



# Introduction To Gwinnett County Transit ADA Paratransit Transportation Services



# 1. WELCOME TO GWINNETT COUNTY TRANSIT (GCT)

This information has been developed for residents and visitors of Gwinnett County to become acquainted with the ADA Paratransit transportation services available to some individuals with disabilities. This guide will help individuals with disabilities decide if they may qualify for ADA Paratransit services, how to apply, and help with developing a realistic expectation of using this type of public transportation service.

For persons with visual impairments or Limited English Proficiency (LEP), this document is available in alternative formats and several foreign languages upon request. If applicants have questions about any of the information contained in the guide and/or need to request the guide in alternate format or foreign language (Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese), please contact Gwinnett County Customer Service 770.822.5010.

## 2. DEFINITION OF ADA PARATRANSIT

Gwinnett County Paratransit Services is part of the comprehensive public transportation system of Gwinnett County. It is neither a personal taxi nor a social service agency. It is a **shared-ride public transportation** service of Gwinnett County in compliance with the complementary paratransit services provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the final rule for 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38 issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) in the 9/6/1991 Federal Register.

Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) operates a shared-ride, curb-to-curb service. The definition of curb-to-curb service is the customer will be picked up at the closest curb to the pick-up location and will be taken to the closest curb of the drop-off location. For those requiring assistance beyond the curb due to their disability, GCT will assist customers as far as their door if it is safe to do so.

## 3. TRANSPORTATION SERVICE TYPES

This service can be used for any purpose, including work, school, shopping, recreation, medical appointments, etc. Gwinnett County Paratransit Service provides transportation that is comparable to the fixed route bus system's hours of operation, service area, and other service characteristics. The duration of a trip may also be as long as the comparable fixed route bus trip plus one-half (1/2) hour for travel and wait time.

GCT's Paratransit Service is a shared-ride service. This means that customers will be on vehicles with other customers for some or all their trips.

The Gwinnett County Transit Reservationist will coordinate information sharing to MARTA Mobility when a trip requires the use of their Paratransit services.

# 4. ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights statute. As a civil rights law, the ADA clearly emphasizes nondiscriminatory access to fixed route service, with complementary paratransit acting as a “safety net” for people who do not have the functional ability to use the fixed route system. Under the ADA, complementary paratransit service is not intended to be a comprehensive system of transportation for individuals with disabilities, and simply having a disability or multiple disabilities does not, in and of itself, entitle a person to ride.

49 CFR Part 37 Section 37.123 defines the standards and sets forth the minimum requirements for eligibility for complementary paratransit service. The law recognizes that ‘a person may be eligible for some trips but not others’ since ‘eligibility does not inhere to the individual or his or her disability, as such, but in meeting the functional criteria of inability to use the fixed route system established by the ADA.’ This is known as trip-by-trip eligibility. The DOT ADA regulations provide three categories of ADA Complementary Paratransit Eligibility.

## *Eligibility Category 1 - Inability to Navigate System Independently*

The first category of eligibility includes those persons who are unable to fully use the accessible fixed route bus services. Included in this category is:

“Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities” [Section 37.123(e)(1)]

This applies to an individual who cannot independently board, ride, or disembark from the fixed route bus system.

## *Eligibility Category 2 - Lack of Accessible Vehicles, Stations, or Bus Stops*

This second category of eligibility applies to persons who could use accessible fixed route transportation services if it were available. Included in this category is:

“Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route on the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.” [Section 37.123(e)(2)]

In the context of the GCT vehicles, this category does not apply to GCT service as all GCT vehicles in fixed route service are accessible. However, it is important to remember that eligibility for complementary paratransit service under Category 2 is ‘route based, not system based’ and in those instances where ‘the lift (or ramp) on a vehicle cannot be deployed at a particular

bus stop, an individual is eligible for paratransit under this category with respect to the service to the inaccessible stop.'

#### *Eligibility Category 3 - Inability to Reach a Boarding Point or Final Destination*

This third category of eligibility includes:

"Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system." [Section 37.123(e)(3)]

This applies to an individual who, because of his/her disability, cannot access a bus stop to board the fixed route bus and cannot access his/her destination after disembarking from a fixed route bus. Eligibility is determined each time the eligible customer calls. Two important qualifiers to this category are included in the regulations. First, environmental conditions and architectural barriers not under the control of the public entity do not, when considered alone, confer eligibility. Second, inconvenience in using the fixed route bus system is not a basis for eligibility.

Of critical importance when making determinations is 'the interaction between an impairment-related condition and the environmental barrier...' While the USDOT acknowledged that 'some judgment is required to distinguish between situations in which travel is prevented and situations in which it is merely made more difficult', it was quick to point out that 'if an impairment-related condition only makes the job of accessing transit more difficult than it might otherwise be, but does not prevent the travel, then the person is not eligible.'

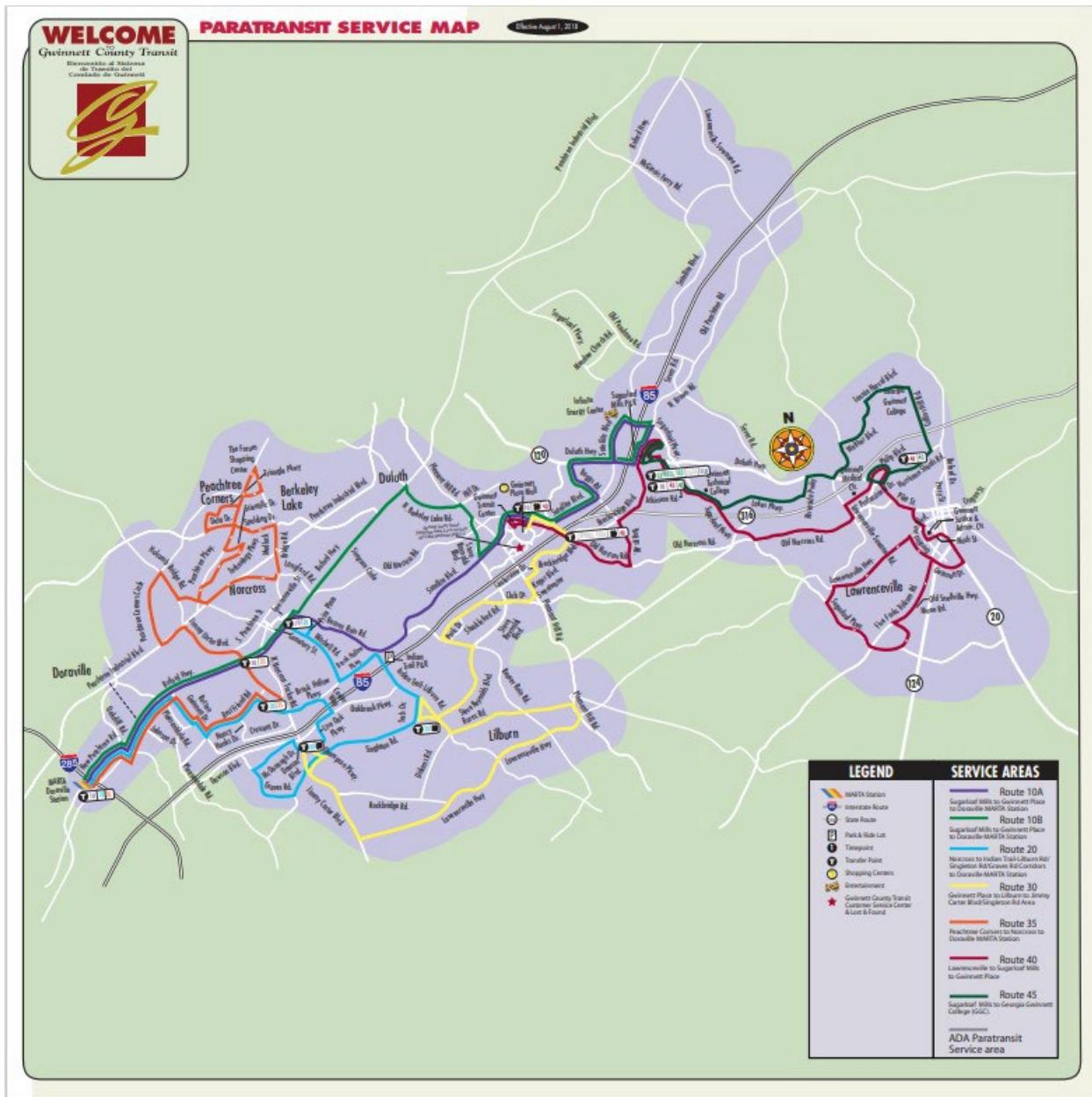
The determining factor in deciding whether the individual qualifies for ADA complementary paratransit is whether the individual can functionally ride or access the bus. It is not a medical determination; it is a functional ability analysis.

Individuals who believe they are eligible must apply for certification. A licensed/certified Healthcare Professional must certify the applicant's eligibility application. GCT reserves the right to make all final eligibility determinations.

Eligibility is valid for three (3) years unless temporary eligibility is given. Temporary eligibility is based on a temporary functional need.

## 5. SERVICE AREA

The GCT Paratransit Service operates three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of a mile on either side of each local bus route in Gwinnett County. In addition to the core service area, Gwinnett County has designated additional corridors for GCT paratransit service with widths of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of a mile on each side of local fixed route segments currently operated by GCT. The service area is within Gwinnett County only, except for including the MARTA Doraville rail station intermodal area as a stop to facilitate interagency transfers.



Customers are not required to live inside the service area; however, all customer trips must begin and end within the GCT paratransit service area, and customers must board and disembark the paratransit vehicle inside of the service area at a safe transfer location. Transfer points will be established with customers traveling outside the service area.

A map of the GCT complementary paratransit service area can be viewed, downloaded, or printed by visiting [www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com). Select 'Accessible Services' and then click on the 'Paratransit Service Area' link located under the ADA Paratransit subheading. The GCT complementary paratransit service area is denoted on the map as 'ADA Paratransit Buffer.'

## 6. OPERATING SCHEDULE

GCT complementary paratransit services are provided Monday through Saturday. The

service hours are the same hours as the local fixed route bus service.

Sunday service is not available. Service is not available in observance of the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

## 7. TEMPORARY DISABILITIES

If a customer has a temporary disability, they may obtain GCT ADA paratransit eligibility and a GCT ADA paratransit photo identification card valid for the expected duration of the disability. If the disability continues beyond the certified time, GCT will require a revised certification from the customer's Healthcare Professional.

## 8. FARE INFORMATION

One-way ADA Paratransit trip fare is \$4.00. Fares may be paid with exact \$4.00 cash or using the Breeze card; loaded with GCT fare products or stored cash value. Fares will be collected in the farebox or by tapping the Breeze card validator at the front of the vehicle. **Operators do not make change or stop for change.**

PCAs travel at no cost. The need for a PCA is indicated during the application process and should be informed to the reservationist during the trip scheduling.

One travel companion may travel with the eligible paratransit customer. Additional travel companions may ride on a space available basis. All travel companions including children who are taller than the height of the farebox must each pay the ADA paratransit fare of \$4.00.

See Section 9 – *Personal Care Attendants (PCA), Companions and Children* for additional information.

Note: Operators cannot make change for fares. Operators are not allowed at any time to accept tips or gratuities, or act in a manner that would suggest that tipping is appropriate.

### GCT Breeze Card

The GCT ADA paratransit photo identification card is also a functioning Breeze card; both 10- ride ticket books and stored cash value can be loaded onto the GCT ADA Paratransit Breeze card at the GCT Customer Service Office and at MARTA Breeze vending machines.



### Transfers to/from GCT Fixed Route Bus Services

Customers with a GCT ADA Paratransit Photo ID Card can also ride fixed route services for half fare. Customers must show their ID to the operator to prove eligibility and can pay cash \$1.25. If customers would like to take advantage of the FREE Transfer to MARTA, the customer would need to also have the GCT Half Fare Breeze Card.

GCT ADA Paratransit customers can transfer to and from GCT fixed route express and local routes. Most transfers are free, but upcharges apply when transferring to a higher-fare service. For example, if a customer transfers from a GCT fixed route local bus to a GCT paratransit vehicle, an additional \$1.50 is collected to complete the \$4.00 fare.

There are **no free transfers** between GCT ADA paratransit vehicles and MARTA Mobility (paratransit) vehicles. Customers will be required to pay full fare for each interagency transfer boarding at the MARTA Doraville rail station.

## 9. PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS, COMPANIONS AND CHILDREN

Personal Care Attendants (PCA), companions, and children are not allowed on a vehicle without the eligible customer aboard. Traveling companions, including children, that ride with the certified paratransit customer do not need to be certified by GCT and do not need an ID card. Additional companions may ride on a space available basis only and must pay the appropriate fare. When scheduling trips, customers must inform the reservations if they are going to be accompanied by a companion and/or any mobility device(s) the companion will be using.

### Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to help an ADA eligible paratransit customer meet his/her personal needs. This individual may either be an employee of the customer, a relative, a friend, or a care provider.

During the application process for eligibility, the applicant should indicate whether they will travel with a PCA. And please inform the reservationist when scheduling the customer trip(s) if a personal care attendant will be traveling with the customer.

PCA's travel at no cost when accompanying the eligible paratransit customer. If the GCT Paratransit customer requires a PCA and is under the age of 12, the PCA must be an adult. The PCA must be physically able to assist and meet the needs of the paratransit customer. For example, must be able to push a wheelchair, or provide other assistance as required by the certified rider. The PCA riding with a GCT paratransit eligible customer must board and exit the vehicle at the same location as the eligible rider.

Similarly, Personal Care Attendants (PCA) or travel companion(s) who violate rules of courtesy and conduct, engage in any activity that disrupts the safe and effective operation of Paratransit services, engage in physical abuse, or cause physical injury to another customer and/or the Operator, or engage in other illegal activities may be subject to immediate and permanent suspension from riding Paratransit service. PCA's or travel companion(s) may also be subject to criminal prosecute, which may include fines.

## Companions

ADA Paratransit eligible customers may travel with one companion. If traveling with a PCA, customers may travel with one companion in addition to a PCA. Additional companions will be allowed on a space available basis.

Travel Companions are subject to the regular GCT ADA Paratransit fare of \$4.00. Companions riding with a GCT paratransit eligible customer must board and exit the vehicle at the same location as the eligible rider.

## Children

Children who are not taller than the height of the farebox travel at no cost when accompanying the eligible paratransit customer. Children taller than the farebox (approximately 42 inches) accompanying the eligible paratransit customer must pay the appropriate ADA Paratransit fare of \$4.00. Children must remain properly seated and are not allowed to walk around inside the vehicle while the vehicle is in motion.

# 10. APPLYING FOR ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE

### *Step 1 – Request / Receive Application from GCT*

The GCT application can be viewed, downloaded, or printed using the GCT web page, [www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com). Select 'Accessible Services' and then click on the desired Paratransit application link located under the ADA Paratransit subheading.

Paratransit applications can also be mailed out to interested persons. To request an application, please call GCT at 770.822.5010 and "press 3" during normal business hours, 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

For persons who have difficulty using a standard phone including people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled, please call Georgia Relay at **711** to set up this free TDD relay public service to connect and communicate with GCT through a variety of Traditional Relay and Captioned Telephone services.

Applications in alternate formats and/or languages are available on request. Refer to page 2 of this guide.

### *Step 2 – Complete / Return Application to GCT*

Complete the application form (called Part A) and return to GCT. All Part A questions must be answered completely by the applicant, or a representative or legal guardian who is familiar with the applicant's disability and his/her ability to travel on a bus. On page 19 of the application, under the section titled **PATIENT CONSENT TO RELEASE & DISCLOSURE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION**, the name and address of the licensed/certified Healthcare Professional who will certify Part B of the application must be provided. A signature on this page serves as the applicant's authorization allowing the licensed/certified Healthcare Professional to release

medical information and allowing GCT to process the application. **This page must be completed and signed by all applicants.** An authorization not properly signed will be returned to the applicant and will render the application incomplete. And incomplete application will also delay the approval process.

If an applicant needs help in filling out the application, contact GCT at 770.822.5010 and "press 3" or TDD at 711 and special arrangements can be made to assist in completing the application.

**Mail completed Part A application including all required signatures to the following address:**

**Gwinnett County Transit  
Re: Paratransit Application Part A  
3525 Mall Boulevard, Suite 5-C Duluth, GA 30096**

Step 3 – Professional Verification

**Part B of the application needs to be completed by the licensed/certified Healthcare Professional in order to proceed with the applicant's eligibility determination.**

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide Part B of the paratransit application to their licensed/certified Healthcare Professional for them to complete and fax or mail back to GCT.

Health Care Professionals may fax a completed Part B to **770.300.9419 (Re: Paratransit Application Part B)** or mail the completed form to:

**Gwinnett County Transit  
Re: Paratransit Application Part B  
3525 Mall Boulevard, Suite 5-C Duluth, GA 30096**

Part B of the application may only be completed and signed by the applicant's licensed/certified Healthcare Professional (Certifier). The Healthcare Professional must be a licensed or certified professional who is qualified to assess the applicant's disability and his/her functional ability to travel on public transit. When Part B is completed and returned to GCT by the Healthcare Professional, the application will be processed.

## **11. APPLICATION EVALUATION & ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

GCT must process a completed application within twenty-one (21) calendar days of receipt. An application is considered complete when both Part A and Part B have been received in the GCT office. **The twenty-one (21) calendar day processing requirement will not apply to incomplete applications.** Incomplete documents will be returned to the applicant or Healthcare Professional for completion. If there is no response, the applicant's file will be closed out after 30 days. To be reopened upon the applicant's request. The applicant's file will be purged after 60 days of no response or request from the applicant to re-open their file. **The applicant**

**will have to re-apply for the paratransit service.**

### **In-Person Interview**

Applicants may be asked to attend an in-person interview. In some cases, applicants may be asked for additional information before receiving approval. Most applicants will be notified of their eligibility status without an interview.

### **Presumptive Eligibility during Application Process**

If the determination process is not completed within twenty-one (21) calendar days per ADA requirements, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day the applicant is presumed to be eligible and may use the complementary paratransit service until a decision is made.

### **Eligibility Determination**

The applicant will be notified in writing, or alternate formats and/ or languages if requested, about his/her eligibility. If approved, the applicant will be instructed as to how to obtain a GCT ADA paratransit photo identification card.

### **Appeals Process**

Customers who have been found not eligible, conditionally, or temporarily eligible for ADA paratransit services have the right to appeal in one of the three ways listed below:

- in writing to *Gwinnett County Transit – 446 West Crogan Street, Ste 410 Lawrenceville, GA 30046 – Department of Transportation - Attention: Loammi Aviles*
- in-person at *Gwinnett County Transit – 446 West Crogan Street, Ste 410 Lawrenceville, GA 30046 – Department of Transportation – Transit Division*
- by telephone at *770.822.7444*

Individuals who wish to appeal their eligibility determination must submit the completed Appeal Request Form and the Reason for Appeal Form within sixty (60) calendar days of the date on which the notice of eligibility determination was issued.

Upon receipt of a completed Appeal Request Form, GCT will contact the applicant to schedule an appeal hearing within thirty (30) days. Customers must be available to participate at a mutually agreed upon date, location (if applicable), and time. The customer must provide his/her own transportation to the appeals hearing.

### **Appeals Decision**

Gwinnett County Transit Appeals Committee will advise customers in writing of its decision concerning their appeal within thirty (30) days of the hearing. The Appeals Committee is a three (3) person board consisting of individuals not involved in the original eligibility determination. Applicants will have the opportunity to be represented at the hearing and are able to present information and arguments. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

## **Presumptive Eligibility during Appeals Process**

Gwinnett County Transit is not required to provide paratransit service to an individual pending the determination of an appeal. However, if GCT has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, the applicant will be given presumptive eligibility of the paratransit service from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

## **Eligibility Period / Recertification**

Once approved, customers are given three (3) years to use the transportation services before needing to be recertified. An application will be mailed three (3) months prior to expiration, along with an enclosed letter notifying the customer that their certification for customer service is up for renewal. Failure to return the application in a timely manner may result in a loss of service.

# **12. GENERAL OPERATING POLICIES**

## **Unattended Customer Policy**

This policy addresses instances when a customer's PCA, caretaker, family member, etc., is not available at a drop-off location. If the customer cannot be left unattended after exiting the vehicle and the caretaker is not at the drop-off location when the vehicle arrives, the customer will remain on the vehicle and the vehicle will continue as scheduled. The operator will contact GCT Control Center for assistance. GCT Control Center will call the emergency contact number and provide the caretaker with the next safe drop-off location to meet the vehicle in-route. If the contact number is not answered or if the number is disconnected, DFCS/911 will be called to take custody of the customer.

The first instance will be a written warning, the second instance within a 180-day period the customer's service will be suspended for fourteen (14) calendar days. If this situation happens a third time within a 180-day period, the customer's service will be suspended for thirty (30) calendar days. If this situation happens a fourth time within the 180-day period, the customer's service will be suspended for sixty (60) calendar days. If the situation happens a fourth time, the caretaker will have to show cause why the service should not be permanently removed.

## **Wheelchair Assistance Policy**

GCT will transport all wheelchair types and other mobility devices as defined by ADA regulations. GCT may not be able to transport a customer in a wheelchair or mobility device that exceeds the lift manufacturer's dimensions and design load for the lift in our current paratransit vehicle. That is, mobility devices measuring over 30 inches in width and over 48 inches in length when measured two inches above the ground and weighing up to 800 pounds combined weight when occupied. Customers will, however, have the opportunity to attempt to board a GCT vehicles in order to confirm that the wheelchair, scooter, etc., is too large and/or heavy to board.

For customer safety and comfort, the following guidance and procedures must be met:

- For safety purposes, it is strongly recommended that wheelchairs back onto the lift platform.
- Brakes must be locked while on the lift.

- Electric power must be turned off until the Operator instructs the customer to re-engage.
- Mobility device customers must wait for the Operator's assistance and follow instructions for entering the vehicle.
- It is strongly recommended for the customer's safety that a person using a manual wheelchair have attached footrests.
- Customers with inoperative mobility devices will try to be accommodated, but operators will not lift or carry the customer or the mobility device.
- Customers may be requested to move to a seat for safety and securement.

## **Scooters**

Three- and four-wheel scooters designed for use indoors to assist riders with mobility disabilities are allowed. Scooters have a high center of gravity and are therefore prone to tipping; even when secured. Customers are encouraged to board vehicles separately, if able, and/or transfer to a seat once onboard the Paratransit vehicle. Scooters are also required to be secured into the four-point tie-down system at all times during the ride. Cooperation with the Securement and Seat Belt Policy is in the best interest of safety for the customer.

## **Mobility Device Securement and Seat Belt Policy**

It is the Operator's responsibility to ensure that mobility devices are properly secured. Mobility devices are required to be secured into the four-point tie-down system at all times during the ride. Operators are required to secure the lap and shoulder belts to ensure the customer's safety. Cooperation with the Securement and Seat Belt Policy is in the best interest of safety for the customer.

## **Ambulatory Customers**

Ambulatory customers are those that can walk under their own control, or use a mobility aid such as a cane, walker, crutches, etc. Customers unable to use the steps to enter the vehicle may stand on the lift platform to be lifted into the vehicle. Customers who stand on the lift must be able to stand without assistance and to hold the rails with both hands. Customers that are unable to stand on the lift platform should discuss with the reservation agent so that GCT Paratransit can assist with other ways to board and depart the paratransit vehicle.

## **Packages on GCT**

Customers may bring grocery bags, luggage, or other packages or (legal) personal items on GCT Paratransit. However, customers may not bring more bags than can be safely managed by themselves and any PCA, companions, etc. Operators are not required to unreasonably assist with loading and unloading of packages and personal items. Delaying the vehicle occurs when customers bring more items than they can carry on the vehicle at one time. This may keep the vehicle from being able to move on after five (5) minutes and cause delays in the GCT service.

Additionally, please keep in mind that this is a shared-ride service and space is limited. Grocery store carts are not permitted on vehicles, but customers may bring packages on-board in a personal two-wheeled, collapsible cart. If bringing a cart, customers must inform the reservation

agent when scheduling a trip. GTC will do its best to accommodate the collapsible cart. Packages may not take up seats on the vehicle and must be safely stowed out of the aisle, either under the customer's seat or on their lap.

## **Respirators and Portable Oxygen Equipment**

Portable oxygen equipment and portable respirators are permitted on all GCT vehicles. The Operator will assist customers in securing this equipment on the vehicle. Operators are not permitted, however, to assist customers in using this equipment. If a customer needs assistance with portable life support equipment, they must arrange to bring a Personal Care Attendant.

## **Service Animals**

Service animals are allowed in all GCT vehicles and facilities. A service animal is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as any guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with 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.

If traveling with a Service Animal on GCT Paratransit, be sure to inform the reservation agent when scheduling a ride.

If a customer has an allergy to dogs (not including pet dander) please notify GCT Paratransit when scheduling a reservation. The reservationist will do the best they can to transport a customer on a vehicle without Service Animals or pets onboard.

Please be aware of the following Service Animal requirements:

- A Service Animal must be on a leash and under control at all times. If a leash prevents the Service Animal from completing a task for a customer with a disability, then the owner may control the animal with voice commands.
- Customers with Service Animals will be loaded first and unloaded last.
- For the safety and comfort of the Operator and other customers, Service Animals are required to be clean, well groomed, completely under the control of their handler, and absolutely non-aggressive.
- Customers are responsible for maintaining control of a Service Animal while on board the vehicle. The animal must remain on the floor or on the customer's lap. The animal may not sit on a vehicle seat.
- Customers are encouraged to bring a blanket for Service Animals since vehicle floors may be hot.
- For safety reasons, Operators are not permitted to handle Service Animals.

## **Pets**

Per the ADA, Emotional Support and Comfort Animals are NOT Service Animals as they have not been trained to perform a task. Therefore, Emotional Support, Comfort Animals and pets are not allowed on GCT buses unless they are in an enclosed carrier at all times.

## **Customer Conduct**

Customers must be respectful and courteous to Operators and other passengers at all times. Customers must comply with the following operating requirements and rules of conduct:

- Inability to pay for proper fare may result in refusal of service. Deliberate fare evasion will be grounds for refusal of service.
- The use of abusive, threatening, or obscene language or actions towards the Operators or other customers is prohibited.
- Eating and drinking is not allowed on GCT vehicles (unless needed due to a disability)
- Smoking, including vaping, on the bus is prohibited.
- The use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs or riding under the influence of intoxicating alcohol or drugs, is always prohibited.
- The use of electronic equipment (music, games, etc.) shall be with headphones and kept at a low enough volume so as not to be heard by and/or disturb other customers.
- Customers must not create unsafe situations on GCT vehicles and must always have proper personal hygiene.
- Customers shall not operate or tamper with any equipment while on the vehicle. This rule includes operation of the lift and attempts to remove mobility device tie-downs or customer seat belts.
- Baby strollers and two-wheeled collapsible carts shall be folded and stowed to avoid blocking the aisle or causing injury to persons on the vehicle.
- Be respectful of Service Animals and refrain from petting them without the permission of the owner.
- Trash shall be disposed of properly both on and around the vehicle.
- Parents/accompanying adults travelling with children shall maintain control during the ride.
- Head, arms, and other body parts must be kept inside the vehicle.
- Objects may not be thrown from the windows.
- Federal regulations prohibit the transportation of flammable or explosive materials on transit vehicles.

## **Denying Services to Customers**

Actions of misconduct, including violent or disruptive behavior, will be grounds for suspension of service. Anyone found to be acting in an unsafe or illegal manner which may endanger themselves, other customers, the Operator, the paratransit vehicle, or the traveling public will be terminated from the service immediately. Customers must depart the transit vehicle upon demand of any authorized GCT representative, including the Operators.

Customers who violate rules of courtesy and conduct or who engage in any activity that disrupts the safe or effective operation of Paratransit services may be subject to penalties up to and including suspension from GCT services.

Customers who engage in physical abuse or cause physical injury to another customer or the Operator, or who engage in other illegal activities may be subject to **immediate and permanent suspension from receiving** GCT services. Customers may also be subject to criminal prosecution, which may include fines.

Any customer who is suspended from service will be notified in writing and will be given an opportunity to appeal the suspension following the GCT appeals process.

Similarly, Personal Care Attendants (PCA) or travel companion(s) who violate rules of courtesy and conduct, engage in any activity that disrupts the safe and effective operation of Paratransit services, engage in physical abuse, or cause physical injury to another customer and/or the Operator, or engage in other illegal activities may be subject to immediate and permanent suspension from riding Paratransit service. PCA's or travel companion(s) may also be subject to criminal prosecute, which may include fines.

## **Assistance Provided by GCT Operators**

As required by the ADA, Operators are trained and expected to provide a “reasonable” level of assistance. GCT defines “reasonable” as assisting customers as needed/requested as long as the assistance does not create an unsafe situation for the Operator or customers.

Here are some examples of how Operators assist GCT customers:

- Operators are required to assist customers when boarding or exiting the vehicle, and to and from the curb of their destination or point of origin. If assistance beyond the curb is required, notice must be given to the reservation agent when the trip is scheduled.
- Operators may provide limited assistance loading/unloading packages for customers.
- Operators are responsible for the operation of the lift and other equipment, and for securing wheelchairs and customer seat belts in the vehicle.

## **Expectations of Using GCT Paratransit Services**

Customers can expect a safe, comfortable ride on GTC. The following information provides additional details on what customers can expect on GTC:

- Safe trips in clean, air-conditioned, smoke-free and properly equipped accessible vehicles.
- Operators that are trained to meet customer's special transportation needs, including boarding and exiting assistance, wheelchair securement, reasonable assistance with bags, etc.
- Professional and courteous treatment from all GCT staff and other customers.
- Correctly fastened seat belts and/or wheelchair tie-downs.

- Pick-ups within a 30-minute window; the pick-up window begins 15 minutes before and ends 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.
- Prompt investigations and effective resolution of complaints, without fear of reprisal.
- Assistance beyond the curb if needed because of a disability.
- Timely certification and registration of eligible applicants.

## 13. ADDITIONAL GCT PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION

### Travel Training

Gwinnett County Transit is committed to training and enabling customers with disabilities to use the fixed route bus system as a way of increasing their independence and ability to travel to all areas served by public transportation. Any individual and/or group interested in participating in a free training seminar can arrange it by calling Customer Service at 770-822-5010.

### Using the Fixed Route Service

Customers can use the fixed route system and flash their GCT Paratransit ID to qualify for cash half fare. If a customer would like to take advantage of the FREE transfer to MARTA, they would need to apply for a GCT Half-Fare Breeze Card. If the customer's Paratransit eligibility allows for a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), the PCA rides for free on fixed route bus services, as well. To plan a public transit trip call 770-822-5010 and a customer service agent will provide assistance in identifying the best route to reach a destination.

### Half Fare

The GCT Half-Fare Breeze card allows the customer to take advantage of the Free Transfer from GCT to MARTA. The Half-Fare Breeze Card application can be found on GCT's website at [www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com). For customers requiring assistance filling out the application, please call 770-822-5010 or visit the customer service office in person.

***Note: In order to make a return trip on MARTA, customers must have a MARTA Half-Fare Breeze Card. The MARTA Half-Fare Breeze Card application can be found at [www.itsmarta.com](http://www.itsmarta.com) and at MARTA ride stores.***

To plan a public transit trip call 770-822-5010 and a customer service agent will help identify the best route to reach a destination.

### CPACS

CPACS has many services available including transportation programs. They offer a CPACS Express service as part of Federal Funding 5307 Low Income money and offer a Share Ride Mobility Services. More information can be found at [www.cpacs.org/transportation/](http://www.cpacs.org/transportation/) or contacting the Main Office Number at 770-936-0969.

## **Senior Services**

Gwinnett County Senior Services offers some programs for transportation assistance. The program includes a transportation voucher program and a volunteer Operator program. For more information call senior services at 678-377-4150.

## **Out-of-Town Visitors**

Visitors residing outside of Gwinnett County may use the ADA complementary paratransit service for any combination of 21 days within a 365-day period if one of the following applies:

- Visitor is certified ADA eligible by another transit provider
- Visitor can provide necessary documentation of a disability, or
- Visitor can self-certify that they have a disability that prevents them from using the scheduled fixed-route lift and ramp-equipped public buses

Visitors who are paratransit eligible with their local transit agency please provide proof of documentation to our Paratransit Department via fax at 770.300.9419.

Visitors who are not paratransit eligible with another transit agency must contact the GTC Paratransit Department at 770.418.2336 and a reservationist will assist with providing the necessary information, to include self-certification.

Visitors are encouraged to contact the Paratransit Department 48-hours in advance to allow time for obtaining, submitting, and processing visitor documentation. Reservations can be made by calling Gwinnett County Transit's Paratransit Department at 770.418.2336 or TDD at 711; Monday – Saturday, 8am to 5pm.

## **Alternative Formats and Limited English Proficiency**

For persons with visual impairments, the Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) Paratransit Service Rider's Guide and application can be made available in alternate formats upon request.

For persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), the GCT Paratransit Service Rider's Guide and application is translated and available in Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese. These four languages have been identified as together encompassing more than 80 percent of the LEP population in the GCT service area.

Based on limited encounters with other languages besides Spanish, the Language Line Services will be used to initiate communication with any LEP population group as needed and provide interpretation and translation services as requested by LEP customers. Gwinnett County Transit will communicate with the LEP person any written notices of rights and notices of denials, losses, or decreases in benefits or services related to vital documents in the LEP person's language.

In addition, GCT will provide oral or written notice in the LEP person's language of the right to receive language assistance to access GCT services and documents, free of cost.

To obtain the Rider's Guide and application in an alternate format and/ or language, please call GCT at 770.822.5010 and "press 3" during normal business hours, 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

For persons who have difficulty using a standard phone including people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled, please call Georgia Relay at 711 to set up this free TDD relay public service to connect and communicate with GCT through a variety of Traditional Relay and Captioned Telephone services.

## Notice to the Public of Rights under Title VI Gwinnett County Transit (GCT)

Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, or national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes he or she has been subjected to any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with Gwinnett County, Georgia.

For more information on GCT's civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, please visit the GCT website [www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com) or contact customer service at 770.822.5010. If an applicant is having trouble using a standard telephone and need TTY/TTD services, dial 7-1-1 to set up Georgia Relay communications; language assistance is available for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

A person may also file a Title VI complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration, Office of Civil Rights, and 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, D.C. 20590. Please visit this webpage: [http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12328\\_5104.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12328_5104.html) for information on filing and a Federal Transit Administration complaint form.

Translation of Notice to the Public of Rights under Title VI is provided on the GCT website at [www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com) for Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese. For other language assistance, please call 770.822.5010 to speak with an interpreter. Customers have the right to receive language assistance to access GCT services and documents, free of cost.

La traducción del Aviso para el público sobre los derechos en virtud del Título VI se provee en el sitio web de GCT en [www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com) para español, coreano, vietnamita y chino. Para obtener asistencia en otro idioma, llame al 770.822.5010 para hablar con un intérprete. Tiene derecho a recibir asistencia con el idioma para acceder a los servicios y documentos de GCT, sin costo.

Bản dịch bằng tiếng Tây Ban Nha, Hàn Quốc, Việt Nam và Trung Quốc được cung cấp trên trang web GC T[www.gctransit.com](http://www.gctransit.com). Để được hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ khác, vui lòng gọi điện đến số 770.822.5010 để nói chuyện với thông dịch viên. Quý khách có quyền nhận được sự hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí để tiếp cận các tài liệu và dịch vụ của GCT.

## **Gwinnett County Transit Customer Service**

Gwinnett County Transit is committed to offering exceptional customer service. Please call GCT Customer Service **770.822.5010** for help with:

Comments, Complaints, and Suggestions  
Ticket/Pass Information  
Trip Planning  
Lost and Found

Route and Scheduling Information  
Paratransit Eligibility  
Half Fare Eligibility  
Breeze Card Information

If a customer is having trouble using a standard phone, call 711 to set up a Georgia Relay call. Language assistance is available for persons with limited English proficiency.

Customer Service Representatives (CSR) are available from:

Monday – Friday: 6:00am – 8:00pm  
Saturday: 7:00am – 8:00pm