

**2016 ADA
Participation Group
Forum Meeting
Dates**



Please join us for the ADA Forum! Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

The next ADA forum is:
* **Nov. 9, 2016**

(Changes in schedule and/or meeting place are possible. However, notices will be posted in advance.)

All ADA Forum Meetings are held at:

Greater Hartford Transit District
One Union Place
Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: (860) 247-5329
Fax: (860) 549-3879
www.hartfordtransit.org



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Did you know that if you have a question, compliment and/or concern about your ADA Paratransit trip we would like to hear from you?

Who do I contact? You may contact the Customer Service Department by calling (860) 724-5340 extension 9, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (For the hearing impaired, please dial Relay of Connecticut at 1-800-833-8134.) You may also contact Customer Service via email at hartfordcustomerservice@firstgroup.com, fax (860) 247-0031 or write:

Customer Service Department c/o First Transit
249 Wawarme Avenue, Hartford, CT 06114

How soon should I call? Please do not delay when you wish to report an incident; contact the Customer Service Department as soon as possible.

What information will I need to provide? Please be certain to have the day of the week, date, and time of all incidents that you would like to report. Any additional details you can provide will be helpful.

When will I receive a response? Any communication with the Customer Service Department will be addressed in a timely manner.

**To obtain a copy in an accessible format please contact us at:
(860) 247-5329 extension 3011**



CONTACT US AT: (860) 724-5340

- Reserve/Cancel/Confirm Select 1**
- Dispatch Department..... Select 2**
- Spanish Select 5**
- General Information..... Select 6**
- ADA Application Status Select 7**
- Service Updates..... Select 8**
- Customer Service Select 9**



**DISABILITY RIGHTS
ARE CIVIL RIGHTS**

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THE S.T.A.R.

(Safe, Timely, Accessible, Reliable)

ADA Paratransit Newsletter



GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT

FALL 2016

CTtransit AND ADA PARATRANSIT FARE CHANGES



On October 3, 2016 the Connecticut Department of Transportation announced fare increases on Connecticut's bus systems. Bus fares will go up 16.7 percent, or 25 cents on a single one-way CTtransit bus trip. As a result, the current one-way cash fare of \$1.50 will increase to \$1.75 and the senior and disabled local current one-way cash fare of \$0.75 will increase to \$.85.

"As we looked to meet our budget requirements, our primary goal was to maintain all existing bus and rail service statewide for the thousands of people who depend on them every day," said Commissioner James P. Redeker. "Combined with other steps to reduce expenses, this fare increase allows us to meet that goal."

The fare increase announcement follows a series of six public hearings around the state on the proposed bus fare increases. Almost 400 people commented on the proposed fares. While some opposed a fare increase of any kind, there were no recommendations to cut service. The bus fare increase, effective December 4, 2016 will apply to the eight CTtransit service areas, including Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, Bristol, New Britain, Stamford, Wallingford and Meriden, as well as CTfastrak.

To coincide with the CTtransit fare increase, the current ADA Paratransit one-way cash fare of \$3.00 will increase to \$3.50. The current cost of \$24.00 for the ADA 10-trip ticket book will increase to \$28.00.

For additional information, you may contact the Connecticut Department of Transportation Office of Communications at (860) 594-3062 or go to www.ct.gov/dot. (Excerpt from: "Rail and Bus Fare Increases to Take Effect in December". www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?A=1373&Q=586320 Web. 3 Oct. 2016).

ADA POLICY UPDATE

No Show and Late Cancellation Policy



Pepe's Pointers for Fall

Ay, Chiwawa! Señor Pepe has been oversleeping and missing his scheduled ADA Paratransit trips! Because he did not call to cancel his ADA trip, Sr. Pepe will be marked as a "no show"- again! This isn't the first time Pepe has neglected to call and cancel an ADA trip he did not need. Pepe scheduled five ADA trips this past month, and was a "no show" for all of them. As a result, Pepe will be mailed a "Warning Letter". Continuing to "no show" for paratransit could eventually result in suspension of Pepe's ADA service! Sr. Pepe says, "Don't end up in the dog house! Please call (860) 724-5340 x 1 or x 2, two (2) hours or more before the pick-up window of your ADA trip to cancel a trip you do not need."

To request a copy of our Oct. 2016 "No Show and Late Cancellation Policy", please call: (860) 247-5329 x 3011.

To encourage responsible trip scheduling and paratransit use, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides that public transit systems establish and enforce a No Show policy. **The Greater Hartford Transit District's ADA Paratransit Passenger No Show Policy was revised as of October 1, 2016.** This updated policy is part of an effort to bring our riders more efficient paratransit service, and to be current with Federal Transit Administration findings and best practices.

Sporadic rider no shows, late cancellations, and cancellations at the door are an expected cost of doing business for a paratransit system. However, a pattern and practice of "No Shows", late cancellations and cancellations at the door adversely affect the efficiency and effectiveness of service and significantly add to the cost of providing ADA complementary paratransit service. No Shows and late cancellations result in wasted trips that could have been scheduled for use by other paratransit riders. No Shows are recorded each time a paratransit rider makes a late cancellation, forgets to cancel, declines their trip at the door, or is not available for pick-up for their scheduled trip.

Definitions:

No Show: A No Show is when all of the following criteria are met:

- There has been no call by the rider (or the rider's representative) to cancel the scheduled trip 2 hours or more before the pick-up window.
AND
- The vehicle arrives at the scheduled pick-up location within the 30-minute pick-up window.
AND
- The driver cannot reasonably see the rider approaching the vehicle within five (5) minutes.

Late cancellations and cancellations at the door, as defined below, will also be treated as No Shows.

Late Cancellation: the rider (or the rider's representative) does not call to cancel a specific scheduled trip at least 2 hours prior to the pick-up window (other than early morning trips as identified above). Late cancellations will be treated as No Shows. (See definitions above).

Cancellation at Door: when the vehicle arrives at the location designated for a specific scheduled trip within the 30-minute pick-up window and the rider (or the rider's representative) notifies the driver at that time that they no longer need the scheduled trip. These are considered No Shows.

Notes on Cancellation:

- The driver is not responsible for cancelling any other trips booked for that day.
- The rider (or the rider's representative) must call to cancel other trips.
- Pick up and return trips are scheduled separately, and the District assumes that all scheduled return trips are needed unless notice is given by the rider or their representative.
- If a pick-up trip is a No Show, The District will not automatically cancel the return trip. A No Show on the return trip will count as a second No Show for the day.

CTTRANSIT CORNER

TRAVEL TRAINING WITH THE KENNEDY CENTER

WHAT IS TRAVEL TRAINING?

Travel training is a program that provides personal instruction in travel skills to enable people with disabilities and people with other barriers to mobility to use regular, public buses (frequently referred to as "fixed route") in an independent fashion.

WHY TRAVEL TRAIN?

Travel training has a whole range of benefits for people who learn to travel independently. It creates opportunities for growth and productivity. It enlarges employment opportunities and improves accessibility to social, recreational and educational resources in the community.

Independent travel results in significant cost savings over the expense of van, taxi, dial-a-ride, or paratransit services. Frequently the cost of paratransit is double that of fixed route. Independent travel also offers more convenience and flexibility. People don't have to wait long periods for their bus. They can arrive at the bus stop at the scheduled departure time. Also, people can change plans and still access public transportation.

Psychologically the benefits of independent travel are enormous. Mastering the tasks necessary for independent travel gives people an increased sense of self-esteem. Frequently the person becomes more willing and able to try new things. People enjoy the independence that comes with community travel and the feeling that they don't have to depend on someone else to get them wherever they want to go. Being able to be "in control" and be in the "mainstream" is both a normalizing experience and an exciting one for the new independent traveler.

WHO DOES THE TRAVEL TRAINING?

The Kennedy Center, Inc., one of the largest human service agencies in Connecticut, is responsible for this program. Since 1991, The Kennedy Center has successfully travel trained more than 3,000 people with cognitive, sensory, and physical disabilities, aged 16-95, to use local buses to access the community.

SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?

Individuals with disabilities and seniors who wish to become more independent should consider participating. Your residence and destination should be on or near a bus route. Travel destinations are your choice and can include: work, medical appointments, and leisure activities.

WHAT DOES TRAVEL TRAINING COST?

The Kennedy Center is funded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, therefore there is no cost for the training program. Each participant, however, is required to pay the bus fare while training is taking place.

The Kennedy Center, Inc.
2440 Reservoir Ave.
Trumbull, CT 06611
Phone: (203) 365-8522 x 273
www.thekennedycenterinc.org/



The NEAT Equipment Restoration Center Went to the Fair!

This year, for the first time, the New England Assistive Technology (NEAT) Equipment Restoration Center (ERC) was at the Hebron Harvest Fair renting scooters and wheelchairs to people attending the 4 day event. Prices were reasonable and positive feedback was received about the equipment. The NEAT ERC will be doing this again next year, and will be looking for volunteers to help staff the booth! The NEAT ERC accepts, repairs, sanitizes and resells gently used donated pieces of durable medical and adaptive equipment at less than half the cost of new. For more information, please contact:

The NEAT Center at Oak Hill School
120 Holcomb Street
Hartford, CT 06112

Toll Free in CT:
(866) 526-4492

Hartford Area:
(860) 243-2869

ADA POLICY UPDATE

No Show and Late Cancellation Policy (Continued...)



Uber Serves Riders With Accessibility Needs

With over one million trips per day across the world, Uber partners provide service to all types of riders, including those with disabilities. In the US, about one in five people have a disability. For people with disabilities, Uber gives them independence they might not have otherwise had. Uber expects partners to comply with all state, federal and local laws governing the transportation of riders with disabilities. This means that Uber must accommodate service animals in compliance with accessibility laws. Additionally, Uber is expected to accommodate riders using walkers, canes, folding wheelchairs or other assistive devices to the maximum extent possible.

For more information about Uber, please go to: www.uber.com/

(Excerpt from: "Serving our users with Accessibility Needs", *Uber Newsroom*: <https://newsroom.uber.com/serving-our-users/> Web 9 July 2015.

A rider who shows a pattern and practice of No Shows may be subject to a suspension of service, as shown in the table below.

Consequences for Pattern and Practice of No Shows	
1st Violation	Letter of warning
2nd Violation	2 Day Suspension
3rd Violation	5 Day Suspension
4th Violation	10 Day Suspension and Loss of Subscription Service
5th Violation and more	28 Day Suspension and Loss of Subscription Service
Violation history covers a 12-month period (October 1 through September 30)	

If a rider has a pattern and practice of No Shows as provided above, they will receive a suspension letter or email, proposing to suspend service within two weeks and outlining the appeals process. Suspension of service privileges will be postponed pending completion of the appeals process.

Loss of subscription service takes effect with four (4) violations in a 12-month period, and will not be removed until the rider has three (3) consecutive months without any No Shows or late cancellations.

Appeal Process

A rider (or a rider's representative) may file a verbal or written appeal for an individual No Show issued by contacting the District's ADA Paratransit Director at: pwilliams@ghtd.org or call (860) 247-5329 ext. 3011. The rider should provide any information on which they wish to rely to support his/her appeal.

Designated District staff will review the information provided by the rider (or the rider's representative) and make a decision to either uphold the individual no show or to excuse it. This decision will be made within ten (10) business days.

If No Shows have accumulated to a point where a suspension will be imposed, the rider (or the rider's representative) may file a verbal or written appeal for a review of all No Shows by contacting the District's ADA Paratransit Director at: pwilliams@ghtd.org or call (860) 247-5329 ext. 3011. Service will continue while the outcome of the appeal is decided.

If in any case, the rider is not satisfied with the review by the ADA Paratransit Director, they may request a formal review by the District's Operations Administrator. A hearing will be scheduled on the matter during which the rider will be permitted to present any materials or testimony relevant to the appeal. A decision on the appeal will be made within ten (10) business days.

All materials are available in accessible format and in languages other than English upon request.

ADA POLICY UPDATE

No Show and Late Cancellation Policy (Continued...)

No Shows Beyond Passenger's Control

Trips cancelled for reasons that are beyond the rider's control will not be considered No Shows. This includes missed trips resulting due to sudden illness, family or personal emergency, transit connection delay, appointment delay, extreme weather conditions, operator error, paratransit lateness, or other unforeseen reasons for which it is not possible to call to cancel in time or to take the trip as scheduled.

Although No Shows will not be issued for reasons beyond the rider's control, the rider should always make every effort to cancel scheduled trips in a timely manner. It is the rider's responsibility to provide a reason for not canceling a trip. Contact should be made as soon as possible so that No Shows occurring beyond a rider's control can be excused. Lack of any contact will result in a No Show record remaining intact and may lead to warnings/service suspensions detailed below.

Riders should contact First Transit Customer Service department at: (860) 724-5340 ext. #9 when experiencing no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control.

No Show Notifications

Riders will be notified of No Shows in writing, and will receive a written warning after five (5) NO SHOWS. The written correspondence will list the total number of No Shows and the percent of No Shows in reference to the total number of trips booked in the period. Specific dates, times and locations of each No Show in the period will be provided in writing upon rider request.

Pattern and Practice of No Shows

Riders may be suspended from paratransit service when they show a "pattern and practice" of No Shows, which occurs when:

- a. A rider has five (5) or more No Shows in a calendar month;
- AND**
- b. The number of No Shows represents more than 15% of the trips booked by the rider in a calendar month.

The following are examples of what would and would not constitute a pattern and practice of No Shows:

Example 1: A rider books 20 trips in a calendar month and misses five trips. This rider **has a pattern and practice** of No Shows because (a) the rider had five No Shows, and (b) those No Shows represent 25% of the total trips booked;

Example 2: A rider books 10 trips in a calendar month and misses four trips. This rider **will not have a pattern and practice** of No Shows because the rider did not have five or more No Shows in the calendar month. (Note that because there were not at least five No Shows, the fact that the rider missed 40% is irrelevant for purposes of determining whether there has been a pattern and practice of No Shows.)



ABC's New Sitcom "Speechless"

The new television show, "Speechless", brings disability awareness to an entirely new level! You will be inspired as you watch JJ DiMeo, a boy with cerebral palsy, use his laser pointer and communication board while navigating the challenges of high school. You will be moved by his mother, played by Minnie Driver, who boldly advocates for JJ's rights and never gives up doing so. You will be charmed as JJ's family works together to adjust to his ever-changing needs. The consistent humor is the perfect touch for drawing viewers into a complex topic. "Speechless" debuted on September 21, 2016.

Make sure you check out "Speechless" on Wednesdays at 8:30 on ABC!

For more information, you may also go to:

<http://abc.go.com/shows/speechless>