

NANTUCKET REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
20 SOUTH WATER STREET
NANTUCKET, MA 02554



YOUR ISLAND RIDE

ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICES
NON-ADA SERVICES

(508) 325-7516

TRANSPORTATION FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH
DISABILITIES AND ELDERS

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Administered By
Nantucket Regional Transit Authority
20 South Water Street
Nantucket, MA 02554
(508) 325-7516

Approved: March 14, 2001
Amended: March 2002
Amended: November 2014
Amended: July 2015
Amended: December 2015
Amended: May 2016

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Definitions	4
Paratransit Service	6
Paratransit Eligibility	7
Non/ADA	8
Non/ADA Eligibility	8
Appeals for Denial of Eligibility	8
Fares	9
Accessible, Lifts, Ramps, and Driveways	9
Companion/Personal Care Attendants	9
Scheduling Trips	9
No Shows and Cancellation Policy	10
Amount of Assistance Rendered	11
Pick-up Window	11
Wait Time	11
Refusing Rides	11
Appeals Hearing Process	12
Visitors	12
Seatbelts	13
Service Animals	13
Application Process	13
Complaints	13
Emergency Cancellations	14

INTRODUCTION

The Nantucket Regional Transit Authority's (NRTA) provides year round transportation to persons with disabilities and elders, this service is called "Your Island Ride". In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Paratransit service is available to persons unable to access the fixed

route bus service. The following are definitions and information for users as to the types of service offered and the types of service that must offered:

Seasonal Fixed Route Bus Service
Year Round Demand Response Service (ADA and Non-ADA)
Comparable Paratransit Service
Contracted Transportation Funded by Human Service Agencies

Help is available to understand these policies and or complete the application process, in accessible formats if requested. Please call 508-325-7516.

DEFINITIONS

Advanced Reservation Dial-a-Ride – the client (or the client’s advocate) must call by 2:00 p.m. (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) on the business day proceeding the requested ride service date. This is Your Island Ride’s van service. (For example for service on Tuesday call by 2:00 p.m. on Monday and for Monday service call by 2:00 p.m. on Friday).

Conditional Eligibility – Paratransit service will be granted when a person who can use the fixed route buses under certain circumstances, but cannot under others (i.e., weather conditions or barriers to certain bus stops). Persons with conditional eligibility are sometimes required to take the fixed route bus.

Curb-to-Curb – the client will be picked up at the curb and dropped off at the curb of their destination.

Demand Response – a term that is often used to describe any services, which is not a fixed route. This term is also used to describe service provided to those who cannot use the fixed route service.

Door-to-Door – when necessary, the client will be assisted from their door to our door and from our door to the door of their destination.

Disability – any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being upgraded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. This definition is also for persons with cognitive disabilities and those with contagious to non-contagious diseases. (Definition taken from Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit Handbook, US D.O.T., UMTA, September 1991, pp 1-6).

Elder– users that are 60 years of age or older.

Fixed Route – a service provided along a prescribed route according to a set schedule. Examples of this type of service are the routes and loops operated by the NRTA during its seasonal operations. When operating fixed route bus service the NRTA is required to offer comparable paratransit service to those who cannot use the fixed route bus service.

Non/ADA Trip – advanced reservation dial-a-ride response service that is available to persons with disabilities and elders.

Paratransit Service – transportation the NRTA must provide, consistent with the ADA, to disabled persons unable to access the fixed route bus system.

Service Animal – Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair or fetching dropped items.

Temporary Disability – any condition that verified by a health care professional would qualify a person to utilize the van service. Service for a determined temporary amount of time.

Trip – One-way transportation from a specified location to a specified location.

Unconditional Eligibility – Paratransit service granted to a person whose disability prevents him/her from ever using fixed route bus service. Persons with unconditional eligibility are not ever required to take the fixed route bus.

Visitor – any person who lives outside of the NRTA service area (Nantucket).

Visitor Eligibility – Paratransit eligibility granted for 21 days of service within a calendar year to persons having been granted eligibility with an off island Transit Authority or through the NRTA's visitor application process.

PARATRANSIT SERVICE

- Service is provided to certified eligible individuals only. Applications are available by calling the NRTA at 508-325-7516 or www.nrtawave.com. Accessible formats are available on request.
- Trips must begin and end within a ¾ mile corridor of any NRTA fixed route during service hours.
- Service is available during fixed route scheduled hours.
- Trips are required to operate curb to curb (the NRTA will strive to operate door to door when extra help is needed), but reserves the right to operate curb to curb).

- Trips may be for any purpose.
- ADA trips cannot be prioritized under any circumstances.
- Rides on the ADA complementary paratransit service can be scheduled the day before the trip or up to 14 days in advance. To schedule a ride, please call **508-325-7516**. To speak to a dispatcher, call Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A telephone answering system is available on Sundays and holidays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. No requests for rides are accepted on Saturdays.
- To help serve you better, we ask that you observe the following 4 tips:
 1. Prepare for your call
 2. Have your trip information ready and organized
 3. Schedule the return trip up front
 4. Be ready to go at the scheduled time

Prepare for Your Call. Please have the following information ready when you call: Name, Date of travel, Origin address, Destination address, Desired pick-up or arrival time, Whether you use a wheelchair or walker and whether a personal care attendant, one or more companions, or a service animal will accompany you

The dispatcher will let you know your pick-up and return times. NRTA will make every effort to schedule your trip at the desired times. The ADA allows the ride to be scheduled up to 1 hour before or 1 hour after the requested times.

Note Your Trip Information. Have a pencil and paper ready to write your pick-up and return times down. This will help you remember them. If you have a calendar, write the times on it.

Schedule Your Return Trip Up Front. NRTA requires return trips to be scheduled at the time original trips are scheduled. Passengers should anticipate the latest possible time needed for their return and schedule a return trip for that time. If you are ready to return before your scheduled time, or if you will be later than your scheduled time, please call NRTA immediately and we will do all we can to accommodate your request.

Be Ready to Go at the Scheduled Time

Please be ready to go 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. NRTA makes every effort to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible. However, NRTA may arrive up to 10 minutes before or 20 minutes after the scheduled pick up time.

Example: If you schedule a 9:30 a.m. pick-up, the vehicle may arrive between 9:20 a.m. and 9:50 a.m.

This 30-minute time period (of 10 minutes before to 20 minutes after the scheduled time) is called the pick-up window.

Drivers, after arriving within the pick-up window, will wait up to 5 minutes. Any passenger, who is not at the scheduled pick-up point and ready to go by that time, will be considered a no-show, and the driver will leave to pick up other riders. The driver will NOT return for a second attempt. The only exception will be passengers who have been detained during a medical appointment. If you know that you will be detained during a medical appointment, please call NRTA at (508) 325-7516 as soon as soon as possible.

PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY

Disability alone does not create eligibility. Eligibility must be determined according to guidelines based on the ADA. A person must be prevented by the disability from accessing or navigating the fixed route service to be considered eligible for Paratransit service. Applications for Paratransit eligibility are available by calling the NRTA Administrative Office at 508-325-7516 or www.nrtawave.com. Assistance in filling out the forms or for large print and accessible formats can be arranged.

Based on the disability, the person will be determined to have conditional or unconditional eligibility. Unconditional eligibility is granted to individuals whose disability prevents them from ever using fixed route. Conditional eligibility is granted to individuals who can use the fixed route system under certain circumstances, but need Paratransit service under certain conditions (i.e. weather conditions, distance to the stop).

The NRTA will notify the applicant of the decision by letter within 21 days of receipt of the application.

Persons whose conditions change may reapply at any time.

NON-ADA

- Non-ADA trips currently operate door to door.
- Non-ADA service is provided on space availability.
- The scheduled operating hours are from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

NON-ADA ELIGIBILITY

- Any person being 60 years of age or older are automatically eligible with documentation provided as proof of date of birth. The NRTA requires the application to be completed. Applicants may reapply at any time if there situation changes.

APPEAL FOR DENIAL OF ELIGIBILITY

The NRTA will send notice of denial to any person who applies to the NRTA for certification as eligible and is denied. The notice of denial will explain the

reasons for the denial and will describe the procedures to appeal the determination.

An appeal must be filed within sixty (60) days of the denial of an individual's application. The individual filing the appeal will be provided an opportunity to present their appeal in person. As part of the appeals process, the NRTA has the right to request additional documentation (relating to the person's ability to use transit services) from a physical therapist, rehabilitation counselor or other health care professional. The NRTA may require that a health care professional designated by the NRTA, at the expense of the NRTA, evaluate the applicant. The NRTA Administrator or the NRTA Administrator's designee will hear the appeal.

Following the ADA "Appeal Process" issued by the Nantucket Regional Transit Authority (NRTA):

1. Notify the NRTA in writing with sixty (60) days of the determination date indicated on the determination letter that you request to be heard by the NRTA Administrator. This hearing process will allow you to present information and arguments on your behalf. The Administrator will then make a decision eligibility and written notification will be sent either stating the change in eligibility or the reasons for denial.
2. The NRTA is not required to provide Paratransit service to the individual pending the determination on appeal. However, if the NRTA has not made a decision within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the appeal, the NRTA will provide service from that time and until a decision on the appeal is made. Written decisions are available in accessible formats upon request.

FARES

In schedule fares are \$1.00 one way trip. Out of schedule fares are \$2.00 one way trip. A quarterly pass is available for \$50.00 and provides unlimited trips during that quarter. The NRTA send quarterly invoices.

ACCESSIBLE LIFTS, RAMPS AND DRIVEWAYS

The NRTA will transport passengers using a mobility device, providing that the following conditions are met. These conditions have been established as safety concerns for our customers as well as our drivers. It is the NRTA's goal to be in compliance with ADA as long as adhering to ADA requirements ensures maximum safety to all parties involved.

1. Any building entrance, to which the NRTA transports customers using a mobility device, having more than one step, must have a ramp from the doorway to a smooth surface walk/access leading to the vehicle.
2. If the combined weight of the passenger and mobility device exceeds the posted vehicle wheelchair lift maximum combined weight threshold, transport may not be provided.

3. The mobility device, a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or more wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered will be transported if it fits in the vehicle.
4. Customers who have difficulty accessing the vehicle using the vehicle steps may board by riding the wheelchair lift whilst standing. Drivers will always assist customers to board the vehicle.
5. The NRTA requires access to building via driveways be free of tree limbs and other impediments which cause vehicle damage or restrict vision.

COMPANIONS/PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS

All Paratransit and Non/ADA riders are entitled to be accompanied by one companion and one personal care attendant on all trips and additional companions on a space available basis. Personal care attendants, identified as necessary during the eligibility process, travel at no charge, companions pay the full fare.

SCHEDULING TRIPS

All passengers are required to call in advance for an appointment. Appointments are to be made by 4:00 p.m. at a minimum the day before the travel date. Office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. No same day transportation will be provided.

During the time of year when fixed-route service operates, a telephone system is available on Saturdays and Sundays and holidays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to accept reservations for ADA complementary paratransit trips.

Requested schedule times may be adjusted to within one hour to fit in the schedule.

NO SHOWS AND CANCELLATION POLICY

Passenger no-show trips and late cancellations affect both the customer and NRTA. No shows and cancellations lead to wasted fuel and time as well as decreased productivity which impacts other clients causing unnecessary delays and detours.

U.S.DOT regulations 49 CFR 37.125 addresses the issue of no show policies in ADA complementary paratransit service programs, and state that: "The entity may establish an administrative process to suspend, for a reasonable period of time, the provision of complementary paratransit service to ADA paratransit eligible individuals who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips. Trips missed by the individual for reasons beyond his or her control (including but not limited to, trips which are missed due to operator error) shall not be a basis for determining that such a pattern or practice exists."

A no-show occurs when the vehicle arrives at the pick-up location within the 30 minute pick up window, waits the required 5 minutes, an attempt is made to contact the client and the client does not board the vehicle. If there is a return trip scheduled, the operator will attempt to call the client to ascertain if the return trip is necessary. If no contact is made the vehicle will attempt the return trip, if the client does not board after the required wait time that will be considered another no show.

A late cancellation occurs when a client cancels a trip less than one hour before the schedule trip.

In any calendar month any customer who has no showed or late cancelled 20% or more of each trip booked will be subject the schedule below. Suspensions begin on the first Monday.

- The first violation is subject to a written warning.
- Second violation -5 day suspension
- Third violation – 10 day suspension
- Fourth violation- 15 day suspension
- Fifth and subsequent violations- 20 day suspension

AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE RENDERED

1. NRTA Paratransit service operates Curb to Curb at a minimum.
2. Help beyond the curb and other assistance will be rendered as necessary and upon request.
3. Vehicle drivers are required to be at the vehicle door to assist customers getting in and out of vehicles.
4. The NRTA will never leave customers unattended on a vehicle.
5. There is a 2-bag limit per person, including groceries, and amount the customer can independently carry up the vehicle stairs.

PICK-UP WINDOW

Because of traffic and unexpected delays it is not possible to guarantee a specific pick-up time. The vehicle is on time if it arrives between ten (10) minutes before and ten (10) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

WAIT TIME

Waiting for passengers who are not ready can disrupt the entire schedule. Passengers are required to be ready fifteen (15) minutes before their scheduled pick up time. The van will wait no more than seven (7) minutes after scheduled pickup time. After that time, the driver will call Dispatch to receive permission to leave that stop.

REFUSING RIDES

Rides can be refused under the following conditions:

1. If the combined weight of the passenger and wheelchair exceeds the vehicle wheelchair lift maximum weight threshold or the wheelchair dimensions exceed the recognized limits and does not fit on the vehicles.
2. Suspicions of customers carry explosives, highly flammable or dangerous materials will not be allowed under any condition.
3. Violent, seriously disruption or illegal conduct or conduct which will compromise the safety of others on the vehicle.
4. Refusal to wear a seatbelt.

Such action may be taken immediately or upon investigation of the incident. In the event of an incident that prompts immediate refusal of or termination of service; the NRTA will investigate the incident and determine if the refusal or termination of service will persist. If future service is to be refused, the NRTA will notify the individual in writing that he/she will no longer be provided with transportation. This determination will be made in a non-discriminatory manner consistent with the ADA.

An appeal of the decision to refuse or terminate service may be made by the affected customer within 10 days of the determination date. The customer may appeal the suspension and will have the opportunity to be heard, to present arguments and to be helped by an advocate working with a local social service agency. The appeal will be heard by the NRTA Administrator or the NRTA Administrator's designee. After the appeal is heard, written notification of the appeal decision and the reason for the decision will be provided within 30 days of the completion of the hearing. Any suspension would be for a reasonable period of time, taking into account the frequency the service is used.

APPEALS HEARING PROCESS

If an appeal hearing is necessary, (whether for suspension of service or denial of eligibility), it is heard by the NRTA Administrator or the NRTA Administrator's designee. If the individual does not agree with the determination decision of the hearing, than the individual may appeal the determination to the NRTA Advisory Board. If the individual does not agree with the determination made by the NRTA Advisory Board, than that individual can appeal to the MassDOT, Rail and Transit Division, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160, Boston, MA 02116

The NRTA may suspend paratransit services for a reasonable period of time to paratransit-transit eligible persons who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips without prior cancellation notice (see: "Cancellations"). Prior to imposing a suspension of services, the NRTA will notify the individual of the unacceptable pattern or practices that may lead to suspension of paratransit service.

VISITORS

Persons who reside outside the NRTA service area are considered visitors.

All visitors who present documentation of their ADA Paratransit eligibility from another transit agency will be accorded “visitor eligibility by the NRTA. Disabled persons without such documentation who desire “visitor eligibility” for Paratransit services will be required to document their place of residence as outside the NRTA service area and, if the disability is not apparent, to document their disability. With those documents and the certification by the individual that he/she is unable to access and/or navigate the fixed route bus service, the NRTA will grant the individual presumptive “visitor eligibility”.

“Visitor eligibility” will permit the disabled individual presumptive eligibility for 21 days of Paratransit service within a calendar year, not necessarily consecutive.

SEATBELTS

All passengers are required to wear seatbelts at all times on NRTA paratransit vehicles. Passengers will be refused transportation if they refuse to wear a seatbelt.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Trained service animals are permitted to accompany individuals with disabilities and must be under the control of the passenger.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Call the NRTA at 508-325-7516 to request an application and one will be mailed to you or you may access application on our website www.nrtawave.com or an appointment made for an interview for Paratransit service with transportation provided.
2. Upon receipt of the application, read the instructions and fill out the two pages that are required to be filled out by the person seeking Paratransit service. Both parts of the form cannot be filled out by the same person.
3. Forward the partially filled out application to your license health care profession, as described on page 3 of the form.
4. Your licensed health care profession must fully complete the two pages of the application they are required to fill out and sign the application.
5. Once the NRTA receives the completed application, a letter of determination will be sent to the applicant within 21 days. The determination will be one of the following:
 - Incomplete application
 - Ineligible, the reasons will be stated in the letter
 - Conditional eligibility
 - Unconditional eligibility

COMPLAINTS

Any person wishing to file a complaint relative to the ADA may do so by contacting:

Cindy Clarkson, NRTA Trip Scheduler/Office Assistant
3 East Chestnut Street
Nantucket, MA 02554
yir@nantucket-ma.gov
508-325-7516

Complaints may be filed via telephone, in writing or electronically.

In the event a complaint is received by the NRTA, the following process will be followed:

1. A letter will be sent acknowledging receipt of the complaint and a hearing, if requested, will be scheduled.
2. Should the complainant not be satisfied that the complaint has been resolved, a hearing will be scheduled with the NRTA Administrator.
3. Should the complainant still feel the matter has not been resolved to his/her satisfaction; a letter will be sent to the Director of Transportation, Mass DOT. This letter will describe the complaint, attempts to resolve it at the local level and will include copies of all relevant documents.
4. The NRTA will maintain records of all complaints received, hearings held and all attempts to resolve said complaints.

EMERGENCY CANCELLATIONS

Your Island Ride van service for ADA and Non/ADA trips will be cancelled when Nantucket Public Schools are closed. The operator will determine other cancellations, due to unsafe conditions, and the NRTA and clients will be notified.

The NRTA reserves the right to modify or amend these policies and procedures from time to time as deemed appropriate.

These policies and procedures are available in accessible formats upon request.