

MARTA, operating within Fulton and Dekalb Counties, is committed to providing transportation services that can be used by all of our customers with ease and comfort. MARTA fixed route buses, rail cars and rail stations are designed with special features to accommodate both elderly and disabled patrons. There are elevators in train stations, and buses are lift-equipped, for riders who use wheelchairs or have difficulty getting up and down bus steps. For everyone's benefit, drivers announce major stops, intersections, and transfer points to help riders recognize their bus stop or point of transfer.

There is priority seating at the front of each bus for riders who are elderly or have a disability. Reserved spaces with tie-down straps and driver assistance are available for riders who use wheelchairs to provide a safe and secure ride. We encourage our customers with disabilities to take advantage of the flexibility and independence that our fixed route bus and train services provide.

MARTA issues **Half-Fare cards** for senior citizens and riders who have disabilities. This card allows an eligible individual to travel at half the regular fare at all times. Currently, MARTA half-fare is 85 cents. The half-fare must be paid in cash, with exact change. Half-Fare cards are good for both bus and rail service. To be eligible for discounts, you must be 65 years of age or older or have a physical or mental disability. **For further information, call the MARTA Half-Fare Office at (404) 848-5112.**

The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires MARTA and other public transit agencies throughout the country to provide complementary Paratransit service, or equivalent public transportation, to individuals with disabilities who cannot board, ride or get to an accessible fixed route bus or train because of their disabilities.

If your disability prevents you from using a MARTA lift equipped bus or the accessible rail system, you may be eligible for Paratransit services.

### **What is Fixed Route Service?**

MARTA's fixed route system consists of bus and rail services that operate on established routes, days and scheduled times within Fulton and Dekalb County.

### **What is Paratransit Service?**

MARTA Paratransit services are a shared ride, advanced reservation form of public transportation that complement MARTA's fixed route service. Paratransit services are **equivalent** to fixed route services. They are designed for, and restricted to, eligible individuals whose disabilities absolutely prevent them from using fixed route services.

Paratransit services operate within the MARTA service area. Specially equipped lift vehicles are capable of transporting up to three wheelchairs and up to nine (9) ambulatory customers. The service operates to and from

facilities on a **curb-to-curb** basis, or as a **feeder service** to the fixed route system.

## **Who Is Eligible for Paratransit Service?**

ADA public law defines who is eligible for complementary Paratransit service in Section 223 of the Federal regulations. Eligibility is based on the following three categories:

### **I. Category 1 Eligibility :**

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

“Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a 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.” [Code Section 37.123(e)(1)]

*This applies to an individual who cannot independently negotiate the fixed route system (board, ride or disembark from a bus or train).*

### **II. Category 2 Eligibility :**

The second category of eligibility includes:

“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 of 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.” [Code Section 37.123(e)(2)]

*This applies to an individual who would be able to use the fixed route system if it were accessible (e.g., if a low-floor or lift-equipped bus is not available). This category is not required once a transit system is 100% accessible.*

### **III. Category 3 Eligibility :**

The 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.” [Code Section 37.123(e)(3)]

*This applies to an individual who, because of his/her disability, cannot access a bus stop or a train station to board the fixed route system and cannot access his/her final destination after disembarking from a fixed route bus or train. 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. Inconvenience in using the fixed route system is not a basis for eligibility.*

An individual who believes he/she is eligible must apply for certification. His/her eligibility application must be certified by a licensed rehabilitation or medical professional affiliated with an accredited service center working with disabilities. MARTA reserves the right to make all final eligibility determinations.

There are two ways in which an eligible customer may use Paratransit services: 1) on a **curb-to-curb** basis or 2) as a **feeder service** to the fixed route system.

- **What is Curb-To-Curb Service?**

Curb-to-curb service operates from the curb of a customer's pick-up location to the curb of his/her destination without transferring to the fixed route system. MARTA Paratransit services do not operate in private residential driveways and the customer should not expect door-to-door service.

***Drivers are not permitted to leave their vehicles unattended or to escort a customer to and from a building.***

- **What is Feeder Service?**

Feeder service operates from the curb of a customer's pick-up location to the nearest appropriate accessible fixed route bus stop or the nearest rail station. A customer who is conditionally eligible for Paratransit service will transfer from a Paratransit vehicle to a fixed route vehicle to complete his/her trip. This service is for an individual who could use the fixed route system if an accessible route were available to the individual and the individual could get to/from the accessible fixed route.

**Where Does Paratransit Service Operate?**

Paratransit service may not extend beyond a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile radius from the fixed route system. Paratransit service operates to and from any point of origin or destination that is within a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor on each side of each bus route or within a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile radius of each rail station within the MARTA service area. Points of origin and destination not within this  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor or not surrounded by fixed-route service are not eligible for ADA Paratransit services.

**When Does Paratransit Service Operate?**

MARTA Paratransit service is **generally** available Monday through Friday from the first pick-up at 5:00 AM until the last pick-up at 12:30 AM and weekends/holidays from 5:30 AM until 12:30 AM. **When a fixed route in a particular area operates on a more limited basis, Paratransit services will operate comparable days and hours.**

**How Do I Apply for Paratransit Service?**

- **Call for an Application.**

To apply, please call MARTA at (404) 848-5389 from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Individuals with hearing impairments may reach us through the Georgia Relay Service at 711 (TTY) or 1-800-255-0135 (Voice). Georgia Relay Service calls must be directed to our Paratransit Service Agents at 404-848-5389. A Paratransit Service Agent will describe Paratransit services to the applicant and mail an application upon request. Should the applicant prefer, the application may be completed by phone and the responses will be mailed to the applicant for review, verification, and authorization for a Health Care Professional to release information.

**Part A** of the Application for Paratransit Eligibility must be completed by the applicant, a representative or a legal guardian who is familiar with the applicant's disability and his/her ability to travel on a bus or train. At the top of the **last page of Part A**, the name, address and telephone number of the **Health Care Professional** who will certify **Part B** of the application must be provided. A signature on this page serves as the customer's authorization allowing the Health Care Professional to release medical information and allowing MARTA 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**.

➤ **Mail Completed Application to:**

MARTA Paratransit Services  
2424 Piedmont Road, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30324-3330

The same day that MARTA Paratransit service agents receive a completed **Part A** of the application with the signed authorization, they will forward a **Request for Medical and Functional Ability Information** to the Health Care Professional.

**Part B** of the Application may only be completed by the applicant's **Health Care Professional (Certifier)**. The Health Care 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.

Once **Part B** is completed and returned to MARTA by the Health Care Professional, the application will be processed.

### **When Will I Know If I Can Use Paratransit Services?**

- **Application Processing**

MARTA 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 Paratransit office. Incomplete documents will be returned to the applicant or Health Care

Professional for completion. If there is no response, the applicant's file will be closed-out after one month, to be reopened upon the customer's request. **The twenty-one (21) day processing requirement will not apply to incomplete applications.**

- **Notification of Applicant's Status**

The customer will be notified in writing, or alternative formats if requested, about his/her eligibility. If approved, the customer will be instructed as to how to obtain a MARTA ADA Paratransit photo identification card and the Paratransit Customer's Guide.

- **What If My Application is Denied?**

If you do not agree with MARTA's decision to deny eligibility for Paratransit service, you have the right to an appeal. Appeals must be filed, in writing, within sixty (60) days of your receipt of a denial letter.

- **Mail Letter of Appeal to:**

MARTA Paratransit Appeals Panel  
2424 Piedmont Road, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30324-3330

Upon receipt of your letter of appeal, MARTA will notify you of the location and time of the appeals hearing to be conducted within thirty (30) days. You will have the opportunity to be represented at the hearing and you may present information and arguments. A subcommittee of

the MARTA Elderly & Disabled Access Advisory Committee (EDAAC) will make recommendations to MARTA at that time. If you are not satisfied with the opinion of the EDAAC subcommittee, formal appellate procedures may be followed. Please contact Paratransit Eligibility at (404) 848-5389 for detailed information regarding these procedures.

- **Do I Have to Be Recertified At Any Time?**

Each MARTA Paratransit customer must be recertified upon reaching his/her eligibility expiration date. Typically, eligibility extends for two (2) years from certification. A customer's ADA Paratransit Photo Identification Card will indicate his/her Paratransit eligibility expiration date. It is the customer's responsibility to maintain a valid photo ID card and to reapply for service prior to one's eligibility expiration date. If a customer fails to renew Paratransit eligibility, he/she will be suspended from service until recertification is completed.

- **Temporary Disabilities**

If a customer has a temporary disability, he/she may obtain Paratransit eligibility for the expected duration of the disability. If the disability continues beyond the certified time, MARTA will require a revised certification from the customer's Health Care Professional.

**ADA Paratransit Photo Identification Cards**

- **How Do I Receive My ADA Photo Identification Card?**

ADA Photo Identification Cards must be obtained from MARTA after the customer receives confirmation of his/her eligibility to use Paratransit services. MARTA will provide instructions on how to obtain a photo ID in the letter of confirmation. A customer's Paratransit service **cannot begin** until he/she has acquired a photo ID card. Eligible customers may ride the Paratransit vehicle free to the photo ID session; however, a one-way fare will be charged for the return trip.

- **Is My ADA Photo ID Card Good Only On MARTA Paratransit?**

The MARTA ADA Paratransit Photo ID cards are accepted across the country. They may be used to ride ADA Paratransit service wherever these services are available. You must have your ADA Photo ID present each time you ride a Paratransit vehicle. Confirm exact scheduling rules and regulations with local transit authorities.

For a free ride on MARTA's fixed-route buses and trains, MARTA Paratransit customers must present both a current MARTA ADA Paratransit Photo ID and a Paratransit Fixed-Rte Pass upon boarding. Please contact MARTA Paratransit at (404) 848-5389 for more information on this program.

- **What If I Lose My ADA Photo Identification Card?**

If a customer misplaces his/her Photo ID Card, a replacement may be obtained by calling Paratransit Customer Service at (404) 848-5389. A \$5.00 replacement cost will be charged for the new identification card.

## **How Do I Make A Reservation?**

Call MARTA Paratransit Reservations at **(404) 848-5826**.

- **What Are the Reservation Hours?**

Reservations are accepted Monday through Friday between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM. **Reservations may be made up to 7 days in advance of a desired trip and until 5:00 PM the day preceding the day of travel.**

**Next-day only** reservations or cancellations may be made on **Saturdays, Sundays and holidays between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM**. The phone line is Voice Mail operated. When you call, you will be asked to **leave your name and phone number**, and your call will be returned within the hour.

Individuals with hearing impairments may confirm a reservation through the Georgia Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-255-0135. Georgia Relay Service calls must be directed to our Paratransit service agents at 404-848-5389, during normal business hours, or to our dispatchers at 404-848-4212, after-hours.

- **What Information Do I Have to Give the Reservation Agent?**

Whenever a reservation is made, the customer should give the reservation agent the following information:

- **Customer Name** (first and last).
- The **exact addresses** of both the **departure** and **destination** points. If known, the name of the nearest **cross street** is very helpful. The names of complexes or subdivisions, as well as building, apartment or suite numbers and easily identified pick-up points, should be communicated, where applicable. (Remember that the customer is responsible for making arrangements for the vehicle to access gated communities or secured complexes. A driver cannot be delayed trying to locate personnel to provide access to a complex.)
- The **drop-off** time the customer must arrive at his/her appointment **OR** the **pick-up** time the customer wishes to be picked up. **Your request for a drop-off time or a pick-up time will determine your “Ready Time” and thirty (30) minute pick-up window.**
- Indicate when you will travel with a **Travel Companion** or an authorized **Personal Care Attendant (PCA)**.
- Indicate the type of mobility aid you will use, or if you will need to use the lift.

- When a **return trip** is needed, indicate the desired pick-up or drop-off time.

- **Will My Reservation Be Confirmed Immediately?**

Whenever possible, reservation confirmations are made when you call the reservation office. Please keep a log of the date and nature of your reservations and record the Ready Times confirmed by the Reservationist.

Two types of reservation service are offered: 1) Advance Reservation; and 2) Subscription. Both services may be scheduled as either curb-to-curb or feeder service to the fixed route bus or rail systems.

- **What is Advanced Reservation Service?**

A customer may make a reservation up to seven (7) days in advance of a desired trip. Reservations are accepted until 5:00 PM on the day **preceding** the day of travel. **Same day reservations and service are not available.** On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, reservations are accepted between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM and are limited to **next day service and/or cancellations only.**

Reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Every effort will be made to accommodate requested pick-up or drop-off times; however, the customer should be aware that due to demand at certain times of the day, a requested trip time may not be available. The reservation agent will attempt to negotiate an alternate trip time and

will confirm a trip as close to the requested time as possible.

Negotiating an alternate trip time is encouraged. Reservation agents may find it necessary to negotiate from a customer's requested time plus or minus one ( $\pm 1$ ) hour.

Every effort will be made to schedule trips so that travel times are comparable to the time it would take to make the trip by fixed route bus. If you are traveling excessive distances, you should expect your travel time to increase. In our provision of a comparable shared-ride service, the duration of a Paratransit trip may be twice as long as a fixed route trip.

- **What Is Subscription Service?**

Subscription service is offered to MARTA customers having travel patterns to and/or from the same destinations, at the same hours, on the same days each week, at least two (2) days per week, from month-to-month. **Individuals having schedules that require frequent changes are not eligible for subscription service.**

Subscription service is restricted to trips to and from work, medical or educational institutions only. Service is offered Monday through Saturday. When a person is eligible for subscription service, it will be necessary for him/her to contact the scheduler to confirm desired days and times of travel. Once a subscription schedule is confirmed, the

customer is relieved from making advance reservations. The Paratransit vehicle will arrive during the scheduled pick-up window at the same location each day as prearranged with MARTA.

Long-term or permanent changes to subscription service that result from a move or a change in employment destination or time, must be submitted to MARTA at least **ten (10) business days** prior to the date that the change is to take affect. MARTA cannot guarantee that requested changes will be available. Your request will be added to the subscription wait list in the order received.

**Temporary and same day changes cannot be made to subscription trips.** Requests for suspension “until further notice” will not be accepted. However, if you notify MARTA at least **ten business days prior**, you may request to suspend your subscription service for a **limited time period**.

**If cancellations exceed eight (8) trips in a thirty-day period, MARTA reserves the right to drop you from subscription service.** You may use advance reservation service for future trips.

Subscription service is not required by ADA and is offered as a convenience to our customers. Availability of this service is on a first-come, first-served basis. Subscription trips may be restricted at certain times during the day due to capacity constraints.

**All subscription trips are automatically cancelled on holidays. If you wish to ride on a holiday, you are responsible for re-scheduling the trip.**

### **How Do I Cancel or Change My Reservation?**

To cancel or change a reservation, customers should call the reservation office **the day before** the scheduled trip by 5:00 PM weekdays and by 4:00 PM weekends at (404) 848-5826. However, customers have up to two (2) hours before the established ready time to cancel a trip before being considered a late cancellation. **Paratransit cannot change pick-up times or pick-up/drop-off locations on the day of your ride.** Such changes would create an inconvenience to other riders.

- **Cancellations occurring after Reservations is closed** the evening prior to a scheduled trip, and anytime on the expected day of travel, which are the result of an unexpected emergency **may be directed to the dispatch number at (404) 848-4212. Please keep a record of the day and time you called and the person you spoke to upon making any cancellation.**
- Please remember, reservation agents and dispatchers are the only persons who can cancel reservations for a trip. **Drivers cannot make, change or cancel your reservations.**
- Call to cancel your trip **as soon as possible. You will be given a Cancellation #.** Please write this down

**and repeat it back to the Agent to confirm it, as you will be asked for this # if you appeal a “No-Show”.**

- Do not “No-Show” a scheduled trip. **Always cancel** the trip even if you must cancel late.
- If you “No-Show” a scheduled trip, **you must call reservations or dispatch and obtain a cancellation number to cancel all subsequent trips for that day** to avoid additional “No-Shows”.

### **How Do I Ride Paratransit Service?**

- **Pick-Up/Drop-Off Times**

Since traffic conditions and service interruptions may prohibit MARTA from meeting precise pick-up times, your trip will be scheduled to include a thirty (30) minute time frame (“Pick-Up Window”) to accommodate unexpected or minor interruptions in the schedule.

- **Pick-Up Window**

Reservation Agents will confirm a **“Ready Time”** when the trip request is confirmed. Customers will not be given a precise pick-up time. The **“Ready Time”** is the earliest time in which a vehicle may arrive at your location. Customers **must be ready** to depart at their assigned **Ready Time**.

A **Thirty (30) Minute “Pick-Up Window”** will begin at the stated Ready Time. **Customers should be ready to**

**depart at any time during this thirty (30) minute Pick-Up Window.**

The customer must prioritize **either** the **drop-off** or **pick-up** time when the reservation is made. **The priority set by the customer will determine the Ready Time and the Pick-Up Window.**

**EXAMPLE: Customer prioritizes the Drop-Off Time.**

When the priority is to be **dropped off** by a certain time, the reservation agent will state a **Ready Time** (the earliest time the Paratransit vehicle can arrive) and apply the thirty (30) minute Pick-Up Window.

1. Customer must arrive at work/school/appointment no later than 8:00 AM.
2. The reservation agent evaluates alternatives and may offer the customer a 6:45 AM **Ready Time**.
3. The customer's pick-up window begins at 6:45 AM and ends at 7:15 AM (**Ready Time plus thirty minutes**).

The scheduled vehicle cannot arrive prior to 6:45 AM and is not late until after 7:15 AM. The customer should notify Dispatch **after** 7:15 AM if the Paratransit vehicle has not arrived.

**EXAMPLE: Customer prioritizes the Pick-Up Time.**

When the customer's priority is to be **picked-up** by a certain time, the reservation agent will state a **Ready Time**

(earliest time in which the Paratransit vehicle may arrive) and apply the thirty (30) minute window.

1. Customer gets off work or finishes school or appointment at 4:00 PM. The customer cannot depart earlier than 4:00 PM.
2. The reservation agent evaluates alternatives and may offer the customer a 4:15 PM Ready Time.
3. The customer's pick-up window begins at 4:15 PM and ends at 4:45 PM (**Ready Time plus thirty minutes**).

Your scheduled vehicle cannot arrive prior to 4:15 PM and is not late until after 4:45 PM. The customer should notify MARTA Dispatch **after** 4:45 PM if the vehicle has not arrived.

- **How do I Check on the Status of my Ride?**

You may call the **Dispatch Office at (404) 848-4212**, anytime that your bus has not arrived within your 30-minute Window to check on the status of your ride.

- **What If the Vehicle Arrives Early?**

Paratransit vehicles should arrive during your 30-minute

**Pick-Up Window** quoted by the reservation agent when the trip was confirmed. **Customers must board the vehicle when it arrives.** If the vehicle arrives earlier than

the Ready Time, you may board early or wait until your assigned Ready Time. **The operator cannot leave, nor charge you with a No-Show, until five (5) minutes beyond the Ready Time.**

- **Will the Driver Wait if I Am Late?**

MARTA provides curb-to-curb Paratransit services. This means you should be at the curb at your Ready Time waiting for the bus. Out of courtesy for other Paratransit customers who are scheduled on the same vehicle, the driver will **wait no longer than a five (5) minute grace period.** Customers **must be ready to depart at any time during the thirty minute window** described when the reservation was made. If a customer has not boarded the vehicle within the five-minute grace period, the vehicle will depart.

**The driver and/or dispatcher will not be able to call the customer to advise that the vehicle has arrived.** It is the customer's responsibility to be at the curb, prepared to board, when the vehicle arrives. If the customer does not board the vehicle within the five-minute grace period, the trip will be canceled and recorded as a **"No-Show."**

Please note that the Paratransit vehicle cannot wait while a customer conducts business at his/her destination. The customer must always schedule a return trip reservation.

- **Pick-Up Procedures**

To provide safe, on-time service for all customers, the customer must designate a location where he/she will be

waiting. The following procedures have been developed to ensure safe vehicle movement and standardized connecting point guidelines for major complexes:

\* **Apartments/Office Complexes**

A customer who lives in a large, multiple unit apartment complex must meet the Paratransit vehicle at the curb closest to his/her address. If the apartment complex is inaccessible to a Paratransit vehicle, a customer must meet the vehicle at the main entrance to the complex. If the facility has a guarded gate or limited access, the customer should inform the security staff of the scheduled pick-up and return times. It is the customer's responsibility to notify the reservation agent of security procedures when the reservation is made and to arrange quick access for the vehicle.

A customer traveling from a large office complex, medical facility or other similar area must meet the vehicle at the curb closest to the main reception desk or lobby entrance.

\* **Nursing Homes/Adult Day Centers**

Customers traveling to/from a nursing home or adult day center should meet the Paratransit vehicle at the curb closest to the main lobby, unless instructed otherwise. Drivers cannot assist customers from the building. Drivers will assist customers on and off the vehicle, only. If the customer is not at the proper pick up location within the designated pick-up window and the five-minute grace

period, the vehicle will depart and the driver will record the trip as a “No-Show”.

\* **Shopping Malls**

Customers will be dropped off and picked up at the Food Court entrance of a shopping mall. When you schedule a trip to a shopping mall, the Food Court location will be confirmed by the Paratransit reservation agent.

• **Boarding the Paratransit Vehicle**

A MARTA Paratransit customer must carry his/her MARTA ADA Photo ID and have the **correct fare** of \$3.50 in cash, two (2) tokens, two (2) MARTA Transcards, a \$3.50 Paratransit Transcard or a combination of the above when boarding the vehicle.

**Drivers cannot make change. If you use cards, please present both cards to your driver so that both numbers may be copied.**

• **Driver Assistance**

Drivers will provide elbow assistance **on and off** the vehicle only. Safety concerns and time constraints do not allow the drivers to assist a customer beyond the curb. The driver will verbally indicate to a visually impaired customer waiting at the curb that the Paratransit vehicle has arrived if so requested when the customer confirms his/her reservation.

**Drivers are not permitted to leave their vehicles or to assist the customer to or from the door of his/her drop-off or pick-up location.**

### **Who Can Travel With Me?**

When a customer is unable to travel alone, MARTA encourages an appropriately certified individual, known as a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), to travel with the customer at no extra cost. The need for a PCA is determined by the customer's Health Care Professional.

If your eligibility letter states the need for a PCA, please do your best to provide someone to ride with you and assist you beyond the Paratransit bus. Please advise the reservation agent **each time** a reservation is made whether a PCA will accompany you.

In addition to a PCA, a customer may be accompanied by a Travel Companion. Travel Companions are subject to the regular Paratransit fare and must have the exact same travel arrangements as the customer. The customer must inform the reservation agent **when the reservation is made** whether a travel companion or a PCA will be accompanying the customer to ensure an accurate count of the individuals traveling on a vehicle.

### **What is the Fare?**

- MARTA's current Paratransit fare is \$3.50 one way. The round trip cost is \$7.00. The Paratransit fare is **double** the fixed route fare. **Half Fare Cards are not accepted for Paratransit services.**
- Exact change, MARTA tokens, and Transcards may be used to pay the fare when boarding. A combination of these may be used.
- **Effective January 1, 2006, Paratransit customers who have been issued a Paratransit Fixed-Rte Pass may ride MARTA fixed-route services for free.** These passes will be issued through the Half-Fare Office. If you are interested in this program, please call MARTA Paratransit at 404-848-5389 for specific information.
- One medically authorized Personal Care Attendant (PCA) may accompany a Paratransit customer free of charge on a Paratransit vehicle. One travel companion may also ride and must pay the Paratransit fare.
- On Paratransit and Fixed Route services, children under age six (6) ride free and must be accompanied by an adult.
- Transfers :
  - Transferring from a MARTA fixed route bus or the train to a Paratransit vehicle at a MARTA rail station requires a fare of **\$3.50**.
  - Transferring from a Paratransit vehicle to any fixed route bus or the train is **free, provided one has the**

**Fixed-Rte Free Ride pass and a valid Paratransit Photo ID card** (otherwise, the charge is \$1.75).

### **What About Visitors With Disabilities?**

Visitors to Fulton and DeKalb Counties who are disabled will be given “presumptive eligibility” and can ride MARTA Paratransit services for up to twenty-one (21) days each year without being certified by MARTA. Visitors must provide proof of disability when boarding the vehicle.

MARTA honors Clayton, Cobb and Gwinnett Counties’ Paratransit certification and photo ID as proof of eligibility. Customers must provide verification of their eligibility to MARTA’s eligibility department. If a MARTA Paratransit customer’s trip includes traveling in any of these other county service areas, he or she must reserve trips and pay to transfer between systems.

### **How Do I Board A Paratransit Van With A Mobility Aid?**

MARTA will transport all “common” wheelchair types as defined by ADA regulations. MARTA may refuse to board customers traveling in mobility devices that do not conform to the regulated dimensions and weight. For your safety and comfort, the following ADA requirements must be met:

#### **Wheelchairs:**

- The wheelchair dimensions must not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length when measured two inches above the ground.
- The wheelchair weight must not exceed 600 pounds when occupied.
- For safety purposes, it is strongly recommended that wheelchairs back onto the hydraulic lift.
- Wheelchair brakes must be locked while on the lift.
- Wheelchair electric power must be turned off until the driver instructs the patron to re-engage.
- Wheelchairs must wait for the driver's assistance and follow instructions for entering the vehicle.
- It is strongly recommended that a person using a manual wheelchair have attached footrests.
- Customers with inoperative mobility devices cannot be transported.

### **Scooters:**

Scooters are often unstable on lift equipment, and they may exceed the ADA allowable dimensions and weight. Some scooters also come with a warning from the manufacturer that they should not be used as seats on moving vehicles. Customers may ride standard scooters on the lift, but it is strongly recommended that our customers transfer to a Paratransit vehicle seat, whenever

possible. Customers traveling on scooters should adhere to the same safety procedures listed for wheelchairs.

### **Wheelchair Securement and Seat Belt Policy:**

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that mobility devices are properly secured. Wheelchair/scooter patrons are required to be secured into the four point tie-down system at all times while riding the vehicle. Operators are required to secure the lap and shoulder belts to ensure the customer's safety. Failure to cooperate with safety related policies may result in a loss of services.

### **Ambulatory Customers:**

Customers unable to use the steps to enter the vehicle may stand on the hydraulic lift 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.

### **May I Transport Packages or Animals?**

- **Packages**

- Each customer is allowed to carry on **three (3) packages**, i.e., what **you** can carry on or off **in one trip**. **Drivers do not provide assistance loading or unloading groceries or luggage.**
- Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated. The maximum combined weight of

all packages cannot exceed **twenty-five (25) pounds**.

- Customers may be required to secure their packages at their seats, as storage space on the vehicle is limited.
- **Service Animals**
  - **Drivers are not permitted to handle service animals.**
  - A service animal must behave under the voice command of its owner. Procedures for travelling with service animals involve **loading the animal first** and **unloading the animal last**.
  - For the safety and comfort of the driver and other passengers, service animals are required to be clean, well groomed, completely under the control of their handler and absolutely non-aggressive.
  - *MARTA will transport other authorized service animals provided they are properly caged.*

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

Failing to notify us that you will not be using a scheduled trip causes the vehicle to be dispatched unnecessarily to your location. No-Shows cost MARTA and taxpayers thousands of dollars each year. They also inconvenience other riders due to schedule disruptions and avoidable

delays. For Paratransit services to provide on-time performance, the number of late cancellations and No-Shows must be kept to a minimum.

To emphasize the importance of avoiding No-Shows, MARTA, with the review and approval of the Elderly and Disabled Access Advisory Committee (EDAAC), has adopted the following No Show policy. A **chargeable No-Show** violation will be added to a Customer's record when the:

- Customer is not at the scheduled pick-up location at the established Ready Time and **fails to board** the bus within five (5) minutes of the arrival of that bus. ("No-Show")
- Customer cancels a scheduled trip **within two (2) hours of the established Ready Time**. ("Late Cancel")
- Customer **chooses not to ride** the vehicle after it arrives at the scheduled pickup. ("Cancel at the Door")

**When a customer is marked as a No-Show for a scheduled trip, all subsequent trips scheduled for the customer that day will remain on the schedule and the customer must call the Reservations Office to cancel all subsequent trips for that day to avoid additional No-Shows.**

**Notice of Suspension - Appeal Process**

Before suspending Paratransit service, MARTA will take the following steps:

- MARTA staff will notify the customer in writing after **each** No-Show occurrence. Each letter will contain a reminder of the incident and provide the customer an opportunity to dispute the No-Show. Documentation may be required to verify extenuating circumstances claimed to have caused the No-Show.
- MARTA staff will notify a customer in writing after **two (2)** chargeable No-Show violations occur within a floating six-month period. This written notification will serve as a **warning** that their Paratransit record will be reviewed for suspension if they incur two more chargeable No-Shows. The warning letter will restate the No-Show policy.
- MARTA considers a six-month period as a review cycle for excessive No-Show consideration. When **four (4)** chargeable No-Show violations occur within a floating six-month period, MARTA will provide the individual with **written notification of suspension status from service**. While reviewing the record, MARTA looks for a pattern or practice of missed trips by the patron. If a pattern is determined to exist, the dates of each chargeable No-Show incident will be cited and the letter will state the effective beginning and ending dates of the suspension. The suspension will last **fourteen (14) consecutive days**. The suspension will become effective no sooner than thirty (30) days after the notification.

- After returning from a fourteen (14) day suspension, a second cycle of chargeable No-Show violations (within the next floating six-month period) will result in a **thirty (30) day suspension**.
- Any customer receiving twelve (12) chargeable No-Shows within a floating twelve (12) month period will be suspended from service for a period of **six (6) months**.
- Customers have ten (10) days from the postmark receipt of notification to dispute any written notification from MARTA by contacting MARTA's Superintendent of Paratransit Operations at (404) 848-5389.
- The customer has a right to appeal a No-Show suspension. **The customer must appeal a No-Show suspension within ten (10) days of the postmark receipt of written notification.**

➤ **Mail Letter of Appeal to:**

MARTA Paratransit Appeals Panel  
 Superintendent of Operations  
 2424 Piedmont Road, NE  
 Atlanta, GA 30324-3330

- MARTA will respond in writing within seven days of receipt of all customer appeals.
- MARTA will provide the individual with an opportunity to be heard and to present information and arguments

before an Appeals sub-committee of the MARTA Elderly & Disabled Access Advisory Committee (EDAAC). This subcommittee generally convenes once a month to hear and weigh customer appeals. The Appeals sub-committee will make its recommendations to MARTA.

- Within the following week, MARTA will provide the individual with written notification of the decision regarding the appeal. If service is to be suspended, the reasons will be explained in the letter. The suspension will become effective no sooner than thirty (30) days after the date of this written notification regarding the appeal.
- If a customer is not satisfied with the opinion of the EDAAC subcommittee, formal appellate procedures may be followed. Please contact MARTA's Superintendent of Paratransit Operations at (404) 848-5389 for detailed information regarding these procedures.
- If a customer chooses not to appeal a warning or suspension notification letter or has received notification that an appeal has been denied, sanctions will occur and become effective thirty (30) days after MARTA's written notification.

**What Are My Responsibilities When Riding A Paratransit Vehicle?**

The following rules of conduct are provided to ensure the safety and comfort of all Paratransit customers:

- Paratransit is public transportation and a fare is required when you board the vehicle. If you do not pay a fare at that time, the driver will refuse to provide the ride.
- Each customer must adhere to the rules of conduct. 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 might endanger himself/herself, other customers, the driver or the vehicle will be terminated from the service immediately. MARTA will consider an appeal for said suspension of service on a case by case basis.
- **A customer requiring physical assistance outside the vehicle (e.g., to or from his/her door or assistance up stairways or difficult grades) must have a Personal Care Attendant or a Travel Companion accompany him/her.** The companion will be responsible for providing the physical assistance the customer requires. Paratransit Operators are required to stay with their vehicles.
- Customers requiring medications or oxygen at regular intervals, should be advised that travel time on the Paratransit vehicle is comparable to MARTA fixed route bus service. Ride times are subject to delays that may result in a customer's on-board time being longer than sixty (60) minutes. Public transportation is subject to

unpredictable conditions such as traffic delays, mechanical problems or delays caused by increased ridership. If you use an oxygen tank, it is recommended that you have a four (4) hour supply of oxygen.

- Administering medication is the customer's responsibility. **MARTA cannot be responsible for, nor can schedules be adjusted to accommodate, the administration of medications once the vehicle is in route.**
- A customer requiring assistance in the administration of medications or oxygen while on the vehicle must travel with either a Personal Care Attendant or a Travel Companion. Should the administration of medications or oxygen become necessary while on the vehicle, MARTA will contact emergency medical assistance to administer the required medication at the customer's expense. Repeated incidents in which medication schedules disrupt or delay other Paratransit customers may result in the evaluation of the individual's ability to ride Paratransit services.
- MARTA subscribes to a **No Tolerance** policy (no smoking, eating or drinking) throughout the transit system. Paratransit customers 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 customer must advise the driver of this fact.

- The use of alcoholic beverages or riding under the influence of intoxicating drugs or alcohol is prohibited at all times.
- Due to the nature of our shared-ride system, customers should take great care in tending to their personal hygiene, showing respect for other customers' desire for a comfortable ride.
- Customers are prohibited from playing radios without the use of headphones.
- Customers may not operate or tamper with any equipment while on the vehicle. This rule includes operation of the hydraulic lift and attempts to remove wheelchair tie-downs or passenger seatbelts.

### **What Are the Paratransit Driver's Responsibilities?**

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

- Drivers cannot leave their vehicles unattended.
- Drivers can provide ***elbow assistance only*** to customers boarding and exiting the vehicle at the curb of their point of origin or destination. **Please do not ask a driver to assist you in any fashion (e.g., pushing your wheelchair up/down a driveway or opening a door for you) beyond the bus.**

- Drivers cannot assist with loading/unloading packages for customers.
- Drivers are responsible for the operation of the hydraulic lift and for securing mobility devices safely in the vehicle.
- Drivers cannot make change for fares or handle fares or cash at any time.
- Drivers may not accept tips or gratuities or act in any manner that would suggest that tipping is appropriate.

### **What If I Lose Something While Riding A Paratransit Vehicle?**

Any article left on the vehicle will be turned in to the Paratransit Dispatch office. Articles will be held for thirty (30) days after which they will be turned over to MARTA's Lost and Found department. To claim a lost article, call the Paratransit dispatch office at (404) 848-4212, Paratransit customer service at (404) 848-5389 or MARTA Lost and Found at (404) 848-3208. Customers are responsible for claiming lost articles.

### **How Can I Receive A Paratransit Customer's Guide in a Different Format?**

Customer Guides are available for individuals with visual impairments. To request a different version, please call

MARTA at (404) 848-5389 through the Georgia Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-255-0135. Georgia Relay Service calls must be directed to our Paratransit service agents at 404-848-5389, during normal business hours.

### **How Can I Make Suggestions, Comments or Inquiries About Paratransit Services?**

MARTA seeks to provide our customers with safe, reliable and efficient transportation. We look forward to working with you to provide the best service possible.

If you have a suggestion or a comment about our services, please call **MARTA's Customer Service Center at (404) 848-4800.**

You may also e-mail ***itsmarta.com*** or write to:

MARTA Customer Service Center  
2424 Piedmont Road, NE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30324-3330

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

- Name, address and telephone number
- Day and time of experience
- Vehicle number and/or driver's name, if applicable
- Reservation or Paratransit Service Agent's name, if concerning a telephone conversation
- Explanation of incident, suggestion or comment

In an effort to support the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) goal to increase their outreach to consumers having difficulty accessing public transportation, MARTA has listed FTA toll free numbers for customers, disabled community advocates or the general public to call with concerns regarding public transit accessibility. The FTA numbers are as follows:

1-888-446-4511  
(Voice)

1-800-877-8339  
(TDD/FIRS)

(202) 366-0153  
(Assistance for TDD Users)

[www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov)  
(Web Site)

[ada.assistance@fta.dot.gov](mailto:ada.assistance@fta.dot.gov)  
(E-Mail Address)

