and inoperative equipment will be replaced promptly with a spare vehicle. The inoperative lift will be repaired before the vehicle returns to service.

If there is no spare vehicle available to take the place of a vehicle with an inoperable lift on a route, the vehicle with the inoperable lift may be kept in service for no more than three days. In such cases, complementary paratransit will be provided to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the vehicle because its lift does not work.

Route Identification to Passengers Waiting at Shared Stops

Where vehicles for more than one route serve the same stop, each driver will stop and announce their route to passengers waiting at the stop. These stops have been listed for each route and the lists are provided to drivers during training.

Route Orientation Announcements

Fixed route drivers will announce the following stops to passengers on board the vehicle (using the vehicle's public address system on larger vehicles if such is available):

- 1) transfer points with other routes,
- 2) major intersections or destination points,
- 3) sufficient intervals along a route to orient a passenger with a visual disability to his or her location, and
- 4) any stop requested by a passenger with a disability.

Stops that fall into the first three categories are listed for each route and provided to drivers during training.

Bus Stop Accessibility

When establishing new bus stops, it is the policy of My Ride to select locations that are accessible to riders using mobility devices, either at the stop location, or close by if the actual stop is not accessible to a wheelchair user. When installing improvements at existing bus stops, the improvements will be made accessible in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines of the U.S. Access Board. In the event that a particular stop is not accessible, the transit system will provide complementary paratransit to any persons unable to use the fixed route system because that stop is inaccessible. If a person with a disability requests that an existing stop be made accessible, My Ride will work with the jurisdiction which is responsible for the street and sidewalk (if applicable) to include accessibility improvements to the stop within the jurisdiction's ADA transition plan for sidewalks.



ADA Complementary Paratransit

Individuals who are unable to use the fixed route service because of a disability will be provided demand-response service that is comparable to the fixed route service in service availability and quality. The policies for ADA Complementary Paratransit are provided in the next section.



**ADA GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES
FOR MY RIDE DIRECT PARATRANSIT SERVICES**

Introduction

My Ride provides ADA Complementary Paratransit services for individuals who are unable to use the fixed route service because of a disability. This is demand-response service that is equivalent to the fixed route service in terms of service characteristics as described under 49 CFR Part 37, Subpart F.

Eligibility Determination Process

To be eligible to use the ADA Paratransit service, local residents and long-term visitors must complete an ADA Paratransit Eligibility Determination Process. Eligible individuals will receive documentation of ADA paratransit eligibility, which can be used in other areas.

Eligibility Criteria

The certification process strictly limits ADA paratransit eligibility to the regulatory definition of eligibility. Only those persons who meet the regulatory definition will be given documentation indicating that they are “ADA Paratransit Eligible.” A person will be considered eligible for complementary paratransit if:

- The person is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment, and without assistance of another individual to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system, which is readily accessible to, and usable by individuals with disabilities. All riders who are using wheelchairs are to be accommodated by the paratransit system.
- The person with a disability is capable of using the system with the assistance of a wheelchair lift, but the route they want to use is not 100% ADA accessible.
- The person with a disability has a specific impairment-related condition, which prevents such individual from traveling to a fixed route boarding location or from a disembarking location.

Temporary eligibility for ADA paratransit service will be allowed for those with a disability that is only temporary in nature. Temporary eligibility is established during the certification process. This will be considered conditional eligibility. In addition, if individuals who are determined to be ADA paratransit eligible can use fixed route service under certain conditions (for example, trips for which they have been trained to navigate or under variable conditions that affect an individual’s disability), this eligibility will also be considered conditional and documentation which they are given will indicate the limitations/condition of their eligibility.



Application Form

A copy of the application form used for My Ride’s ADA paratransit service is available on the Myriderockhill.com website. Large print, audio, electronic, and other accessible formats are also available upon request.

Review Process and Time Frame

Upon receipt of a completed application, My Ride will review the application and determine the individual’s eligibility within 21 days of receipt. This responsibility has been assigned to the ADA Coordinator, or other designated individual.

Notification of Eligibility

Each applicant will be notified in writing by mail of his or her status within 21 days of submitting a properly completed application. If determined eligible, this letter will serve as temporary eligibility documentation as described below. The procedures for using ADA paratransit will be mailed with the eligibility letter in a format usable by the individual (such as large print, audiotape).

Those persons determined to be ineligible will be informed as to why their application was rejected and provided instructions on how they can appeal the decision (described below). This information will also be mailed with the eligibility letter in a format usable by the individual.

Documentation

My Ride will provide certified individuals with documentation that can be used as identification for reciprocal service in other areas of the state or in other communities in the United States that are required to provide ADA complementary paratransit service. This documentation will include the following information:

- Name of eligible individual
- Name of certifying transit provider – My Ride
- Telephone number of – My Ride’s ADA Coordinator
- Whether or not the rider requires use of a lift or ramp
- Expiration date
- Any conditions or limitations on eligibility
- Whether person is authorized to travel with a Personal Care Attendants (PCA)
- Information on the appeal process if the individual is denied eligibility or has conditions placed on eligibility.



Term of Eligibility

Once determined eligible, a person maintains eligibility for 3 years. Recertification is required every 3 years. Persons given temporary eligibility remain eligible for the duration of time of the temporary disability, as determined through the certification process and indicated in the documentation that is to be provided to the applicant.

Appeals Process

The applicant has 60 days to file a written appeal with My Ride. The appeal will be reviewed and decided by a designated My Ride/City of Rock Hill representative. The representative will have 30 days from the date of receipt of the appeal to render a decision concerning the appeal. The applicant will be presumed eligible until a decision has been reached. ADA regulations require that the person who makes a determination on an appeal must not be involved in the initial determination of the individual's eligibility.

ADA Paratransit Service for Visitors

ADA paratransit eligible individuals visiting from other localities outside of the City will also be served when eligible trips are requested. The visiting individual's local certification will be honored by My Ride. If a visitor does not have ADA certification from another jurisdiction, but makes a claim of eligibility, that claim will be honored as required by the ADA. However, My Ride may require documentation of the individual's place of residence and of his or her disability, if the disability is not apparent. If the visitor is planning on utilizing the service for more than 21 days in a 365-day period, he or she needs to formally apply for eligibility certification.

Personal Care Attendants

My Ride will provide paratransit service for a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) traveling with the eligible rider. The need to travel with a PCA will be determined as part of the eligibility determination process. It is important to note that the PCA may not directly be needed for transportation, but may be needed at the individual's trip destination (for example, to assist with grocery shopping) and thus need for a PCA will not be limited to those individuals who require assistance in traveling. Also, an individual who is certified as needing a PCA cannot be denied service if they chose to travel without a PCA.

SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS AND OPERATING POLICIES

Geographic Service Area

The ADA paratransit service area has been established in accordance with the ADA requirement to provide complementary paratransit service within 3/4 mile of a fixed bus route. For more information please visit myriderockhill.com/my-ride-direct.com

Days and Hours of Service

ADA paratransit is provided within the same days and hours as the fixed-route services.



Trip Purpose

ADA paratransit is provided for trips of any purpose; no priorities are placed on specific types of trips.

Trip Scheduling and Response Time

Reservations are accepted for ADA paratransit trips beginning 2 weeks in advance up until the day before the requested date. Riders may call and speak with a scheduler during normal business hours of Monday through Saturday, 7am-7pm. After hours, riders may leave a voicemail with the requested trip information. Every effort will be made to accommodate trip requests. To schedule a trip, please contact York County Access at 803-327-6694 ext. 2.

Service Capacity and Scheduling Flexibility

As required, My Ride will provide adequate capacity to meet all demand for eligible ADA paratransit trips. In some cases, it may be necessary to make use of the one-hour window of scheduling flexibility allowed by law (that is, a trip requested for 11:00 a.m. may be scheduled as early as 10:00 a.m. or as late as 12:00 noon). In order to meet the ADA requirement for ensuring adequate capacity, My Ride will monitor the following indicators of capacity to ensure that no patterns or practices of capacity constraints are found:

- **On-time performance** –

My Ride defines on-time performance as being within 15 minutes prior to and 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. The System will try to ensure that all trips are on-time, but because of the realities of operating conditions (e.g., poor weather, road construction, etc), 100 percent of trips will not be on-time. Should on-time performance fall below 90 percent, actions will be taken to address and improve trip timeliness.

- **Trip denials and missed trips** –

A missed trip is defined as a trip where the vehicle arrives late and the rider either is no longer there or declines the trip due to lateness. A denial is the when a ride cannot be scheduled for a time that is not more than one hour before or after the desired departing time. Since ADA prohibits a substantial number of denials or missed trips, My Ride plans to meet all requests for ADA paratransit service based on expected demand and to avoid any missed trips. There may be an insignificant number of trips that may be denied due to unforeseen conditions. There may also be an insignificant number of missed trips due to the realities of operating conditions. These will be monitored to ensure compliance with ADA.

- **Trips with excessive lengths** – Since the ADA prohibits substantial numbers of trips with excessive lengths (also called travel time or ride time), My Ride monitors travel times on ADA paratransit to ensure comparability to the same or comparable trip if taken on fixed route. *[Note: ADA paratransit trips should generally not take much longer, for example 15 or 20 minutes longer, than comparable trips on fixed route, which include not only the time on the bus but the time to walk to and from the bus stops at either end of the trip and the time to wait for the bus to arrive. These will be monitored to ensure compliance with ADA.]*



Subscription Trips

As permitted by the ADA regulations, My Ride provides a portion of its ADA paratransit trips on a subscription basis (also called standing orders). Unlike other ADA paratransit trips, trip priorities and waiting lists for subscription trip may be established. Since My Ride does not have capacity constraints, there are no restrictions on the percentage of trips that will be provided as subscription trips.

Companions

An ADA paratransit rider is permitted to travel with a companion (and more than one on a space-available basis). The eligible rider shall reserve space for the companion(s) when the rider reserves his or her own ride. Any companions traveling with the eligible individual must share the same trip origin and destination as the eligible individual.

Curb-to-Curb Service and Passenger Assistance

ADA paratransit services will be provided on a curb-to-curb basis. My Ride drivers will assist ADA paratransit riders with boarding and disembarking from vehicles and in securing their mobility devices. All drivers who operate ADA paratransit services will be proficiently trained in passenger assistance and sensitivity towards persons with disabilities.

Riders will be required to travel to the curb outside of their trip origin in time for their scheduled pick-up. Riders who require additional assistance in the form of door-to-door service in order to use the paratransit may request a modification of this policy by contacting the Transit Administrator at (803) 329-RIDE (7433). In such case, the driver will provide assistance on a door-to-door basis. This ensures that the system meets the ADA requirement to provide service on an "origin to destination" basis. While limited assistance in guiding a passenger from their door to the curb may be provided on a case-by-case base, this must be prearranged and indicated when the trip is scheduled.

Under no circumstances will staff of the My Ride provide weight-bearing assistance, leave a vehicle unattended with passengers on board, enter a rider's home, or take actions that would be clearly unsafe. If more extensive assistance is needed by the individual than My Ride can provide as provider of public transportation, the individual will be responsible for arranging for personal assistance. The ADA coordinator will work with the individual and/or their caregiver/social worker to clarify parameters of the assistance provided by the driver and formally document this in a letter sent to the individual.

Wheelchair Accommodation

Transportation providers are required to carry a wheelchair and its user, as long as the lift can accommodate the size and weight of the wheelchair and its user, and there is space for the wheelchair on the vehicle. If a vehicle lift/ramp and securement area can accommodate a mobility device, My Ride will transport the device (and its user).



No Show Policy

If no shows become a problem for ADA paratransit riders, My Ride will establish an ADA No-Show Policy with input from the disability community. A No Show Policy allows a transit system to restrict riders who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips, which can have a negative effect on paratransit performance.