

# INFORMATION GUIDE TO *SENIOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE*

## WELCOME

*Senior Transportation Service* is door-to-door, *shared-ride* transportation provided for people **age 75 or older**. This guide is designed to help you understand this program and your responsibilities while using it.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

*Senior Transportation Service* is a transportation program offered by Paratransit, Inc., in the greater Sacramento area for people age 75 or older and is available on a prearranged basis for any trip purpose within the designated service area.

### Accessible Formats

This Information Guide is available in large print, Braille, Spanish, and on disk and audio tape, by calling (916) 557-4685 or 557-4686 TDD for hearing impaired. It is also available online at <http://www.sacrt.com>.

### Service Area

The *Senior Transportation Service* area includes Sacramento, Carmichael, Fair Oaks, Rancho Cordova, Citrus Heights, Antelope, Rio Linda, Elverta, Orangevale, Elk Grove, Laguna, and North Highlands. *Senior Transportation Service* generally **does not** go to Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Roseville, or West Sacramento, with the following exceptions:

Roseville: Paratransit, Inc., is able to transport passengers **who live in Citrus Heights** to Kaiser's Roseville facilities at Riverside and at Eureka, and to Sutter Hospital in Roseville.

West Sacramento: Paratransit, Inc. provides limited coverage in West Sacramento in the vicinity of Raley Field and the Ziggurat Building only.

Folsom: Paratransit, Inc., will provide a portion of the paratransit service within 3/4 mile of the Folsom light rail stations. Folsom Dial-A-Ride also provides service within Folsom.

There are also transfer points which can connect passengers to other accessible transportation services provided in adjacent jurisdictions, such as Folsom, Roseville and West Sacramento.

### **Service Days And Hours**

Paratransit trips are available seven days a week, including holidays, from 6 a.m. through 12:30 a.m. (just after midnight). Limited trips are available prior to 6 a.m. and after 12:30 a.m. within 3/4 of a mile of RT bus and light rail service in operation.

### **Certification Process**

To be certified, you may obtain an application form by calling Regional Transit's (RT) Paratransit Certification Office at (916) 557-4685 or 557-4686 TDD. Let staff know if you need an application in an alternative format or assistance completing your application. Proof of age is also required. Once your information form is processed, you will be sent written instructions for using *Senior Transportation Service* and an identification card to show the driver each time you board a *Senior Transportation Service* vehicle. If your ID card is lost, please call RT at (916) 557-4685 or 557-4686 TDD to request a replacement card.

### **MAKING A RIDE RESERVATION**

#### **Numbers to Call**

(916) 429-2744 or 1-800-956-6776

(916) 429-2568 TDD

## Reservation-Taking Hours

7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily, including holidays.

Ride requests may be made one to two days in advance, but not later than 5:00 p.m. one day before your ride date. Same-day emergency service is **not** provided.

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. If space exists, you will be offered a "*ready time*" and a trip confirmation number. Write down the trip confirmation number and ask the reservationist to read back your trip request to ensure every detail is correct.

When space isn't available at the time you want, and an alternative day or time cannot be negotiated, your trip may be denied. When you call, please have a paper, pencil, and the following information available:

- Your first and last name.
- Your *Senior Transportation Service* ID number.
- The date of your requested trip.
- Your preferred pick-up and return times.
- Your origin and destination addresses and phone numbers at those locations (including building name and specific drop-off and pick-up information). If a medical appointment, include the name of the doctor and the suite number.
- Agency sponsoring the ride, if any.
- 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 *Senior Transportation Service* 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**

Riding with a personal attendant is strongly encouraged, and may be required, if Paratransit, Inc., determines it is not safe for you to travel alone. Since your personal attendant is riding with you to help fulfill the purpose of your trip, the attendant **will not be charged** a fare, provided both of you travel to and from the same addresses.

## **Companions**

A companion is someone without an ID card who rides with a registered passenger, but not as a personal attendant. Companions

are allowed on a space-available basis, as long as a reservation has been made for the companions and they travel to and from the same addresses. Companions pay the same fare as the registered passenger.

## **TAKING A TRIP**

### **Vehicles and Drivers**

*Senior Transportation Service* is provided using a variety of vehicles, including taxis. Paratransit, Inc., reserves the right to determine whether it will deliver transportation services using its own drivers and vehicles, or using drivers and vehicles of other entities (for example, taxis). 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 "pickup window." For example, if your negotiated "*ready time*" is 8 a.m., your 30-minute "pickup window" is 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. You'll need to be ready to board at 8:00 a.m. 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 five 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 five minutes.

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

If your ride has not arrived within **30 minutes** after your "*ready*

*time,*” call the "Where's My Bus?" Line at (916) 429-2009 and listen to the instructions after dialing to reach the right unit. 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 two hours. If your travel plans change or you will not be ready to board at your *“ready time,”* please call (916) 429-2009 and listen to the instructions after dialing to reach the right unit. Shorter notice without a compelling reason could result in service interruption.

### **Preventing No-Shows**

It is the goal of Paratransit, Inc., to always connect with passengers and provide their scheduled ride. When riders do not cancel at least two hours in advance or are not available to board within five minutes, it is considered a "no-show."

### **Trip Fares**

- Cash                   \$ 4.50 (local) (effective January 2009)  
                              \$ 8.00 (airport)
- Monthly Pass       \$100.00

With the exception above, each one-way trip is **\$4.50**. The airport is not in the normal service area for Paratransit, Inc., but service is provided to the airport for a cash-only fare of \$8.00 one way. No fare is required for personal attendants. All other accompanying guests must pay the applicable fare. Drivers (including taxi drivers) must collect fares upon boarding, so please have the exact fare ready as they cannot give change. Alternatively, you may pay with ride coupons or a monthly pass. To purchase ride coupons or a monthly pass, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope along with a check or money order to Paratransit, Inc., PO Box 231100, Sacramento CA 95823-0401.

Please Note: Trip fares are subject to change.

### **Boarding With A Mobility Device**

Paratransit, Inc., vans are lift-equipped and will accommodate mobility devices, such as wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers, provided the devices fit within the ADA-specified *boarding envelope*. This includes all 30" wide by 48" long mobility devices when measured starting from two inches above the ground **and** that do not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied. Larger devices may not qualify.

- All drivers are trained to operate the lift, and will secure you after boarding.
- Boarding while standing on the lift is allowed, but not encouraged.

### **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, Inc., vehicles.

### **Transporting Animals**

You may travel with a service animal such as a guide dog or canine companion. 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 *Senior Transportation Service* vehicles only in properly secured cages or containers. You are responsible for loading and securing the containers in Paratransit, Inc. vehicles.

## **PASSENGER RESPONSIBILITIES**

*Senior Transportation Service* 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 Information Guide carefully.
- Make reservations at least one day in advance.
- Be at designated pick-up locations.
- Board the vehicle as soon as it arrives.
- Call to inquire if the vehicle has not arrived within 30 minutes after your *"ready time."*
- 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**

*Senior Transportation Service* 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 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.

## **SUSPENSION OF SERVICE**

**1. Suspension for Untimely Cancellation Notice, "No-Shows," and Lateness:** A suspension will be imposed as described below for a documented pattern, within any 30-day period, of misuse of system capacity within your control.

First Suspension: 7 days

Second Suspension: 14 days

Third Suspension: 30 days

**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 Paratransit, Inc., 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 Paratransit, Inc., 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.

## **COMMON QUESTIONS**

### **Can I Use *Senior Transportation Service* In Other Cities?**

Because *Senior Transportation Service* is locally funded, your eligibility applies only in the greater Sacramento area. To use similar service elsewhere as a "visitor," you may need to be certified as eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This requires a different application process, which is explained below.

### **What Is ADA Paratransit Service?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires all public transportation agencies like RT 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.

You may want to consider also applying for ADA paratransit

eligibility if you are disabled and would need accessible transportation in other cities.

**How Do I Apply for ADA Service?** To apply, complete and mail back an application provided by RT. When RT receives your completed application, it will be evaluated to determine whether your disability or health-related condition affects your ability to ride the regular RT fixed-route system (bus and light rail). The number to call to obtain an application is (916) 557-4685 or 557-4686 TDD. 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. It will take about three weeks after receipt of your completed application for RT to make a determination and notify you of your ADA certification. If eligible, you will be scheduled to be photographed for your ADA service identification card.

### **What Is Fixed-Route Service?**

RT provides fully accessible fixed-route service in the greater Sacramento area. RT encourages seniors and individuals with disabilities to take advantage of the independence and flexibility, that is provided by its bus and light rail train system which offers the following services and accessible features:

- Reduced fare for seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Free *Lifetime Pass* for people **age 75** and older.
- Free mobility training.
- Trip planning.
- Stops, including transfer points and major intersections, as well as any requested stops, are announced by drivers to help orient passengers to their destinations.
- 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.
- Boarding ramps at most light rail stations to assist passengers who have difficulty climbing steps.
- Braille and raised-print signage posted at light rail stations to assist blind and visually impaired passengers.
- Detectable warning tile at light rail stations to assist blind and visually impaired passengers in navigating the system.

### **Can I Learn To Ride RT Buses Or Light Rail Trains?**

Yes. Professional instructors are available through Paratransit, Inc., to provide personal mobility-training lessons, free of charge, to teach seniors and people with disabilities to ride RT buses and light rail trains, when possible. For more information about mobility training, call Mobility Options at (916) 429-2009 extension 352 or 341.

### **PARATRANSIT CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS**

Your *Senior Transportation Service* staff care what you think and welcome your compliments, complaints and suggestions. Write or call Paratransit, Inc.'s, Customer Communications staff at 429-2009 as soon as a good or bad deed has occurred and let them know: Who? What? Where? When? Why? The mailing address for Paratransit, Inc., is PO Box 231100, Sacramento CA 95823-0401. Paratransit, Inc., will work diligently to resolve rider concerns and provide positive results.

## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

### (Area Code 916)

RIDE RESERVATIONS	429-2744 or 800-956-6776
TDD (for hearing impaired)	429-2568
CANCELLATIONS	429-2009
IF YOUR RIDE IS LATE	429-2009
IF YOU ARE DELAYED	429-2009
CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS	429-2009
MOBILITY OPTIONS	868-6220
AUTOMATED TELEPHONE SYSTEM	429-2488

For more information about *Senior Transportation Services* or ADA paratransit eligibility, to request an application, or to request a replacement ID card, call:

Regional Transit  
Accessible Services (Paratransit Certification Office)  
(916) 557-4685 or 557-4686 TDD  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Closed for lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
e-mail: [paratransit@sacrt.com](mailto:paratransit@sacrt.com)