



**Paratransit**  
by Spokane Transit

# PARATRANSIT

## User Handbook



Welcome to Spokane Transit, your public transportation provider in Spokane County. Whether you use our regular bus service, Paratransit vans, or both, we're here to serve you. Our main goal is to give you high-quality, safe, and friendly service.

Paratransit is different from regular bus and taxi services. It offers door-to-door, shared rides for people with disabilities who can't always use the bus.

This booklet is your guide to using Paratransit services. It has all the information you need to know and helps you understand your responsibilities as a Paratransit customer.

We hope you find everything you need in this booklet, but if you have any questions, please call or email us. Our contact information is included in this book.

Your safety and satisfaction are very important to us.

Enjoy the ride!

# **Spokane Transit's Vision Statement**

Connecting everyone to opportunity.

# **Spokane Transit's Mission Statement**

We provide safe, inclusive, convenient, and efficient public transportation services to Spokane area communities.

We are leaders in transportation and a valued partner in the region's social fabric, economic infrastructure, and quality of life.



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## **Title VI**

Spokane Transit assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information, visit [www.spokanetransit.com](http://www.spokanetransit.com). All phone numbers are accessible for people who are deaf or hard of hearing through Relay 711.

Upon request, alternative formats of this document will be produced for people who are disabled.

Call 509-325-6094 or email STA's Ombudsman at: [ombudsman@spokanetransit.com](mailto:ombudsman@spokanetransit.com).

## Comments About Paratransit

Your comments, suggestions, complaints, compliments, and concerns are important. Please let us know what's on your mind. We will try our best to get back to you within 72 hours. The following options are available for you to provide comments about our service:

1. Call the Paratransit Rider Hot Line at:  
509-325-6026
2. Reach out to us on our website at  
[spokanetransit.com/help](http://spokanetransit.com/help), or
3. Contact the STA Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer  
Phone: 509-325-6094  
WA Relay: 711  
E-mail: [ombudsman@spokanetransit.com](mailto:ombudsman@spokanetransit.com)  
Mail: 1230 West Boone Avenue Spokane, WA 99201

You may remain anonymous if you wish.

# Helpful Addresses & Phone Numbers

**Spokane Transit  
Paratransit Services  
1212 Sharp Avenue Spokane, WA  
99201-2686**

To schedule, cancel, or check on a ride, please call the reservations office at **509-328-1552** between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., seven (7) days a week.

If you do not have a push-button phone, please stay on the line for the next available Reservationist to take your call.

To cancel or check on a ride before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m., dial 509-328-1553 and choose Option 1.

If you have a smartphone or computer with internet access, call the reservations department to learn how to use PASS Web.

## **Special Notes for Using This Book**

For your convenience and at the request of our customers, this document is printed in a larger type.

### **To Caregivers and Social Service Agencies**

This handbook is phrased as if the Paratransit customer is reading it. We know that many caregivers and others will assume the responsibility for reading and understanding this information, as well as making reservations and other arrangements for the customer.

Please keep in mind that all customers must be able to abide by Spokane Transit Authority's (STA) Rules of Conduct. For the full Rules of Conduct please visit [spokanetransit.com/rules](http://spokanetransit.com/rules) or you may request to have a copy sent to you by calling the Rider Hotline.

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# Welcome To Paratransit Shared-Ride Van Service

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This handbook provides you with step-by- step instructions on how to use Paratransit van service, along with policies, procedures, helpful contact information, and tips for our customers.

## **What Is Paratransit?**

Paratransit is a public, wheelchair-accessible shared-ride transportation service for individuals when the effects of their disability prevent them from using the regular fixed route buses all or some of the time. This means that a person must be unable, because of the effects of their disability, to get to or from the bus stop, get on or off a ramp-equipped bus, or successfully navigate or travel by bus to or from their destination. All Paratransit customers must apply and be found eligible to ride Paratransit.

Paratransit van service is comparable to fixed route bus service as it operates in the same service area and during the same service hours as the regular bus.

We take pride in offering the best possible van transportation to customers who are eligible for Paratransit service under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

The Paratransit fleet has over 100 vans and helps more than 6,000 ADA-eligible customers, along with their guests and personal care attendants (PCA). The van service runs every day of the year and completes hundreds of thousands of trips each year.

# Eligibility

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Spokane Transit fixed route buses are considered the primary mode of public transportation for everyone in our service area. Therefore, riders who require Paratransit service because they are unable to use the regular bus, must apply for eligibility.

There are three types of eligibility, which are based on the applicant's specific disability: temporary, conditional, and unconditional (full) service.

Because the effects of a disability can change over time, certification for Paratransit eligibility is not permanent. Most eligibility is granted for a period of one (1) to five (5) years. A notification letter and recertification form are sent at least 60 days before your eligibility is due to expire.

## **Paratransit Provides Three Different Levels of Service**

1. Temporary service is for people who have a temporary need for the service due to a catastrophic event such as a stroke, hip replacement, broken leg, etc.
2. Conditional service is for customers who can take the bus some of the time and require van service at other times. Please see the section on Conditional Eligibility for more information.

3. Unconditional (Full) service allows eligible customers to take the van for all their trips during our service hours and within our service area.

## **Determining Eligibility**

After reviewing your application our Eligibility Specialist will determine if you are eligible for Paratransit services. If we determine that you are eligible for Paratransit services, you will receive a letter and ID card notifying you of the decision. The ID card will have your customer ID number printed on it. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you may appeal within 60 days of the date of the letter. See Eligibility Appeal Process.

## **Conditional Eligibility**

This level of service is for people who can take the bus some of the time and require the van service at other times. The conditions you can use the van service are customized to each individual's abilities based upon the information provided in the application. Your eligibility letter will explain the conditions under which you can use the van service. Abilities change over time, and you can reapply to adjust the level of service at any time.

## **Eligibility Appeal Process**

If you disagree with your eligibility determination, you may appeal within 60 calendar days of the date

on your eligibility determination letter. A form to request your appeal is included with your eligibility determination letter.

An appeal of your eligibility determination gives you the opportunity to present information and arguments of why you believe the determination is not correct. You will want to provide information that demonstrates how the effects of your disability prevent you from independently:

- getting to the nearest bus stop.
- boarding and riding the regular, fixed route bus; and/or
- getting off the bus and successfully navigating to your destination.

You can request an in-person appeal hearing to be held at Spokane Transit. If you wish, you can bring someone with you to the hearing. STA will provide Paratransit transportation to and from the hearing.

If you would rather appeal in writing, you may submit a letter of appeal.

Within 30 days after your hearing or after Spokane Transit has received all the information you want considered in your appeal; you will receive a written, final decision regarding your Paratransit eligibility.



Please submit your notice of appeal and any additional information to:

**Appeals, Paratransit Services  
Spokane Transit  
1230 W Boone Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99201-2686  
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com**

## **How Can I Get an Application?**

Contact Spokane Transit Paratransit Services Eligibility department at 509-325-6052 to request a Paratransit application or download an application from: [www.spokanetransit.com/Paratransit](http://www.spokanetransit.com/Paratransit)

Fill out the application with complete answers to each question and mail it to Spokane Transit. Be sure to sign the application and have the medical portion completed before you send it in. Spokane Transit will not process incomplete applications.

# Paratransit Service

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## Service Hours/Holidays

Paratransit hours of service are comparable to the hours of service on the regular bus, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Paratransit van service is currently available seven days a week including holidays.

If your trip begins early in the morning or ends late at night, the Paratransit Reservationist will identify the pick-up/drop-off times that will most closely meet your travel needs. Please note that your reservation times will also depend on the length of your trip. The hours of operation for the regular bus can change throughout the year.

Please be aware that these are the current holidays that STA observes. The hours of holiday service are restricted and may change in the future:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

## **Service Area**

All your Paratransit trips must begin and end within the Paratransit service area. Presently, this includes areas in the cities of Cheney, Medical Lake, Airway Heights, Liberty Lake, Spokane, Spokane Valley, and Millwood. Fairchild Air Force Base and Spokane International Airport are also served.

The Paratransit service area is comparable to the area served by the regular, fixed route bus system and conforms to the Americans with Disabilities Act. The service area is a corridor which extends  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile around each fixed route. The Paratransit service area never extends beyond Spokane Transit's official boundary, the Public Transportation Benefit Area, however, you may see Paratransit vehicles driving outside the service area when they are traveling from destination to destination.

Changes that increase or decrease the areas and times served by the fixed route buses will result in comparable changes to the Paratransit service area and times.

If you are unsure if your home or destination is within the current Paratransit service area, please call the Eligibility department at 509-325-6052.

# Scheduling Your Van Ride

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Spokane Transit Paratransit van service is not a taxi service, but rather a shared-ride van service that carries multiple customers to different destinations. If you schedule your ride two days or less before your trip date the trip times may be negotiated. Trips will be negotiated within one hour of your requested trip time.

Matching rides is the most complex part of getting you where you need to go on time. When you call, the Reservationists will do their best to accommodate your request. The more flexible you can be about the time you request, the easier it is to serve a greater number of customers. Trips are scheduled to allow for adequate travel time between stops. The amount of time you are on the van is designed to be comparable to the fixed route buses.

## **Pick Up Window**

When you schedule a van ride, you will be given a 30-minute range of time during which you can expect a Paratransit van to pick you up.

This 30-minute period is called the “pick-up window.” Your van may arrive any time during this window and is not late until the 30-minute window has passed.

The 30-minute window applies to all scheduled rides, including return rides. For example, if you agree to a 9:00 a.m. pick-up, the vehicle should arrive between 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. for an on-time pick-up.

## **When To Schedule A Ride**

You can schedule your Paratransit van ride up to seven (7) days in advance of your trip but no less than the day before your trip.

The Reservations office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., seven days a week including holidays.

## **How To Schedule A Ride**

Call the Reservations office at 509-328-1552. All calls are recorded for quality assurance purposes.

Our goal is to answer your call as quickly as possible. However, if you are on hold, please be patient and stay on the line. Calls are answered in the order received and a Reservationist will be with you shortly.

The Reservationist will guide you through the process of scheduling your ride. Please have the following ready before you call:

- Your Paratransit ID number
- Your name and address
- Pencil and paper

- Your complete pick-up address, including apartment and/or building name or number
- Exact address and description of where you want to go (for example, Fred Meyer at 400 S. Thor- Grocery Entrance)
- Time(s) of and date(s) of travel
- Time(s) of any appointments you might have, so we can plan your drop-off and pick-up times
- If a personal care attendant (PCA) or guests will be riding with you
- If a service animal or pet will travel with you
- Whether you will be using a mobility aid (wheelchair, walker, oxygen)
- The form of payment you will use.

## **Confirming Your Ride Requests**

When you are finished scheduling your trip, the Reservationist will review all the information with you. This is a good accuracy check for both of you. Have a pencil (or pen) and paper handy to write down the information the Reservationist gives you. We suggest you write down the name of the Reservationist who helped you plan your trip. All calls are recorded for quality assurance.

## **Tips For Requesting Rides**

These tips will help provide you with the best possible service:

- **Call Early** - The earlier you call (up to seven (7) days in advance) for a ride, the more time Spokane Transit has for route planning.
- **Allow extra travel time** - Trips are scheduled on a shared ride basis. The vehicle may stop to let other customers on or off before reaching your destination. In addition, travel times may vary due to rush hour slowdowns, time of day, local events, road construction, traffic accidents, bad weather, or day of the week.
- **Be flexible** - Paratransit may not be able to schedule a ride at the time you want. Because Paratransit is a shared ride service, we may need to schedule your pick-up time up to one (1) hour earlier or later than you request.
- **Remember the “pick-up” window** - When you schedule a van ride, you will be given a 30- minute range of time during which you can expect a Paratransit van to pick you up. This 30-minute period is called the “pick-up window.” Your van may arrive any time during this window. Your ride is not late until the 30-minute window has passed. The 30-minute window applies to all scheduled rides, including return rides. For example, if you agree to a 9:00 pick-up, the vehicle should arrive between 9:00 and 9:30 for an on-time pick-up.

- **Be ready** - When the van operator comes to pick you up during the scheduled time, they can only wait for five (5) minutes after trying to contact you. To avoid delays, missed appointments, and penalties for not showing up, make sure you're prepared to leave when the vehicle arrives. Keep in mind that Paratransit operators won't assist you in getting ready for your trip. If the van arrives earlier than your scheduled pick-up time, you don't have to leave early, and the operator will wait for five (5) minutes after your scheduled pick-up time.
- **Consider a PCA** - A PCA is someone who helps people with disabilities with their daily activities. Be advised that you may be left alone on the Paratransit vehicle anytime that our operator assists other customers. The vehicle will not always be visible to the operator at those times. You will be dropped off at your destination, even if someone is not waiting for you. We cannot wait with you until someone arrives. If you cannot be left alone, please arrange for a PCA to travel with you.
- **Multiple trips** - You may schedule multiple trips for the same day. However, because this is a shared-ride service, it is important you allow ample time between drop-offs and pick-ups. We recommend you allow no less



than one (1) hour and 15 minutes between each scheduled pick-up time. Please do not schedule more trips than you plan on using as it may negatively impact other riders.

- **Choose stores and other locations close to your home** - When you are going shopping or other places, choosing a location close to your home will reduce your travel time and costs, allowing Paratransit to operate more efficiently for the benefit of all customers.
- **Limit your onboard parcels** - Operators are only allowed to assist the ADA-eligible customer with up to four (4) bags or items, (not to weigh over 25 pounds each), or one personal shopping cart (with no extra bags of groceries hanging on the outside of the cart).
- Paratransit reserves the right to refuse transport of items exceeding the weight limit, or bulky items for lack of space in the vehicle. Please keep in mind walkways on the van must be kept clear for safety reasons.
- **Bring your ID - Fairchild Air Force Base requires special identification to enter the base.** Please have your ID with you when you board the vehicle and ready when approaching the base.
- **Oxygen** - if you are using oxygen, please bring an ample supply.

## **Notify Paratransit of Any Change to Your Personal Information**

Call the Eligibility department at 509-325-6052 if you move to a new address, change apartments, change your home telephone number, or emergency contact number.

It is important to keep your mailing address up to date and it can be different than your pick-up address.

## **Standing Rides (Subscription Trips)**

If you need a ride to the same place at the same time at least once a week for an extended period, a Standing Ride may be an option for you.

Once a Standing Ride is set up, you will not have to call to arrange this ride because the computer system automatically schedules these rides for you. However, you must remember to cancel any trip you are not planning to take. **Standing Rides are meant to be long term with minimum changes and cancellations.**

For information about arranging a Standing Ride, please call the reservations office at 509-328-1552.

Standing Rides will be automatically cancelled on these major holidays:

- New Year's Day

- Martin Luther King Jr.-Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Juneteenth
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the standing ride will be automatically canceled on the federally observed holiday. If you want your usual trip on a holiday, you need to call at least the day before to schedule the trip.

## **Canceling Your Trips**

If you need to cancel your scheduled ride it is your responsibility to call the reservations office at 509-328-1552.

- Please be sure to cancel both ends of your trip (pick-up and return) if appropriate.
- Customers must cancel their trip(s) a minimum of one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time to avoid a no-show penalty.
- If you need to cancel more than one (1) trip, be sure to tell the Reservationist which trips to cancel. Paratransit van operators are not permitted to request, change, or cancel trips for you.

- If you miss a ride for a reason that is outside of your control, please contact a Reservationist as soon as possible.

**If you do not call to cancel your trip at least one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time, you may be considered a “No-Show.”**

More information about “No-Shows” can be found on page 46.

### **If Your Appointment Is Running Late**

If your appointment is running late and there is a chance you will not be ready at your scheduled return time, or if you have missed the van, call the reservations office at 509-328-1552 as soon as possible. The Reservationist will help you schedule a return trip.

### **Same Day Service**

Depending on the space available, limited same-day trips may be accommodated. However, do not rely on same-day service for your usual trip needs.

If you have a medical emergency, you will be advised to seek another form of transportation. We are not able to accommodate medical emergencies.

## Be Ready When The Van Arrives

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- When the van pulls up, please be ready to go. Every effort is made to pick you up within 30 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time.
- The van can arrive anytime in the 30-minute pick-up window and is still considered on time.
- The operator can only wait for you for five (5) minutes. If the operator arrives early, you are not required to leave until five minutes after your scheduled pick-up time.
- The operator's responsibility for your safety begins at the door where the trip begins and ends at the door of your destination. That is door to door service.
- Operators are not caregivers and do not provide -to-attendant-to-attendant service and cannot wait for an attendant at drop-off.
- If you need one-on-one service, a PCA or companion should travel with you.
- Operators are not required to approach a house where there is a risk of encountering an unrestrained animal.
- For safety reasons the pathway from the door to the van must be clear of ice, snow, and debris.
- Have your fare ready and visible. Operators do not carry change and are not allowed to

search purses, pockets, or backpacks for the fare.

- All Paratransit operators wear uniforms with the company name embroidered on them. They will identify themselves and will have their employee ID available.

## **Waiting Areas and Common Lobbies**

- Operators will come into the common area of an apartment or office building to meet you.
- Customers will ONLY be escorted to and from the common areas.
- Operators are not permitted to go through facilities, up elevators, stairs or into individual offices to assist or locate customers.
- Operators are not permitted to enter your home, even to assist you with a wheelchair, carry your packages or groceries, or to help you with your coat.

# Travel Tips

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## **A PCA Is Recommended Under The Following Conditions**

- You are unable to be left alone.
- You are unable to travel independently beyond the door of the pick-up or drop-off.
- You use a wheelchair and must travel up or down more than one step.
- You are traveling on rough or uneven terrain, or any other conditions that present a safety hazard.
- You require supervision during transport on Paratransit.

## **Traveling With Guests (Companions)**

- Each eligible rider may travel with one guest in addition to their PCA. Additional guests may travel if space is available.
- Your guest(s) must board and disembark at the same location as you.
- Be sure to tell the Reservationist you will be bringing a guest(s) with you when you schedule your ride.
- Operators cannot transport passengers who are not prescheduled for a trip.
- Guests pay the same fare as you pay when accompanying you on the van.

- In the event you have scheduled a ride for a guest to go with you and they will not be taking the trip, please call a Reservationist at the reservations office at 509-328-1552 to cancel their trip so we can offer that empty seat to another customer.

## **Transporting Children**

- Children under four (4) years of age (or under 40 pounds) must travel in an approved child seat.
- Children under two (2) years of age or under 20 pounds must travel in a rear facing approved child seat.
- Paratransit vehicle safety belts are compatible for use with child safety seats.
- You are responsible for securing the car seat and securing your child in the car seat.
- You are responsible for your child during trips.

## **Service Animals (And Service Animals in Training)**

- Service animals are animals that have been trained to perform a specific task or tasks to assist a person with a disability.
- Service animals are welcome on Paratransit vehicles.
- A service animal may travel on the floor near its handler, or if small, on the handler's lap.



- A service animal must be always under your control.
- The operators will not handle your service animal.
- If you need assistance getting on or off the van with your service animal, please plan to bring a PCA to assist you.

Any animal that is not controlled and/or exhibits vicious behavior will not be allowed to ride on any STA vehicles.

## **Pets**

- If you are traveling with a pet, it must be in a carrier designed for animals with absorbent material on the carrier floor.
- You must be able to handle and carry the pet carrier by yourself.
- The pet carrier must fit under the seat or on your lap and cannot block the walkway on the van.

## **Wheelchairs And Other Mobility Aids**

- The ADA requires Spokane Transit to transport manual or powered mobility devices (wheelchairs and scooters) used by a person with a mobility disability.
- A Paratransit customer and their wheelchair must fit on the lift and fit into the wheelchair securement area.

- If you are not sure if your mobility device will fit due to length, width or weight contact our Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 for more information.
- If you and your mobility device together weigh more than 800 pounds, contact our Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026.
- The operator can assist you in your manual wheelchair up or down one (1) step to a level surface. This rule also applies to unoccupied manual wheelchairs.
- For safety reasons, operators cannot assist people who use power wheelchairs or scooters up or down steps or curbs.
- Operators will not operate power wheelchairs or scooters.
- Operators will not transport you in a power wheelchair or scooter that is not operational.
- If your power wheelchair or scooter becomes inoperable while out in the community and you have a ride scheduled, please call the reservations office at 509-328-1552 to advise Paratransit of the situation.
- If you have a ramp at your home site, it must meet ADA requirements for slope, be safely constructed and be cleared of any obstructions for an operator to assist.
- If the operator determines that they cannot safely use your ramp, a Paratransit Supervisor will be notified. Operators will not escort you

over the ramp until a supervisor has determined it is safe.

- If you have questions about the safety or design of your walkway or ramp at your pick-up or drop-off location, call the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 for assistance.
- Only the operator is permitted to operate the vehicle wheelchair lift or securement devices.
- If you use a wheelchair or other mobility aid, we ask that you keep it clean and in good working order.
- Some scooters and power chairs may be difficult to secure or are unsafe to occupy during transit. Because of this, the operator may recommend that you transfer to the passenger seat for your safety. **You are not required to transfer to a passenger seat, but we encourage you to do so when your operator recommends the transfer.**

## Other Aids

- The operator will secure walkers inside the vehicle. Walkers, plus any attachments such as baskets, bags, or water bottles, should weigh no more than 25 pounds total.
- If you need to travel with an oxygen unit, a portable unit is preferred.
- If you have an oxygen cylinder, it must be transported in a cylinder holder and be attached firmly to a mobility aid or be in a

cylinder cart on wheels. The operator will secure your cylinder cart inside the vehicle.

- The operator will load and secure your shopping cart on the vehicle. Items must be in the cart and not hanging from the cart.
- If the personal shopping cart has wheels and the lift is used the 25-pound weight limit does not apply.

## **The Lift**

Customers who do not use wheelchairs may use the lift to board the van. Please tell the Reservationist that you wish to use the lift when you book the trip. This information will be given to the driver.

If you have not planned to use the lift, but need to, let the driver know and they will lower the lift for you.

## **Seatbelts**

- For safety and security, all customers, guests, and PCAs are encouraged to wear seatbelts and remain seated with their seatbelts secured during transport.
- Seatbelt extensions are available for your comfort. Let the operator know if you would like to use one.
- Spokane Transit recommends that customers in wheelchairs use a personal lap belt to

prevent a fall from the wheelchair seat during transport.

- Shoulder belts are available for customers traveling in wheelchairs. The shoulder belts are optional. Let the operator know if you would like to use one.

## Fare Information

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You can pay the fare using a variety of fare options. For information about the different fare options currently available, call the reservations office at **509-328-1552** between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., seven (7) days a week, or contact the customer service department at 509-456-7277. Fares are subject to change.

- Have the exact fare ready. Operators do not carry change and are not allowed to search purses, pockets, or backpacks for the fare.
- Put the fare in the fare box or hand it to the operator each time you board the vehicle.
- Guests/companions are required to pay a fare.
- **PCAs are not required to pay a fare.**
- **There is no charge for service animals or pets.**

# Paratransit Operators

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Paratransit operators are trained in customer service, defensive driving, passenger assistance, disability awareness, and the safe operation of Paratransit vehicles. Please cooperate with the operators and follow their instructions.

- The operator's first responsibility is the safety and security of all the customers and the vehicle.
- Minimize operator distractions. Operators will not engage in unnecessary conversation with you. To help the operator focus on their driving, please limit the conversation to questions or concerns about your trip.
- Operators, whenever possible, are encouraged to stay within sight of the vehicle, however, this is not always possible.
- Please be advised that you may be left alone on the Paratransit vehicle when the operator assists other customers.
- Operators are allowed to assist the ADA-eligible customer with up to four (4) bags, (not weighing over 25 pounds each), or one personal shopping cart (with no extra bags hanging on the outside of the cart).
- Operators cannot pick up packages (such as prescriptions) for you and bring them to you.

- Operators are not allowed to wait while you complete a quick errand.
- Operators are not authorized to handle medications or money, other than your fare.
- Operators cannot accept tips; they do appreciate letters of praise for good service.
- Operators will not approach a house where there is a risk of encountering an unfriendly or unrestrained animal. When the operator arrives, make sure your animal is contained or on a leash.



# Travel To and From the Airport

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## To the Airport

When you are traveling to or from Spokane International Airport, the operator will be happy to carry your luggage from your door to the van.

You may have no more than four (4) items of luggage per ADA-eligible passenger, each item weighing no more than 25 pounds.

PCAs and companions are required to carry their own luggage and are limited to four (4) items, each one weighing no more than 25 pounds.

At Spokane International Airport, according to airport regulations, the operator must remain curbside. The operator will drop you and your luggage off at the curb nearest to the entrance to the airline on which you will be traveling.

## From the Airport

On trips from the airport, you must meet the operator at curbside. Spokane Transit suggests you wait in the area by the luggage carousel and near a window. You must be able to see the van pull up and make your way to the curb.

When you reserve a trip from the airport, you will be advised to call the reservations office at 509-328-1552 when your flight arrives to let Paratransit

know you are waiting for your van ride. **Because of the potential for delayed flights, a van will not be dispatched until you call.**

## Out Of Town Visitors

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If you are planning to travel out of town and would like to use an ADA Paratransit service in another area, contact the STA eligibility department at 509-325-6052 for assistance setting this up.

Visitors to the Spokane area, who are certified ADA eligible for Paratransit by another transit provider, or who provide documentation of a disability or self-certify that they have a disability that prevents them from using the regular STA buses, may use Spokane Transit's Paratransit service for up to 21 days of service over a 365 day period without completing the formal application process.

If more than 21 days of service in Spokane are needed in a year, visitors must apply through the Spokane Transit eligibility process. To request an application, contact the eligibility department, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at 509-325-6052.

# Inclement Weather or Local Disasters

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Spokane Transit may delay or cancel public transportation service when adverse weather creates conditions hazardous for customers and operators, or when vehicles are unable to reach your residence or destination safely.

Some trips may be canceled on short notice. Every effort will be made to provide life-sustaining trips such as dialysis or chemotherapy, if vehicles are able to safely reach your residence and destination.

Paratransit service announcements for emergency cancellations will be communicated daily through a call to all customers who have a ride scheduled.

If weather conditions deteriorate after Paratransit service has dropped you off at your destination, we will arrange a return trip home.

If your trip starts or ends on a hill or side street, Paratransit service may not be able to get there until the street is cleared of snow and ice and is safe to travel.

**Sidewalks, driveways, and ramps must be cleared of snow, ice, and debris so operators can safely assist customers to and from the van.**

# Points of Courtesy

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## A Few Rules

Paratransit is a shared-ride service, and our goal is to provide a safe, comfortable ride for all our customers.

Spokane Transit wants you to be aware of a few important rules for riding Paratransit.

A complete copy of the rules regulating behavior on STA's vehicles, property, and in its facilities can be found under STA Rules of Conduct.

The following is a summary of activities which are not allowed:

- Drinking from cups without lids, smoking, eating, and playing audio equipment without headphones or operating other noisy equipment in the van.
- Being noisy, seriously disruptive, violent, or threatening while in the van or during the boarding or disembarkation process.
- Engaging in behavior that is illegal or might cause harm to others.
- Refusing proper securement of a wheelchair.
- Possessing flammable liquids.
- Displaying a weapon in a manner that manifests an intent to intimidate another.

- Delaying or impeding the flow of transportation services.
- Walking around in the vehicle during transport.
- Blocking the walkway on the van.

## **Please Consider**

Perfumes and colognes may trigger allergic reactions resulting in cardio-respiratory distress for other customers. Avoid the use of scented items when you are riding the Service.

For the comfort and health of all customers, personal hygiene must be maintained within acceptable standards. Strong odor, animal dander, and other allergens may cause distress for other customers.

## **Lost And Found**

Spokane Transit is not responsible for items left on the van. Customers are responsible for keeping track of all personal belongings brought onto the van.

If you discover you have left an item on a vehicle, call the reservations office at 509-328-1552, or the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 as soon as possible.

Items found on the van will be kept for no longer than 30 days.

# No-Show Policy

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A “No-Show” occurs when a customer:

- is not at the requested pick-up address, and the operator cannot locate the customer; or
- is not ready to board the vehicle within five (5) minutes of the arrival of the on-time vehicle; or
- has not called to cancel the trip a minimum of one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time.

Cancellations made at the door for an on-time pick-up will be considered a No-Show.

**Cancellations made at the door because the van arrives after the 30- minute window will not be considered a violation.**

If the van arrives early, the driver may ask if the customer is willing to leave early. **If the customer does not wish to leave prior to the scheduled pick-up time, the driver will continue to wait until five (5) minutes past the scheduled pick-up time before leaving for the next pick-up or drop-off location.**

**No-Shows or late cancellations that occur due to circumstances beyond the control of the customer should be reported to the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 as soon as possible.**

# Warnings And Suspensions

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Establishing a pattern or practice of No-Shows will result in warning and suspension penalties.

A pattern or practice of No-Shows is automatically established when a customer fails to cancel three (3) or more trips during a monthly period **and** has been charged a No-Show for 10% or more of his/her trips for the month.

Penalties are progressive, which means the severity of the penalty increases if the pattern and practice of No-Shows continues. Each penalty will be calculated based upon the customer's No-Show history over the previous 12-month period.

Warnings and suspensions shall be imposed as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> penalty – Warning Letter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> penalty – Seven (7) day suspension from Paratransit service
- 3<sup>rd</sup> penalty – Fourteen (14) day suspension from Paratransit service
- 4<sup>th</sup> penalty – Twenty-one (21) day suspension from Paratransit service
- 5<sup>th</sup> penalty – Twenty-eight (28) day suspension from Paratransit service



At no time will the suspension period exceed 28 days, and customers will receive no less than a 15-day notice of a suspension before it starts.

**Please note that all No-Show warnings or suspensions may be appealed through an administrative review by contacting the Paratransit Administration office at (509) 325-6026.**

## **Administrative Review**

Spokane Transit reserves the right to suspend your service for flagrant and/or repeated violations of the STA Rules of Conduct. You will be notified when any violations occur.

If you disagree with Spokane Transit's warning or decision to suspend service, you have the right to request an administrative review in writing or alternative format within 15 calendar days of the date of the warning or decision. To request an administrative review contact:

**Senior Manager  
Paratransit Services Spokane Transit  
1212 W Sharp Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99201-2686  
509-325-6015**

## **Appeal**

If you disagree with the result of the administrative review, you may request a formal appeal.

As soon as possible after you receive notice of the results of your administrative review, and no later than three (3) business days before the scheduled commencement of your suspension, contact the Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer at:

**Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer  
Spokane Transit  
1230 W Boone Avenue |  
Spokane, WA 99201-2686  
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com  
509-325-6094**

# Comments and Complaints

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We value your opinion. Share your thoughts, ideas, comments, and complaints about our service. Give us a call on the Rider Hotline at 509-325-6026 (TTY WA Relay 711), reach out to us on our website at [spokanetransit.com/help](http://spokanetransit.com/help), or send us a letter to:

**Senior Manager  
Paratransit Services Spokane Transit  
1212 W Sharp Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99201-2686**

When you contact the Paratransit office, please be specific and include the following information:

- Your name, ID number, address, phone number
- The date, time, and location of the incident
- The vehicle number or operator's name
- Your compliment, suggestion, or complaint

If you would like to contact someone at Spokane Transit who is outside the Paratransit Department or if you would like to remain anonymous, please contact:

**Ombudsman & Accessibility Officer  
Spokane Transit  
1230 W Boone Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99201-2686  
ombudsman@spokanetransit.com  
509-325-6094**

You can expect to receive prompt, accurate responses to your questions and concerns.

We hope this informational handbook has helped answer your questions about Spokane Transit's Paratransit shared-ride van service.

If you have questions after reading this handbook, please call the Paratransit office at 509-328-1552. Our staff will be happy to assist you.

## Final Notes

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**Only ADA-eligible individuals** are authorized to use a Paratransit ID card. If your ID card is lost or stolen, call the Paratransit Eligibility office immediately at 509-325- 6052. There is a charge for replacing lost, stolen, or damaged Paratransit ID cards.

**Carry needed medication with you in case of delays.** If you are diabetic or hypoglycemic, bring a small snack in case you travel longer than expected.

**For medical emergencies CALL 911.** Paratransit operators are not trained as paramedics, and we cannot provide emergency transportation.

## STA Rules of Conduct

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A copy of the current rules of conduct is included in this mailing and is available at [spokanetransit.com/rules](http://spokanetransit.com/rules).

Any changes to the rules of conduct will be posted on the STA website as they occur and can be requested at any time.

How a great city moves.™