

Muskegon Area Transit System's Ada Complementary Paratransit Rider's Guide



Public Transportation
For Persons with Disabilities

Effective: September 27, 2020

Table of Contents

What is MATS ADA Complementary Paratransit Service?	3
Who Is Eligible to Ride?	4
Where and When Is the Service Available?	5
What Is the Fare?	6
How Do I Reserve a Ride?	6
What if I Need to Cancel or Reschedule?	7
Passenger Responsibilities	7
MATS ADA Bus Driver Responsibilities	8
MATS General Comments or Complaints Procedures.....	8
MATS Accessibility Advisory Committee	9
Notification of Rights Under Title IV	9
MATS ADA Complaint Procedure	10 & 11
Exhibit 1 MATS Title VI/ADA Complaint Form	12

What is the MATS ADA Complementary Paratransit Service?

The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requires transit agencies to provide service comparable to fixed-route service for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from being able to access the fixed-route bus.

The MATS ADA Complementary Paratransit Service, or “ADA Bus,” is a shared-ride public transit service that is intended to provide a level of transportation service comparable to that which the MATS fixed-route bus service currently provides. ADA riders share trips, if they are generally traveling in the same direction at the same time. Trips are scheduled in advance without regard to the purpose of the trip.

The ADA also states that the MATS regular fixed-route bus service should be the primary means of public transportation for everyone, including people with disabilities. Under the ADA, the MATS ADA Complementary Paratransit Service will provide a safety net for only those persons who do not have the functional capability to ride the MATS’ regular, fixed-route buses.

This is an advanced reservation, curb-to-curb, transportation share-ride service for ADA certified individuals.

- The service operates within ¾ mile radius of the fixed route service.
- Vehicles pick up passengers at their home or other locations as requested.

MATS manages the service, establishes policies, and verifies rider eligibility according to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and its amendments. MATS’ Customer Care Representatives take trip reservations, schedules rides, and MATS Management has final responsibility for coordinating operations. MATS strives to ensure safe, reliable, and courteous service.

Buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts. All vehicles comply with all ADA regulations including wheelchair lift requirements. The lift is designed to hold a wheelchair that is less than 32” wide, less than 48” long and weighs less than 800 lbs. when in use. If a passenger and their mobility device exceed these dimensions, every effort will be made to transport the passenger, as long as it is safe to do so.

Who Is Eligible to Ride?



“CERTIFIED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES”

Individuals who are interested in using this ADA paratransit service must apply through a written application process. MATS is responsible for determining eligibility for paratransit service. Paratransit eligibility is not automatic, nor is eligibility recertification.

Paratransit service is provided to:

“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 useable by individuals with disabilities.”

Applications for eligibility may be obtained by calling MATS at 231-724-6420, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by visiting the the MATS website at matsbus.com.

Terms to Know:

Personal Care Attendant: A personal care attendant (PCA) may accompany an ADA eligible passenger at no additional cost. Prior approval required.

Companion: Companions may travel with eligible passengers. The fare for companions is the same as that for the eligible passenger. Arrangements must be made at the time the trip reservation is called into the MATS office, and are based on availability.

Service Animals: A service animal may also accompany ADA-eligible passengers at no additional cost. Service Animals must remain on the floor and under control at all times.

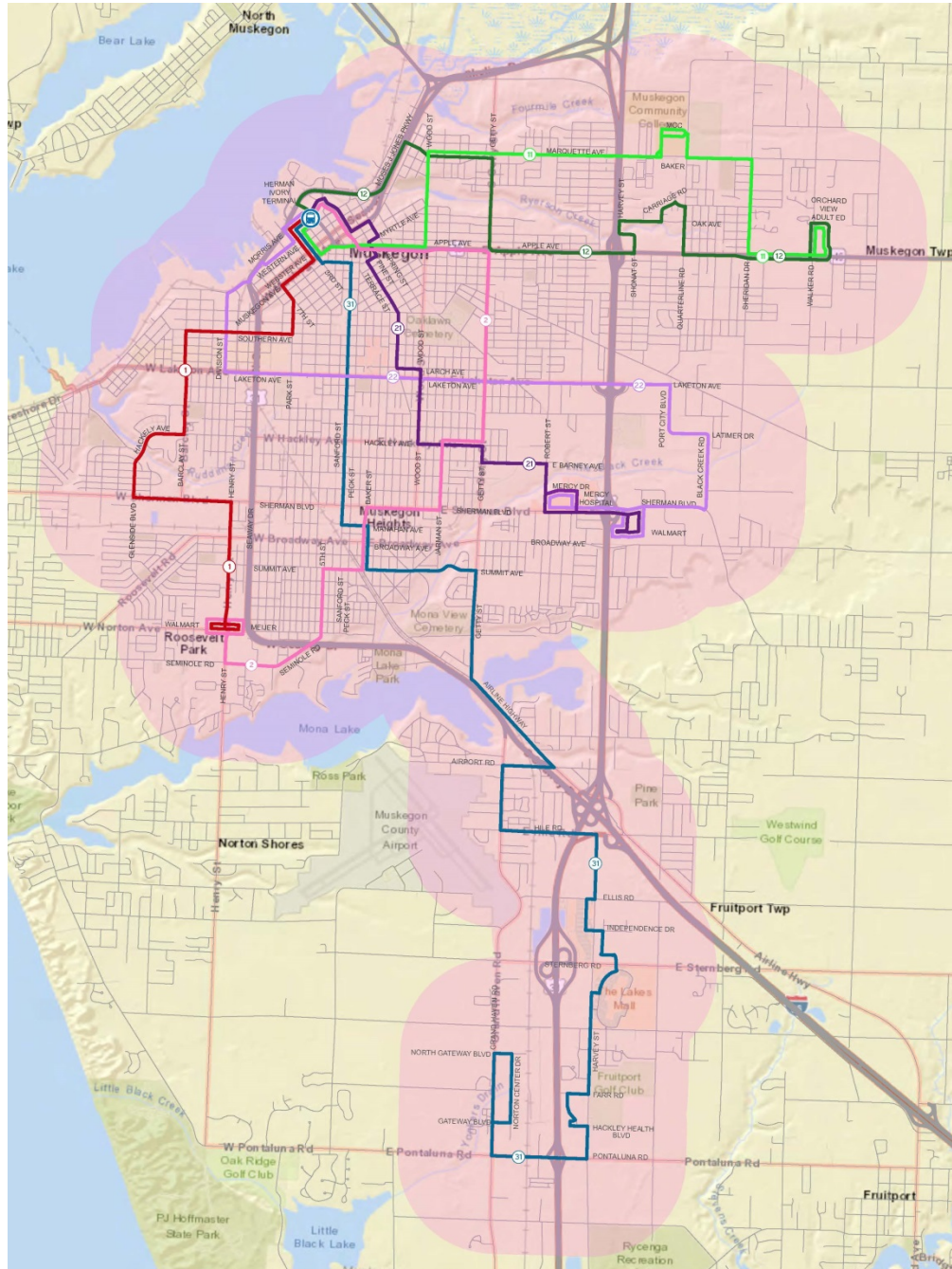
Comfort Animals: Although MATS appreciates the value and role of a Comfort Animal for the individual, Comfort Animals are not required under the ADA and are not permitted on MATS vehicles.

No-Show Policy: The MATS “No-Show” policy is contained within the 2020 MATS ADA Complementary Paratransit Program and describes the process and sanctions that will be followed if customers establish an excessive pattern of such activity.

Where and When is the Service Available?

The service is available to ADA-eligible riders during the same hours and days that fixed-route has published service available. (Currently, Mon-Fri, 7:00 a.m. to 5:51 p.m.)

MATS provides ADA-certified riders transportation to and from locations ONLY within 3/4 mile of our fixed-route system. The pink shaded areas on the map below designates ADA Bus areas.

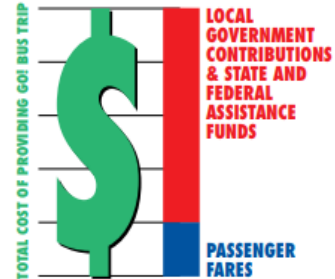


What is the Fare?

The fare is \$2.00 per ride.

The average cost of providing each trip is approximately \$39.00. Passenger fares cover small portion of this cost. The remainder is paid by MATS with funds contributed by local, state, and federal governments.

Fares must be paid when boarding the vehicle, either in the exact cash amount or with the correct ticket. Drivers do not make change.



Tickets can be purchased from the ADA Bus Drivers, Customer Care Representatives at the downtown Herman Ivory Terminal, or at the MATS Admin Building at 2624 Sixth Street.

How Do I Reserve a Ride?

All service is on an advanced-reservation basis.

Reservations may be made by calling MATS at 231-724-3555 during the following hours:

- Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- ADA Riders may leave a voice message on Sundays, or holidays before a service day, between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm for next day rides only.

Reservations can be made up to 14 days in advance. Same day service is not guaranteed, but may be available.

When you call to request a ride, our staff will need to know the following:

- Passenger's name
- Date service is needed
- Preferred pick-up or appointment time
- Preferred return time
- Pick up address and destination address
- Whether passenger's mobility aid has changed
- Whether a PCA or companion will be traveling with them.

What if I Need to Cancel or Reschedule?

To **Cancel** a ride:

- Riders who must cancel should call the MATS office (231) 724-3555 no later than 1 hour before the scheduled time.
- Drivers are not authorized to accept cancellations in reservations.

To **Reschedule** or make changes in reservations:

- Riders who must reschedule or make changes must call the MATS office at least the day before the trip is scheduled.
- Same day changes are not guaranteed.
- Drivers are not authorized to accept changes in reservations or destinations.

Passenger Responsibilities

ADA Passengers should:

- Wait in a safe, well-lit location.
- Choose a pick-up and drop-off location that allows the driver to not lose sight of the vehicle when assisting you to or from the door if necessary.
- Be ready to travel 10 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time.
- Let the vehicle come to a complete stop before approaching.
- Allow the driver to assist you in boarding the vehicle; ask for special assistance if you need it.
- Take care of all personal belongings - they are your responsibility.
 - Any items found on the vehicle will be returned to base when the driver is done with the route. The passenger will be responsible for picking up the item at the location during regular business hours.
- Be able to load and unload your own belongs in one trip (two grocery size bag limit).
- Not eat, drink or smoke in the vehicle.
- Be prepared and able to sit in the vehicle for the shared ride trip duration.
- Display no disruptive behavior or risk suspension.
- Not request unscheduled stops
- Be dressed properly, including shoes and shirt.
- Understand no special requests for specific drivers or vehicles can be honored.
- Treat drivers and other passenger with respect and courtesy.
- Tipping the drivers is not required, nor permitted.

Concerns about the rider's responsibilities or ADA service should be directed immediately to the MATS Office so that appropriate follow-up action can be taken. We encourage your questions, suggestions, complaints, and concerns. Please call us at 231-724-6420.

MATS ADA Bus Driver Responsibilities

Drivers are:

- Not required to carry the passenger's belongings.
- Not required to assist wheelchairs up/down more than one step (up to 8").
- Not required to push wheelchairs through grass, sand, mud, ice, or snow or any other debris.
- Not required to do any lifting of the passengers.
- Not required to go in buildings.

Drivers will:

- Assist wheelchair passengers up/down one step up to 8" in height if it can be done safely. In using the wheelchair lift and in securing their wheelchair in the vehicle.
- Be courteous.
- Drive safely.
- Wear a seat belt.
- Securely tie down wheelchairs.
- Be properly uniformed.
- Make a good faith effort to find a client (horn honking to notify a client of arrival is NOT acceptable).

Drivers must have a safe driving record, pass a criminal background check, and test negative for drugs and alcohol. Also, they are trained in defensive driving, and to safely assist and be sensitive to passenger's special needs.

Drivers are selected based on their ability to provide the specialized service needed for the paratransit program.

Traffic delays, tight schedules, weather conditions, passengers running late, and other factors can cause stressful situations that could affect the quality of service for paratransit customers. If a driver or passenger acts in an unreasonable manner (or contrary to our policies and procedures) the problem should be reported.

MATS General Comments or Complaint Procedures

If you have a general comment or complaint about your experience on a particular trip, please contact MATS through our website to complete the "Provide Feedback" option, or through our Customer Care Staff at 231-724-6420 and give us your comments as soon as possible after the event. Good comments are always appreciated, and we want to respond and resolve negative issues and experiences right away.

MATS Accessibility Advisory Committee

MATS has established the MATS Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC) to ensure they receive input from riders with disabilities and representatives of riders with disabilities regarding compliance with the ADA. If interested in participating, please contact the ADA Coordinator at MATS. See the MATS website at www.matsbus.com for more and up-to-date information.

Notification of Rights Under Title VI

MATS fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. MATS operates without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, income, gender, age, and disability. Any person who believes him/herself, or any specific class of persons, to be subject to discrimination prohibited by Title VI may by him/herself or by representative, file a written complaint with MATS. A complaint must be filed not later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination and contain the following information:

- Name, address and phone number of the Complainant
- Name, Address, phone number and relationship of Representative to Complainant (if applicable)
- Basis of complaint (ie: race, color, national origin)
- Date of alleged discriminatory act(s).
- A statement of the complaint, including specific details, relevant facts and documentation.

Please submit Title VI complaints to MATS by mail, fax, or email to the following address:

Mail:

Attention: Mr. Jim Koens
Title VI Coordinator
2624 Sixth St.
Muskegon Hts., MI 49444

Fax:

Attention: Mr. Jim Koens
(231) 830-1607

Email:

koensji@co.muskegon.mi.us

MATS ADA Complaint Procedure

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Last Revision: March 2019

Any citizen who feels that their Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rights have been violated alleging any action prohibited by 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, 38, and 39 may file a complaint with the Muskegon Area Transit System using the following procedures:

1. To file a complete complaint, please provide the following information:
 - Complainants name
 - Complainants address
 - Complainants telephone number and/or email address
 - If a mobility aid was being used (if any)
 - Date, time, and location of the incident
 - Transit mode and/or route
 - Vehicle ID number (if known)
 - Name(s) of agency employee(s) or others (if known)
 - Detailed description of what transpired
 - Other documentation such as photographs (if any)
2. The complaint can be made: either by mail (United States Postal Service), by telephone, by email, or by fax.

To make a complaint by mail, please send to:

Mr. Mike Milligan
ADA Coordinator
2624 Sixth St.
Muskegon Hts., MI 49444

To make a complaint by **telephone**, please call: ADA Coordinator (231) 724-4730

To make a complaint by **email**, please send to : milliganmi@co.muskegon.mi.us

To file a complaint by **fax**: 231-830-1607

3. The complaint will be reviewed and investigated within seven (7) working days after receiving initial complaint.
4. MATS staff may contact the Complainant for additional information regarding the complaint.
5. The ADA Coordinator, or their designee, will contact the individual who made the complaint and share the results of the investigation and offer possible remedies within seven (7) working days.

6. If an appeal is received, a panel consisting of the MATS System Manager or their designee, the ADA Coordinator, and a member of the Local Advisory Committee will hear the appeal within ten (10) working days either in person or by telephone.
7. All complaints will be maintained for one (1) year.
8. All summary of all complaints will be maintained for five (5) years.

This information can be made available in an alternative format such as large print, braille, etc, upon written request to:

MATS ADA Coordinator
2624 Sixth Street
Muskegon Heights, MI 49444

