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**CITY OF GASTONIA  
ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE  
OPERATING POLICIES  
UPDATED 08/10/2022**

Gastonia Transit's ADA Paratransit Service operates curb-to-curb van service for our passengers that cannot utilize the fixed route bus system due to a physical or mental disability. The ADA Van Service only operates within the City limits of Gastonia. To be eligible for the service passengers must submit an application for eligibility. Forms can be obtained on the City's website, [www.cityofgastonia.com/ada-paratransit](http://www.cityofgastonia.com/ada-paratransit), by mail when calling Bradley Station at (704) 866-6855, or in person at Bradley Station, 121 N. Oakland Street, Gastonia NC 28054.

The following are the operating policies for the City of Gastonia ADA Paratransit service. Passengers may be transported to the nearest accessible fixed route bus stop for transfer, if it is determined that they cannot utilize the bus service with assistance. These policies are subject to change as needed. The most up-to-date policy can be obtained on the City's website, [www.cityofgastonia.com/ada-paratransit](http://www.cityofgastonia.com/ada-paratransit), by mail when calling Bradley Station at (704) 866-6855, or in person at Bradley Station, 121 N. Oakland Street, Gastonia NC 28054.

**I. Eligibility**

A *Request for Certification of Eligibility* must be completed and returned to Gastonia Transit at PO Box 1748, Gastonia, NC 28053. Please call (704) 866-6855 if assistance is needed filling out the form.

Eligibility will be defined according to the United States Federal Register, Volume 56, Number 173 (dated 9/6/91). The following individuals are eligible for this service:

1. Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (including vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed route bus system which is readily accessible to and usable individuals with disabilities.
2. Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride and

disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. *This section pertains to the individuals desiring service at a stop where the fixed route bus service cannot safely utilize the wheelchair lift. Passengers may be transported to the nearest accessible fixed route bus stop for transfer.*

3. 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 bus system.

A determination of eligibility will be made within five (5) business days from receipt of the completed application. Incomplete applications will be returned.

The determination of eligibility may require professional verification. If this is the case, a Request for Professional Verification will be sent to the individual identified on page 3 of the Request for Certification of Eligibility form.

If an application is denied, the individual will be notified via US Mail. The individual may appeal the decision. Appeals will be accepted for up to 60 days after receipt of notification of denial. A decision on the appeal must be made within 30 days of receipt of the notice of appeal. All appeals should be directed to the Division Manager of Fleet Services at the contact information listed below.

Cindy Forrester, Division Manager of Fleet Services  
City of Gastonia  
PO Box 1748  
Gastonia, NC 28053  
(704) 836-0039  
[cindyf@cityofgastonia.com](mailto:cindyf@cityofgastonia.com)

## **II. Cost and Service Area**

The fee for this service is \$2.50 per trip. Guests may travel with the certified passenger on a space available basis and will be charged \$2.50 per trip. Exact change is required. The operation will not be responsible for giving change. There will be no billing or purchase orders accepted.

The City of Gastonia's ADA Paratransit Service will operate within the City limits.

## **III. Hours and Days of Service**

The City of Gastonia's ADA Paratransit Service operates from 5:30 am to 6:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Saturday service operates from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

There is no ADA service on the following holidays:

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day

ADA also does not operate on inclement weather days when fixed route bus service is suspended. Notices are posted on [www.cityofgastonia.com](http://www.cityofgastonia.com), local news stations, and the City's Facebook page.

#### **IV. Scheduling**

Trips are scheduled on a first come first served basis. No consideration will be given for the type of trip (medical, pleasure, or school). Passengers wishing to schedule a trip must call (704) 866-6855 at least one (1) day in advance but no more than fourteen (14) days in advance. Trips may be scheduled between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Sundays leave message. There will be no Saturday scheduling of trips. Unconfirmed trips will not be honored.

Passengers must schedule both the originating and the return trip at initial time of scheduling. Passengers on a medical trip will be allowed to call in for the return trip pick-up and do not need to schedule the return trip at the time of scheduling the initial trip.

#### **V. No Show Policy**

"No shows" – cancelling at the last minute, refusing a ride when the vehicle gets to the pickup location, or failing to appear at the pick location can adversely affect the schedule of ADA Paratransit services and other passengers. If a client fails to notify Gastonia Transit that they will not require transportation service for their scheduled appointment and a vehicle has been dispatched for the individual, the client will receive a "No Show."

Changes in pick-up times and/or destinations must be made at least one (1) day in advance. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the trip and the passenger receiving a no-show.

Trip cancellations must be done prior to the van arriving for the scheduled pick-up. Failure to do so will result in the passenger receiving a no-show.

A passenger receiving three (3) no-shows in a 30-day period will be suspended from using the service for 30 days. Continued no-shows may result in suspension of service.

#### **VI. Subscription Service**

Subscription service will be available to passengers making the same trip three (3) or more times in one week. With this service, the passenger will not be required to call and schedule the trips on a daily basis. The items in Section V will still apply.

The City of Gastonia's ADA Paratransit Service will allow up to 50 percent subscription trips; once this threshold is reached passengers desiring subscription service may call periodically to see if space has become available.

#### **VII. Assistance Limitations**

Passenger assistance will be from origin to destination. Drivers are not permitted to go into residences or other facilities to assist or look for passengers. Drivers are not permitted to load or unload packages; packages are limited to what the passenger can load onto the van at the time of boarding. Drivers are not permitted to take wheelchairs up or down stairs.

#### **VIII. Personal Care Assistants**

A Personal Care Assistant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to assist the passenger in meeting their needs. Personal care attendants who assist passengers on trips are supplied by the family or agency of the passenger and are not supplied by Gastonia Transit. At times our vans carry multiple passengers from different locations therefore the drivers are not able to provide personal care to passengers. The PCA can ride at no cost and must have the same origin and destination as the passenger. Space for a PCA must be reserved at the same time the passenger reserves his/her ride.

#### **IX. Service Animals**

Service animals are allowed to accompany passengers with disabilities. A service animal is any animal trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including but not limited to: guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

#### **X. On Time**

The van may arrive up to five (5) minutes before or fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled pickup time. This will be considered on time. The van will wait for up to five

(5) minutes for a passenger before proceeding on route and classifying the trip as a no-show.

## **XI. Onboard Policies**

Smoking, eating or drinking will not be permitted on the vehicles. Animals, except for service animals, will not be permitted on the vehicles. Passengers violating these policies could be removed from the service for a period of 30 days. Continued violation of policies may result in further suspensions of service and cancellation of eligibility.

## **XII. Visiting Passengers**

Under Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations at 49 C.F.R. Section 37.127, each public entity required to provide complementary paratransit service must make the service available to visitors as provided under the section. The transit entity must provide service to visitors who present documentation that they are ADA paratransit eligible in the jurisdiction in which they reside, under the criteria of 49 C.F.R. Section 37.125. If a visitor with a disability does not present such documentation, the transit entity may require documentation of the individual's place of residence and of his or her disability, if the disability is not apparent.

Gastonia Transit allows each visitor service for 30 days during a 365-day period, after that, the visitor may be required to apply for eligibility through the same processes established for residents as outlined in this policy.