

CATA/VCT ADA Paratransit Program



cata

Crawford Area Transportation Authority Office

214 Pine Street • Meadville, PA 16335

Ph. 814-336-5600 • Toll Free 1-855-338-5600

Venango County Transit Office (powered by CATA)

134 Hanger Drive • Franklin, PA 16323

Ph. 814-432-7255

information@catabus.org

www.catabus.org



Background:

The Americans with Disability Act of 1991 specifies that all transit authorities who offer fixed route services must make available door-to-door paratransit service to those individuals who cannot use the fixed route bus based on disability.

ADA Regulations strictly limit the use of ADA Paratransit Service to the following individuals: Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment & without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or boarding device) to board, ride or disembark from any vehicle on the system, which is readily accessible to and usable for individuals with disabilities; OR any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on the fixed route system.

To become qualified for ADA Paratransit Service you must complete an application (attached to this brochure) and submit the application to CATA/VCT for review. CATA/VCT will make a determination regarding your status for the ADA Paratransit Service. You will either be granted permanent status, yearly recertification status, temporary status or denied ADA Paratransit Service.

Federal Guidelines for ADA Paratransit Service:

1. Once approved for ADA Paratransit Service, you can utilize the service at any time that the fixed route bus operates.
2. ADA Paratransit approved riders are permitted to have a personal care attendant (PCA) ride for free so long as the PCA boards and disembarks the bus with the rider. A family member must be registered as a PCA in order to ride for free.
3. ADA Paratransit approved riders are permitted to have 1 companion ride with them. The companion must pay the ADA fare. PCA's are not considered companions.
4. ADA Paratransit approved riders can have more than one companion ride with them so long as there are available seats on the bus. CATA/VCT is not required to make accommodations for more than 1 PCA and 1 companion.

Q. Who is eligible for ADA Paratransit service?

A. Any person under the age of 65 that lives within $\frac{3}{4}$ of one mile of the boundaries of the CATA/VCT fixed route network and cannot use the fixed route due to a physical or mental disability. **CATA/VCT does not discriminate against individuals based on disability. If a customer feels that they have been discriminated against, complaint forms are available at the CATA or VCT Office, or at www.catabus.org.**

Q. How much does it cost to ride the ADA Paratransit Service?

A. Federal law allows CATA/VCT to charge twice the fixed route fare for persons who use the ADA Paratransit Service. **The current one-way fare for an ADA trip is \$2.50 for CATA and \$3.00 for VCT.**

Q. Where can I go on the ADA Paratransit Service?

A. Once approved for ADA Paratransit Service, you can travel to any destination along the CATA fixed route. CATA/VCT cannot limit your usage of ADA Paratransit Service once you are approved.

Q. What if I need to go somewhere that the CATA fixed route bus does not go?

A. Then you cannot use ADA Paratransit Service for that trip. You must either pay full fare or utilize another approved sponsor for that trip.

Q. If I am determined to be ADA Paratransit eligible and I want to ride the fixed route bus instead, how much does it cost to ride the fixed route bus?

A. CATA/VCT encourages **EVERYONE** to ride the fixed route bus. If you are determined to be ADA Paratransit eligible, you also qualify to ride the fixed route bus for a discounted rate. A one-way trip for ADA Paratransit eligible riders on the fixed route is only **\$0.75**. In order to utilize the fixed route at a discount, you must show your ADA card to the bus driver (bus drivers do not carry change). This discount does not apply to companions. Companions must pay the full fixed route fare (\$1.25 in Crawford, \$1.50 in Venango).

Q. How do I schedule an ADA Paratransit trip?

A. You must schedule your trip during normal business hours which are Monday - Friday between 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. CATA/VCT cannot accept same day reservations. Reservations must be made at least one day prior to the day of travel, however, placing your reservation two business days in advance or by 2pm the business day before is greatly appreciated. ADA law allows CATA/VCT to negotiate trip pick up and drop off times, but all trips must be provided within one hour of the initially requested time. To make a reservation, call 814-336-5600. If you need to schedule a trip for a Monday, you must call before 5:00pm on the Friday before your trip. You must also state that you are an "ADA" eligible rider. **Information on the days and hours of CATA/VCT - ADA Paratransit operation is available in the Shared Ride Service Brochure and on the Internet at www.catabus.org.**

Q. Is there a penalty for not showing up or canceling my scheduled trip?

A. YES. You must call CATA/VCT at least two hours before your scheduled pick up time to cancel your trip. Failure to do so will result in your trip being labeled as a "No-Show". CATA/VCT will issue you a letter after the first no-show. **Customers may be suspended after exhibiting a pattern or practice of no-showing. CATA/VCT reviews all recorded No-Shows [and late cancellations] to ensure accuracy. Further information is available on the back cover of this brochure.**

What is the process for determining if I am ADA Paratransit eligible?

All information about ADA Paratransit Service is available in accessible formats including large print upon request.

1. You must complete the attached ADA Paratransit application and return it to the CATA office, 214 Pine Street, Meadville, PA 16335.
2. Approval of an ADA Paratransit application will be determined by CATA/VCT. The Applicant may be asked to undergo an exam from an independent physician group to verify information on the application. CATA/VCT will notify you if a doctor's review is warranted and will provide location options for the exam to be done at no charge. Free transportation to and from the exam will be provided by request. You must call CATA/VCT at least one business day in advance of your appointment if you need to arrange transportation.
3. CATA/VCT will review your application and submit a decision to you in writing regarding your ADA Paratransit status within 21 days of receiving your application. Should you not receive a decision within 21 days, you can request and use ADA Paratransit Service until a decision is made.
4. CATA/VCT may require recertification of the eligibility of ADA Paratransit eligible individuals at reasonable intervals.
5. If your application for ADA Paratransit service is denied, you have the right to appeal the decision. All appeals must be submitted to CATA/VCT in writing within 60 days of notice of the decision. CATA/VCT may request a face to face meeting and/or forward the appeal to the CATA Board of Directors for consideration.

CATA/VCT ADA Paratransit Application

The information in this application shall be used strictly by the Crawford Area Transportation Authority in determining the eligibility of ADA Paratransit Service. This information may be shared with your primary care physician to verify accuracy.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Emergency Contact Name and Phone: _____

Please describe 1. The disability that restricts you from using the fixed route bus and 2. how this disability restricts you from riding the fixed route bus.

Is this condition temporary? If yes, what is the expected duration of this condition?

Do you know that CATA/VCT fixed route buses are fully ADA compliant with wheelchair securement areas, preferential seating for the disabled and have low floor entry?

Yes No

Can you ride the fixed route bus on certain occasions?

Yes No Sometimes

If yes or sometimes, please specify when you can ride the fixed route bus: _____

Have you ridden the CATA/VCT fixed route bus within the last 4 weeks?

Yes No

Can you wait at a bus stop for up to 10 minutes at a time?

Yes No Sometimes

If yes or sometimes, please specify when you can wait at a bus stop: _____

When traveling, do you require the assistance of any of the following (check all that apply.)

Personal Care Attendant

Manual or Electric Wheelchair

Power Scooter

Cane

Service Animal

Crutches

Other _____

Can you travel, unassisted: (Check all that apply)

200 feet

3 blocks or about 1/4 a mile?

6 blocks or about 1/2 a mile?

9 or more blocks or about 3/4 a mile?

Suspension Policies for a Pattern or Practice of Excessive No-Shows and Late Cancellations

Established Thresholds for Considering Suspending a Rider Due to Excessive - No-Showing - (The A, B, C's)

A. CATA reviews all recorded No-Shows [and late cancellations] to ensure accuracy before recording them in a rider's account. Each verified No-Show [or late cancellation] consistent with the above definitions counts as one [1] penalty point per calendar year.

The Point Scale and Corresponding Actions are:

1. 1 accumulated penalty point per year - First Warning Letter
2. 2 points per year - Second Warning Letter
3. 3 points per year - Third Letter and Possible Loss of Standing Order

A fourth No-Show will generate a letter stating that they have exceeded the maximum number of No Shows, and if they miss another trip without good cause, they **may** face suspension of service.

B. If reaching 5 points per year, the rider will be suspended [*during the following month and after appeal-review if warranted*] if the number of No-Shows they have accumulated exceeds **1.5%** of their total scheduled trips during a year without "**Good-Reason**".

Our system-wide average for no-shows is .5%

C. Suspensions are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1st violation: | [5 day] suspension |
| 2nd violation: | [10 day] suspension |
| 3rd violation: | [15 day] suspension |
| 4th violation: | [20 day] suspension |
| 5th and subsequent violations: | [30 day] suspension |

If **1.5%** is **not** committed in a calendar-year, the client's tally returns to zero, and will not be carried over to the next year. All suspension notices include a copy of this policy, information on disputing No-Shows [or late cancellations], and how to appeal suspensions.

Please list the name and phone number of your primary care physician OR the physician that can verify the information you have provided in this application.

Physician's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Approval of an ADA Paratransit application will be determined by CATA/VCT. The Applicant may be asked to undergo an exam from an independent physician group to verify information on the application. CATA/VCT will notify you if a doctor's review is warranted and will provide location options for the exam to be done at no charge. Transportation to and from the exam may be provided by request.

By signing this form, you understand that you are giving CATA/VCT and the independent physician group (if required) the ability to contact your primary care physician to verify any and all information on this application. You also understand that submission of an application does not guarantee ADA Paratransit eligibility. Any application that is not completed in full will be returned to the applicant.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____

If another person is completing this application on behalf of the individual requesting ADA Paratransit service, please provide:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____