



A GUIDE FOR USING MET
ADA PARATRANSIT TRANSPORTATION

Metropolitan Transit Authority
of
Black Hawk County

Revised 5/24/2023

Welcome to MET

Metropolitan Transit Authority (MET) looks forward to serving your transportation needs. In order for us to serve you best, we ask that you read carefully the information in this manual.

Metropolitan Transit Authority

1515 Black Hawk Street

Waterloo, IA 50702

Phone: 319-234-5714

For paratransit schedulingpress 2

For paratransit cancellations
or to check on a pick-up timepress 3

For fixed route informationpress 4

For special and weather
Related announcementspress 5

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Welcome..... | 3 |
| Service Area | 6 |
| Type of Service..... | 6 |
| Wheelchairs | 6 |
| On-Time Arrivals..... | 7 |
| Passenger Assistance | 7 |
| Destinations | 8 |
| Changes / Cancellations | 8 |
| No Shows | 9 |
| Emergency Medical Trips..... | 12 |
| Holidays..... | 12 |
| Safety | 13 |
| Refusal of Service..... | 13 |
| TDD / TTY | 13 |
| Animals..... | 14 |
| Fixed Route Service..... | 14 |
| Certification..... | 14 |
| Obtaining Certification Forms..... | 14 |
| Approval | 15 |
| Denial | 15 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Attendant / Companion..... | 16 |
| Reservations | 16 |
| Subscription Reservations..... | 18 |
| Hours of Service..... | 18 |
| Fare of Person with Disabilities | 18 |
| Visitors | 19 |

Visit us on the web at www.mettransit.org

Service Area

Passengers who have a trip origin and trip destination within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the existing MET fixed routes serving Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Evansdale will be served. This may sometimes include trips that fall slightly outside the city limits may be considered. Please contact scheduling at 319-234-5714 if you are unsure if your desired trip falls within the paratransit service area.

Type of Service

The service provided is door to door. Drivers are not to enter any private residence.

Wheelchairs

Passengers using wheelchairs will not be assisted up or down steps. A ramp shall not have a grade in excess of standard grade, which is 1:12. All wheelchairs should have foot plates and fully functional brakes which must be in the locked position when the passenger is on the lift or when the vehicle is in motion.

MET Transit will transport passengers who occupy wheelchairs if the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate them, unless doing so is inconsistent with “legitimate safety requirements”, such as wheelchairs blocking the isle or interfering with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency

On-time Arrivals

At the scheduled pick-up time the passenger should be ready, and at the door when the vehicle arrives. Drivers are instructed to wait no longer than five minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time for passengers. Drivers arriving ten minutes before pick-up time or ten minutes after pick-up time shall be considered operating on-time. If your ride is fifteen (15) minutes late please call dispatch at 234-5714.

Passenger Assistance

Passenger assistance including walking support or maneuvering of a wheelchair (excluding wheelchairs on steps).

Drivers are instructed not to run errands for passengers. Please do not ask them to do so.

Assistance with minor packages that the passenger is unable to handle is allowed. Drivers are not to make multiple trips carrying packages, groceries, and laundry or to handle heavy packages. For example. If you have 10 (ten) bags of groceries and the drivers is only able to carry five (5) of those bags, you will be responsible for the rest. Passengers who have an item or more items than they can handle should have other assistance with them or make separate arrangements for package delivery.

Passengers should be able to close or lock home doors or have the appropriate assistance from an aide. This is not the responsibility of the driver.

Destinations

Drivers are instructed to stop at the designated destination only. Travel arrangements with more than one destination will be treated as separate trips and must be scheduled as such.

Drivers will not enter a facility beyond the receptionist desk to look for a passenger. Passengers should be ready at the door of the scheduled location ten (10) minutes prior to scheduled pick up time.

Upon arrival at a destination, if a driver finds the destination locked or unattended for other reasons, the passenger may be dropped at an appropriate nearby location or return to trip origin as soon as the driver's schedule permits. A second attempt to transport the passenger to that destination will not be made in the same day.

A destination may only be changed by contacting dispatch.

Paperwork needs to be filed in advance if a passenger can NOT be left alone.

Changes-Cancellations

We require at least one-hour notice prior to pick up of any change or cancellation.

There is staff in at 6:00 am Monday through Friday and at 8:45 am on Saturday to take calls.

Any cancellations received less than one hour from the scheduled pick-up time will be regarded as a no-show and will be subject to the no-show policy.

To cancel a ride, call 234-5714. Give the name and phone number. Give the date(s) and time(s) of the rides to cancel. Give the address of the pick-up and destination. Drivers are not allowed to take cancellations.

For paratransit scheduling.....press 2

For paratransit cancellations
or to check on a pick-up time.....press 3

No Show / Late Cancellation Policy

In order to be considered a no show, each of the following conditions has occurred:

- The customer has a scheduled ADA paratransit trip
- The ADA vehicle arrives at the scheduled pick-up point no later the ten (10) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.
- The driver waits at least five (5) full minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time, and the customer fails to board the vehicle.

Late cancellations will be counted as a no-show for the purposes of this policy.

- A late cancellation occurs when the customer (or customer’s representative) fails to call dispatch one (1) hour or more prior to the scheduled pick-up time to cancel his/her ride.

If the customer has more than one ride scheduled, having a no show does not automatically cancel the rest of the rides for the day. It is still the customer’s responsibility to call and cancel the remaining rides for the day. If the rides are not

cancelled, and the customer does not ride, the result would be additional no shows.

MET will track scheduled trips, no shows and late cancellations by customers. MET will identify customers who have a no show / late cancellation within any thirty (30) day period which meet the following criteria. Customers who meet these criteria will be in violation of the no show / cancellation policy:

- No show / late cancellations represent ten percent (10%) or more of their scheduled trips.

On the day the rider violates the no show / late cancellations policy, the following progressive action will be taken:

- 1st Occurrence – A warning letter will be issued advising the rider that he / she has violated MET’s no show / late cancellation policy.
- 2nd Occurrence –Customer will receive a three (3) day* suspension.
- 3rd Occurrence - Customer will receive a five (5) day* suspension.
- 4th Occurrence - Customer will receive a ten (10) day* suspension.
- Additional occurrences – Customer will receive a twenty-five (25) day* suspension.

*For the purposes of this policy the suspension period means days that MET Transit is in operation, which excludes Sundays and holidays.

Passengers who contact MET to appeal no shows will be provided with a form to complete and submit. must be completed and submitted to MET for consideration within ten

(10) days of the no show / late cancellation violation. MET will investigate the customer's appeal using computer and internal records to determine if the challenge is valid. Also, consideration will be given to customers with no shows that were a result of a circumstance beyond their control.

No shows are EXCUSED when the trip is missed for the following reasons:

- The customer is sick
- The customer has a family emergency: Death or illness of family member, or other family emergency.
- Mobility aid failure
- Appointment cancelled / delayed for reasons not the customer's fault.
- Adverse weather: Snow storm, extreme heat or extreme cold.
- Acts of God: Floods, earthquakes, etc.
- Staffing error: The transit coordinators did not make all the cancellations the client requested; or customer just found out the ride was scheduled for the wrong day, time, or location; or the customer was not informed that his / her pick up time was changed and was not ready.

No shows or cancels are NOT EXCUSED when the trip is missed for the following reasons:

- Customer didn't want to travel today.
- Customer changed their mind about going to the appointment
- Customer didn't know or forgot that he / she had a ride scheduled or was supposed to call to cancel.
- Customer got another ride

- Customer told someone else he / she was not planning to travel (driver, facility, etc.) or someone else scheduled the ride for him / her.
- Customer does not want to ride with specific driver or passenger, or on a specific vehicle.

Appealing a Warning or Suspension

Customers are given the opportunity to appeal a suspension of service before MET by Unless a violation is for safety reasons, suspension of service will not begin until the appeal process is complete. Customers will be notified in writing of the final decision.

Repeated no-shows may result in suspension of service.

Emergency Medical Trips

Emergency medical trips should be handled by an ambulance service. Ambulance service can be reached by calling 911.

Holidays

Service will not be provided on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day or days celebrated as such.

Service is stopped 1(one) hour early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Safety

Please keep ramps, sidewalks and driveways free of ice, snow, toys and other obstructions which may present a safety hazard. If any of these hazards are present, MET reserves the right to refuse service. Drivers are instructed not to lift passengers or wheelchairs.

During the winter when side streets may not be cleared, MET staff will notify passengers if a bus is unable to get to their pickup. Drivers will assist passengers when the walks are cleared of snow and ice. It is a passenger's responsibility to have walks cleared. Transportation will not be provided if walkways are not kept free of snow and ice.

Passengers carrying hazardous materials (ie: kerosene, gasoline, firearms, fireworks, etc.) will not be allowed on transit or paratransit vehicles.

Refusal of Service

MET may suspend or refuse service to any individual who willfully:

- abuses the policies of MET
- exhibits disregard for his / her own safety, the driver, or that of other customers
- interferes with the safe operation of the vehicle.

TDD / TTY

For TDD Communications please contact: Relay Iowa Telecommunications Relay Service at 1-800-735-2942.

Animals

Any and all animals carried on MET vehicles must be service animals or in a closed carrier or container.

Fixed Route Service

Any ADA eligible passenger, who attempts to board a fixed route vehicle and is unable due to mechanical breakdown of the ramp / lift, will be accommodated by the driver, who will radio dispatch. A paratransit vehicle will be sent within one (1) hour and the ADA eligible passenger will ride at the regular fixed route fare.

Certification

All persons riding paratransit must be certified as ADA eligible. These guidelines are established by the Federal Government.

Obtaining Certification Forms

Persons may obtain a certification form by calling MET Transit at 234-5714 or on the web- www.mettransit.org. The form needs to be completed by the person requesting to be certified or by a physician or case worker. All forms are to be returned to:

Metropolitan Transit Authority
1515 Black Hawk St
Waterloo, Iowa 50702

A MET Official will review your certification form to determine eligibility for paratransit service. A MET Official will notify the applicant of a decision within three (3) weeks. If a decision is not made within 21 days, presumptive eligibility will be granted, and the rider will be permitted to access paratransit

services until a final decision is made. No service will be provided until you are certified by MET, except in the case of an appeals hearing. See page 13 on denials.

Approval

Once approved, an I.D. card of Paratransit Eligibility will be issued. This card is numbered and will expire in two (2) years. Replacement after expiration is the responsibility of the card holder. The card identified persons to the local transit Authority. **This is your responsibility. MET does not issue reminders for notice of expiration.**

The card must be used to identify paratransit eligibility for any paratransit system in the United States. Be sure to check guidelines of any system outside of this area.

Denial

If a request for certification is denied, or if only conditional or temporary eligibility is granted, the decision may be appealed in writing to:

Metropolitan Transit Authority
1515 Black Hawk Street
Waterloo, IA 50702

A hearing will be arranged with MET's Board of Trustees. This is mandated by ADA. Persons appealing will be notified of the date and time of the hearing and may choose to attend. Paratransit rides are available for the purpose of this meeting. The Board will render a decision within 7 days after the appeals process is complete.

Attendant / Companion

Any person certified as ADA Eligible may travel with one guest or more on a space available basis. A guest will pay the same fare as an eligible ADA passenger. A person assisting an eligible passenger is not considered as a guest. There is no charge for a required personal care attendant. If you will be traveling with a guest or personal care attendant, please schedule for the extra persons seat on the vehicle ahead of time.

Reservations **When: Traveling within Waterloo
OR
Traveling within Cedar Falls**

When traveling **within** a given city, our goal at MET Transit is to schedule your pick-up time 30 minutes prior to your appointment time. If the scheduled time given to you by the scheduler changes by more than 10 minutes, you **will** be called. Every effort is made to pick you up in a timely manner but due to the large volume of daily calls received, your pickup time could vary up to an hour as allowed per ADA Guidelines.

For example: If you need to be to work at 9:00 am, your scheduled pickup time will be 8:30. If that time varies by more than 10 minutes you will receive a call from MET informing you of your new pick-up time. This could mean that your pickup time is as early as 7:30 am as per ADA guidelines.

If your driver arrives early and you are ready, your driver will take you.

**When: Traveling between Waterloo and
Cedar Falls
Or
Traveling between Cedar Falls and Waterloo**

When traveling **between** two cities our goal at MET Transit is to schedule your pick-up time 45 minutes prior to your appointment time. If the scheduled time given to you by the scheduler changes by more than 10 minutes, you **will** be called. Every effort is made to pick you up in a timely manner but due to the large volume of daily calls received, your pickup time could vary up to an hour as allowed per ADA Guidelines.

For example: If you need to be to work at 9:00 am, your scheduled pickup time will be 8:15. If that time varies by more than 10 minutes you will receive a call from MET informing you of your new pick-up time. This could mean that your pickup time is as early as 7:15 am as per ADA guidelines.

If your driver arrives early and you are ready, your driver will take you.

Reservations may be made by calling 234-5714. Reservations will be taken from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday. You may leave a voicemail after hours or on the weekend with full details of a trip request, and we will attempt to schedule a ride as soon as next-day. You will receive a call confirming or for more information on any trip requests made after hours.

It is your responsibility to have correct information ready for the scheduler when you call (i.e.: appointment time, return time and exact address of your appointment or where you need to be dropped off). Schedulers will not look up addresses for you.

Reservations will be taken up to two (2) weeks in advance.

Subscription Reservations

A subscription reservation is one that is repeated the same day of the week and time of day to and from the same locations. An example would be a request for transportation every Monday and Wednesday at 11:00 am to Covenant Medical Center. We will make every effort to honor subscription reservations.

Changes in subscription reservations should be made as much in advance as possible but no later than the day before by 4:00 pm. Frequent changes in subscription reservations may result in suspension of subscription service.

Hours of Service

Hours of Service for Persons with Disabilities:

Mon-Fri 5:45 am – 6:15 pm

Saturday 7:15 am – 5:45 pm

NOTE: Latest available pick-up times are one half hour before quitting time.

Fare for Persons with Disabilities

Paratransit Fare Structure

1-way ticket is a three (\$3) dollar ticket

Sheet of ten (10) tickets is thirty (\$30.00)

Tickets may be purchased from the driver, from some area agencies or from the MET office. You may also purchase tickets by mail by mailing a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

MET Transit
1515 Black Hawk St
Waterloo, IA 50702

Please allow two (2) weeks for return.

All fares and tickets are to be collected from the passenger prior to boarding. Please have the fare ready when the driver arrives. Drivers do not carry change.

Visitors

MET Paratransit will provide paratransit service to visitors with the proper identification. Proper identification can include their Paratransit certification ID card from their previous place of residence, or other documentation of their disability (particularly if the visitor's home area does not have paratransit services). Please contact us to request visitor paratransit eligibility even if you feel you may not have the proper paperwork—MET will do our best to accommodate you. MET Paratransit will provide service up to 21 days; after that, the visitor may be required to apply for eligibility through the same processes established by residents.