

# RED APPLE TRANSIT RIDER'S INFORMATION GUIDE TO ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE

## WELCOME

ADA paratransit service is door-to-door, *shared-ride* transportation for individuals whose disabilities or health conditions prevent them from using the Red Apple Transit bus system (also referred to as a fixed route). This guide is designed to help you understand the service and your responsibilities while using it.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires all public transportation agencies like Red Apple Transit to provide specialized transportation that is comparable to the public transit bus service for individuals who do not have the functional ability to ride public transit. ADA paratransit service in the Farmington area is available on a prearranged basis for any trip purpose within the designated service area. If you are interested in using ADA paratransit service, you must apply and be found eligible for the service according to ADA guidelines.

### Accessible Formats

This Rider's Guide is also available in large print by calling (505) 325-3409.

### Service Area

The service area for paratransit service is available within the City of Farmington city limits.

### Service Days And Hours

Paratransit rides are available six days a week (Monday through Saturday), excluding holidays, from 7:00 AM to 6:00PM, the same hours as our fixed route service.

### Certification Process

To apply, complete and mail back an application provided by Red Apple Transit.

When Red Apple Transit receives your completed application, it will be evaluated to determine how your disability or health-related condition affects your ability to ride the regular Red Apple Transit fixed-route system. Only those persons whose disabilities **prevent** them from using regular bus service, all of the time or some of the time, are eligible under the ADA.

Applications for ADA paratransit service are available by calling the Red Apple Transit office at **(505) 325-3409** or by downloading it from the City of Farmington's Red Apple Transit webpage at [www.fmtn.org](http://www.fmtn.org). Within 21 calendar days of Red Apple Transit's receipt of your completed application, you will be notified by letter as to your eligibility status. If you do not get written notice of your eligibility determination within 21

calendar days after Red Apple Transit receives your completed application; you may ask for and get paratransit service until a decision is made, by calling (505) 325-3409.

Should your application be denied and you wish to appeal the decision, you may do so by contacting the City of Farmington, City Manager's Office 800 Municipal Drive, Farmington, NM 87401 or by 505-599-1100 to schedule an appointment.

### **Out-of-Area Visitor Riding Privileges**

Red Apple Transit will provide rides for up to 21 calendar days in a year for ADA-certified persons with disabilities who are visiting from outside the Farmington paratransit service area. At the time of making your trip request, let the reservationist know you are visiting from another area and by which paratransit system you have been certified. If you require paratransit service beyond the 21-day limit, you must become locally certified for ADA paratransit service.

## **MAKING A RIDE RESERVATION**

### **Numbers to Call**

(505) 325-3409

### **Reservation-Taking Hours**

7:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily

Passengers may make reservations as early as, but no more than 14 calendar days in advance and up to the previous day prior to the needed day of service. Same-day emergency service is on a first come first served basis, and based on availability.

The office is closed on Sundays and holidays. Passengers may leave a message requesting a reservation. Messages will be checked each afternoon, your call will be returned by no later than 5:00 PM, on the Sunday or holiday to negotiate your reservation time.

When you call, the reservation taker will "negotiate your trip" by searching for available space up to one hour on either side of the pick-up time you request. Write down the trip "ready time" Time/Date and ask the reservationist to read back the information to ensure every detail is correct. When you call, please have paper, a pen/ pencil, and the following information available:

- Your first and last name.
- Your ADA paratransit service ID number.
- The date of your requested trip.
- Your preferred pick-up and return times.
- Your origin and destination addresses or the name of well known locations such as the "post office".
- If you'll be traveling with an attendant, companion (including children), or

service animal.

- If you or anyone accompanying you will be traveling using a wheelchair, scooter or other equipment.
- Any other information the driver should know to help you travel. Since this is a shared-ride service, the driver may make other stops on the way to your drop-off point, so it's best to allow plenty of time to get to and from your destination. If you are unsure of how much time you should allot for your trip, please ask the reservation taker for suggestions when scheduling your pickup. You will need to use your "best guess" when scheduling your return time.

## **Standing Rides**

Subscription reservations are offered on a limited basis for trips that recur weekly at the same time to and from the same addresses. Subscription waiting lists exist and are reviewed periodically to see if additions will create increased ride-sharing opportunities. Therefore, all scheduling is based on time, geography, and direction of the trip-not on a first-come, first-served basis. Not more than half of all rides scheduled in any given time period will be on a subscription basis. With this understanding, you are welcome to place a subscription request with the standing ride coordinator.

## **Personal Attendants**

A personal attendant assists the passenger with daily life functions and may provide assistance during the ride or at the destination. Personal attendants are not required to pay fares and must be picked up and dropped off at the same locations and times as the passenger. A passenger's need for a personal attendant must be registered with the Red Apple Transit program.

## **Companions**

A companion is someone without an ID card who rides with a registered passenger, but not as a personal attendant. You may arrange to bring one companion along on each ride, in addition to a personal attendant. Companions must be picked-up and dropped-off at the same addresses and times as the customer. Companions pay the same fare as the registered passenger. Companions will be accommodated on a space available basis.

# **TAKING A TRIP**

## **Vehicles and Drivers**

ADA paratransit service is provided using small buses or vans. You must ride in the vehicle that is sent for you. Special requests for specific vehicles and drivers cannot be honored.

## **Boarding Time**

When you call to reserve your ride, you will be given a "30 minute pickup window" in which the vehicle will arrive. You'll need to be ready at the beginning

of your pick up window. For example, if your negotiated "ready time" is 8 AM, your 30-minute pickup window is 8 AM to 8:30 AM. You'll need to be ready to board at 8 AM. By being ready when the paratransit vehicle arrives, you help keep everyone's trip on schedule.

### **How Long Will the Paratransit Vehicle Wait?**

When the vehicle arrives within the pickup window, the driver will wait no more than 5 minutes. If the vehicle arrives before your pickup window starts, you may leave if you are ready. If you are not ready, the driver will wait until your pickup window starts and then an additional 5 minutes.

### **What If My Ride Is Late?**

If your ride has not arrived within **30 minutes** after your "ready time," call (505) 325-3409. A dispatcher will update you on the status of your ride.

## **CANCELING A TRIP**

The **Cancel Line is open 24 hours**. The minimum cancellation notice required for trips that are not needed is 2 hours. If your travel plans change or you will not be ready to board at your "ready time," please call, if no one answers, leave a message.

### **Preventing No-Shows**

It is the goal of Red Apple Transit to always connect with passengers and provide their scheduled ride. When riders do not cancel at least 2 hours in advance or are not available to board within 5 minutes, it is considered a "no-show." Riders can prevent no-show situations when they:

- Review dates, times and addresses with the reservationist to be sure information is correct.
- Call Red Apple Transit and cancel rides as soon as the ride is no longer needed.
- Cancel at least 2 hours in advance of the scheduled pickup time.
- Are prepared to board at the starting time of the pickup window and within five minutes after the vehicle arrives.
- When there are circumstances outside the rider's control, it is not considered a no-show.

### **Trip Fares**

Cash \$2.00

Each one-way trip is **\$2.00**. No fare is required for personal attendants. All other accompanying guests must pay the applicable fare. Drivers must collect fares upon boarding, so please have the **exact fare** ready as they cannot give change.

## **Boarding With A Mobility Device**

Red Apple Transit vans are lift-equipped and will accommodate most mobility devices, such as wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers, provided the devices fit within the ADA-specified boarding envelope. Mobility devices will be allowed if the lift and vehicle can safely accommodate them, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements, including blocking an aisle or would interfere with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency. Larger devices may not qualify. All drivers are trained to operate the lift and will secure you after boarding. If you have a device for some reason cannot be secure you will have the option of taking a seat on one of the bus seats. Boarding while standing on the lift is allowed if you so choose.

## **Transporting Life-Support Equipment**

You may bring a respirator, portable oxygen, and/or other life-support equipment as long as it does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials.

## **Transporting Children**

Children traveling as companions or personal attendants, who are under the age of six or weigh less than 60 pounds, are required by law to use a child safety seat, a booster seat, or other safety restraint system. You are responsible for providing such safety equipment and for securing it and the child in paratransit vehicles.

## **Transporting Animals**

You may travel with a service animal. Service animals are defined as animals that are individually trained to perform a task for people with disabilities, such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. Please tell the reservations taker when you book trips that you will be traveling with a service animal. Small pets and other non-service animals may be carried on paratransit service vehicles only in properly secured cages or containers. You are responsible for loading and securing the containers in paratransit vehicles.

## **PASSENGER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Red Apple Transit has a short list of common-sense responsibilities designed to ensure safety and comfort for all riders and drivers.

### **Passengers have a responsibility to:**

- Read all sections of the Rider's Information Guide carefully.
- Make reservations at least one day in advance.
- Be at designated pick-up locations at the agreed time.
- Board the vehicle as soon as it arrives.
- Call to inquire if the vehicle has not arrived within your 30-minute *"pickup*

*window.*

- Call to cancel rides that are not needed.
- Pay the correct fare upon boarding with cash, ride coupons or a monthly pass.
- Wear seat belts.
- Avoid distracting the driver or annoying other passengers with inappropriate behavior.
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene.
- Bring a personal travel attendant if needed.
- Refrain from eating, drinking, or smoking on the vehicles.

## **DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Paratransit drivers will treat you with courtesy and dignity as they escort you to and from the main door of your pick-up locations and help you get on and off the vehicle. They can stow small personal belongings, but if you need other types of help, like filling prescriptions, managing several bags or packages, etc., please bring along a personal attendant.

### **Drivers are not permitted to:**

- Transfer passengers from wheelchairs/ scooters to vehicle seats.
- Lift or carry riders.
- Carry riders or wheelchairs up or down steps.
- Secure child safety systems in the vehicle or children into such systems.
- Enter the home.

## **SUSPENSION OF SERVICE**

**1. Suspension for Untimely Cancellation Notice, "No-Shows," and Lateness.** A suspension will be imposed as described below for missing 20% of scheduled rides, within any 30-day period, that are within your control. First Suspension 7 days; Second Suspension 14 days; Third Suspension 30 days.

A "no-show" is when a rider does not cancel at least 2 hours in advance or are not available to board within 5 minutes, it is considered a "no-show." Riders can prevent no-show situations when they:

- Review dates, times and addresses with the reservationist to be sure information is correct.
- Call Red Apple Transit and cancel rides as soon as the ride is no longer needed.
- Cancel at least 2 hours in advance of the scheduled pickup time.
- Are prepared to board at the starting time of the pickup window and within five minutes after the vehicle arrives.

When there are circumstances outside the rider's control, it is not considered a no-show.

## **2. Service Suspension for Abusive or Disruptive Behavior.**

Service will immediately be denied on a long-term basis to passengers who engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct directed at other riders or Red Apple Transit staff. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to: threats or fear of physical or verbal abuse; unlawful harassment, including unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations; unauthorized use of equipment on the vehicle; voluntarily and repeatedly violating vehicle-riding rules, including smoking in the vehicle, eating or drinking without medical indication, or defacing equipment. Suspensions will not be imposed for circumstances that are beyond your control. Examples of situations not within your control are:

- A sudden personal emergency.
- Sudden or worsening illness.
- Inability to get through on Red Apple Transit phone lines.
- Late arrival of the vehicle.
- Disruptive behavior caused by a disability.

**3. Steps of the Suspension Process.** You will be provided an opportunity to explain the reason for each occurrence. Prior to a suspension for incidents other than for abusive or seriously disruptive behavior, you will receive a written warning of the proposed suspension period and the reason(s) for the suspension. You will also receive written instructions for appealing your suspension, should you wish to appeal the decision to suspend you.

### **KEEPING ELIGIBILITY AND INFORMATION UP TO DATE**

Please call Red Apple Transit at (505) 325-3409 if there is a change in the following:

- Your address or telephone number.
- Your emergency contact's name or telephone number.
- The type of mobility device you are using.

Please call Red Apple Transit Accessible Services if there is a change in the following:

- Your physical or mental condition.
- Your need for a personal attendant.
- When a person is registered as eligible for ADA paratransit service and does not use the service for 12 consecutive months, he or she is considered an "inactive" customer and the file is "archived." If a reservationist informs you that you are an inactive customer, you will be asked to verify basic information in your file. Red Apple Transit will reactivate your records and provide you with service, provided your eligibility has not expired.

### **PARATRANSIT CUSTOMER ADVOCACY AND ASSISTANCE**

Your paratransit service staff care what you think and welcome your compliments, complaints and suggestions. Write or call Red Apple Transit at (505)325-3409 as soon

as a good or bad deed has occurred and let them know: Who? What? Where? When? Why?

The mailing address for Red Apple Transit is:  
**800 Municipal Drive, Farmington, NM 87401**

Red Apple Transit advocates will work hard to resolve rider concerns and provide positive results.

## **FIXED-ROUTE TRANSIT SERVICE**

### **Services and Accessible Features**

Red Apple Transit provides fully accessible fixed-route transit service in the Farmington area. Red Apple Transit encourages seniors and individuals with disabilities to take advantage of the independence and flexibility that is provided by its bus system, which offers the following services and accessible features:

- Reduced fare for seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Stop announcements.
- Priority seating for riders who have difficulty standing while the vehicle is moving.
- Lift-equipped buses to assist riders who use wheelchairs or have difficulty getting up and down the bus steps.
- Reserved wheelchair securement spaces on buses.

### **Learning to Use Regular Fixed-Route Transit Service**

If you have any questions or need assistance using the regular fixed route system, call and we can provide training on using the system. (505) 325-3409