

PARATRANSIT SERVICE RIDER'S GUIDE



GWINNETT COUNTY TRANSIT

**Customer Service Center
3525 Mall Boulevard Suite 5-C
Duluth, GA 30096**

Phone: 770.822.5010

**Business Hours:
Monday – Saturday, 8:00am – 5:00pm**

FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS

Before calling for the services listed below, please read and become familiar with the applicable sections of this Rider's Guide for details on the service and when to call.

Call 770.418.2336 or TDD at 711 to:

- Make Trip Reservations
- Change a Scheduled Trip (**prior to the day of the trip**)
- Cancel a Scheduled Trip (**prior to the day of the trip**)
- Request Help with Application

Call 770.246.4770 and "press 2" or TDD at 711 for:

- Same Day Cancel of a Trip
- Where's My Ride
- Inquire about Service Status during Hazardous Weather and Emergency Events
- For Medical Offices and Similar Facilities to Notify GCT if Passenger's Appointment is Running Long

Call 770.822.5010 and "press 3" or TDD at 711 for:

- General GCT Paratransit Information
- Request GCT Paratransit Application
- Lost Breeze Paratransit Photo ID Card
- Lost Personal Property and Items
- Comments, Suggestions and Complaints

This Rider's Guide is Available in Alternate Formats and/or Languages

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 or contact customer service at 770.822.5010. If you have 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 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 for Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese. For other language assistance, please call 770.822.5010 to speak with an interpreter. You 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 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.

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Bản dịch bằng tiếng Tây Ban Nha, Hàn Quốc, Việt Nam và Trung Quốc được cung cấp trên trang web GC 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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION & PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY	7
<i>Welcome to Gwinnett County Transit.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>What is Gwinnett County Paratransit Services?.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Who Is Eligible?.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Reasonable Modification</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Types of Eligibility.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Using the Fixed Route Service</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Half Fare.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Travel Training</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>What Areas Are Served?.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>When Does the Service Operate?.....</i>	<i>11</i>
APPLICATION GUIDELINES	13
<i>How Do I Apply For Service?</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>How Will I Know If I Can Use The Paratransit Service?</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Notification of Applicant's Status.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>The Right to Appeal Your Eligibility.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>How Long Is My Certification Valid</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>What if I have a Temporary Disability.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo identification card.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>What if my Card is Lost or Stolen Card</i>	<i>16</i>
SCHEDULING/RESERVING A TRIP	17
<i>How Do I Reserve a Trip.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Requesting a Pick-up Time</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Changing a Scheduled Trip</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Reservation Confirmation</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Where's My Ride</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Subscription Service (Standing Orders)</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>How Do I Cancel A Trip Reservation?</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>What If I Missed My Scheduled Trip?</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>How Do I Ride The GCT Paratransit Service?.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>What If My Vehicle is late?.....</i>	<i>24</i>
NO-SHOW POLICY	25
<i>What If I Fail To Show Up For A Scheduled Trip?.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Definitions.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>What is Beyond the Rider's Control?.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Suspension Policies for a Pattern or Practices of Excessive No-Shows and Late Cancellations.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>No-Show Notifications and Penalties.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>No-Show Disputes and Appeals.....</i>	<i>28</i>

THINGS TO KNOW WHEN RIDING PARATRANSIT SERVICE.....	29
<i>What If My Caretaker Is Not Available At The Drop-off Location?.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Who Can Travel With Me?</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>What Is The Fare?</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>What About Visitors With Disabilities?</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Procedures When Using A Wheelchair or Other Mobility Devices?.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Scooters</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Mobility Device Securement and Seat Belt Policy</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Ambulatory Passengers</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>May I Transport Packages and Personal Items?</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Respirators and Portable Oxygen Equipment</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>May I Transport Animals?</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>What Is My Responsibility When Riding A GCT Paratransit Vehicle?</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>What are my Responsibilities As a GCT Paratransit Customer?</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>What Is The Driver's Responsibility?.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>What Can Customers Expect from GCT Paratransit Services?.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>What If I Lose Something While Riding A GCT Paratransit Vehicle?.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Hazardous Weather and Emergency Event Policy</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>How Can I Make Comments and Suggestions About GCT Paratransit?</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Other Services.....</i>	<i>37</i>

GENERAL INFORMATION & PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Welcome to Gwinnett County Transit

The information contained in this Gwinnett County Paratransit Service Rider's Guide has been developed to help new and existing customers become acquainted with the Gwinnett Paratransit Service system and to provide the necessary guidelines required to use it effectively.

This document can be available in alternative formats upon request. If you have questions about any of the information contained in the guide and/or need to request the guide in alternate format, contact Gwinnett County Customer Service 770.822.5010.

What is Gwinnett County Paratransit Services?

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 curb-to-curb, with door-to-door service upon request. 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.

Transportation is provided within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile corridor on either side of the existing local fixed route services in Gwinnett County. This service can be used for work, school, shopping, recreation, medical appointments, etc. Gwinnett County Paratransit Service provides transportation that is comparable to the fixed route system in the area, service times, and travel times.

Customers must be aware, this is a shared-ride service, duration of a trip may be as long as a comparable fixed route bus trip plus one-half (1/2) hour for travel and wait time.

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

Who Is Eligible?

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 passenger 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 your 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.

Reasonable Modification

The County shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability or to provide transit service accessibility. GCT will make every attempt to provide transportation services that meet our customer needs as long as the request:

- Does not fundamentally alter the service
- Does not create a direct threat to the health and safety of others and;
- Is not necessary to permit the passenger to use the services for their intended purpose.

Types of Eligibility

GCT in accordance with federal ADA requirements has the authority to grant eligibility for use of paratransit services as follows:

Unconditional Eligibility

Unconditional eligibility will be granted to an individual who is unable to use fixed route transit services under any circumstances and is thus eligible to make all trips using complementary paratransit. Examples of applicants granted unconditional eligibility include:

- Individuals who cannot travel independently due to severe or profound intellectual disabilities or advanced dementia
- Individuals with physical disabilities who have limited functional ability (e.g., riders who use a

manual wheelchair and who cannot sufficiently propel themselves)

- Individuals who have lost vision late in life and have not learned to travel independently in the community

Conditional Eligibility

Conditional eligibility may be granted to an individual who is able to use fixed route transit services for some trips but not others. Conditional ADA paratransit eligibility will be for those trips for which he or she meets the criteria. An individual's conditional eligibility will be processed based on factors that are specific, measurable and thorough. Examples of individuals who might be candidates for this type of eligibility:

- Individuals with intellectual disabilities who have learned how to make certain trips on fixed routes but cannot make all trips independently – They would not be eligible for the trips they have learned to take by fixed route, but would be eligible for all other trips.
- Individuals with physical disabilities who can reach a bus stop or rail station within four blocks when the route is accessible – An appropriate condition on eligibility in this instance is “when the distance to or from stops and stations is more than four blocks or when the route to stops and stations is inaccessible.”
- Individuals with health conditions who can get to and from stops and stations when the temperature is not too hot (e.g., less than 80°F) or the distance is not too far (e.g., closer than four blocks) – They would be ADA paratransit eligible when the temperature exceeds 80°F or the stop or station is more than four blocks away

Temporary Eligibility

Temporary eligibility may be granted to an individual whose health condition or disability is expected to change in the short term or whose mobility device will soon change. Temporary eligibility can be either unconditional or conditional, depending on the individual's functional ability. For example, an individual may need to undergo two months of treatment for a health condition, resulting in severe fatigue that prevents him or her from using fixed route service. This individual would be ADA paratransit unconditionally eligible for the duration of the treatment period.

Using the Fixed Route Service

Passengers can use the fixed route system and flash their GCT Paratransit ID to qualify for cash half fare. If a passenger 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 passenger's Paratransit eligibility allows for a PCA, your Personal Care Attendant (PCA) can ride for free taking advantage of the flexibility and independence provided by our fixed route system. To plan your public transit trip call 770-822-5010 and a customer service agent will help you identify the best route to reach your destination.

Half Fare

Half Fare application can be found on our website at www.gctransit.com, if a customer needs assistance filling out the application, they can call 770-822-5010 or visit the customer service office in person. The GCT Half-Fare Breeze card allows the passenger to take advantage of the Free Transfer from GCT to

MARTA.

However, in order to make the return trip from MARTA, the customer would also need to hold a MARTA Half-Fare Breeze Card. Half-Fare Breeze Card application for MARTA can be found at www.itsmarta.com and can be obtained at the MARTA ride stores.

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

Travel Training

Gwinnett County Transit is committed to training and enabling disabled customers to use the fixed route 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.

What Areas Are Served?

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.

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

A map of the GCT complementary paratransit service area can be viewed, downloaded, or printed using the GCT web page, 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.'

When Does the Service Operate?

GCT complementary paratransit services are provided Monday through Saturday. The service hours are the same hours as the local fixed route bus service.

End of Service Day Considerations

To ensure that complementary paratransit drivers can complete their drop-offs no later than the latest fixed route drop-off (weekday vs Saturday times vary), some of the latest-available return-trip pickup times may vary to reflect the travel times for requested trips.

For example, to ensure that the last drop-off for complementary paratransit coincides with a last fixed route drop-off time of 10 p.m. (Saturday Only), GCT might limit the latest paratransit return-trip pickup time to 9:30 p.m. This would provide sufficient travel time (assuming the estimated trip time is approximately 30 minutes) to complete the last drop-off by 10 p.m.

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.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

How Do I Apply For Service?

Step 1 -- Get the GCT application for paratransit eligibility.

The GCT application can be viewed, downloaded, or printed using the GCT web page, 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 the application form and return it 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 -- 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.

[How Will I Know If I Can Use The Paratransit Service?](#)

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.**

You may be asked to attend an in-person interview. In some cases, you may be asked for additional information before you can be approved. Most applicants will be notified of their eligibility status without an interview. If the determination process is not completed within twenty-one (21) calendar days per ADA requirements, on the 22nd day the applicant is presumed to be eligible and may use the complementary paratransit service until a decision is made.

[Notification of Applicant's Status](#)

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.

The Right to Appeal Your Eligibility

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.

Appeal 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. You will have the opportunity to be represented at the hearing and you may present information and arguments. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

Presumptive Eligibility

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.

How Long Is My Certification Valid

All paratransit passengers are required to be recertified every three (3) years. An application will be mailed three (3) months prior to expiration, along with an enclosed letter notifying the passenger that their certification for passenger service is up for renewal. Failure to return the application in a timely manner may result in a loss of service.

What if my Recertification Application is Denied

If the application for recertification is denied, the passenger may continue to use the service for sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the notification letter. If the passenger does not file an appeal within

the sixty (60) calendar days, the passenger's service will be discontinued on the 61st calendar day.

If the passenger does file an appeal within those sixty (60) calendar days, service will be continued until the Appeals Committee determines the passenger's eligibility. The passenger will receive written notification of the Appeals Committee's decision within thirty (30) days. If the passenger's application is denied, service will be discontinued ten (10) business days from the date of the notification letter.

What if I have a Temporary Disability

If a passenger has a temporary disability, he/she 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 passenger's Healthcare Professional.

GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo identification card

The GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo identification (ID) card is used to show proof of your eligibility to ride GCT complementary paratransit. **You must have your GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo ID card present when you ride.** The GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo ID card is accepted at other transit agencies across the United States. Confirm exact scheduling rules and regulations with local transit authorities.

What if my Card is Lost or Stolen Card

If you lose or misplace your GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo ID card, a replacement can be obtained for a fee of \$5.00 at the GCT office located at 3525 Mall Boulevard, Suite 5-C, Duluth, GA 30096. Contact Customer Service at 770.822.5010 and "press 2" or TDD at 711 for questions about a GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo ID card. **It is strongly recommended to show your valid GCT Breeze ADA paratransit photo ID card upon boarding.**

SCHEDULING/RESERVING A TRIP

How Do I Reserve a Trip

Reservations can be made by calling Gwinnett County Transit's Reservation line at 770.418.2336 or TDD at 711.

GCT operates an advanced reservation service for all paratransit trips. Reservations may be made by calling and speaking with a representative or by leaving a voicemail message one (1) operating (business) day before a trip is required.

Representatives are available during our normal business hours from Monday through Saturday, 8:00am to 5:00pm, for trip reservations. Trip reservations for Monday service may be requested via voicemail on Sundays. **Same day reservations are not available.**

There are no daily limits on the number of reservations the passenger can request. Please note that when making a reservation for a round trip, allow at least two (2) hours between the requested pick-up times.

Every effort will be made to accommodate your requested pick-up time. However, passenger trip demand at certain times of the day may require that the passenger adjust their desired time by up to one (1) hour before or one (1) hour after the desired pick-up or drop-off time. Reservation space is assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Please make sure to allow ample time for traffic or any other delays associated with transit when planning your trip.

Customers must be aware; this is a shared-ride service. The duration of a trip may be as long as a comparable fixed route trip plus one-half (1/2) for travel and wait time.

GCT paratransit service does not provide emergency or same day transportation. In addition, GCT paratransit service does not alter same day trip times or locations.

Whenever the passenger makes a reservation for a trip, the passenger must be prepared to give the reservation agent the following information:

- Your first and last name.
- Exact address of pick-up location, including an apartment number and gate code access number if appropriate.
- Exact address of the destination or drop-off location. Without an exact address a trip cannot be scheduled.
- The designated ADA accessible entrance location of the facility.
- Requested pick-up time (or appointment time) and return time.
- Notification whether a Personal Care Attendant, companion, child, and/ or service animal is traveling with the passenger.
- Whether wheelchair or other mobility device will be used.
- Need for door-to-door service.

The reservation agents are required to ask for complete information and will repeat the information back to you to make sure everything is correct. A paratransit vehicle driver or passenger cannot change the location of the pick-up or drop-off location on the day of the trip.

Customers are required to coordinate with MARTA mobility on their own. You can call MARTA Mobility at 404-848-5000.

Requesting a Pick-up Time

You may request a pick-up for anytime during operating hours. If your requested pick-up time is not available, the reservation agent may offer a pick-up time within one (1) hour before or one (1) hour after your requested pick-up time.

If you have to be at a specific location “no later” than a certain time, tell the reservation agent the time you must be there and let them tell you what time you need to be picked up.

Remember GCT’s paratransit service is a shared-ride service and you may need to ride with other passengers. If you do not want the reservation agent to estimate an appropriate pick-up time, then plan to allow enough time so that you can arrive on time.

As with most paratransit systems, GCT uses a thirty (30) minute pick-up “window.” This means the vehicle can arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time or 15 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time and still be considered on time. Please keep the pick-up window in mind when making reservations, particularly when requesting a specific pick-up time.

Negotiating Pick-up or Drop-off Time

Customers may be asked to adjust their requested pick-up or drop-off times due to demand at certain times of the day. See examples below.

The “latest arrival” time means that the passenger has to be at their destination at a specific time (for example, Medical/Dental appointments, and start time for work/school).

The one-hour negotiating window should be used on the early side to ensure that the customer arrives on time.

Example1: Customer must arrive at doctor/work/school no later than 8:00 AM

- The reservation agent must evaluate travel time and 30-minute window when assigning the pick-up time. (example travel time 1 hour plus ½ hour window, total 1 ½ hours)
- The customer may be offered a time before 6:30 AM but not later. A pickup time of 6:15AM would be reasonable while a 6:45 AM may not be reasonable in ensuring he/she arrives on time at the destination.

The “earliest departure” time is the earliest time the passenger wants to be picked up (for example, getting off work or leaving school)

The one-hour negotiation window should be used on the late side because the customer cannot leave before the stated time.

Example 2: The customer ends work/school at 4:00 PM

- The reservation agent must take into account that the customer will not be ready until after 4:00 PM
- The customer may be offered a time after their 4:00 PM end time but not earlier. A pick-up time of 4:15 would be reasonable while a 3:45PM would not be reasonable since they cannot leave work or school early.

The one-hour negotiation window should be used on the late side because the customer cannot leave before the stated time.

When no travel restrictions apply (no exact arrival or departure time)

The one-hour negotiating window can be used on either side of the requested time since the customer is not constrained by appointments and/or work school schedule.

Changing a Scheduled Trip

If you have scheduled a trip and your plans and/or travel times change, call GCT at 770.822.5010 and “press 3” or TDD at 711 **at least one (1) day before your trip.** Tell the reservation agent that you would like to change a trip that has already been scheduled, and the reservation agent will ask you:

- Your first and last name.
- The date and time of the trip you are calling to change.
- The new times you would like to schedule or the changes you would like to make.

The reservation agent will always try to fulfill your needs, but changes to your original trip request may result in adjustments to your pick-up times.

GCT Paratransit is unable to change pick-up times or pick-up/ drop- off locations on the same day of your ride due to scheduling constraints with equipment and other passengers.

Reservation Confirmation

Customers will be given their schedule pick-up time at the end of their reservation process. A confirmation call will be made by GCT to the customer between 4:00pm and 8:00pm on the day the customer made their reservation to confirm for the following day. Reservation changes will only be accepted Monday through Saturday from 8:00am to 5:00pm, to include Sunday voicemails, up to the day before the customer’s schedule trip.

Where's My Ride

Customers can also sign up for a free service that will provide them text alerts of their schedule. Text Alerts include:

- When your vehicle is approaching
- When your vehicle has arrived
- When your vehicle is running late
- Your schedule the night before

Customers can customize the types of notices they receive by visiting www.transitoms.com/vision2/passenger_alert.aspx by selecting Gwinnett County Transit.

Customers will need to contact Paratransit Dispatch 770-246-4770 option #2 to receive their Client ID number for signup.

Subscription Service (Standing Orders)

If you need a ride to the **same place**, at the **same time**, and **at least three (3) days per week**, "Subscription Service" may be a good option for you. This service allows you to schedule these recurring trips with one call. You will then automatically be placed on the schedule each week. **Ask the reservation agent about this option.**

All subscription trips are pre-cancelled on the specified GCT service holidays.

For passengers who are receiving Subscription Service and **if you do not need a ride on a particular day, it is very important to call GCT Paratransit one (1) day prior to cancel the trip.** This will help us avoid unnecessary trips or missed connections. And you avoid a no-show on your passenger record. A subscription passenger that is suspended due to no-show violations will lose their current subscription status and may reapply after the suspension is completed.

You can put your subscription trip on "hold" for up to three (3) months. Then, when you are ready to have your Subscription Service taken off hold, call GCT Paratransit seven (7) days in advance to reinstate the subscription. If you need to put your subscription trip on hold for a longer period than three (3) months, we may ask you to call back and request a new Subscription Service at the time it is again needed.

If a passenger chooses to change the subscription time, it will be handled as a new subscription request. If a corresponding time slot is available, then the passenger's new subscription will take effect on the date requested by the passenger. If no corresponding time slot is available, the passenger may place his/her name on the subscription waiting list. Subscriptions will be assigned as space becomes available.

The passenger may temporarily change the destination or pick-up address on a subscription per year for a minimum of two weeks if the time slot is available. All changes to subscriptions must be made at

least one (1) day in advance. **Same day address changes cannot be accommodated.** If the passenger chooses to change the subscription permanently, it will be handled as a new subscription request and placed on the waiting list if the time slot is not available.

As traffic patterns and demographics change, GCT Paratransit reserves the right to make reasonable adjustments to existing subscriptions. Should a passenger's subscription need to be adjusted, these changes will be made on an individual basis with input from the passenger and/or his/her guardian/caretaker. At no time will GCT adjust or change a passenger's subscription without consulting with the passenger. If an agreement cannot be reached between GCT and the passenger, it may result in the passenger's subscription being dropped from the subscription list and placed back on the request list until an appropriate time slot can be found. These changes will allow GCT to make the best use of its resources while providing the timeliest service possible to all of its passengers.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, which states that not more than 50% of the rides at any hour of any day may be subscription rides, total subscription trips may not exceed fifty (50) percent of space availability at any time during the day. Certain time periods may not have subscription time slots available. If the current subscription service trips exceed the 50% threshold, GCT will start a wait list for customers interested in signing up for subscription trips.

How Do I Cancel A Trip Reservation?

To cancel a reservation **prior** to the day of the trip, please contact the GCT Paratransit Reservation Line at 770.418.2336 or TDD at 711, Monday through Saturday, 8:00am until 5:00pm; a customer may also leave a voicemail if calling on Sunday. Please note: **Do not call reservations for same day reservation cancellations.** Any **same day** cancellations must be made by calling the GCT Control Center Office at 770.246.4770 and "press 2" or TDD at 711.

Be sure to give the passenger's name, address, date of travel, scheduled pick-up time and return trip information. Cancelling a reservation in a timely manner helps to keep the service operating on schedule and prevents the possibility of the passenger being charged for a "no show" for a trip not taken.

Any cancellation less than one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time will be considered a no-show and a violation notification will be mailed to the passenger.

A passenger that shows a pattern or practice of cancelling five (5) same-day trips within thirty (30) calendar days of the first infraction, regardless of whether they were cancelled prior to one (1) hour of the trip, will be penalized with one no-show violation; this includes cancelling multiple trips on the same day. On the fifth (5th) cancellation, a no-show will be recorded. Depending on the number of no-shows already on the passenger's record, a notification letter, warning letter, or suspension letter will be sent to the passenger. As with all no-shows, the passenger may appeal to the Appeals Committee and provide documentation of any extenuating circumstances for consideration.

What If I Missed My Scheduled Trip?

If a passenger missed their scheduled trip for reasons beyond their control, they must call GCT Control Center right away. The dispatcher/reservationist will do the best they can to take get the passenger on the next available vehicle. This might mean that a vehicle may arrive later than the original pick-up time.

If a passenger ride started from home, GCT will not send a replacement vehicle to pick them up. If a passenger has other rides scheduled that day, they must call to confirm and let GCT know if they still need those rides or if they want to cancel.

The GCT Control Center can be reached at 770.246.4770 and “press 2” or TDD/TTY at 711.

How Do I Ride The GCT Paratransit Service?

Pick Up Times

The scheduled pick-up time will be based upon the preference set by the passenger. Passengers can either schedule their pick-up time based on the time they need to be dropped off for an appointment or the time they wish to be picked up. At times, the GCT vehicle may arrive early. You can board the vehicle early if you want; however, you are not required to board the vehicle before the schedule pick-up time.

- If you must be at the doctors, school, work, etc. at 9:00 AM, please make sure you use this time to determine an appropriate pick-up time that will get you to your destination on time.
- If you end work at 4:00 PM, use this time to determine an appropriate pick up time that enables you to meet the vehicle within five (5) minutes of its arrival at your work site.

Pick Up Window

A pick-up time will be based upon appointment times. **A pick-up window of thirty (30) minutes allows GCT to arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time or 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.** The thirty (30) minute pick-up window assists GCT in accommodating as many passengers as possible during a particular time period. If the paratransit vehicle has not arrived by the end of the thirty (30) minute period, please contact GCT by calling the GCT Control Center at 770.246.4770 and “press 2” or TDD at 711 to check the status of your pick-up.

GCT recommends that you allow enough time to arrive at your destination before your appointment. The GCT paratransit service is curb-to-curb (you may request door to door service with some restrictions) and you will need to travel from the curb to your final destination. This is especially important if you are traveling within a complex of buildings.

In order to maintain service efficiency, GCT paratransit vehicle drivers do not make side stops on the way to your destination. Please schedule all times and locations when you make your reservation.

Gated Communities

Those passengers that reside or travel to or from a gated community should remain in their

dwelling until the vehicle has arrived at the gate. The passenger will be notified that the vehicle has arrived at the gate. If the gate buzzer does not work, the driver will call the GCT Control Center and the GCT Control Center will notify the passenger to open the gate.

Boarding the Paratransit Vehicle

Passengers must have their GCT ADA paratransit photo identification card and paratransit fare ready to present to the paratransit vehicle driver when boarding the vehicle. Failure to provide fare in either the form of GCT paper paratransit ticket, Breeze GCT electronic paratransit ticket, or exact cash fare (drivers do not make change) at the time of boarding may result in possible service disruption. Fare payment is required.

Please Note: GCT paper paratransit tickets are no longer available for purchase. If you have any GCT paper paratransit tickets they will be accepted as fare payment until December 31, 2021.

Driver Assistance

Drivers will provide assistance to passengers on and off the bus. The driver will provide assistance with the use of lifts, ramps, and securement devices. The driver will assist in pushing a manual wheelchair up the ramp or onto the lift of the bus. Drivers do not assist passengers with packages.

GCT operates a curb-to-curb service (and extends farther upon request). The drivers will assist on and off the vehicle from the curb of the address. If assistance is needed beyond the curb due to disability, make this known to the reservation agent at the time of scheduling the trip.

Driver Wait Time

It is important to be at the designated pick-up location at the scheduled pick-up time indicated by the reservation agent when passengers made their reservation. The vehicle **will wait up to five (5) minutes** past the scheduled pick-up time for a passenger to arrive at the curb or designated pick-up point. If the vehicle arrives after the scheduled pick-up time, the driver is instructed to wait five (5) minutes and to contact the GCT Control Center.

The vehicle is not permitted to wait while the passenger conducts business at their destination. The passenger will need to make a reservation in advance for their return trip on a designated pick-up time. Pick-up time and driver wait time requirements also will apply to the return trip.

Closed Business or Facility

If a business or facility is closed upon the arrival of the vehicle, the passenger can choose to stay on the vehicle and be dropped off at the return address at the convenience of GCT (return trip fare must be paid), or the passenger can get off the paratransit vehicle and wait for the return trip paratransit vehicle to pick them up.

Early or Late Pick-up Requests

GCT is not obligated to comply with a change for an early or late pick-up on the day of the scheduled trip. GCT will try and accommodate an early or late pick-up request on the day of the scheduled trip; however, other scheduled trips cannot be disrupted. Drivers are not allowed to start earlier than the first scheduled pick-up on their scheduled trip manifest nor are drivers allowed to stay later than the last scheduled drop-off on their manifest for an early or late pickup request.

Procedures for Pick-up Locations

To provide safe, on-time service for all passengers, GCT has developed the following procedures:

Apartment Complexes

Passengers who live in a large, multiple-unit apartment complex must meet the bus at the curb closest to their address. Passengers in apartment complexes that are inaccessible to paratransit vehicles (for example, low clearances, cul-de-sac, et cetera) must meet the paratransit vehicle at the main entrance to the complex. If the complex has a guarded gate or limited access, the passenger should inform the security staff of the scheduled bus pick-up and return times. If a passenger is visiting someone inside a guarded gate or limited access complex, it is the passenger's responsibility to advise the person they will be visiting ahead of time for access.

Office/ Medical/ Mall/ Churches and Other Complexes

Passengers traveling from a large office complex, medical facility, malls, churches, or other large areas must meet the paratransit vehicle at the curb closest to the main reception desk or main lobby entrance unless instructed otherwise. Drivers remain with the vehicle and do not go inside the complex or facility.

Nursing Homes/ Assisted Living Centers

Passengers traveling from a nursing home or hotel should meet the paratransit vehicle at the curb closest to the main lobby unless instructed otherwise. Drivers remain with the vehicle and do not go inside the center.

Adult Day Care and Dialysis Centers

Passengers should be waiting in a designated area when the paratransit vehicle arrives for their pick-up at the centers. Drivers will assist passengers in boarding the vehicle. Drivers remain with the vehicle and do not go inside the facility. It is highly recommended that the center contact GCT by calling the GCT Control Center at 770.246.4770 and "press 2" if there is a problem with the scheduled pick-up time. GCT does not handle emergency trips to the hospital.

Malls

Passengers will be picked up and dropped off at the main entrance that is closest to the main reception desk or main lobby entrance unless instructed otherwise. Operators remain with the vehicle and do not go inside the mall.

Exception

If a facility's main reception desk or main lobby entrance does not meet ADA accessibility standards, it is the passenger's responsibility to contact the facility administrator for determination of their designated accessible entrance and notify GCT **prior** to the trip.

[What If My Vehicle is late?](#)

If the vehicle has not arrived within the 30 minute pick-up window, call GCT Control Center at 770.246.4770 and "press 2" or TDD/TTY at 711 for late vehicle assistance.

NO-SHOW POLICY

What If I Fail To Show Up For A Scheduled Trip?

Gwinnett County Transit understands that because paratransit services requires trips to be scheduled in advance, riders may sometimes miss scheduled rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. GCT also understands that riders may sometimes miss scheduled trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely way for reasons that are beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled trips or failing to cancel trips in a timely way can lead to suspension of service. The following information explains GCT's no-show policy.

Definitions

Advanced Cancellation – when the customer (or the customer's representative) calls and cancels a specific scheduled trip at least 1 hour before the pick-up window. Early morning trips scheduled for pickup before 7:00 AM are to leave a cancellation message to cancel a trip before 6:00am at the following number: 770.246.4770 and "press 2".

Cancel at Door – when the vehicle arrives at the location designated for a specific scheduled trip within the 30-minute pick-up window and the customer (or the customer's representative) notifies the driver at that time that they no longer need the scheduled trip. These are considered No-Shows. **Each No-Show is counted as one (1) penalty point.**

Please Note: The driver is not responsible for cancelling any other trips booked for that day. Customers (or the customer's representative) must call GCT Paratransit Dispatch to cancel other trips. They can be reached at 770-246-4770 and "press 2" or TDD/TTY at 711.

Late Cancellation – A "late cancellation" occurs when a customer cancels a trip less than one hour before the start of the 30-minute pick-up window. **Each late cancellation is counted as half (1/2) of a penalty point.**

No-Show – A No Show is defined when all the following criteria have occurred:

- There has been no call by the customer (or the customer's representative) to cancel the scheduled trip 1 hour or more before the pick-up window.
AND
- The vehicle arrives at the schedule pickup location within the 30-minute pick-up window
AND
- The driver cannot reasonably see the customer approaching the vehicle within five (5) minutes of arrival
AND
- The dispatch office is notified. At this time, dispatch will verify that the operator is at the location.

Late cancellations and cancellations at the door will be treated as No-Shows and are assigned a penalty; ½ a point or 1-point respectively.

GCT schedules pick-up and return trips separately and assumes all schedule return trips are needed unless notice is given by the customer or their representative. If a pick-up trip is a no-show, GCT will not automatically cancel the return trip. A No-Show on the return trip will count as the second No-Show for the day and will be assigned a separate 1-point penalty.

In the event you are a no show for a ride, the return ride or any additional ride(s) scheduled for that day **will not be automatically canceled**. Please call 770.418.2336 or TDD/TTY at 711 to cancel any return/additional rides you had scheduled that will no longer be needed.

Missed Trip - a missed trip results from trips that are requested, confirmed, and scheduled, but do not take place because:

- The vehicle arrives and leaves before the beginning of the pickup window without picking up the rider and without any indication from the rider that he or she no longer wants to make the trip. Note that a rider is not obligated to board until the start of the pickup window until 5 minutes have elapsed.
- The vehicle does not wait the required time within the pickup window, there is no contact with the rider, and the vehicle departs without the rider. Note that if during the wait time the rider indicates he or she no longer wants to take the trip, this is typically recorded as a "cancel at the door."
- The vehicle arrives after the end of the pickup window and departs without picking up the rider (either because the rider is not there or declines to take the trip because it is now late).
- The vehicle does not arrive at the pickup location.

What is Beyond the Rider's Control?

There are many circumstances that may be beyond the rider's control, including but not limited to:

- Family emergency
- Illness that precluded the rider from calling to cancel
- Personal attendant or another party who didn't arrive on time to assist the rider
- Rider was inside calling to check the ride status and was on hold for extended time
- Rider's appointment ran long and did not provide opportunity to cancel in a timely way
- Another party cancelled rider's appointment
- Rider's mobility aid failed
- Sudden illness or change in condition
- Adverse weather impacted rider's travel plans, precluding the rider from cancelling in a timely way

Riders should contact GCT Control Center at 770-246-4770 and "press 2" or TDD/TTY at 711 when experiencing no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control.

GCT error, which may not be counted as a rider no-show, includes but is not limited to:

- Vehicle arrived late, after the pick-up window
- Vehicle arrived early, before the pick-up window, and rider was not ready to go
- Vehicle never arrived

- Vehicle went to the wrong location
- Driver did not follow correct procedures to locate the rider
- Rider cancelled in a timely way, but the cancellation was not recorded correctly or wasn't transmitted to the driver in time

Suspension Policies for a Pattern or Practices of Excessive No-Shows and Late Cancellations

Gwinnett County Transit monitors missed trips monthly and reviews all recorded no-shows and late cancellations to ensure accuracy before recording them in a rider's account. This policy is intended to discourage a pattern or practice of missed scheduled trips.

In any 30-day period, any customer who has "no showed" or "late cancelled" more than 10% of their trips will receive a suspension notice. A trip cancelled in accordance with our policy, i.e., more than one hour before the start of the pick-up window, will not be counted in the total number of trips booked, and the client will not receive penalty points.

Additionally, to ensure suspension only applies to riders who have an established pattern or practice of scheduling trips and not taking them, **a customer must accumulate three (3) or more penalty points to receive a suspension.** A customer will be subject to suspension only if both the minimum 10% of trips scheduled were "no showed" or "late cancelled" and the minimum number of penalty points are reached during the 30-day period.

No-Show Notifications and Penalties

The length of a customer's suspension will adhere to the following schedule:

TABLE 2: Consequences for an Established Pattern or Practice of No-Shows

Violation	Consequence
1 st Violation	Letter of Warning
2 nd Violation	7-day (1 week) Suspension
3 rd Violation	14-day (2 week) Suspension
4 th Violation	21-day (3 week) Suspension and Loss of Subscription Service
5 th + Violation	28-day (4 week) Suspension and Loss of Subscription Service
Subsequent violations will increase by a week (Loss of Subscription)	

Violations of this policy will result in suspension, per the above schedule.

Gwinnett County Transit will notify riders of all points assessed to their record. Prior to sending a suspension letter, GCT will review all no shows and late cancellations to ensure that the process was followed properly, and an accurate count is represented. Any no show or late cancellation that is found to be in error will be removed from the customer's account.

Special Exceptions

When a suspension would prevent a rider from receiving medical services that are deemed life-sustaining

by the rider's medical provider, the Transit Division Director may grant an exception to a rider's suspension for the life-sustaining trips. Such special exception medical trips will be provided as demand trips and require individual trip reservations.

No-Show Disputes and Appeals

If a no show or late cancellation is due to circumstances beyond your control, please call GCT's Paratransit Department at 770.418.2336 to explain the circumstance and request the review and/or removal of the no show or late cancellation.

Any passenger who receives a no-show violation will be notified of such in writing. The passenger has the opportunity to appeal any no-show violation or suspension. The appeal must be in writing and received by GCT within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the notification letter. Documentation explaining the appeals process and an Appeals Request Form will be mailed out along with a passengers No-Show violation or suspension notice.

Mail Appeal Request Form to:

**Gwinnett County Transit
Re: No-Show Appeal
446 West Crogan Street, Ste 410
Lawrenceville, GA 30046**

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.

THINGS TO KNOW WHEN RIDING PARATRANSIT SERVICE

What If My Caretaker Is Not Available At The Drop-off Location?

If the passenger cannot be left unattended after exiting the vehicle and the caretaker is not at the drop-off location when the vehicle arrives, the passenger 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 passenger.

The first instance will be a written warning, the second instance within a 180-day period the passenger's service will be suspended for fourteen (14) calendar days. If this situation happens a third time within a 180-day period, the passenger's service will be suspended for thirty (30) calendar days. If this situation happens a fourth time within the 180-day period, the passenger'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.

Who Can Travel With Me?

Personal Care Attendant:

- A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to help an ADA eligible paratransit passenger meet his/her personal needs. This individual may either be an employee of the passenger, a relative, a friend, or a care provider.
- During the application process for eligibility, the applicant should indicate whether he/she will travel with a PCA.
- PCA's travel at no cost when accompanying the eligible paratransit passenger.
- If the GCT Paratransit passenger 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.
- Please inform the reservationist when scheduling the passenger trip(s) if a personal care attendant will be traveling with the passenger.

Travel Companions:

- You may travel with one companion.
- If you travel with a PCA, you may travel with one companion in addition to your 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.
- The Traveling Companion 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 passenger.
- Children taller than the farebox (approximately 42 inches) accompanying the eligible paratransit passenger 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.

Companions, personal care attendants, escorts, and children are not allowed on a vehicle without the eligible passenger aboard. Traveling companions, including children, that ride with the certified paratransit passenger 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, passengers 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.

What Is The Fare?

- One-way ADA Paratransit trip fare is \$4.00. 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.
- 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. **Drivers 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 passenger. 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.
- GCT ADA Paratransit passengers can transfer to and from GCT fixed route express and local routes. Most transfers are free, but upcharges apply when transferring to a higher-fared service. For example, if a passenger 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. Passengers will be required to pay full fare for each interagency transfer boarding at the MARTA Doraville rail station.
- Customers with a GCT ADA Paratransit Photo ID Card can also ride fixed route services for half fare. Passengers 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.

What About Visitors With Disabilities?

To qualify for Paratransit service with Gwinnett County Transit, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a person must have a disability that prevents them from using a lift or ramp-equipped fixed-route public bus either some or all the time. 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 or by email at transit@gwinnettcountry.com. Visitors who are not paratransit eligible with another transit agency please contact our Paratransit Department at 770.418.2336 and a reservationist will assist with providing the necessary information, to include self-certification. We encourage visitors 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.

If your plans require you to travel in other metro Atlanta service areas, you must make a reservation with the GCT paratransit service and with the other service agency (that is, MARTA and Cobb Community Transit; CobbLinc). GCT reservation agents can provide reservation numbers for contacting the other metro Atlanta transit systems.

The GCT ADA paratransit photo identification card will be recognized throughout the United States and passengers may use it to ride paratransit service wherever it is available. Check with the local transit provider for the exact rules and regulations for scheduling a trip.

Procedures When Using A Wheelchair or Other Mobility Devices?

GCT will transport all wheelchair types and other mobility devices as defined by A D A regulations. GCT may not be able to transport a passenger 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.

For passenger 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 driver instructs the passenger to re-engage.
- Mobility device passengers must wait for the driver's assistance and follow instructions for entering the vehicle.
- It is strongly recommended for the passenger's safety that a person using a manual wheelchair have attached footrests.
- Passengers with inoperative mobility devices will try to be accommodated, but operators will not lift or carry the passenger or the mobility device.
- Passengers 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. Passengers 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 passenger.

Mobility Device Securement and Seat Belt Policy

It is the driver'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. Drivers are required to secure the lap and shoulder belts to ensure the passenger's safety. Cooperation with the Securement and Seat Belt Policy is in the best interest of safety for the passenger.

Ambulatory Passengers

Passengers unable to use the steps to enter the vehicle may stand on the lift platform to be lifted into the vehicle. Passengers who stand on the lift must be able to stand without assistance and to hold the rails with both hands. Passengers 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.

May I Transport Packages and Personal Items?

You may bring grocery bags, luggage, or other packages or (legal) personal items with you on GCT Paratransit. However, please do not bring more than you and/or the persons who are traveling with you can manage without delaying the vehicle. Drivers are not required to assist with loading and unloading of packages and personal items. Delaying the vehicle occurs when you bring more items than you can carry on the vehicle at one time and you keep the vehicle from being able to move on after five (5) minutes.

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 you may bring packages on-board in a personal two-wheeled, collapsible cart. If you are bringing a cart with you, let the reservation agent know when you request your transportation so we can schedule an accessible vehicle that will best accommodate the collapsible

cart. Packages may not take up seats on the vehicle and must be safely stowed out of the aisle, either under your seat or on your lap.

Respirators and Portable Oxygen Equipment

Portable oxygen equipment and portable respirators are permitted on all GCT vehicles. The driver will assist you in securing this equipment on the vehicle. Drivers are not permitted, however, to assist you in using this equipment. If you need assistance with portable life support equipment, please arrange to bring someone who can help you.

May I Transport Animals?

Service animals are allowed in all GCT vehicles and facilities. A service animal is defined by ADA as any guide dog or signal dog 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. Emotional animals or pets are not allowed on GCT buses unless they are in a suitable carrier.

If you have an allergy to dogs (not including pet dander) please notify GCT Paratransit when scheduling your reservation. The reservationist will do the best they can to not place you on a vehicle with a live animal to which you have an allergic reaction.

If you are traveling with a service dog on GCT Paratransit, be sure to inform the reservation agent when you are scheduling a ride.

Please be aware of the following procedures and guidelines:

- A service dog must behave under the voice command of its owner.
- Procedures for travelling with service dog involve loading the animal first and unloading the animal last.
- For the safety and comfort of the driver and other passengers, service dogs are required to be clean, well groomed, completely under the control of their handler, and absolutely non-aggressive.
- You are responsible for maintaining control of your service dog while on board the vehicle. The dog must remain at your feet or on your lap. The dog may not sit on a vehicle seat.
- You are encouraged to bring a blanket for service dog since vehicle floors may be hot.
- For safety reasons, drivers are not permitted to handle the animals.

What Is My Responsibility When Riding A GCT Paratransit Vehicle?

Each passenger must adhere to the rules of conduct. The following rules of conduct are provided to ensure the safety and comfort of all GCT Paratransit passengers:

- GCT Paratransit is a shared-ride system of public transportation and a fare is required when you board the vehicle. 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 driver or other passengers is prohibited.
- Passengers are prohibited from eating or drinking on the vehicle unless a medical condition requires one to eat or drink at specified times. In such cases, the passenger must advise the reservation agent when scheduling a trip.
- Smoking 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 passengers.
- Due to the nature of our shared-ride system, passengers should take great care in tending to their personal hygiene, showing respect to other passengers' desire for a comfortable ride.
- Passengers 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 passenger 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 of the children 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.

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 himself/herself, other passengers, the driver, the paratransit vehicle, or the traveling public will be terminated from the service immediately. Passengers must depart the transit vehicle upon demand of any authorized GCT representative, including the driver.

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

Passengers who engage in physical abuse or cause physical injury to another passenger or the driver, or who engage in other illegal activities may be subject to **immediate and permanent suspension from receiving** Paratransit service. Passengers may also be subject to criminal prosecution, which may include fines.

Any passenger 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 passenger and/or the driver, 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 prosecution, which may include fines.

What are my Responsibilities As a GCT Paratransit Customer?

- Be informed regarding program benefits and limitations.
- Schedule trip requests one (1) day in advance. In accordance with ADA, riders may be asked to negotiate a different time of pick-up to one (1) hour before or one (1) hour after the requested time. Once the time has been negotiated, it cannot be changed without the passenger's consent.
- Be ready and remain at the pick-up location within your 30-minute pick-up window. Wait at the main entrance door in an area where you can see the vehicle, as drivers will not enter the building or residences.
- Call in trip cancellations as soon as possible but not later than one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time.
- Have times, addresses, zip codes and other needed information ready when making a reservation.
- Present correct fare and/or fare media when boarding the vehicle.
- Keep wheelchairs and other mobility devices in good working condition, including having an operable wheelchair brake.
- Expect shared-ride service equivalent to bus (not taxi) service. Travel time should be comparable to service provided by GCT fixed route service including transfers.
- Request a pick-up time taking the 30-minute window time, distance and rush hour traffic into consideration.
- Allow sufficient time, at least 1.5 hours, between scheduled drop-off and return time.
- Advise the reservationist of your appointment time or work report time if you must arrive at a certain time. The reservationist can provide you with a pickup time that takes into consideration travel time and your appointment time.

What Is The Driver's Responsibility?

Drivers are expected to obey the same rules as passengers. The following additional rules also apply:

- Drivers may assist passengers when boarding or exiting the vehicle, 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.
- Drivers cannot make change for fares. Drivers are not allowed at any time to accept tips or gratuities, or act in a manner that would suggest that tipping is appropriate.

- Drivers may provide limited assistance loading/unloading packages for passengers.
- Drivers are responsible for the operation of the lift and other equipment, and for securing mobility devices and passengers safely in the vehicle.
- Drivers are not allowed to engage in any distracting activity (for example, using a cell phone or electronic audio and/or video device) while operating a vehicle.

What Can Customers Expect from GCT Paratransit Services?

- Safe trips in air-conditioned accessible vehicles.
- Operators that are trained to meet rider's special transportation needs.
- Safe, clean, properly equipped, smoke-free vehicles.
- Correctly fastened seat belts and/or wheelchair tie-downs.
- Pick-ups within 30 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time. Passengers are not required to be ready for travel before the scheduled pick-up time but can do so if desired.
- Professional and courteous treatment from all GCT staff and other passengers.
- Refuse unsafe service and file complaints without fear of reprisal.
- Prompt investigations and effective resolution of complaints.
- Current and complete program information.
- Assistance getting in and out of the vehicle and to the main entrance of the destination if required. Operators are not permitted to lift passengers and cannot enter buildings or residences.
- Prompt resolution of passenger's concerns.
- Timely certification and registration of eligible applicants.

What If I Lose Something While Riding A GCT Paratransit Vehicle?

Any personal property and items left on the vehicle will be turned in to GCT's lost and found department at the bus garage. Personal property and items will be held for thirty (30) days. Please call GCT Customer Service at 770.822.5010 and "press 2" or TDD at 711 during normal business hours, 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday, for instructions on how to claim and where to pick up lost personal property and items.

Hazardous Weather and Emergency Event Policy

In the event of snow, ice, or other potentially hazardous weather or emergency situations, GCT may cancel paratransit service. GCT paratransit will not transport in unsafe conditions. GCT's highest priority is the safety of its passengers and employees. While every effort will be made to operate vehicles according to confirmed schedules, hazardous road conditions or emergency events may cause operation of vehicles to be unsafe and, therefore, service may be temporarily terminated. If conditions warrant, vehicles may operate on a limited basis. GCT will resume regular service when all roads are clear and safe for travel or the emergency event has ended.

As soon as operational decisions are made to terminate or reopen services, local radio and television stations will be notified. Updates will be posted on the GCT web page www.gctransit.com, as well as the

GCT Facebook and Twitter pages. You may also contact the GCT Control Center at 770.246.4770 and “press 2” or TDD at 711 to check the status of paratransit service operations.

How Can I Make Comments and Suggestions About GCT Paratransit?

GCT seeks to provide its citizens with safe, reliable and efficient transportation. We look forward to working with you to provide the best service possible.

If you have any comments and suggestions including questions, complaints or compliments, please submit them using one of the following methods:

- 1) call GCT Customer Service at 770.822.5010 and “press 2” or TDD at 711 during normal business hours, 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday.
- 2) submit comments using the GCT web page www.gctransit.com and on the left side of the page click on the ‘Comments and Suggestions’ link.
- 3) write to Gwinnett County Transit Customer Service at the following address:

**Gwinnett County Transit
Re: Comments and Suggestions
3525 Mall Boulevard, Suite 5-C Duluth, GA 30096**

Specific details help GCT thoroughly address your comments or suggestions. Please include the following information when calling or writing:

- Your name, address and telephone number.
- Date and time of experience.
- Vehicle number and/or driver name, if applicable.
- Reservation agent name or other employee name, if concerning a telephone conversation.
- Explanation of the incident or suggestion.

Other Services

CPACS

Center for Pan Asian Community Services (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/ 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 driver program. For more information call senior services at 678-377-4150.