

PREMIUM PARATRANSIT FARES

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), San Jose, California

SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGY:

VTA charges higher fares for premium paratransit services than it charges for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-required complementary paratransit services. This provides customers with additional travel choices, helps to manage the demand for paratransit, and results in a higher farebox recovery for premium services (and a lower net cost per trip).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION:

For the complementary paratransit services that are required under the ADA, VTA charges \$4.00 per trip, which is twice the fixed-route fare, as allowable under the ADA.

For premium paratransit services, those that go beyond the minimum ADA requirements, VTA charges a premium fare of \$16.00. Premium services include:

- Open Returns - Open Returns (or will-call trips) allow for customers to call in when they are ready to return, rather than pre-scheduling, giving them greater flexibility for uncertain appointment time lengths such as medical trips. The pickup for an Open Return trip occurs within 90 minutes after the request is made. Open Returns are provided on a space-available basis, limited to once per day, must be requested by 6:30 p.m. and performed by 8:00 p.m., and cannot be requested for subscription trips. (To qualify for the \$4.00 fare, a customer needs to

AGENCY PROFILE

Organization Type: Independent Transit Authority; paratransit service management and brokered operations are contracted out

Service Area: VTA serves 326 sq. mi. in Santa Clara County, urbanized area at southern end of San Francisco Bay. Santa Clara Valley is often referred to as Silicon Valley and the county is one the most affluent counties in the United States.

Resources:

- **Fleet size: approx.** 650 total including fixed route bus, light rail, and paratransit (242)
- **Staff size:** approx. 2,100 total (paratransit management and operation is contracted out)
- **FY 2012 Operating Budget:** approx. \$363 million (approx. \$25.7 million in paratransit)

Service Summary for Paratransit:

- **Modes Operated:** demand response
- **Days and Hours of Service:** matches fixed-route service and varies by area; generally within 6:00 a.m. - 12:00 midnight daily with some routes Monday-Friday or peak-hour only
- **Paratransit Fares:** \$4.00 base fare for service that is required under the ADA. \$16.00 fare for premium service (including same-day trips extended service area, open return trips, and second vehicle sent)
- **Passenger Trips/Year:** approx. 930,000

Contact:

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3331 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95134
(408) 321-2300
<http://www.vta.org>

schedule the trip at a specific time (both going to and returning from a destination.)

- Same-Day Service - Same-day service can be requested on a space-available basis. (To qualify for the \$4.00 fare, a customer needs to schedule the trip at least the day before.) Same-Day rides must be requested by 4:00 p.m. and may take up to three hours to provide service.
- Second Vehicle - Customers that schedule a return ride, but miss it (i.e., amounting to a no-show), can request that a second vehicle be sent to pick them up and take them home. Second vehicles cannot be used for a missed trip from the customer's home. Service may take up to two hours to arrive.
- Outside the Service Area Trips - Customers can travel up to one mile beyond the ADA paratransit service area for a premium fare. (To qualify for the \$4.00 fare, a customer needs to travel within the ADA paratransit service area which is limited to ¾ mile around VTA bus and light rail routes.)

The fare is determined at the time the customer schedules the trip. The contracted paratransit management company uses computer-aided scheduling and dispatch software which identifies trips that are requested outside of the service area.

CONDITIONS THAT PROMPTED THE STRATEGY:

Faced with rising costs and reduced revenues, VTA developed a premium fare

strategy as part of a package of cost-containment strategies implemented by the organization. In planning for cutbacks across all modes, VTA was faced with scaling back its ADA paratransit service. The goal was to meet but not exceed its ADA obligations. VTA did not want to completely eliminate service in communities beyond the ¾ mile geographic radius, since this would be a hardship for some customers. As a compromise, VTA maintained the availability of service in the larger-than-required service area, but implemented a premium fare for this premium service (which also costs more to operate due to increased miles and labor hours). VTA also did not want to take away same-day scheduling flexibility, so retained the opportunity to travel with a shorter advanced notice also for a premium fare. While VTA wanted to continue to allow premium services as a safety net for those customers who truly need them, VTA also needed to contain the costs associated with providing premium services. Charging a significantly higher fare for such services both helps to manage the demand for expensive-to-operate premium services and also allows for a greater farebox recovery ratio, increasing operating revenues and reducing the operating deficit for these services.

Historically, like many transit systems, VTA had a paratransit system that provided a higher level of service than was strictly required under the ADA. Prior to implementing premium paratransit fares, the fare for VTA paratransit was \$2.80. For this amount, customers could travel an unlimited number of miles (within the County) from the fixed route bus and light rail services and schedule same-day service and open returns.

VTA first implemented premium fares for some services in August 2003. These fares were adjusted incrementally over time based upon actual cost per trip for each type of premium service. As of 2009, the premium fares ranged from twice the standard paratransit fare to five times the standard paratransit fare. The multiple premiums were somewhat complex to administer.

In 2009, VTA simplified the paratransit fare structure. For all premium trips, the fare is now four times the ADA paratransit fare. While VTA initially proposed to eliminate some of the premium options (such as Open Returns, which at the time were twice the standard paratransit fare), during the public comment period, customers expressed a desire to keep the premium options even at a higher fare.

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGY:

As illustrated in the following table, since implementing premium fares, VTA has been able to contain the demand for premium services, contain total paratransit operating costs, and reduce the net total cost per paratransit trip.

Paratransit Service Measure	FY 2003	FY 2004 (some premium fares effective August 1, 2003)	FY 2009 (prior to simplified fare policy)	FY 2011
Premium fare trips	not applicable	21,779	18,859	8,958
Total trips	1,036,768	930,540	1,067,115	824,813
Total operating costs	\$31,413,568	\$27,727,358	\$29,403,409	\$22,060,493
Cost per trip (all trips)	\$30.30	\$29.80	\$27.55	\$26.75
Net cost per trip (all trips)	\$27.87	\$27.26	\$24.84	\$23.43
Farebox recovery (all trips)	7.90%	8.46%	9.77%	12.11%

Cost savings for reduced Second Vehicles and Outside the Service Area trips is intuitive. Reducing the number of Open Returns and Same-Day Service trips enabled the contractor to reduce the call center staffing to handle same-day requests (thus reducing overall contract costs for this function).

KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS:

- VTA management began educating Board members 6-8 months prior to asking for approval on the proposed fare changes, beginning with a primer on what ADA paratransit service is, what the ADA requires in terms of service characteristics, and how the minimum ADA requirements compared to existing VTA services.
- VTA also educated and sought input from customers. For the 2009 change, this began with a mailing to its nearly 15,000 registered customers explaining what ADA paratransit service is and isn't. Information was posted on VTA's website and customers could obtain information by phone. The paratransit broker, OUTREACH, was able to research customer ridership records and let customers know how the proposed changes would affect them personally (and because they only affected a small percentage of trips, customer worries were, on the whole, assuaged. VTA conducted six public meetings on its budget, fares, and paratransit service proposals and accepted comments via website and phone. VTA adjusted its service and fare proposal based upon the comments received.

- VTA planned and implemented the paratransit service and fare changes as part of a package of organization-wide cost-containment strategies. This helped to make the proposed paratransit changes easier to understand and accept. If paratransit was the only service impacted, it would have been more difficult to gain community buy-in/acceptance.
- VTA's paratransit management and brokerage contractor, OUTREACH, was able to implement the changes without difficulty using their dispatching and scheduling software. VTA already had a long history of successfully working with OUTREACH, which is a nonprofit corporation that brokers service out to private operators and also manages the eligibility determination function of VTA's ADA paratransit.
- As a nonprofit that also manages and coordinates several human service transportation programs, OUTREACH can offer VTA customers other specialized services

or funding options (such as senior transportation) when they are eligible. In this way OUTREACH gives eligible customers more affordable options, thus further managing demand for VTA's paratransit.

CHALLENGES:

- Board member turnover and varying degrees of familiarity with services and service requirements meant that VTA staff needed to educate the Board and help them to understand the benefits of and justification for the premium fare strategy, and how VTA meets (and exceeds) ADA requirements. Starting with a goal of cost containment and laying out the facts, VTA staff took the time to build a case for the change, and it was ultimately well-received.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

RECOMMENDED FOR:

- Transit agencies needing to control ADA paratransit demand yet desiring to provide higher levels of service than required under the ADA
- Transit agencies planning to implement other cost-containment service and fare changes

RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESS:

- Education of policy-makers so that they understand what is - and is not - required by the ADA
- Community outreach and input
- A well-defined fare policy

METHODS FOR DOCUMENTING RESULTS:

- Track paratransit trips and fare revenue by type of fare; compare before and after

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS:

- Example of educational information for Board (5-page memorandum dated May 21, 2009)
- VTA/OUTREACH Paratransit Rider's Guide (pages 10-13 are most relevant for this strategy)



Date: May 21, 2009
Current Meeting: May 21, 2009
Board Meeting: N/A

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Administration & Finance Committee

THROUGH: General Manager, Michael T. Burns

FROM: Chief Financial Officer, Joseph T. Smith

SUBJECT: Paratransit Service Change Proposals

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

BACKGROUND:

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires VTA to provide paratransit service at a level that is comparable to its fixed route bus and light rail service. The service is provided for eligible individuals with functional disabilities who are unable to use fixed route service for some or all of their trips. VTA contracts with OUTREACH, a non-profit organization, to provide its ADA paratransit service.

VTA is committed to meeting the mobility needs of persons with disabilities certified in our paratransit program. The paratransit program serves nearly 15,000 certified customers and provides over 1 million passenger trips per year. VTA needs to plan our resources to sustain the paratransit program consistent with the ADA and continue to meet our year to year ridership growth of 2 to 3 %.

For many years, VTA has been able to provide OUTREACH paratransit customers with premium services that exceed ADA requirements. While customers have paid higher fares for some of these premium services, there is still significant expense to provide these services. VTA has proposed changes to these premium services in order to cost contain, meet growth, and impact the fewest customers. The paratransit program data indicates that the vast majority of customers takes standard pre-scheduled rides and will not be impacted by these proposed changes. Customers currently taking premium trips can take standard pre-scheduled trips in place of the premium service options.

DISCUSSION:

VTA and OUTREACH collaborated to develop a set of proposals for the paratransit service to align it with the fixed route bus and rail services per the ADA. The initial proposal included the

elimination of some of the premium services. In preparation for the six public meetings on the budget, fares and paratransit service proposals, VTA mailed approximately 15,000 letters describing the proposed changes to all OUTREACH customers. Information was also posted on VTA's website. Customers could comment thru the website or by calling the customer service departments at VTA and OUTREACH. 44 comments were received through these sources.

Most of the 60 to 70 attendees at the public meetings were there to express their concerns on the paratransit service proposals. Many customers were looking for more information on how the proposals impacted them directly. OUTREACH was able to review their prior trip patterns to determine these impacts. Most customers would experience little or no impacts due to the changes. In FY2009, OUTREACH will provide about 1,065,000 annual trips with 98% of the customers traveling between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. The vast majority of riders take standard pre-scheduled trips and only 2-3% use premium services.

The general response from most customers was that while they used the premium services infrequently, the services were very important to their ability to travel conveniently. Customers understood that these trips cost VTA more to provide and were willing to pay to retain these services. Based on these consistent comments, VTA has revised our original proposals. The revised proposal retains the premium services but at an adjusted fare and with operational and policy changes that make the services more cost effective to provide.

Originally, the paratransit service changes were planned to be implemented on October 1, 2009. Given that the fare change is now proposed to take effect January 1, 2010, we propose that the paratransit service proposals take effect then also.

The following describes the paratransit service changes with information on the current policy, the original proposal and the revised proposal.

Open Returns (Will-Call Rides)

This premium service allows customers to make reservations without a specific time for the return trip. On the day of service these customers call when they are ready for the return trip. Open Return paratransit trips are currently provided as a premium option at a fare of two times the regular one-way trip fare; must be requested by 11pm and may take up to 1 hour 15 minutes after the call to OUTREACH Dispatch is made; and may not be used for a pick up from the customers residence and cannot be used for subscription trips.

The original proposal was to discontinue this service (6,800 annual trips) to ensure better trip planning for all customers, especially during the busiest times of the day when it is a challenge to add open return trips without inconveniencing other customers. However we received many comments indicating that for many trip types, especially medical appointments that it is very difficult to predict when the trip is needed. The revised proposal includes:

- Fare proposed at 4X standard paratransit fare (currently 2X)
- Modifications to operational policies
 - On space available basis only
 - 1 open return can be scheduled per day (no limit now)
 - Trip performed by 8pm (now call for trip before 11pm)

- 90 minute pickup window (now 75 minutes)
- Cannot schedule fixed pickup and open return for same trip
- Not available for pickup at residence or for subscription trips

Requesting a Second Vehicle

Second Vehicle paratransit service is provided as a premium customer service option for five times the regular one-way trip fare (\$17.50) only when a scheduled return ride is missed by the customer and they are stranded. Second vehicles are not sent to pick up a customer if a trip is missed with a scheduled pick-up at the customer's residence. Second vehicles may take up to 2 hours to pick-up customers.

The original proposal was to discontinue this lightly used service (800 annual trips) and ensure that customers who encounter situations that are beyond their control will not be stranded. Few comments were received on this premium service. However the revised proposal includes retaining the service with no change to the current operational policies and modifying the proposed fare to 4X standard paratransit fare (currently 5X). This is part of standardizing all the premium paratransit fares to 4X the standard fare, which would be \$16 in January 2010. Currently premium fares range from 2X to 5X.

Same Day Service

Same-Day paratransit service is provided as a premium customer service option for four times the regular one-way trip fare (\$14.00). Same-Day trips will be provided on a space-available basis to customers with positive account balances by calling the OUTREACH Dispatch Office between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM. Same day service may take up to 3 hours to pick-up customers.

VTA's original proposal was to retain this premium service to ensure unanticipated travel needs can be met. The revised proposal also retains this service with no change in the current operational policies and continues the fare of 4X the standard paratransit fare for the client and increasing the fare from 2X to 4X for a companion. This service is used for about 8,000 annual trips.

Subscription Trips

Subscription service allows passengers to prebook regular, reoccurring trips once without the need to schedule them each individual time. This is typically used for school, work or medical (dialysis) appointments. These trips are provided at the regular paratransit fare and no changes were originally or now proposed. About 204,000 annual trips are taken as subscription trips.

Outside the Service Area Surcharge

Currently, this premium service allows paratransit to be provided to and from locations that are beyond the ¼ mile boundary from the VTA bus and light rail system as established by ADA. Currently, customers pay a \$7.00 surcharge (\$10.50 total) if they travel to or from an area outside the ¼ mile boundary. South County customers (south of Cochrane Road) traveling outside the ¼ mile boundary have been exempted from this surcharge since 2003. The paratransit service area is currently defined as a ¼-mile corridor around all the VTA bus routes and light rail and does not change throughout the day as these routes do.

The original proposal was to discontinue this premium service. Paratransit passengers would need to travel within the defined ¾ mile service area. About 4,000 annual trips are assessed the surcharge now. The revised proposal is to continue this premium service to provide paratransit trips up to 1 mile past the ¾ mile ADA service area (1 ¼ miles total). The fare as the others is proposed at 4X the standard paratransit fare (currently 3X: \$3.50 + \$7.00 surcharge). The exemption for South County paratransit travel is also proposed to be discontinued. Customers, who live or travel outside the proposed service area, will still be eligible for paratransit service. Customers can come into the revised service area and pay the base paratransit fare to use the service.

Extended Service Hours

VTA currently offers paratransit service from 5:00 am to 2:00 am seven days a week, 365 days a year with 24 hour service along Line 22 and light rail. These hours do not change as VTA's bus and light rail routes change throughout the day. This premium service provides paratransit for longer hours than bus and light rail service is provided along those same routes.

The proposal is to align the paratransit service hours with the same hours that VTA's bus and rail lines serve and change throughout the day. Paratransit would only be provided within the service boundary of VTA bus routes and light rail only during the same hours of the day and days per week that bus and light rail trains are running on those routes. This approach would provide equity between the bus/rail service network and the paratransit service.

This is the original proposal and is unchanged. It is estimated that about 20,000 annual trips may be impacted however some passengers will just change trip times to align with the bus and rail schedules. The premium fare is not applicable as paratransit service will no longer be provided beyond what is required under ADA.

Advanced Trip Scheduling

The ADA requires one-day advance reservations. Currently, paratransit customers can book trips up to 14 days in advance. The advance reservation period is proposed to change from 14 days to 3 days in two phases. These changes will allow more efficient trip scheduling and reduce the number of trips reserved far in advance and then changed or cancelled or missed.

Phase 1, originally to be effective on October 1, 2009, the advanced reservation period will be 7 days. This phase will now start January 1, 2010 with all the other proposed changes. The shorter reservation period will better accommodate the introduction of automated trip bookings over the phone (voice or touchtone). Customers will be able to book trips to their "favorite" pre-selected places (e.g. work, home, doctor, church, shopping, etc.). Customers will also be able to confirm or cancel trips through the automated phone system. Phase 2, the reservation period will go from 7 days to 3 days effective July 1, 2010 as the automated trip booking is fully deployed.

Customers or other parties sending reservations in by fax, mail or email may continue to do so. Live reservation agents will continue to be taking calls. Currently 56% of the customers schedule a trip the day before and 85% call three days or under.

Paratransit Eligibility

No changes to paratransit eligibility processing or criteria are proposed. The changes proposed above do not affect a person's eligibility for paratransit service. Customers, who live outside the service area for example, will still be eligible for paratransit service. A customer's eligibility for paratransit service is only affected if their medical condition or disability changes; service area or residence is not a factor in determining eligibility for paratransit.

Prepared By: Jim Unites, Deputy Director Operations Planning



Paratransit Rider's Guide

A Reference Guide to Paratransit Services Provided by

OUTREACH

&

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)



Effective: August 1, 2011

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of ADA Paratransit

Valley Transportation Authority makes paratransit service available to persons who are unable to independently use its bus or light rail services due to physical, visual or cognitive disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

VTA's ADA paratransit service is administered through a brokerage contract with Outreach and Escort Inc. (OUTREACH). OUTREACH staff reserve trips that are requested by eligible customers and manages the provision of these trips through contracts with sedan, accessible van, and taxi service providers.

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**Information in the *Paratransit Rider's Guide*
is subject to change.**

1. ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY

ADA paratransit eligibility is based on an individual's functional ability to independently use VTA bus or light rail and is determined by the following criteria:

Category 1 -Any person with a disability who is unable to board, ride, or disembark from an accessible vehicle without the assistance of another person (except for the operator of a lift or other boarding device).

Category 2 - Any person with a disability who needs the assistance of a lift ramp to board, ride or disembark from an accessible vehicle and an accommodating vehicle is not available or key stations have not been made accessible.

Category 3 - Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition that prevents the person from traveling to or from a boarding and disembarking location.

Eligibility is not based on age, economic condition, or inability to drive an automobile. Applicants should note that having a medical condition or a disability will not automatically qualify them for ADA paratransit eligibility.

Applications for Paratransit Eligibility:

The paratransit eligibility application process begins with an informational brochure from OUTREACH:

(408) 436-2865 / (408) 436-0155 (TTY) / www.outreach1.org

or from VTA:

(408) 321-2300 / (408) 321-2330 (TTY) / www.vta.org.

The paratransit information brochure contains a one-page application to complete and sign. Brochures are available in English, Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese, and OUTREACH provides language assistance to any individual in need of translation services.

The application process requires two more steps:

1. Submit the signed one-page application by mail, fax, or drop off to OUTREACH. The signed application authorizes OUTREACH to contact the applicant's physician or licensed third-party professional.

2. Participate in a phone interview: OUTREACH will call the applicant to review their application and conduct a brief phone interview to help determine the applicant's paratransit eligibility. Translation and language assistance is provided.

Eligibility Determinations and Appeals:

The application process takes 21 days to complete. Applicants have a right to service if eligibility decisions take longer than 21 days after the submission of a completed eligibility application.

Following an eligibility determination, applicants will receive written notification. Specific information supporting the decision and appeal instructions are included in the notification.

Travel will be provided at no charge to applicants and an attendant and/or companion if needed to participate in the eligibility or appeal process.

New paratransit customers will receive an ID card to use as proof of eligibility. OUTREACH will work with customers to arrange a time, date and location to take a photo for the ID card. Refer to Section 9 in this Rider's Guide for more information on using the Picture ID card to access free bus and light rail services.

2. CONTACTING OUTREACH

A. Address and Telephone Numbers

OUTREACH

926 Rock Ave, Suite 10
San Jose, CA 95131

Information, General Administration, Customer Service, Client Accounts & Eligibility Telephone Numbers

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Weekdays (Closed Major Holidays)

Main Office Number (408) 436-2865
Fax (408) 382-0470
TTY for all telephone numbers listed (408) 436-0155

Reservations Department - 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (365 days a year)

San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Cupertino,
Campbell, Milpitas, Los Gatos, Saratoga, and (408) 436-4860
Monte Sereno

Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos, and (650) 988-9860
Los Altos Hills

(800) 400-6222

Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Martin

Day Of Service Department - 5:00 AM to 8:00 PM (365 days a year)

Confirmations, Cancellations, Late Vehicles, Open Returns, Second Vehicles,
and Same-Day Trip Requests

San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, (408) 436-6030
Campbell, Milpitas, Los Gatos, Saratoga, and
Monte Sereno

Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos, and (650) 988-9852
Los Altos Hills

Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Martin (800) 400-3440
Toll Free from All Santa Clara County Cities

Online Access

Website www.outreach1.org
e-mail admin@outreach1.org

B. Business Hours

OUTREACH Administrative and Customer Service Departments are open Monday through Friday - closed on weekends and major holidays.

3. GETTING STARTED

A. Before You Reserve Your First Trip

Customers are encouraged to make an initial deposit into their OUTREACH accounts by sending a check or money order, with their ID number, payable to OUTREACH at the following address:

OUTREACH
Customer Account Department
926 Rock Ave, Suite 10
San Jose, CA 95131

Or, customers who are interested in using a VISA or MasterCard to make a deposit to their account may call the OUTREACH Customer Account Department at (408) 436-2865, or TTY at (408) 436-0155.

An initial deposit of \$25.00 is recommended.

B. Maintaining Your Account

Fares are deducted from customer OUTREACH accounts as each trip is taken. (See Summary of Fares and Service Charges on Page 12). Customers may not reserve any trips, or revise any trips that are already reserved, once they have reached a negative account balance equal to the fare payment owed for 5 one-way standard paratransit trips. This policy applies to all customer trips regardless of trip purpose. Thus, to ensure continued availability of services, customers must maintain a balance in their accounts.

OUTREACH reservationists will provide account balance information during each reservation call.

4. RESERVING PARATRANSIT SERVICES

A. To Reserve a Paratransit Trip

Call the Reservations Department (for specific city) during Reservations Department business hours. (Page 5).

Paratransit trips may be reserved from 1 to 3 days in advance, between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM for service the next day.

Customers may reserve multiple trips with one call. OUTREACH reservationist may negotiate the pick-up time with customers and reserve trips during a one-hour period before or after a customer's desired pick-up time.

Customers should be prepared when they call to reserve a paratransit trip with:

- their OUTREACH identification number;
- the date and requested time of the pick-up and time of the return trip;
- the exact name and address (including suite number, if known) of the pick-up and drop-off locations (including return trip information). If the customer's home address or destination is difficult to find, special driving instructions should be provided when a trip is reserved;
- whether they will be traveling with a mobility device, a Personal Care Attendant, Companion or Service Animal.

If the arrival time is of primary importance, such as for a trip to work or an appointment, the customer is advised to reserve the trip to arrive early at the destination.

OUTREACH Service Providers are not able to drop-off and then wait for a customer at a location.

B. Reserving a Return Trip

A return trip may be reserved at a specific time, with a 30-minute pick-up window, or the return time may be left "open". See Page 11 for information about Open Returns, which require higher fares.

If a pick-up location for a reserved return trip needs to be changed, customers must inform OUTREACH Day Of Service Department staff prior to the start of their reserved 30-minute pick-up window. Changes to pick-up locations are limited to locations at facilities, to nearby addresses, or to locations across the street from where the reserved pick-up was arranged.

C. Canceling a Trip and No-Shows

Before the Day of Service: Customers are encouraged to advance cancel whenever possible by using the IVR or by speaking with a live agent.

On the Day of Service: Customers must call the OUTREACH Reservations Department at least 2 hours prior to the beginning of the 30-minute pick-up window to cancel a previously reserved trip between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM seven days a week. While Customers are encouraged to call in the early morning hours if they have an early trip, it may not always be feasible to call 2 hours in advance. While these early morning trips will not be recorded as No-Shows if you do not cancel at least 2 hours before the scheduled pick-up, customers should call as soon as they can to cancel a trip so that other riders will not be impacted.

To cancel a trip with a pick-up window reserved to begin in less than 2 hours, customers must call the OUTREACH Day Of Service Department (open 5:00 AM to 8:00 PM). Customers will be provided with an alternate telephone number to cancel a trip if the pick-up is reserved after 8:00 PM.

Trips cancelled with less than 2 hours notice, or where the customer cannot be located, may result in a No-Show recorded on the customer's record, if the situation was within the customer's control. Customers may dispute any No-show by calling OUTREACH. OUTREACH will attempt to call the customer that same day or the next day to confirm whether the event was within the customer's control.

No-Show fees (see Section 6) may be assessed a) when customers state that they were in control of the situation; b) if not an isolated event but appears to be a pattern.

Assessed No-Show fees will appear on the Customer's monthly statement. Customers may appeal any No-Show fees by calling Customer Services or Client Accounts.

D. Automated Trip Scheduling, Confirmation and Cancellation Option

OUTREACH customer calls are connected with an Automated Telephone System that allows callers to select the proper department for their calls.

Interactive Voice Response System (IVR)

Customers may confirm and cancel their trips 24 hours a day using OUTREACH's Interactive Voice Response System (IVR). The IVR also allows customers to reserve trips to their “favorite” pre-selected places (e.g. work, home, doctor, church, shopping, etc.) by 5:00 PM the day before the trip is needed. The IVR system cannot be used to schedule trips between 5:00 PM and 8:00 PM.

5. OVERVIEW OF PARATRANSIT SERVICES

A. VTA's ADA Paratransit Service Area

The ADA paratransit service area is a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile corridor around VTA bus routes and light rail stations. An OUTREACH reservationist will advise customers when their destinations are outside of the paratransit service area.

B. Inter-County Services

For travel to destinations in adjacent counties, beyond the ADA Paratransit Service Area, customers may arrange a transfer to the paratransit operator in the adjacent county.

For trips to San Mateo County, contact Redi-Wheels at (650) 508-6241, or TTY at (650) 482-9366. The recommended transfer point is Stanford Medical Center.

For trips to Alameda County or Contra Costa County, contact the East Bay Paratransit Consortium at (510) 287-5000, or TTY at (510) 287-5065. The transfer point is the Fremont BART Station.

C. Service Hours

VTA's paratransit service operates only during the same hours of the day and days of the week that bus and light rail trains run their regular routes. This ensures the equity between the bus/rail service network and the paratransit service. OUTREACH Reservationist will advise customers regarding the service hour availability of their requested trips.

D. 30-Minute Pick-Up Window

All regular One-Way Trip pick-ups occur within a 30-minute pick-up window. An OUTREACH vehicle may arrive any time during the 30-minute window. Customers are not required to leave if the vehicle assigned to transport them arrives before the start of the reserved 30-minute pick-up window. However, all customers must be ready to depart at the start of their pick-up window.

Drivers will wait for 5-minutes after they arrive within a customer's reserved pick-up window and may depart thereafter if the customer is not ready.

E. Late Vehicles

If a vehicle has not arrived by the end of a customer's reserved 30-minute pick-up window, the customer should call the OUTREACH Day Of Service Department (open 5:00 AM to 8:00 PM) to report a late vehicle and to get an estimated arrival time. Customers will be given an alternative telephone number to call to check on a late vehicle for any pick-ups reserved after 8:00 PM.

F. Excessively Early Trips

If a vehicle arrives more than 30 minutes earlier than planned (e.g. due to another rider cancelling) and customer does not wish to de-board the vehicle, the driver will wait until 30 minutes before the scheduled appointment time before escorting the rider to the external door.

G. On-Board Travel Times

The ADA requires VTA to provide paratransit service at a level that is comparable to its bus and light rail service. This includes considering service area, service times, travel time to and from a bus stop, and any transfer time. Comparable on-board time for Paratransit trips with direct driving distances of 7 miles or less may take up to 60 minutes to complete. Trips with direct driving distances between 7 miles and 14 miles may take more than 90 minutes.

H. Premium Services

Premium service exceeds the base service requirements of the ADA. OUTREACH customers may request premium services and pay a rate higher than is paid for standard service. Premium services include Open Returns, Same-Day Service, Second Vehicle, Extended Service Area Trips, and Subscription Service.

H1. Open Returns

Open Return Trips allow customers to make reservations without a specific time for their return trip. On the day of service, customers can call when they are ready for their return trips. The fare for this service is \$16. The following conditions apply to the use of Open Returns:

- they are provided on a space-available basis only
- only one per day may be reserved

- pick-up will occur within 90-minutes after a request is made to the Outreach Day Of Service Department
- trips must be requested by 6:30 PM
- Trips must be performed by 8:00 PM
- customers cannot reserve a fixed pick-up and an Open Return for same trip
- trips are not available for pickups at residences or for subscription trips

H2. Same-Day Service

On a space-available basis only. To access this service call the OUTREACH Day Of Service Department between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM. Please allow up to 3 hours for pick-up.

H3. Requesting a Second Vehicle

Available only when a reserved return ride is missed and the customer is stranded in the community. Second Vehicle service may be requested by calling the Outreach Day Of Service Department. The fare for this service is \$16.00

Second vehicles will not be sent to pick up a customer if a trip is missed with a reserved pick-up at the customer's residence. Please allow up to 2 hours for pick-up.

H4. Outside the Service Area Trips

Allows customers to travel up to 1 mile beyond the ¾ mile ADA service area around VTA bus and light rail routes throughout Santa Clara County, including areas along VTA's bus routes in Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and unincorporated County communities. The fare for an Outside the Service Area trip is \$16.00.

H5. Subscription Service

For customers who request routine trips to the same destination on a regular schedule (i.e., work or medical appointments). Customers need only call once to reserve a recurring trip. OUTREACH will reserve the trip on a continuing basis until the request is terminated, or on a space available basis. Customers may only make changes to subscription reservations once in a 3-month period. Open Returns cannot be used on Subscription Service.

The ADA permits wait lists for subscription service. OUTREACH will seek to add subscription trips when they are efficient and do not negatively impact OUTREACH's ability to provide non-subscription trips.

6. SUMMARY OF FARES AND SERVICE CHARGES

A. Fares For Paratransit Trips (Effective October 1, 2009) and No-Show Fees

The regular paratransit One-Way Trip fare is \$4.00, or two times the Adult Base Fare for VTA bus and light rail services. No-show fees are equivalent to fare amounts but are not fares as the trip was not taken. Standard and Premium trip fares are and included in the following table:

Paratransit Trip Fare Table

Paratransit Service	Formula	Amount
One-Way Standard Paratransit Trip	2x VTA Adult Bus Fare	\$4.00
Companion	Equal to One-Way Trip	\$4.00
Open Return Trip	4x One-Way Trip	\$16.00
Second Vehicle Sent	4x One-Way Trip	\$16.00
Standard Trip No Show Fee	Equal to One-Way Trip	\$4.00
Same-Day Trip	4x One-Way Trip	\$16.00
Same-Day No Show Fee	Equal to Same-Day Trip	\$16.00
Same-Day Trip Companion	4x One-Way Trip	\$16.00
Extended Service Area Trip	4x One-Way Trip	\$16.00

Personal Care Attendants and Service Animals may accompany an eligible customer at no additional charge.

B. Eco Pass Program

Paratransit eligible employees working at companies that participate in VTA's Employer Eco Pass Program pay ½ the fare for a regular paratransit One-Way Trip. There are no discounts under this program for premium fare OUTREACH services. Eligible participants must inform OUTREACH Customer Service their employer is an Eco Pass participant.

7. OTHER SERVICES, INFORMATION, AND POLICIES

A. Personal Care Attendants

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone whose services or presence is required by the customer to meet his or her personal needs or to assist in traveling.

The need for a PCA shall be documented during the eligibility certification process. Paratransit customers are responsible for providing their own PCAs.

Customers should inform the reservationist when they will be traveling with a PCA to ensure an extra seat is reserved on the OUTREACH vehicle. PCAs ride free and must have the same pick-up and drop-off locations as the customer.

B. Companions

A Companion is a friend, relative, or other person who accompanies an OUTREACH customer on a trip who is not a personal care attendant.

Customers shall inform the reservationist when they will be traveling with a companion to ensure an extra seat is reserved on the OUTREACH vehicle. Companions must have the same pick-up and drop-off locations as the customer.

Companion trips fares are shown in the Paratransit Trip Fare Table in Section 6.

OUTREACH shall accommodate 1 companion at all times and additional companions may ride if space permits.

C. Service Animals

Service Animals may travel on paratransit vehicles to assist individuals with disabilities, subject to the following conditions:

- Service Animals must remain on a leash and under full control of the customer at all times.
- Service Animals must not misbehave (e.g., soiling the vehicle or growling at or harassing customers, the operator, or other Service Animals).
- Service Animals should generally remain in a down or sit position. Service Animals may not block the aisle of the vehicle.
- Service Animals shall not occupy vehicle seats unless space limitations prevent the Service Animal from remaining off the seat.

Customers should inform the reservationist when they will be traveling with a service animal to ensure sufficient room on the OUTREACH vehicle.

D. Pets

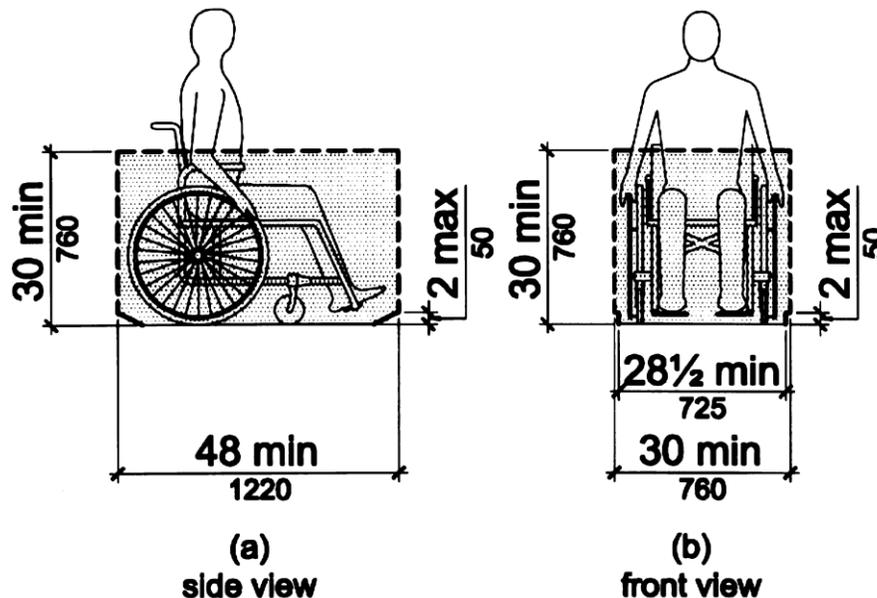
Customers may also travel with a pet, in an approved cage and under the control of the customer at all times.

E. Mobility Devices

Customers may use wheelchairs, canes, walkers, and other common mobility devices on paratransit vehicles.

Wheelchairs must meet the ADA definition of a "common" wheelchair or mobility device. A common wheelchair is a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or four-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

Wheelchairs and other mobility devices must conform to the dimensions indicated in the diagrams below:



- A maximum of 48 inches in length measured at 2 inches above the surface of the platform.
- A maximum of 30 inches in width measured at 2 inches above the surface of the platform.
- A maximum of 600 pounds when occupied.

Note: Customers concerned about the size of their mobility devices and whether the device will fit on board OUTREACH vehicles should call OUTREACH Customer Service to arrange to have the device measured.

F. Mobility Devices and Customer Safety

- Customers who are transferable are able to move from their mobility device to the seat of the vehicle and back with a minimum of assistance. A minimum of assistance is defined as a driver extending an arm or stabilizing the mobility device while the customer moves in and out of the device. Drivers are prohibited from lifting or carrying customers.

- For safety reasons, customers using three-wheel scooters are strongly encouraged to transfer out of their scooter into the seat of the paratransit vehicle whenever possible.
- Drivers cannot transport mobility devices that are broken or damaged to the extent they pose an immediate safety threat.
- Drivers cannot assist customers who use mobility devices up or down steps or other obstructions over five eighths (5/8) of an inch in height. A ramp must be available or the customer must have someone available at the pick-up and drop-off location to provide assistance negotiating obstacles.

G. Miscellaneous Medical Equipment

Customers may travel with oxygen tanks and respirators when using paratransit service. For safety reasons, oxygen tanks and respirators must be secured to prevent oxygen tanks from falling or becoming dislodged and striking other objects or customers in the vehicle.

H. Packages on Paratransit Vehicles

Customers may bring up to three grocery bags or the equivalent onboard a paratransit vehicle. Equivalent items may be bags, packages, or suitcases.

I. Replacement ID Cards

To receive more information about obtaining a replacement ID Card, contact OUTREACH Customer Service. There is an \$8 fee for replacement cards, and the number of replacement cards issued may be limited.

J. General Policies

- Drivers are required to transport customers to the pre-reserved destination indicated on the driver's trip schedule. Drivers are not allowed to make any destination changes.
- Drivers only provide exterior lobby/door to door service. Drivers are not permitted to lose sight of their vehicle at any time.
- Drivers are prohibited from entering a customer's residence for any reason.
- Drivers may not request that customers pay them a tip for the service that they provide.
- Customers should carry their OUTREACH identification cards with them when using ADA paratransit service. Drivers may check customer OUTREACH identification cards.
- Customers are required to wear seatbelts while on paratransit vehicles. Drivers will assist with seat belts.

- Smoking is NOT allowed while onboard an ADA paratransit vehicle
- Eating, or drinking, is NOT allowed while onboard an ADA paratransit vehicle unless needed to address a health condition.
- Riding paratransit vehicles under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited.
- Radios, cassette or disc players are not permitted to be played aloud while onboard an ADA paratransit vehicle.
- Customers shall NOT bring explosives, flammable liquids, acids, or other hazardous materials onboard an ADA paratransit vehicle.
- Customers traveling with a child who needs a car seat must supply the child's car seat. Customers are responsible for securing the car seat into the vehicle and for its removal.

K. Seriously Disruptive Behavior

ADA regulations allow paratransit service to be denied to customers who engage in violent, illegal, or seriously disruptive behavior. Seriously disruptive behavior can include the following:

- Getting out of a seat while a paratransit vehicle is in motion.
- Leaving a paratransit vehicle while it is parked to pick-up or drop-off another customer.
- Disturbing a paratransit vehicle operator while the operator is driving.
- Disturbing other customers.
- Refusing to wear a seatbelt or refusing to exit the vehicle.
- Violent behavior.
- Physically or verbally threatening vehicle operator or other customers.
- Engaging in conduct or activity that is a danger to the customer, other customers, or the driver.
- Smoking while onboard a paratransit vehicle.
- Damaging or destroying vehicle equipment.

8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

A. Service Satisfaction

The goal of OUTREACH is complete customer satisfaction. If a customer has a compliment, suggestion, or would like to file a complaint regarding any aspect of paratransit service, the customer should call OUTREACH Customer Service at (408) 436-2865 or at (408) 436-0155 (TTY).

B. Compliments

If any staff paratransit service staff has been particularly helpful, or has gone out of their way to offer assistance, contact OUTREACH so a notice of commendation can be issued.

C. Complaints

Customers should file a complaint any time that the service is not satisfactory, safe, or secure. Complaints must be filed with OUTREACH Customer Service. Complaints may be filed in writing or by telephone by calling OUTREACH's Customer Service office.

If you leave a message using the voice mail system, please leave your full name and OUTREACH customer identification number.

To assist with the investigation, file the complaint as soon as possible. When filing a complaint, customers will be asked for the following information:

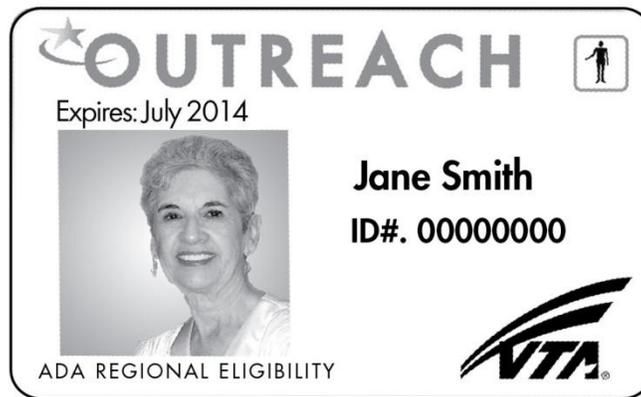
- OUTREACH customer identification number;
- Exact date and time of the trip;
- Description of the incident; and,
- Address of the pick-up location or destination.

All complaints are taken seriously and every effort is made to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Tracking numbers are assigned to each complaint received by OUTREACH and are provided to customers for their future reference.

If a customer believes that OUTREACH has not responded appropriately to a complaint, customers may call VTA Customer Services Department at (408) 321-2300, or TTY (408) 321-2330 for assistance.

9. VTA ACCESSIBLE BUS AND LIGHT RAIL SERVICES

OUTREACH customers are encouraged to take trips by bus and light rail whenever they are able. The OUTREACH paratransit photo ID card qualifies customers for free service on most VTA bus and light rail services. The paratransit photo ID card is available upon to any customer wishing to have one. If the card has an Attendant icon on its upper right corner, a PCA may accompany the customer on bus and light rail for free. If an OUTREACH ID card does not have a photo on it, the customer is encouraged to call OUTREACH to arrange a time and place for a photo to be taken if they wish to use VTA bus and light rail for free. OUTREACH shall arrange to take the photo at the customer's convenience.



Simply present the paratransit photo ID card to VTA Coach Operators upon boarding VTA buses, or present it to any VTA Light Rail Fare Inspector upon request. (Not valid on Highway 17 Express, Dumbarton Express, Caltrain, or Sports service.)

Travel Training: For personalized travel training assistance on VTA bus and light rail services, call VTA Customer Services Department at 408-321-2300, or TTY (408) 321-2330 for assistance.

Mobility Device Securement: All mobility devices must be secured on VTA buses. VTA also recommends, but does not require, the use of lap belts and shoulder harnesses.

VTA Customer Service

VTA Customer Service is available weekdays from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and Saturdays/Holidays from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. (Closed Sundays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day.) VTA's automated phone

system provides reservation information 24 hours a day, seven days a week in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

VTA Customer Service Assistance	Telephone Numbers
Route and Schedule Information	(408) 321-2300
Information for all Toll Areas	(800) 894-9908
TTY number	(408) 321-2330

Online Access

Website: www.vta.org

E-mail: customer.service@vta.org

Regional Transportation Information is available by calling 511. TTY users can access 511 telephone information by dialing the national 711 number for access to Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS).

Title VI

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance”.

VTA and OUTREACH have adopted policies that promote equal access and quality service to all our customers.

Any person with a disability who believes that he/she has been discriminated against in any of VTA’s transportation services is encouraged to contact VTA’s Office of Civil Rights and Employee Relations at (408) 321-5571 or (408) 321-2330 (TTY) for assistance or to file a complaint.