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## **Overview**

### **ADA Program**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Program is a complimentary service for passengers who live along the LakeXpress fixed route corridors, but due to a disability are not able to utilize this service. In order to utilize ADA service the person must first complete an ADA eligibility application to determine if they qualify for this service.

The ADA Program is similar to the Transportation Disadvantaged Program but has different trip scheduling requirements and eligibility procedures.

For a complete overview of the ADA Program please refer to the back of this Rider's Guide.

### **Transportation Disadvantaged Program**

The Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged Program was established for individuals who do not have access to any other means of transportation, including public bus service (LakeXpress), because of age, disability or income. It is also provided to those who do not receive services from a sponsoring agency. A "sponsoring agency" is an agency that pays for transportation services for their clients, such as Medicaid. Transportation Disadvantaged services are provided primarily for senior citizens and at-risk children who are mobility and developmentally impaired.

This Rider's Guide is designed to help passengers understand Lake County's paratransit service, which operates under the name of Lake County Connection (LCC).

This document will provide passengers with information about the policies and procedures that govern the provision of both TD and ADA transportation services.. This guide is available online at [www.ridelakexpress.com/lcc/rider'sguide](http://www.ridelakexpress.com/lcc/rider'sguide). It is also available on audiocassette and may be obtained by calling Lake County Connection at 352-326-2278.

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners contracts with Ride Right Transit, LLC to operate Lake County Connection. The Lake County Transit Division provides management and oversight over Ride Right Transit, LLC and its provision of federally-funded public transit service.

The Transportation Disadvantaged and ADA Programs provides transportation service for eligible individuals and is funded through the following agencies: Lake County Board of County Commissioners, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Agency for Health Care Administration (Medicaid), Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), Mid Florida Community Services and Elder Affairs.

Lake County Connection provides more than 400 scheduled passenger trips per day, using a variety of vehicles specifically equipped to transport individuals with disabilities. Due to the high demand for this special transit service, it is important that each passenger carefully follow the guidelines established for this program.

Cooperation and flexibility from passengers will allow Lake County Connection to meet each passenger's needs more effectively and efficiently.

### **Customer Service**

Lake County Connection Customer Service handles all applications for service and processes all reservation requests, which includes scheduling and dispatching of all approved trips.

To contact Lake County Connection Customer Service, please call 352-326-2278 [Florida Relay voice: 800-955-5770; TTY: 800-955-8771]. Trip requests may be made Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For after-hour services or for after-hour hospital discharges, please call 352-630-5495. For all emergencies, dial 911.

When calling Customer Service, choose from one of the following options or simply remain on the line and your call will be answered in the order in

which it was received.

- Press “2” to speak with a Customer Service Representative to schedule, confirm or cancel a trip (The best time to call to schedule a trip or travel is between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.)
- Press “2110” to speak with the General Manager
- Press “2113” to speak with the Operations Manager
- Press “2113” to register a complaint

All other comments about Lake County Connection should be reported to Lake County Transit Division at 352-323-5733 or at [www.ridelakexpress.com/contact](http://www.ridelakexpress.com/contact).

If an issue remains unresolved after contacting the Lake County Transit Division, you may contact the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged Helpline at 800-983-2435.

### **Eligibility & Operations Hours**

Individuals who are interested in using the Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged Program must apply for services by completing an eligibility application. To receive an eligibility application, call 352-326-2278 or download an application at [www.ridelakexpress.com/LCC/TransportationDisadvantagedApplication](http://www.ridelakexpress.com/LCC/TransportationDisadvantagedApplication).

Applicants must provide all of the required information as requested on the application, including proof of income. Incomplete applications will be denied.

Applications are evaluated and eligibility is determined based upon Florida Statutes, Chapter 427, and the sponsoring agency guidelines and based upon a determination by the transit provider that the passenger does not have the access or ability to use the fixed-route bus system (LakeXpress).

Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged Program transportation is provided Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Transportation service is provided on Saturday for dialysis treatment, Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care (PPEC) and hospital discharges only.

No service

is provided on the following observed holidays:\*

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

*\* Other holidays may be observed if approved by the Lake County Board of County Commissioners*

Individuals who live along the fixed route (LakeXpress) who are not able to utilize LakeXpress because of a disability must complete an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Application. An ADA application may be obtained or downloaded at [www.ridelakexpress.com/LCC/ADAParatransitApplication](http://www.ridelakexpress.com/LCC/ADAParatransitApplication)

To schedule an ADA trip, please contact Lake County Connection Customer Service at 352-326-2278 [Florida Relay voice: 800-955-5770; TTY: 800-955-8771]. Trip requests can be made Sunday through Friday from

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ADA passengers can only be provided trips that are along the LakeXpress route.

Please contact Lake County Connection Customer Service at 352-326-2278 [Florida Relay voice: 800-955-5770; TTY: 800-955-8771], or the Lake County Transit Division at 352-323-5733 or visit [www.ridelakexpress.com/LCC/ADARider'sGuide](http://www.ridelakexpress.com/LCC/ADARider'sGuide), for more information on ADA Transportation services.

### **Making A Reservation**

Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program is a limited-ride program with reservations taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Passenger's must make reservations at least 2 business days prior to the date service is being requested. ADA clients must make their reservations one day before the desired date of transport.

EXAMPLE: If a TD passenger is requesting transportation on Monday,

reservations must be made no later than 5 p.m. the Thursday before.

Transportation services are available for Lake County residents only, unless arrangements are made with another Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). Due to the limited availability of daily trips, all trips are prioritized based on the following needs:

- Critical medical care
- Other medical
- Nutritional (grocery shopping, meal sites and food stamps)
- Employment
- Education
- Other

To make a reservation, please call Lake County Connection Customer Service at 352-326-2278.

- Passengers may schedule trips from two to 14 days in advance.
- Passengers may schedule up to 3 round trips per call.
- Passengers will be limited to no more than three round trips provided in a given day.
- There is a minimum one hour stay for all appointments.

When making a reservation, have the following passenger information ready:

- Passenger's first and last name
- Home address
- Whether the passenger uses a wheelchair or other personal mobility device
- Home telephone number, work and/or cell phone number
- Date of Birth (an adult must accompany any child age 15 and under)
- Whether there are any other special considerations that must be considered to provide transportation
- Whether a service animal will be accompanying

the passenger.

- Date transportation is needed.
- The time of the appointment or time the passenger needs to be at their destination.
- The time the passenger will need to be picked up for their return trip.
- The destination address, zip code, county and telephone number.
- The general purpose of the appointment.
- The drop-off and pick-up location (When making a reservation, please give the customer service representative detailed information about the location. However, at larger facilities, such as hospitals, the customer service representative may request that the passenger wait in a common pick-up area that has been prearranged with the facility).
- An escort or companion is permitted to travel with the passenger. Please inform the customer service representative if an escort will be accompanying the passenger at the time the reservation is made. All escorts must be at least 16 years of age and will not be charged a fare.
- Users of this service must provide their own child restraint devices and the device must meet the requirements of the Florida Child Safety Seat Law.
- Trips for day care may be provided when the parent is gainfully employed, attending school or the child has been court-ordered to attend a day care program. No minor child will be transported without an accompanying adult or guardian (The individual must be 16 years or older).

A “standing order” is for passengers who travel to the same place at the same time on the same day or days of the week.

Passengers with regular appointments may request a standing order. Request for service may or may not be granted depending on the availability of funding.

A passenger cannot change a standing order more than once per month or this privilege may be revoked. However, personal circumstances may arise that may require a change. If your situation changes, please notify the customer service representative immediately at 352-326-2278. All efforts will be made to accommodate such requests, but

are not guaranteed.

If a passenger has a standing order and will not be using it for one or multiple days, please contact Lake County Connection Customer Service to cancel or suspend services to avoid having a “no show” recorded against the passenger.

Lake County Connection relies on the cooperation of all the passengers to make the system run smoothly. If a passenger must cancel a trip, it is important to inform Lake County Connection Customer Service at 352-326-2278 at least two hours before the scheduled pick-up time. Failure to call at least two hours in advance will constitute a “no show.”

Because so many people depend on the Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged and ADA Programs, changes in a person’s scheduled return time are very limited. If a passenger is ready to return more than 2 hours earlier than originally scheduled, he or she may call and ask for an earlier pick-up. Every attempt will be made to honor the request, however, earlier pick-up times are not guaranteed.

Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged Program does not provide same-day service and is not liable or responsible for providing same day transportation in the event of a passenger being in a distressed situation. Please call 9-1-1. If a passenger is in a distressed situation.

### **Estimated Pick-up Times**

When calling to schedule a trip, the customer service representative will provide the caller with two estimated pick-up times for all round trips. The first estimated pick-up time will be from the passenger’s home to their destination. The second estimated pick-up time will be the return time from the passenger’s destination back to their home.

Each pick-up time is the start of a one hour window. A passenger should expect the driver to arrive within the one hour window. A passenger will need to be ready to travel at any time within that one hour window. Schedules are developed to allow passengers to get to their destinations on time when they are picked up within the pick-up window.

Under certain circumstances pick-up times may be negotiated with

passengers to allow more efficient scheduling. Pick-up window adjustments of up to one hour may be required. Each estimated pick-up time includes:

- The one hour window
- Additional time for the trip distance.
- Additional time for peak periods (rush hour).
- Additional time for other passenger's scheduled on the vehicle.
- Additional "negotiated" time of up to one hour if necessary.

Multi-legged trips will be treated as round trips with multiple return (second, third, etc.) windows based on requested return times.

Please wait at least one hour past the scheduled pick-up time before calling Lake County Connection Customer Service at 352-326-2278.

The driver can arrive up to one hour after the scheduled pick-up time and still be considered "on time" as long as the passenger arrives at their destination on time. Please remember the pick-up time is based on factors such as the time the passenger needs to reach their destination, traffic delays, inclement weather conditions and multi-loading of other passenger's.

The one-hour return window does not apply to dialysis passengers. It is the goal of Lake County Transit Division to pick up all dialysis passengers within 30 minutes of their scheduled return pick-up time.

### **Will Call**

Sometimes a passenger is not ready to be picked up at the scheduled return time. When this happens the driver places the passenger on "will call." The driver must notify the passenger that they have been placed on will call if the passenger can be located. The driver shall also notify dispatch when a passenger is placed on "will call".

This means that the passenger "will call" Lake County Connection Customer Service when they are ready to be picked up. Once Lake County Connection has been notified, the passenger will be taken off "will call" and

reasonable efforts will be made to pick the passenger up within 90 minutes. If the passenger is a dialysis patient or taking chemotherapy treatment, efforts will be made to pick them up as soon as possible.

If the customer cannot be found at the scheduled destination, they will be considered a “no show”. If the customer requests a return trip after the “no show” has been issued, the return trip will be scheduled with no set time frame.

### **Fares**

The driver will collect the appropriate fare from each passenger when they board the vehicle. The customer service representative will remind each passenger of the amount of their fare in advance of their scheduled trip. The fare will be based upon the requirements of the agency sponsoring the trip. Lake County Connection does not establish fares or rates.

Passengers must have the exact change because drivers do not carry money and are not allowed to make change or to stop for passengers to get change. Fares must be paid in advance for each trip. All fares are expected to be paid at the time of service. Drivers are not allowed to accept tips. Please notify Lake County Transit Division if any driver asks for, or accepts a tip.

The fare for the Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged Program is as follows:

- **Within Lake County** — \$2 each way.
- **Orlando** — \$5 each way (This service is provided for medical appointments only on Tuesday and Thursday. The bus will depart Orlando at 2 p.m.)
- **Gainesville** — \$10 each way (This service is provided for medical appointments only on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The bus will depart Gainesville at 2 p.m.)

### **No Shows & Tardiness**

Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged and ADA Programs are a

shared ride system; therefore, it is important that each passenger is ready to board the vehicle when it arrives.

It is the County's policy that the drivers wait only five minutes for a passenger to board the vehicle because there are other passenger's waiting for their scheduled ride or to get to their appointments.

If a vehicle arrives to pick up a passenger and he or she is not there or does not board the vehicle by the scheduled time, the passenger will be considered a "no show."

If a passenger places a child or other property on a vehicle and returns inside their home and causes the bus to wait longer than five minutes, the passenger's transportation services will be suspended for 10 days.

Multiple "no shows" will result in a suspension of the passenger's transportation service. The steps leading up to a suspension of service are as follows:

- The first "no show" is recorded in the passenger's file and a door hanger is placed on his or her door.
- A second "no show" within 90-days of the first "no show" will result in a letter being sent to the passenger warning that the next "no show" will result in a 30-day suspension.
- A third within 90-days of the first and second "no show" will result in a 30-day suspension.
- A 4th within 90-days of the first 3 "no shows" will result in a 60-day suspension.

Passengers may appeal their "no show" if they have information that is contrary to that noted above.

While waiting for the bus, please do not leave the area. If a driver is unable to find a passenger within five minutes of arriving, or if a passenger does not cancel a trip at least two hours before the scheduled pick-up time, the passenger will be considered a "no show." If the driver is late, the passenger will not be considered a "no show."

Repeat "no show" offenders may be assessed a \$2.00

“no show” fee.

## **Suspension from Services**

Passengers may have their transportation services suspended for violating the following conditions and any other policy that can be detrimental to the welfare of the program, other passengers, staff or the public.

- 1. Verbal Abuse:** Verbal abuse is defined as any oral presentation that is offensive to another passenger, transit employees, public, elected or appointed official or Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) staff.
- 2. Disruptive Behavior:** Disruptive behavior is defined as a passenger who engages in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct directed at other passengers, transit employees, the public, elected or appointed official or CTC staff.

Such conduct includes but not limited to: threats or fear of physical or verbal abuse; unlawful harassment; including unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations; unauthorized use of equipment on the vehicle; voluntarily and repeatedly violating vehicle-riding rules, including smoking in the vehicle, eating or drinking without prior medical approval, or defacing equipment or property.

- 3. Dangerous Behavior:** Dangerous behavior is defined as any threat or action that could cause direct or indirect physical harm to the driver, vehicle, other passengers, to one’s self, the public and elected or appointed official or CTC staff.

**Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse is defined as any action that may cause direct or indirect physical harm to a passenger, driver or other staff.

The driver may refuse transportation to an individual or a group that defies these rules, behaves offensively or could endanger the safety, health, welfare or comfort of other passengers.

- 4. Late Cancellation Notice:** Any scheduled trip that is not cancelled at least two hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time is considered a late cancellation. Late cancellations will adhere to the same

suspension guidelines as the “no show” policy.

If the passenger cancels when the driver arrives then the passenger will be considered a “no show” and is subject to the “no show” suspension policy as previously stated.

Suspensions will not be imposed for circumstances that are beyond the passenger’s normal control. Examples of situations beyond the passenger’s control are:

- A sudden verified personal emergency.
- Sudden or worsening illness.
- Death in the passenger’s immediate family.
- Late arrival of the vehicle.
- Disruptive behavior caused by a disability.

**5. Excessive Timely Cancellations:** Any scheduled trip that is cancelled at least two hours before the schedule pick-up time will not be considered a Late Cancellation or a “No Show.” However, if you cancel your trips regularly this will be considered Excessive Timely Cancellation and may be subject to the following actions.

- Ten late cancellations in a calendar month - warning letter will be issued.
- Eleven late cancellations in a calendar month - 14 day suspension.
- Twelve late cancellations in a calendar month - 30 day suspension.
- Lake County Connection is a multi-loading service and the consideration and cooperation of all the riders is imperative for the system to work efficiently and be cost effective.

**6. Providing False Information:** Providing false information on the application for services or regarding the nature of a trip.

**7. Service Animals:** Do not interfere with a service animal without the permission of the owner.

**8. Other Actions:** Other actions not specified but that are determined by

the CTC to be an interruption to service.

9. **Failing to submit an application:** Passengers may be suspended for not recertifying or providing additional information to determine passenger eligibility.

### **Safety Tips & Customer Responsibilities**

The Lake County Transit Division offers the following safety tips:

- Wait in a safe, well-lit location while waiting for the vehicle.
- Choose a pick-up and drop-off location that allows the driver to not lose sight of his or her vehicle when assisting you to or from the door.
- Let the vehicle come to a complete stop before approaching it.
- Allow the driver to assist you in boarding and de-boarding from the vehicle.
- Ask for special boarding assistance if you need it; we are here to serve you.
- Always wear your seat belt.

Passengers of the Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged and ADA Programs are responsible for the following:

- All personal belongings are the responsibility of the passenger.
- Passengers are responsible for loading and unloading their belongings. Under limited circumstances the passenger may request the driver to assist with their belongings. However, there is a five bag limit and the bags cannot weigh more than 20 pounds each.
- Bringing an approved child safety seat for children less than five years of age.
- Not eating, drinking or smoking in the vehicle.
- Using a headset for personal video or audio equipment so it does not

distract the driver or fellow passengers.

- Shirts, pants, skirts, dresses and shoes are required to utilize this service.
- Drivers are not permitted to make any unscheduled stops or allow special requests without approval.

Passengers are requested to respect others by maintaining a good standard of personal cleanliness and hygiene as well as to practice common health courtesy when traveling with such illnesses as the common cold.

Passengers are requested not to wear strongly scented personal care products while on the vehicle. This will help ensure that the vehicles are accessible for passengers with multiple chemical sensitivity or environmental illnesses.

### **Drivers**

The drivers are employees of Ride Right Transit, LLC and are trained by Ride Right Transit, LLC according to Lake County Board of County Commissioners and Ride Right Transit, LLC. specifications and guidelines. Drivers must have a safe driving record, pass a criminal background check, pass a U.S. Department of Transportation physical and test negative for drugs and alcohol.

Drivers are trained in defensive driving, passenger sensitivity and how to safely transport individuals with special needs. Drivers are selected based on their ability to provide the specialized service needed to serve the citizens of Lake County.

Drivers are not required to assist wheelchairs up or down more than one step, push wheelchairs through grass or sand or to lift the passenger into or out of their mobility device, with the exception of stretcher clients.

### **Drivers are expected to**

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- Be courteous.
- Drive safely.
- Wear a seat belt.
- Securely tie down mobility devices.
- Wear a photo identification attached to their uniform that can be seen

easily by the passenger.

- Be in uniform.
- Make a good faith effort to find a passenger.
- Not to honk the horn for a passenger unless there is a dangerous animal or unsafe condition or the fence is locked or other barriers prevent them from accessing the passenger's home.
- May assist passengers with up to five bags that do not exceed 20 pounds each.
- Not use a text or talk on a cell phone while transporting passengers.

Traffic delays, tight schedules, weather conditions, passenger's running late and other factors can cause stressful situations that could affect the quality of service for passengers.

If a driver or other passenger acts in an unreasonable manner (or against these policies and procedures), please report the problem immediately by calling Lake County Transit Division at 352-323-5733.

## **Other Considerations**

### **Lost items**

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If a passenger loses a personal item and believes it may be on a Lake County Connection vehicle, please call Customer Service at 352-326-2278. If the item is found, the passenger may be asked to travel to a central pick-up point to retrieve it. If the item is not located in the vehicle, Lake County Transit Division, Ride Right Transit, LLC. and their employees will not be held responsible for replacement of the lost items.

All lost and found items will be subject to Florida Statute 705.103 and will be held for 90 days.

### **Wheelchair service**

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Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged Program service is "door-to-door" unless otherwise noted. When making a reservation, be sure to mention if the passenger has any of the following concerns:

Difficulties walking.

Uses a mobility device or a wheelchair.

Use of a service animal.

The passenger must provide wheelchairs and mobility devices, and the passenger must be on the ground floor at the time he or she is to be picked up.

A wheelchair is a mobility aid designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged and ADA Program vehicles are equipped to transport “common wheelchairs” which do not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured 2½ inches above the ground, and do not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied.

### **Service animals**

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Lake County Transportation Disadvantaged and ADA Program will accommodate any service animal as defined by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Passengers are asked to refrain from interfering or petting a service animal without prior permission from the animal’s owner.

### **Oxygen requirement**

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Traveling with oxygen equipment is permitted, but the equipment must be small enough so the driver does not have to assist with the loading and unloading of it. The safety and use of this equipment is the sole responsibility of the passenger.

## **Medicaid Overview**

For persons who receive Medicaid benefits, please contact your Medicaid Representative (telephone number located on the back of your Medicaid Card) to acquire the telephone number for the appropriate Medicaid Broker.

# Lake County ADA Program Rider's Guide

Final 2015  
Approved 3/27/15  
Effective 7/13/15.

~~Not knowing what Communications would need or want, I left the table of contents.~~

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## **Lake County ADA Rider's Guide**

### **Meeting Our Customers' Travel Needs**

This Rider's Guide provides information about Lake County's 100% accessible Fixed Route service "LakeXpress" as well as more detailed information about Lake County Connection "Paratransit" service - how to become eligible to use the service, where it operates, the days and hours of service, how to request a ride, fares, and other important information.

### **Fixed Route Bus Service**

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners is committed to providing transportation services that can be used by all of our customers. All "fixed route buses" (larger buses that operate on set routes) have ramps and are low-floor with a kneeling feature to better serve riders who use wheelchairs or have difficulty getting up and down the bus steps.

For everyone's benefit, LakeXpress buses automatically announce major stops, intersections, and transfer points to help riders recognize their bus stop or point of transfer. A limited number of seats are usually available near the entrance for persons who have difficulty standing while the bus is moving. Reserved spaces with tie-down straps and driver assistance are available for riders who use wheelchairs to provide a safe and secure ride.

For route and schedule information, or any questions you may have about using the fixed route bus, call (352) 326-8637. Florida Relay 711 for TDD users.

### **ADA Paratransit Service**

For eligible riders who have a disability that prevents them from making some or all of their trips on fixed route buses, Lake County Connection offers a shared ride, door-to-door service called Paratransit. This service is sometimes called "ADA Paratransit Service" because it is provided as part of our efforts to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (or ADA). Paratransit service must be reserved at least one day in advance. The service is provided with lift-equipped minibuses or lift-equipped vans. ADA Paratransit service operates in the same areas and

during the same days and hours as the fixed route bus. The service can be used for any trip purpose.

If you still have questions after reading this Rider's Guide, you can call the Paratransit office at (352) 326-8637 or 711 if you use a TTY). On request, copies of this Rider's Guide will be provided in large print, or audio-tape.

### **Who is Eligible for ADA Paratransit Service?**

ADA paratransit service is provided for riders whose disability or health condition prevents them from using the LakeXpress fixed route services for some or all of their travel. Individuals who are interested in using ADA paratransit service must apply and be found eligible according to ADA guidelines. The certification process strictly limits ADA paratransit eligibility to those individuals who meet the paratransit eligibility criteria that are contained in Section 37.123 of the DOT Regulations.

Applications for ADA paratransit eligibility may be obtained by contacting RIDE RIGHT Transportation at (352) 326-2278. Paratransit certification staff will discuss with potential applicants how ADA paratransit is intended to function to make sure they understand basic ADA paratransit eligibility requirements and how ADA paratransit operates, and will ensure that the potential applicant does not already have an application or certification on file. An application form and instructions will then be mailed to the individual.

Completed applications must be mailed to RIDE RIGHT Transportation, ADA Paratransit Certification. Completed applications will be processed within 21 days.

If a determination of eligibility is not made within 21 days of the postmark on the application envelop, the applicant is treated as eligible on an interim basis and shall be provided ADA Paratransit service until a determination concerning eligibility is made.

Because eligibility depends on a functional definition of disability as it applies to actual trips, applicants may only be eligible for ADA paratransit for specific trips. Such applicants are conditionally eligible for ADA paratransit service.

Notification concerning eligibility is provided in writing. In addition, the reasons for the determination and any eligibility conditions are included in

the written notification. Documentation will be provided to each eligible individual stating that he or she is “ADA Paratransit Eligible.”

Eligibility will remain valid for a period of two (2) years from the applicant's month of the year of determination. Eligibility periods of shorter duration will be granted for temporary disabilities.

### **Temporary Disabilities**

Temporary eligibility is provided to customers who have a temporary disability that prevents them from using the LakeXpress bus system. Eligibility will be provided for the expected duration of the disability.

### **Service for Visitors**

Visitors to the Lake County area may use Paratransit for up to 21 days a year by providing documentation that they have been determined eligible for similar ADA Paratransit services by a transit agency in another part of the country. Visitors who do not have this kind of eligibility because they live in areas without public transit service might be asked for documentation of their health condition or disability.

### **Presumptive Eligibility**

Determinations of eligibility must be made within 21 calendar days of the submission of a completed application form. If a determination is not made by the 21st day, the applicant is treated as eligible and paratransit service is provided on a **presumption** of eligibility until the review is completed. Unconditional service will be provided during this period of presumed eligibility

### **Recertification of Eligibility**

Each Paratransit customer must be recertified upon reaching his/her eligibility expiration date. It may also be necessary from time to time, if the condition of the disability changes, to re-evaluate an individual's eligibility. Typically, eligibility extends for two (2) years from certification. A customer's ADA Paratransit Identification Card will indicate his/her Paratransit eligibility expiration date. It is the customer's responsibility to reapply for services prior to his or her eligibility expiration date. If a customer fails to renew Paratransit eligibility, he/she will be ineligible for service until he/she is determined eligible in the certification process.

### **Paratransit Identification Card**

Your Paratransit Identification Card will be mailed at the time eligibility has been determined. Your Paratransit ID card counts as a reduced fare card for a reduced fare when you ride LakeXpress fixed route.

### **Type of service**

“Door to Door” ADA Paratransit Service is provided in Lake County. This meets the federally required “origin to destination” service. Drivers do not have to provide services that exceed “door-to-door” service (e.g., go beyond the doorway into a building to assist a passenger). Nor would drivers, for lengthy periods of time, have to leave their vehicles unattended or lose the ability to keep their vehicles under visual observation, or take actions that would be clearly unsafe (e.g., back a vehicle down a narrow alley in specific circumstances that would present a direct threat to safety).

### **Paratransit Service Area and Service Hours**

The Lake County ADA service area includes all origins and destinations within corridors with a width of 3/4-mile of each fixed route. There are no core service areas, (any small areas not inside a corridor but surrounded by corridors at this time.)

LakeXpress service is available Monday – Friday from 6:00 a.m. until 7:45 p.m. LakeXpress busses do not run on Saturdays, Sundays, and the 7 annual county holidays. ADA comparable paratransit service is available during the same days and hours as LakeXpress service.

### **Response, pick up, and travel time**

Requests for reservations for ADA paratransit are accepted Sunday – Friday (including holidays) from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Same Day service is not provided. Advance reservations may be made up to 14 days before a desired trip. The reservation taker will "negotiate trip times" by searching for available space up to one hour on either side of a requested pick up time.

When space exists, passengers are given a 30-minute "Ready Window" and a trip confirmation number. This is the 30 minute period within which the

vehicle is scheduled to arrive. Passengers must be ready at the beginning of the Ready Window. For example, if a negotiated Ready Window is 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. The passenger would need to be ready to board at 8:00 a.m. When space isn't available at the requested time, and an alternative day or time cannot be negotiated, the trip may be denied.

Passengers requiring medication or oxygen at regular intervals should be advised that travel time on the paratransit vehicle is comparable to that of the fixed-route system.

Comparable travel time includes the actual time on a fixed route bus, the time required to walk to a bus stop from the point of origin. Comparable paratransit travel time is estimated at 1 and 1/3 that of fixed route travel time.

Rides are subject to delays that may result in a customer's on-board time being longer than 60 minutes. Transportation services are subject to unpredictable conditions such as traffic delays, inclement weather, and mechanical problems.

Eligible ADA paratransit passengers should add the 30 minute pick up window to the 1 and 1/3 fixed route travel time for a particular trip when they wish to arrive at a set appointment time. Customer Service staff will assist passengers in determining the comparable fixed route travel time when requested.

If sand or slippery conditions at a bus stop make it difficult or impossible for a fixed route passenger with a disability to get to a lift, or for the lift to deploy, the driver will move the bus to a cleared area for boarding, if such is available within reasonable proximity to the stop.

## **Service Standards**

### **On Time Performance**

Our vehicle will be considered “Late” if it arrives more than 30 minutes after the scheduled pick up time or if you are dropped off past the scheduled drop off time.

Our vehicle will be considered “Early” if it picks you up before the scheduled pick up time or drops you off more than 30 minutes before the scheduled drop off time.

Will-call trips (when allowed by Lake County Connection) have up to a 60 minute window or will-call response time from the time the request is made. Our vehicle will be considered late if it arrives more than 60 minutes after the scheduled (based on the requested) pick up time. Travel and drop off time calculations are the same as non-will call trips.

Requested and approved scheduled pick up time adjustments. Original trips will be cancelled and a new trips created when a passenger requests and is approved for a revised pick up time. (This will ensure that trips are not incorrectly counted as early or late) For example, a passenger may be ready to return from an appointment earlier than scheduled. If it is possible to make the adjustment the original trip will be cancelled and a new one created for the return trip.

### **Missed Trips**

If the vehicle arrives outside of the pickup window and the rider does not take it.

### **Denied Trips**

One leg of an ADA paratransit round trip cannot be reserved. It is tracked as two denials if the rider declines the trip.

### **Vehicle Ride Time**

When compared to fixed route trips, paratransit trips will be considered excessively long if they are more than one and one third (1 1/3) times a

comparable fixed route trip (allowing for walking time to and from stops, wait time at stops, and transfers between buses).

### **Telephone Hold time**

Passengers should not expect more than a four minute telephone hold time when contacting the paratransit office. This will be monitored as follows:

The contracted operator will provide daily phone hold time logs. Fifteen checks per weekday will be recorded.

- Five checks between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 am.
- Five checks between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- Five checks between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The monthly average hold time should not exceed 4 minutes.

### **No Show Policy**

A no-show occurs when all four of the following circumstances have occurred:

- The customer (or the customer's representative) has scheduled ADA paratransit service.
- There has been no call by the customer or his/her representative to cancel the scheduled trip prior to the start of the Ready Window.
- The paratransit vehicle has arrived at the scheduled pickup point within the specified 30-min Ready Window.
- The driver has waited at least two full minutes beyond the beginning of the 30-min Ready Window, but the customer has failed to board the vehicle.

A cancellation occurs when the customer (or the customer's representative) calls and speaks to a paratransit reservation or dispatch staff member before the beginning of the Ready Window and specifies that a scheduled trip is to be canceled.

The agency computer system keeps track of each trip a customer has requested, scheduled, taken, cancelled, and no-showed. When a no-show occurs, the computer data will be used to calculate the percentage of no-shows that have occurred in that customer's scheduled trips for the

preceding 6 months. When the no-show percentage reaches 3%, the customer will be advised verbally of the no-show policy and a letter will be sent to the customer's residence with a copy of the policy enclosed.

When the no-show percentage reaches 5%, the customer will be issued a notice of a 3-day suspension of ADA paratransit service, subject to the appeals hearing process. With each successive no-show, the percentage will be recalculated. If the percentage is equal to or greater than 5%, each successive no-show (within 6 months of the last suspension) will result in the length of suspension as follows:

Second occurrence—5 consecutive day suspension.

Third occurrence—10 consecutive day suspension.

Fourth occurrence—15 consecutive day suspension.

Fifth occurrence—20 consecutive day suspension.

Sixth occurrence—25 consecutive day suspension.

The policy is designed to identify those customers who have a pattern and practice of violating the no-show policy based on their frequency of use. All punitive or corrective measures are applied to those customers with a documented frequency of violations within the previous 6 months. No corrective action is applied to the infrequent violator; that is, one with no-shows of less than 5% of scheduled trips. The focal point of this policy is to first gain customer cooperation through education. Punitive measures are used only as a secondary measure and only when (1) educational efforts have failed to gain the needed cooperation, and (2) there is a sufficient pattern and practice of no-shows to cause an accumulated no-show rate of at least 5% within a 6-month period.

### **How to Cancel a Scheduled Ride**

If you have scheduled a ride that you no longer need to take, please call the Paratransit Scheduling Office as soon as possible before your pick up.

### **How Long Will a Paratransit Vehicle Wait?**

When the vehicle arrives within the Ready Window, the driver will wait no more than two minutes. If the vehicle arrives before the Ready Window starts, the passenger may leave if he or she is ready. If the passenger is not ready, the driver will wait until the Ready Window starts and then an additional two minutes.

## **Fares**

The ADA complementary paratransit fare is \$2.00 per one way trip. The full fare on LakeXpress is \$1.00. The paratransit fare is twice the fixed route fare for ADA trips.

No fare is charged for PCAs. Any companions must pay the same fare as the ADA eligible individual. There are no free-fare zones for fixed route; therefore, there are no free-fare zones for comparable ADA paratransit.

## **Trip Purpose**

No restrictions or priorities are applied to ADA comparable paratransit trips based on trip purpose.

## **Driver Assistance**

A passenger's request for a fixed route driver to assist with luggage or packages will be denied in most instances.

Likewise, paratransit passengers are responsible for loading and unloading their belongings. Under limited circumstances the passenger may request the paratransit driver to assist with their belongings. However, there is a five bag limit and the bags cannot weigh more than 20 pounds each.

## **Lift, Ramp, and Equipment Failure Procedure**

Operators are required to cycle lifts and ramps daily to ensure that they are operative. Operators will immediately report any failure of a lift or ramp to operate.

If a wheelchair lift or ramp failure is experienced on an in-service vehicle alternative service will be promptly provided. The vehicle will be removed from service before the beginning of the next service day if the lift or ramp is not repaired. The lift or ramp will be repaired before the vehicle is returned to service.

## **How to Reserve a Ride**

You can reserve your Paratransit ride from 1 to 14 days in advance of your trip. The Paratransit scheduling office takes trip requests Sunday – Friday

from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. To request a ride, call the Paratransit Scheduling Office at 326-2278.

### **Subscription Service**

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

### **Scheduling Tip**

The reservation agent will guide you through the process of reserving a ride. The reservation agent will ask for the following information:

1. Your first and last name.
2. The date and day of the week you need to ride.
3. The street address where you need to be picked up.
4. The street address where you are going, any point of reference that might help the driver find the location.
5. The time you would like to arrive (the appointment time, if applicable).
6. The time you will be ready to be picked up for a return trip (if applicable).
7. If a personal care attendant or companions will be traveling with you.
8. If a service animal will be riding with you.
9. Any other information you feel we should know to safely and comfortably serve you.

Every effort will be made to schedule your trip so that you do not arrive more than 30 minutes before your requested drop-off time and no later than your requested drop-off time.

Every effort will be made to schedule a return pick-up no later than 60 minutes after the time you have requested and no earlier than the time you have requested.

If you are scheduling several trips, have all of the information for each trip available when you call. This will help the reservation agent serve you efficiently.

### **If Your Appointment is Running Late**

Everyone has occasional circumstances outside of their control that can cause delays at a scheduled appointment. If your appointment is running later than you expected and there is a chance you will not be ready for your scheduled return trip (or if you have missed the bus), call the Paratransit office as soon as possible. Your request will be coordinated with the Dispatch office that stays in radio contact with drivers. You will be asked:

1. Your name.
2. The time of your scheduled return trip pick-up

Every effort will be made to adjust your return trip pick-up time and assign another bus to pick you up at a later time. Because schedules are set the day before, there may be a delay of 90 minutes or more before another vehicle is available to accommodate your trip, or another bus may not be available. Remember: Allow extra time for medical appointments or other appointments that may take longer than expected. This will reduce the unnecessary cost of sending an additional vehicle.

NOTE: If a bus is sent and you are not ready, you will be assessed a no-show. If you call to change your appointment because you are running late, you will be assessed points in accordance with the "No Show Policy" for the scheduled trip.

### **When the Paratransit Vehicle Arrives**

The Paratransit driver will pull the vehicle up to the curb in front of the pick-up address you provided, unless something is preventing them from doing so, then they will park as close as possible to the location. The driver will come to the door unless prevented by unusual circumstances.

The vehicle might arrive up to 30 minutes after your Ready Time. Please be ready to go when the vehicle arrives so that the driver can stay on schedule for all customers. The driver is not permitted to honk the horn to let you know the vehicle has arrived, so wait in an area where you can see or hear the vehicle arrive or where the driver will be able to see you.

Please note that the vehicle may arrive anytime within the 30 minute Ready Window and that drivers can only wait for you for 5 minutes after they have

arrived. If you are not ready, the driver may have to leave to avoid inconveniencing other riders.

### **Personal Care Attendants**

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone you may bring with you to assist you with traveling or with personal care or activities. One (1) PCA may ride for free when traveling with you. A PCA must get on and off the bus at the same places and times as you.

To be able to have one PCA ride free with you, you must be registered with us as needing a PCA. This is done as part of the eligibility process. If you did not indicate a need for a PCA when you first applied to be eligible for Paratransit and now need a PCA, you should call 326-2278 and request that a new application form be mailed to you.

You will need to tell the reservation agent when you schedule trips that you will be traveling with a PCA. This ensures that there will be room on the vehicle for you, your PCA, and other scheduled riders.

### **Guests/Companions**

A guest/companion is someone you want to bring along to share the trip, not someone you must bring to assist you. Guests/companions must pay a fare when accompanying you, and must get on and off the vehicle at the same place and time as you.

You will need to tell the reservation agent when you schedule trips that you will be traveling with one or more guests/companions. Drivers cannot add riders who do not have a reservation.

If you make a reservation for them, you are always entitled to bring one guest/companion with you. Additional guests/companions will be accommodated if there is enough space on the vehicle.

### **Children**

All children under six (6) years of age must be accompanied by an adult. They cannot ride unattended. If traveling with an eligible fare-paying adult, children under five (5) may ride for free.

## **Wheelchairs and other Mobility Aids**

The term “wheelchair” means a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or more wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

Our vehicles will transport a wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate them, unless doing so would be inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements such as a wheelchair of such size that it would block an aisle, or would interfere with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency.

A wheelchair user’s request to board a fixed route or paratransit vehicle separately from his or her device when the occupied weight of the device exceeds the design load of the vehicle lift will generally be granted.

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

It is the driver’s responsibility to ensure that mobility devices are properly secured. Wheelchair/scooters are required to be secured into the four point securement system at all times during the ride. We request that riders allow operators to secure the lap belts to ensure the customer’s safety.

## **Respirators and Portable Oxygen Equipment**

Portable oxygen equipment and portable respirators are permitted on all vehicles. Drivers are not permitted to assist you in using this equipment. If you need assistance with portable life support equipment, please arrange to bring a qualified attendant along with you.

## **Service Animals**

Riders may travel with a service animal. Service animals include guide dogs, signal dogs, and other animals trained to work or perform tasks for persons with disabilities.

You are responsible for the care and supervision of your animal while on board. If you are planning on riding with a service animal, please follow these guidelines:

- The animal must not be aggressive towards people or other animals
- Service animals “under control” are allowed to access all Lake County transit vehicles.
- Lake County Park Rules and Regulations require “Dogs in areas other than the designated enclosed or fenced area shall at all times be restrained or kept on a leash not more than six (6) feet in length.”
- LakeXpress and other county transit vehicles travel into County Parks on a regular basis. Therefore, service animals (dogs) on LakeXpress or Lake County Connection vehicles must be on a leash while in the vehicle.

## **Pets**

Animals that are not service animals may ride on Paratransit vehicles only if they are properly secured in a cage or kennel. For safety reasons, drivers are not permitted to carry cages or kennels on or off of Paratransit vehicles. If you need assistance with a pet, please arrange to travel with someone who can help you.

## **Rider Courtesy and Conduct**

- No smoking on the vehicles.
- Riders shall maintain appropriate, reasonable personal hygiene.
- No eating or drinking on-board (unless required for health reasons).
- No riding with open containers of alcohol or with illegal drugs.
- No abusive, threatening, or obscene language or actions.
- No deliberate fare evasion.
- No physical abuse of another rider or the driver.
- No petting guide dogs or other service animals without the permission of the owner.
- No playing of radios, cassette tape players, or compact disk players (without headphones), or other noisy equipment while on-board.
- No operating or tampering with any vehicle equipment.
- Littering is prohibited.
- Shirts and shoes or other footwear must be worn.
- Baby strollers and any shopping carts should be folded and must not block the aisle.
- Head, arms and other body parts must be kept inside the bus.
- Objects must not be thrown from the bus window.

- Parents must control children.
- Federal regulations prohibit the transportation of flammable or explosive materials on transit vehicles.
- Weapons are prohibited on buses.

Riders, their personal care attendants or companions traveling with riders, who violate rules of courtesy and conduct, may be subject to penalties, up to and including suspension of service.

Lake County Transit may refuse to provide service to riders, their personal care attendant or companions traveling with riders (any individual) that engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

However Lake County Transit will not refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of the entity or other persons.

## **Appendix A**

The following items are included due to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (section 504), specifically to provide that transportation entities are required to make reasonable modifications/accommodations to policies, practices, and procedures to avoid discrimination and ensure that their programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

DATES: These items are effective July 13, 2015.

### **Procedure CFR-1. Revised 7/13/15. 37.3 Definitions**

Lake County paratransit provides Door to door paratransit service as described in the Riders Guide: "Door to Door" ADA Paratransit Service is provided in Lake County. This meets the federally required "origin to destination" service. Drivers do not have to provide services that exceed "door-to-door" service (e.g., go beyond the doorway into a building to assist a passenger). Nor would drivers, for lengthy periods of time, have to leave their vehicles unattended or lose the ability to keep their vehicles under visual observation, or take actions that would be clearly unsafe (e.g., back a vehicle down a narrow alley in specific circumstances that would present a direct threat to safety).

### **Procedure CFR-2. Revised 7/13/15. Amended § 37.5**

Lake County Transit may refuse to provide service to riders, their personal care attendant or companions traveling with riders (any individual) that engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

However Lake County Transit will not refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of the entity or other persons.

### **Procedure CFR-3. Revised 7/13/15. § 37.17**

For any complaint received directly by the Coordinator, the complaint follow-up shall be handled in the following manner:

Complaint forms shall be filled out for all complaints received.

a. The Coordinator shall notify the Operator of the said complaint either by phone, e-mail or fax to initiate an investigation into the complaint. When a complaint is made by phone a written report shall also be sent.

b. On any written complaint or voice mail complaint received a verbal acknowledgment will be made within twenty-four (24) hours to the customer to inform the person that their complaint is being investigated. Further, a written record of the complaint will describe and explain the remedial action taken within three (3) days of the date that the complaint was received and mailed to the customer.

Within five (5) working days a follow-up letter will be sent to the individual filing the complaint to determine if the problem has been resolved to the person's satisfaction.

At the discretion of the CTC and depending on the severity of the complaint a verbal response may replace the written response, but the complaint will still be documented in the Monthly Report.

For any complaint received directly by the Operator, the Operator shall log the call into the system under the customer's file and resolve the complaint as soon as possible, and in no case no later than five days of receipt of the complaint.

It is important to note that in addition to a timely follow up and resolution to complaints, it is also imperative that the problem that caused the complaint is eliminated.

### **Procedure CFR-4. Revised 7/13/15. § 37.169**

Process to be used by Lake County in considering requests for reasonable modification with respect to fixed route, demand responsive, and complementary paratransit services.

Passengers may request a reasonable modification with respect to fixed route, demand responsive, and complementary paratransit in order to use our service, or submit a comment or complaint about the services, by contacting Lake County Transit Division at 352-323-5733 or sending an email to [ABradford@lakecountyfl.gov](mailto:ABradford@lakecountyfl.gov).

Whenever feasible, requests for modifications should be made and determined in advance, for example, during the paratransit eligibility process, through customer service inquiries, or through the complaint process.

Where a request for modification cannot practicably be made and determined in advance (e.g., because of a condition or barrier at the destination of a paratransit or fixed route trip of which the individual with a disability was unaware until arriving), operating personnel will make a determination of whether the modification should be provided at the time of the request. Operating personnel may consult with the management before making a determination to grant or deny the request.

Requests for modification of policies and practices may be denied only on one or more of the following grounds:

- (1) Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of the services, programs, or activities;
- (2) Granting the request would create a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
- (3) Without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use the services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.

In determining whether to grant a requested modification, Lake County will be guided by the provisions of Appendix E (below).

In any case in which a request for a reasonable modification is denied, action shall be taken, to the maximum extent possible, (that would not result in a direct threat or fundamental alteration) to ensure that the individual with a disability receives the services or benefit provided by the County.

### **Procedure CFR-5. Revised 7/13/15: Sandy or slippery walkway**

Passengers will be allowed to take the driver's arm to increase both the speed and safety of the walk from the door to the vehicle.

Likewise, if sand or slippery conditions at a bus stop make it difficult or impossible for a fixed route passenger with a disability to get to a lift, or for the lift to deploy, the driver should move the bus to a cleared area for boarding, if such is available within reasonable proximity to the stop.

### **Procedure CFR-6. Revised 7/13/15: Pick Up and Drop Off Locations with Multiple Entrances**

A paratransit rider's request to be picked up at home, but not at the front door of his or her home, should be granted, as long as the requested pick-up location does not pose a direct threat.

Similarly, in the case of frequently visited public places with multiple entrances (e.g., shopping malls, employment centers, schools, hospitals, airports), the paratransit operator should pick up and drop off the passenger at the entrance requested by the passenger, rather than meet them in a location that has been predetermined by the transportation agency, again assuming that doing so does not involve a direct threat.

### **Procedure CFR-7. Revised 7/13/15: Private Property**

Paratransit passengers may sometimes seek to be picked up on private property (e.g., in a gated community or parking lot, mobile home community, business or government facility where vehicle access requires authorized passage through a security barrier).

The paratransit operator should make every reasonable effort to gain access to such an area (e.g., work with the passenger to get the permission of the property owner to permit access for the paratransit vehicle). The paratransit operator is not required to violate the law or lawful access restrictions to meet the passenger's requests.

### **Procedure CFR-8. Revised 7/13/15: Obstructions**

For fixed route services, a passenger's request for a driver to position the vehicle to avoid obstructions to the passenger's ability to enter or leave the vehicle at a designated stop location, such as parked cars, sand, and construction, should be granted so long as positioning the vehicle to avoid the obstruction does not pose a direct threat.

To be granted, such a request should result in the vehicle stopping in reasonably close proximity to the designated stop location. Likewise, paratransit operators should be flexible in establishing pick up and drop off points to avoid obstructions.

### **Procedure CFR-9. Revised 7/13/15: Fare Handling**

A passenger's request for transit personnel (e.g., the driver, station attendant) to handle the fare media when the passenger with a disability cannot pay the fare by the generally established means will be granted on fixed route or paratransit service (e.g., in a situation where a bus passenger cannot reach or insert a fare into the farebox).

Transit personnel are not required to reach into pockets or backpacks in order to extract the fare media.

### **Procedure CFR-10. Revised 7/13/15: Eating and Drinking**

If a passenger with diabetes or another medical condition requests to eat or drink aboard a vehicle (fixed route or paratransit) or in a transit facility in order to avoid adverse health consequences, the request will be granted.

### **Procedure CFR-11. Revised 7/13/15: Medicine**

A passenger's request to take medication while aboard a fixed route or paratransit vehicle or in a transit facility will be granted. For example, individuals will be allowed to administer insulin injections and conduct finger stick blood glucose testing.

Transit staff will not need to provide medical assistance, however, as this would be a fundamental alteration of their function.

### **Procedure CFR-12. Revised 7/13/15: Boarding Separately From Wheelchair**

A wheelchair user's request to board a fixed route or paratransit vehicle separately from his or her device when the occupied weight of the device exceeds the design load of the vehicle lift will generally be granted.

(Note that under § 37.165(b), we were required to accommodate device/ user loads and dimensions that exceed the former "common wheelchair" standard, as long as the vehicle and lift will accommodate them.)

### **Procedure CFR-13. Revised 7/13/15: Dedicated vehicles or special equipment in a vehicle**

A paratransit passenger's request for special equipment (e.g., the installation of specific hand rails or a front seat in a vehicle for the passenger to avoid nausea or back pain) can be denied so long as the requested equipment is not required by the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Department's rules.

Likewise, a request for a dedicated vehicle (e.g., to avoid residual chemical odors) or a specific type or appearance of vehicle (e.g., a sedan rather than a van, in order to provide more comfortable service) can be denied.

Procedure CFR-14. Revised 7/13/15: Exclusive or Reduced Capacity Paratransit Trips.

A passenger's request for an exclusive paratransit trip will be denied as a fundamental alteration of the entity's services. Paratransit is by nature a shared-ride service.

### **Procedure CFR-15. Revised 7/13/15: Outside of the Service Area or Operating Hours**

A person's request for fixed route or paratransit service may be denied when honoring the request would require the transportation provider to travel outside of its service area or to operate outside of its operating hours. This request would not be a reasonable modification because it would constitute a fundamental alteration of the entity's service.

## **Procedure CFR-16. Revised 7/13/15: Personal Care Attendant (PCA)**

While PCAs may travel with a passenger with a disability, transportation Lake County is not required to provide a personal care attendant or personal care attendant services to meet the needs of passengers with disabilities on paratransit or fixed route trips.

For example, a passenger's request for a transportation entity's driver to remain with the passenger who, due to his or her disability, cannot be left alone without an attendant upon reaching his or her destination may be denied. It would be a fundamental alteration of the driver's function to provide PCA services of this kind.

## **Procedure CFR-17. Revised 7/13/15: Intermediate Stops**

Granting a paratransit passenger's request for a driver to make an intermediate stop, where the driver would be required to wait, is optional. For example, a passenger with a disability arranges to be picked up at a medical facility and dropped off at home. On the way, the passenger with a disability wishes to stop by a pharmacy and requests that the driver park outside of the pharmacy, wait for the passenger to return, and then continue the ride home. While this can be a very useful service to the rider such a stop in the context of a shared ride system is not required.

Since paratransit is, by its nature, a shared ride system, requests that could disrupt schedules and inconvenience other passengers could rise to the level of a fundamental alteration.

## **Procedure CFR-18. Revised 7/13/15: Payment**

A passenger's request for a fixed route or paratransit driver to provide the transit service when the passenger with a disability cannot or refuses to pay the fare may be denied.

Passengers are required to pay appropriate co-pays or fares. Free service would constitute a fundamental alteration of the service we provide.

## **Procedure CFR-19. Revised 7/13/15: Caring for Service Animals**

A paratransit or fixed route passenger's request that the driver take charge of a service animal will be denied. Caring for a service animal is the responsibility of the passenger or a PCA.

## **Procedure CFR-20. Revised 7/13/15: Opening Building Doors**

For paratransit services, a passenger's request for the driver to open an exterior entry door to a building to provide boarding and/or alighting assistance to a passenger with a disability should generally be granted as long as providing this assistance would not pose a direct threat, or leave the vehicle unattended or out of visual observation for a lengthy period of time.

Note that a request for "door-through-door" service (i.e., assisting the passenger past the door to the building) generally would not need to be granted because it could rise to the level of a fundamental alteration.

## **Procedure CFR-21. Revised 7/13/15: Exposing Vehicle to Hazards**

If the passenger requests that a vehicle follow a path to a pick up or drop off point that would expose the vehicle and its occupants to hazards, such as running off the road, getting stuck, striking overhead objects, or reversing the vehicle down a narrow alley, the request can be denied as creating a direct threat.

## **Procedure CFR-22. Revised 7/13/15: Hard-to-Maneuver Stops**

A passenger may request that a paratransit vehicle navigate to a pick-up point to which it is difficult to maneuver. A passenger's request to be picked up in a location that is difficult, but not impossible or impracticable, to access should generally be granted as long as picking up the passenger does not expose the vehicle to hazards that pose a direct threat (e.g., it is unsafe for the vehicle and its occupants to get to the pick-up point without getting stuck or running off the road).

### **Procedure CFR-23. Revised 7/13/15: Specific Drivers**

A passenger's request for a specific driver will be denied. Having a specific driver is not necessary to afford the passenger the service provided by the transit operator.

### **Procedure CFR-24. Revised 7/13/15: Luggage and Packages**

A passenger's request for a fixed route driver to assist with luggage or packages will be denied in most instances. Such assistance is a matter for the passenger or PCA, and providing this assistance would be a fundamental alteration of the driver's function.

Likewise, paratransit passengers are responsible for loading and unloading their belongings. Under limited circumstances the passenger may request the paratransit driver to assist with their belongings. However, there is a five bag limit and the bags cannot weigh more than 20 pounds each.

### **Procedure CFR-25. Revised 7/13/15: Request to Avoid Specific Passengers**

A paratransit passenger's request not to ride with certain passengers will be denied.

Paratransit is a shared-ride service. As a result, one passenger may need to share the vehicle with people that he or she would rather not.

### **Procedure CFR-26. Revised 7/13/15: Navigating an Incline, or Around Obstacles**

A paratransit passenger's request for a driver to help him or her navigate an incline (e.g., a driveway or sidewalk) with the passenger's wheeled device should generally be granted.

Likewise, assistance in traversing a difficult sidewalk (e.g., one where tree roots have made the sidewalk impassible for a wheelchair) should generally be granted, as should assistance around obstacles such as construction

areas between the vehicle and a door to a passenger's house or destination should generally be granted.

However, such assistance would not be provided if doing so would cause a direct threat, or leave the vehicle unattended or out of visual observation for a lengthy period of time.

### **Procedure CFR-27. Revised 7/13/15: Extreme Weather Assistance**

A passenger's request to be assisted from his or her door to a vehicle during extreme weather conditions should generally be granted so long as the driver leaving the vehicle to assist would not pose a direct threat, or leave the vehicle unattended or out of visual observation for a lengthy period of time.

For example, in extreme weather (e.g., very windy or stormy conditions), a person who is blind or vision-impaired or a frail elderly person may have difficulty safely moving to and from a building.

### **Procedure CFR-28. Revised 7/13/15: Unattended Passengers**

Where a passenger's request for assistance means that the driver will need to leave passengers aboard a vehicle unattended, Lake County will generally grant the request as long as accommodating the request would not leave the vehicle unattended or out of visual observation for a lengthy period of time, both of which could involve direct threats to the health or safety of the unattended passengers.

It is important to keep in mind that, just as a driver is not required to act as a PCA for a passenger making a request for assistance, so a driver is not intended to act as a PCA for other passengers in the vehicle, such that he or she must remain in their physical presence at all times.

### **Procedure CFR-29. Revised 7/13/15: Need for Return Trip Assistance**

A passenger with a disability may need assistance for a return trip when he or she did not need that assistance on the initial trip. For example, a dialysis patient may have no problem waiting at the curb for a ride to go to the dialysis

center, but may well require assistance to the door on his or her return trip because of physical weakness or fatigue.

Lake County provided door-to-door service for all paratransit trips unless doing so would create a direct threat, or leave the vehicle unattended or out of visual observation for a lengthy period of time..

### **Procedure CFR-30. Revised 7/13/15: Five-Minute Warning or Notification of Arrival Calls**

A passenger's request for a telephone call 5 minutes (or another reasonable interval) in advance or at time of vehicle arrival generally should be granted.

A passenger's request for a telephone call 5 minutes (or another reasonable interval) in advance or at time of vehicle arrival will be granted. These calls will be originated by Ride Right staff and generated through the Route Match system when available in 2016.

### **Procedure CFR-31. Revised 7/13/15: Hand-Carrying**

Except in emergency situations, a passenger's request for a driver to lift the passenger out of his or her mobility device will be denied because of the safety, dignity, and privacy issues implicated by hand-carrying a passenger.

Hand-carrying a passenger is also a PCA-type service which is outside the scope of driver duties, and hence a fundamental alteration.