

Paratransit Services (Access-a-Ride)

Information below is from MTA.Info. Some of the material in this fact sheet has been edited for readability. If you have any questions about this material, please refer to the original website http://www.mta.info/nyct/paratran/guide.htm#what_is or contact CIDNY and ask to speak to a benefits counselor.

Program:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that organizations that provide fixed-route bus or subway service also provide paratransit service for individuals unable to use public bus or subway service for some or all of their trips.

Paratransit is the term used for a “demand-response” service in which an eligible customer must reserve a trip in advance. MTA New York City Transit runs Access-A-Ride (AAR), the paratransit service for New York City. The service is shared-ride, door-to-door, or feeder service.

Eligibility:

If you are determined to be eligible, you will be assigned one of the following categories:

- (1) full
- (2) continual – your condition is permanent and will not improve, so you will not need to reapply;
- (3) temporary – either full or conditional for less than 5 years; or
- (4) conditional - due to restricted stairs at inaccessible subway stations.

Those determined conditionally eligible for AAR may only travel by AAR when the conditions noted on the AAR ID card apply. NYC Transit will check the weather site www.weather.gov/nyc to determine when weather conditions apply.

Please note: all NYC Transit buses have wheelchair-lifts or ramps.

Where to get an application:

- Download a form: http://www.mta.info/nyct/paratran/access_application.pdf
- Phone: 877-337-2017 to request an application to be mailed to you.
- DO NOT mail your application back to the MTA. Your finished application must be brought with you to your scheduled evaluation at the offices of the professional certifier selected by NYC Transit. Please give the completed application and any supporting documents to the professional certifier.

Application Process:

- Whether you are applying or recertifying for AAR, you must call Eligibility (877-337-2017) Monday through Friday, 9a.m. to 5 p.m., to schedule an appointment at an assessment center in the borough where you live.
- Please inform Eligibility staff if you need:
 - 1) Material in large print, Braille or recorded format
 - 2) A sign language interpreter
 - 3) A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to travel with you (a PCA may be a relative, spouse, friend or a professional attendant).

- Once you have agreed to visit an assessment center, Eligibility staff will send you an application packet that should arrive in approximately 5 days. If you requested application packet materials in accessible format, it will be mailed to you separately.
- The packet includes the print version of the application and a letter with the date, time and location of your appointment. Only the print application will be accepted at your interview. The letter also provides instructions on scheduling round-trip transportation to the assessment center. Call Eligibility (877-337-2017) if you don't receive the application packet. Applications mailed to Paratransit offices will be returned.
- When scheduling transportation, remember to say if you will be traveling with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). If you cannot keep your appointment, please call Eligibility to cancel and reschedule. You must also call and cancel your transportation.
- At the center, you will have a face-to-face interview with a healthcare professional. You will also undergo functional testing, if appropriate. An assessment report will be sent to NYC Transit Eligibility staff. This procedure lets AAR determine objectively if you are entitled to get paratransit service.
- A decision about your eligibility will be made within 21 days after you visit the assessment center. You will receive written notification of our decision.
- If you have not received a notification of our decision after 21 days, please call Eligibility (877-337-2017).
- Except for customers who have temporary conditions, those found eligible will need to reapply every 5 years. You are notified by mail when it's time to recertify. If you don't receive a letter six weeks before the expiration date on your AAR ID card, call Eligibility.

Appeals:

- If you are denied eligibility or given conditional eligibility, you have a right to appeal the decision within 60 days of notification.
- Appeal instructions and an appeal form are included with the notification letter.
- Appeals may be in writing or in person.

Telephone Directory for Access-A-Ride:

Call **877-337-2017** toll-free from area codes 212, 718, 347, 516, 631, 646, 914, and 845.

From other area codes, dial **718-393-4999**.

Customers who are deaf/hard of hearing can use their preferred relay service or the free 711 service relay.

- For eligibility, appeals, certification or application questions, please press "1".
- To request a trip, please press "2".
- To change a trip, please press "3".
- To cancel a future trip, please press "4".
- For same day trip information or cancellation, please press "5".
- For subscription service, please press "6".
- To repeat this announcement, please press "0".

Fares:

- AAR fares are the same as full fare on public transit.
- Show the driver your AAR ID and pay the exact fare as you board the vehicle.
- AAR drivers do not provide change and do not accept round-trip fares.
- Your vehicle will not leave unless you and your guest(s) pay the fare.
- Only PCAs ride free of charge.
- AAR TransitChek coupons are accepted as fare payment. Each coupon is good for one trip.

How to Commend or Complain:

When making a complaint, please give your name, address, telephone number, and AAR ID number. Also, give the specific details of your complaint and when and where it happened. If you're complaining about a trip, the information on your trip ticket helps us investigate.

1. Call: 511, the MTA New York City Transit Customer Service line, between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., seven days a week, to speak with a representative who handles paratransit issues.

Deaf/hard of hearing customers: use your preferred relay service provider or the free **711** service relay to reach **511**.

2. Write: MTA New York City Transit, Paratransit Division, Customer Relations, 130 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

3. E-mail: <http://mta-nyc.custhelp.com/app/ask>

For more information on AAR:

- Online: go to www.mta.info/nyct/paratran/guide.htm to print a copy.
- Call: You may also get copies of this guide by calling 877-337-2017.
- MTA NYC Transit Customer Service at 511: provides AAR publications, bus and subway maps and information, between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., seven days a week.
- If you want to receive a Braille or recorded version of the Guide to Access-A-Ride Service, please call 718-393-4133.