

ADA Paratransit Service

Grand Valley Transit's ADA Paratransit Service is offered in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The ADA Paratransit service is for persons with physical, cognitive, emotional, visual or other disabilities which functionally prevent them from using the public fixed-route bus system known as Grand Valley Transit, either permanently or at certain times of the year.

Disability alone does not create eligibility. The decision is based solely on the applicant's functional ability to use GVT buses.

The GVT fixed route system is almost fully accessible. All buses are accessible to persons who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs and walkers.

ADA Paratransit service is available only in the area and at the times served by the GVT fixed route system.

EVALUATION PROCEDURE

All applicants seeking to use the Paratransit Service must go through an eligibility determination process. The first step is to contact Grand Valley Transit and request an application. The application must be completed and returned to GVT, whose eligibility committee will review it and respond with a determination within 21 days. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant.

The Paratransit application also requires medical verification of the applicant's functional limitations to be completed by a licensed medical professional. Information provided by a social service agency or other professional regarding the applicant's ability to use public transit may also be considered.

Applicants may be sent for a professional functional assessment if GVT is unable to determine their eligibility.

CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY

Those persons who are certified eligible are classified as having unconditional, transitional or conditional eligibility for paratransit service as follows:

Unconditional status is assigned to persons who are determined unable to ever independently use GVT buses.

Transitional status is assigned to persons who are determined to be capable of using accessible GVT buses but cannot do so at present due to a temporary disability.

Conditional status is assigned to persons who are able to use GVT buses some of the time but are unable to do so under certain circumstances.

These circumstances may include travel for those receiving medical treatments which leave the client in a greatly weakened condition or those unable to function in cold weather.

APPEALS

Applicants who are certified not eligible or who do not agree with the conditions established for their use of GVT Paratransit may appeal the decision. Requests for appeals must be received by Grand Valley Transit in writing within 60 calendar days from the date of eligibility determination.

SUSPENSION OF SERVICE/NO-SHOW POLICY

GVT will suspend the provision of service to ADA paratransit eligible individuals who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips. A "no-show" is defined as missing a scheduled trip or failing to cancel a scheduled trip within 2 hours of the scheduled pick-up time.

When a no-show occurs, the vehicle operator will notify the GVT dispatcher. The dispatcher will attempt to contact the individual by telephone, and a notation will be made on the individual's database card. If another no-show occurs within a 30 calendar day period, GVT will put the individual on six-month probation. GVT staff will mail a letter to the individual explaining that the individual's ADA paratransit eligibility has been placed on probation, and will attempt to identify ways to avoid further sanctions.

If, during the probation period, the individual misses three more trips or 8% of monthly trips (whichever is greater), the individual will be notified by Registered Mail that their ADA paratransit eligibility has been suspended. Eligibility will be suspended for one week for the first violation, and for two weeks for second and subsequent violations. If more than one year elapses between any two stages of violation, the progression of suspensions would start from the first step.

The suspension of service will become effective 7 calendar days from the date the Registered Mail letter of notification is sent in order to allow the individual to appeal the suspension. The notification of suspension will include the specific reasons for the suspension. The notification will inform the individual of the right to appeal the suspension, and will explain the appeal process. If an appeal is requested, it will be scheduled for the Appeals Committee review within 30 calendar days of the request, and the suspension of service will be delayed until the appeal is heard. Notice of appeal, however, must be received within 5 working days of the receipt of the notice of suspension. If the no-shows are determined not to be the fault of the individual, service eligibility will be restored.

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Individuals will be notified by a letter sent by Registered Mail of the decision regarding the appeal within seven calendar days of the Appeals Committee meeting and this notification will state the new date on which the suspension, if up-held, will begin.

The individual requesting the appeal may bring other persons to represent him/her including a lawyer, independent living or rehabilitation counselor or other professional to testify on his/her behalf. A sign interpreter will be provided if requested, and an attempt will be made to provide language interpreters.