



# **POINT PLUS**

## **ADA Paratransit Service Policies**

January 2022

### **Service Description**

Central Transportation (CT) offers a Paratransit service program to individuals with qualifying disabilities. Paratransit is a demand response service where the vehicle does not follow a fixed route or schedule.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires federally funded public transit systems to provide a complementary Paratransit service for individuals with a disability whose condition prevents them from using the fixed route bus service.

This document is designed to provide information regarding Central Transportation's ADA Paratransit program. Some of the ADA standards cited in this document do not apply to non-ADA Paratransit programs.

### **Application Materials**

The ADA Paratransit Eligibility Form and other information for Central Transportation's Paratransit services are available in print form at the CT office (2700 Week Street in Stevens Point). Forms are also available for download on CT's website, [stevenspoint.com/transit](https://stevenspoint.com/transit).

### **Program Eligibility**

CT determines eligibility upon review of a completed application form. The form contains information regarding the applicant's functional ability to board, ride or disembark from the fixed route buses.

CT, in accordance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, will determine eligibility no later than 21 days after receiving the completed application. This does not include time waiting for requests for more information from the applicant.

After the completed eligibility form is received, a CT staff member may call to schedule an in-person interview. Interviews are conducted by appointment. If necessary, transportation to and from the interview will be provided free of charge.

Within 21 days, a written response will be mailed to the individual notifying them of their eligibility status. If eligibility is denied, a reason for the denial will be included in the letter along with a copy of Central Transportation's Appeal Policy. Be advised that you have the right to appeal this decision.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

Individuals meeting any of the following two criteria will be determined ADA Paratransit eligible as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

1. A person who cannot navigate the transit system without assistance. This includes an inability to board, ride, or disembark from a fully accessible CT bus.
2. A person who, because of a disability, cannot travel to or from the bus stop due to, for example, distance, terrain, weather, safety, or other obstacles that impede them due to their disability.

All CT buses are equipped with a ramp and other accessible features. All routes are served by accessible buses, so there is no eligibility based on inaccessible vehicles.

## **Type of ADA Eligibility**

Unconditional (all trips) - An individual with a disability that cannot use the fixed route bus system under any circumstance.

Conditional or Trip by Trip (some trips) - An individual with a disability that can be reasonably expected to make some trips by bus, but requires Paratransit for trips under certain circumstances (e.g., deep snow or variable health conditions).

Temporary Disabilities - An individual with a disability that cannot use the fixed route bus system for a limited period of time.

## **Appeals Process**

An appeals process will be available to those individuals wishing to dispute a conditional or denial of certification or service suspension. Appeal letters may be sent to:

Central Transportation  
2700 Week Street  
Stevens Point WI 54482

Appeals must be made in writing within 60 days of the decision date. Final decisions on all appeals will be made by the Stevens Point Transportation Commission.

## **Type of Service**

Point Plus is a door-to-door service. Drivers are not permitted to enter beyond the threshold of any building. If additional assistance is needed, the rider must make arrangements to have a personal care attendant assist them.

Point Plus provides lift-equipped vehicles to serve the needs of riders who may need additional assistance getting on or off the bus. The service is shared ride, so riders may share the vehicle with other riders during their trip.

### **Service Hours and Days**

When the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP) campus is not in full session:

Monday through Friday      6:45 AM - 6:15 PM

When the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP) campus is in full session:

Monday through Thursday    6:45 AM - 10:10 PM

Friday                            6:45 AM - 3:00 AM

Saturday                         11:15 AM - 3:00 AM

No service on Sundays and the following observed holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Point Plus Paratransit service shall be available throughout the same hours and days as the Stevens Point fixed route bus service.

### **Service Area**

Service is only provided inside the service area as defined by the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The area is defined as an area within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile on either side of a fixed route.

### **Levels of Service and Fares**

The basic mode of service for complementary Paratransit is demand responsive, origin-to-destination. Door-to-door service is provided.

The Stevens Point Transportation Commission establishes fares for the Central Transportation system.

The current Paratransit fare is as follows:

- Basic Service: \$2.50 per one-way trip
- Agency fare: \$12.50 per one-way trip

Riders must pay the driver at the time of the trip or have funds available in their prepaid account.

### **Trip Scheduling**

Paratransit riders reserve trips by calling the service provider's dispatch number during business hours of 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. On Saturday, when the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point campus is in full session, riders can call during business hours of 11:00 AM - 5:30 PM. The caller should be prepared to provide the dispatcher the following information: first name; last name; phone number; how they intend to pay the fare; origin address; destination address; accompanying companion(s), if needed; accompanying equipment (e.g., oxygen tank and respirators); ambulatory or non-ambulatory and desired arrival time.

Next day or subscription service is available by contacting the provider's dispatcher. Trips can be scheduled up to 14 days in advance. The more notice given, the better the chance the requester has of obtaining a desirable pick-up time.

During periods of high demand, it may be necessary for dispatchers to negotiate pick-up times. However, the rider will not be required to schedule a trip more than one hour before or after the desired pick-up time.

One day advanced scheduling is encouraged, however same day call-ins will be considered on a space available basis. CT cannot guarantee same day ride requests, nor guarantee requested pick up times within the one-hour window. Will-calls will only be accepted if a trip has been scheduled. You must have a scheduled pick-up time. A rider can call to request an earlier pick-up time before their scheduled trip, but CT cannot guarantee that the requested pick-up time will be accepted.

### **Trip Purpose**

The ADA prohibits restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose. All trips are served in the order received and as scheduled. For state and federal reporting purposes, riders may be requested to provide the reason for the trip, but will not be denied service based on trip purpose.

### **Multiple Destinations**

Each trip includes one destination. Brief stops at locations before the scheduled destination will not be allowed. If multiple destinations are needed, each section of the trip must be scheduled separately and the rider must pay a fare for each ride.

### **Service Reservations**

There are two types of reservations: advance and subscription. Advance service includes trips

scheduled for next day service. Subscription service is defined as trips that are set up for a rider to occur on a regular basis. The number of subscription rides is limited to 60 percent. Subscription trips that are cancelled 25 % or more within a 30-day period may result in the cancellation of subscription service. Subscriptions which have been inactive for longer than 30 days will be cancelled.

The rider is to be aware subscription service will be automatically cancelled on all Federal holidays.

### **Pick-Up Window**

When your pick-up time is scheduled, the vehicle can arrive within a 30-minute pick-up window. For example, if your pick-up window is 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM. Then we can pick you up anytime within that scheduled time frame. It is the rider's responsibility to be prepared to board the vehicle within the pick-up window.

### **5-Minute Wait Time**

Once the vehicle arrives in the allotted pick-up window, the driver will wait for up to 5-minutes for a rider. If the rider is not prepared to board within this 5-minute period, the trip will be counted as a no-show and the vehicle will leave. It is the rider's responsibility to clearly see the area where a vehicle would arrive for pick-up. The rider should be prepared to approach the vehicle when it arrives unless driver assistance was requested when the ride was scheduled.

### **Cancellations**

When a rider needs to cancel a trip, the cancellation should occur at least one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time. A late cancellation, less than one hour, is considered a no-show (see the "No-Shows" policy below).

### **No-Shows**

A no-show occurs when the Point Plus Paratransit vehicle arrives at your pick-up location, waits the required five minutes and the passenger does not board the vehicle. A late cancellation occurs when the scheduled trip is cancelled less than one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time.

Three no-shows within any 30-day period may result in suspended service. Any person suspended from service has the right to appeal the decision. ADA service may continue during the appeals process.

### **Prohibited Behavior**

To ensure safety, our rider policy prohibits seriously disruptive behavior, public health threats, and refusal to comply with rules. If the prohibited behavior results from a disability, CT may require a personal care attendant ride with the rider to control the behavior.

## **Personal Care Attendants and Companions**

One personal care attendant (PCA) per ADA program rider is permitted to ride free.

One companion may accompany a program rider, but must pay the current cost for each one way trip. Additional companions may ride and pay a fare, if space is available for safe transport. PCA's and companions must have the same origin and destination as the program rider.

Arrangements for all additional companions must be made at the time of the reservation. Program rider must supply child safety seat for accompanying infants and small children.

## **Visitors and Reciprocal Eligibility**

Visitors are eligible for 21 days of service in a 365-day period beginning on the first day the service is used by the visitor. For additional days of service, the individual is expected to register under CT eligibility procedures.

For individuals who reside outside the CT service jurisdictions, CT shall certify an individual with a disability as a visitor when providing documentation of residence, a statement that because of their disability they are unable to access the fixed route, and, if requested, documentation of disability.

CT shall accept the certification of another transit agency for visitor service.

## **Medical Equipment**

CT allows riders to bring medical equipment such as respirators and portable oxygen tanks on board vehicles. Oxygen tanks should remain upright at all times and must be secured to the mobility device or held in an upright position.

## **Carry on**

Each eligible rider is allowed to carry on up to three personal belongings and grocery bags.

## **Reasonable Modification**

CT will honor and accommodate any reasonable modification to service if the request does not fundamentally alter the service; does not create a direct threat to the health and safety of others; and is not necessary to permit the passenger to use the services for their intended purpose (nondiscriminatory). Such modifications should be made in advance to properly consider and plan for such modification but may be made to the driver at the time of boarding.

## **Rider Policy**

The purpose of the rider policy is to set guidelines for refusal or suspension of transportation services administered or provided by Central Transportation (CT).

This policy applies to circumstances and/or behavior that occurs on CT property, vehicles, or while boarding any CT vehicle.

Services may be refused, suspended, or conditioned due to the following circumstances and/or behaviors:

- Documented Pattern of No-Shows
- Seriously Disruptive Behavior
- Public Health Threats
- Refusal to Pay the Applicable Fare
- Refusal to Comply with Safety Rules

### **Seriously Disruptive Behavior**

Service may be refused to riders who engage in violent, illegal, or seriously disruptive behavior. Seriously disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Getting out of a seat while a Paratransit vehicle is in motion
- Leaving a Paratransit vehicle while it is parked to pick up or drop off another rider
- Disturbing a vehicle operator while the operator is driving
- Violent behavior
- Physically or verbally threatening vehicle operator, dispatcher or other riders
- Smoking while on board a vehicle
- Damaging or destroying vehicle equipment
- Engaging in conduct or activity that is a danger to the rider, other riders, or the driver
- Offensive language

### **Public Health Threats**

Service will be refused to any rider who poses a potential public health threat. Examples of public health threats include, but are not limited to the following:

- The existence of excrement on clothes or on hands
- The existence of other body fluids, such as blood or vomit

### **Refusal to Comply with Safety Rules**

A rider that refuses to comply with posted safety rules or driver instructions may be refused service. A rider must be able to physically board and alight from the bus. If a rider cannot physically board or alight from a bus, the rider will need to acquire the resources needed to overcome their disabling condition, such as, a mobility device and/or personal care attendant.

### **Service Refusal Process**

The vehicle operator has the authority to refuse service on the day of the violation. Violations of these rules will be reviewed by CT staff for further action.

The Transportation Superintendent, or the designee, is authorized to suspend or refuse the provision of service to riders who: (1) violate CT's no-show policy; (2) engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct; (3) pose a public health threat; (4) refuse to pay the applicable fare; or (5) refuse to comply with safety rules. The term of the suspension or refusal of service shall depend on the nature and seriousness of the prohibited conduct.

To the extent feasible, the rider shall be notified in writing. The written notification will state the specific basis for the proposed action, the proposed sanction, and the appeal process.

### **Paratransit Performance Monitoring**

CT is responsible for ensuring Paratransit service performance complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Service oversight is completed through review of monthly trip records, feedback received through the complaint and comment process, and periodic surveys of riders. In general, the ADA requires Paratransit service provided to riders with disabilities to be comparable to what is provided to riders of the fixed route bus system. CT has developed standards based on regulatory requirements and nationally recognized guidance related to Paratransit service. Below is a list of performance measurable to ADA Paratransit service and established standards within each measure.

**On-Time Performance** - A Paratransit vehicle is on-time if the vehicle arrives with a 30-minute pick-up window. This is defined as 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. CT monitors trip records from all ADA trips to track on-time performance. The goal is for 95 percent on-time performance. Will-calls trips and other non-ADA trips are not included in this goal.

**Phone System Access** - The standard is to minimize call hold times. Our goal is for 95 percent of calls to be answered within 3 minutes and 99 percent answered within 5 minutes. CT analyzes this measure by randomly monitoring the provider's phone access and documenting call hold times. Rider complaints are also used to determine if phone access capacity constraints occurred.

**Overall Customer Satisfaction** - On occasion, CT may conduct a survey of all or a segment of ADA Paratransit riders. Riders may be asked to rate their satisfaction with, dispatcher courtesy, driver courtesy, driver sensitivity, vehicle cleanliness, and overall ride quality. The results are reviewed with the provider to identify areas of improvement and areas of success.

**System Capacity** - CT's Paratransit system is prohibited from having any capacity constraints. Trip demand must be adequately served to provide equivalent access when compared to the fixed route bus system. CT monitors the following to ensure adequate capacity: trip denials; no-shows; subscription rides; customer complaints; and vehicle used.

### **Central Transportation's Accessible Bus Service**

ADA Paratransit programs are designed to provide transportation for individuals with disabilities that are unable to board, ride or alight from a bus; or when environmental or

architectural barriers prevent a rider with disabilities from getting to or from a bus route stop. When these conditions are not present, riders with disabilities must utilize the fixed route bus to meet their mobility needs.

The fixed route bus offers a cost effective and accessible service. By presenting your Paratransit program identification card, you qualify for the reduced cash fare.

Each bus contains accessible features, including: kneeling capability (bus lowers to make the first step easier); a ramp for wheelchair boarding; on-board wheelchair securement areas; and stop announcements by drivers.

Travel training is available upon request and is provided free to the rider. The travel trainer will assist the rider in planning their trip and will accompany the rider until such time the rider has the knowledge and confidence to ride independently.

Due to the high center of gravity of scooter-type mobility aids and the recommendation by scooter manufacturers, CT recommends that riders not be seated on the scooter while the vehicle is in motion. This recommendation is for the safety of the riders.

CT drivers are trained to safely secure wheelchairs. Mobility aide tie-downs are used to secure mobility devices. The vehicles are designed to utilize four straps to secure the mobility device in a forward facing position. All four straps must be secured to the mobility device prior to the vehicle moving. Each vehicle provides seatbelts for all riders. It is required that all riders utilize them for their safety. CT drivers assist with the use of ramps and securement devices.

CT does not provide assistance when safety to drivers or riders is at risk. When a driver's or rider's safety is at risk CT staff may recommend use of a personal care attendant or Paratransit service for the rider.

CT will provide to its riders, upon request, service materials including maps, applications and policies in an accessible format for disabled riders. If an accessible format is unavailable, CT will accommodate the rider's request to the best of its ability.