

Interim Edition

CUSTOMER GUIDE



Monterey-Salinas Transit

RIDES

ADA Paratransit Program

Available in large print

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RIDES ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE

RIDES ADA Paratransit is accessible transportation for people with physical, visual or cognitive impairment that **prevent** them from making some or all of their trips on fixed-route buses in accordance with the Americans with Disability Act of 1990(ADA).

RIDES ADA Paratransit is curbside-to-curbside, shared-ride transportation that is available and operates in the same areas and during the same days and hours as the fixed-route bus service. A request for transportation must be reserved at least one day in advance. Last-door-to-first-door service is available upon request at the time the trip is reserved.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

RIDES ADA Paratransit service is for individuals who meet the requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The applicant must complete the certification process and be found eligible in accordance with ADA guidelines.

Applicants may be eligible for RIDES ADA Paratransit service if, as a result of their disability or health-related condition:

- Applicant is unable to independently travel to or from fixed-route stops or stations within the service area; or

- Applicant is unable to independently board, ride or exit an accessible fixed route (bus or light rail) vehicle; or
- Applicant cannot independently “navigate the system” even if they are able to get to a transit stop and can get on and off the vehicle. (Example: A person who can’t ride the bus independently, recognize bus stops, understand how to complete bus trips, determine the fare, etc)

Your disability or condition must meet ADA requirements for certification

TYPES OF CERTIFICATION

Unconditional – Due to a disability or health condition, one is always prevented from independently using fixed route buses. This level of eligibility allows one to use ADA paratransit services for any trip in the MST-defined service area.

Conditional – A customer can use fixed-route services sometimes but may require paratransit services when a combination of disability, environmental barriers, or some other special circumstance prohibits the independent use of fixed-route services for a particular trip. MST RIDES will only be provided for those trips in which ADA Paratransit eligibility standards have been met. Riders will be required to use the MST fixed-route bus or find alternative transportation for trips that are ADA Paratransit ineligible.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

An applicant must complete a *Contact Information Form* (if recertifying the application form will be mailed with a recertification notification letter). In addition, a *Professional Verification Form* must be completed by a state licensed health care provider that can attest to the applicant's disability or limitations related to riding fixed-route buses. This licensed professional must be trained specifically in assessing the disability or limitations for which the applicant is stating their eligibility. Both forms must be signed and mail to MST; not copies or facsimiles will be accepted.

The forms and a RIDES brochure can also be requested by calling MST at 1-888-678-2871 or by visiting the MST website at: www.mst.org. When the completed forms are received and reviewed, the applicant will be contacted by telephone to schedule an in-person interview that may include a short bus trip with a travel trainer. The in-person interview may take up to one hour.

(Note: if an applicant is unable to schedule an interview within 90 days of submitting both completed forms, the applicant may be required to provide a new *Professional Verification Form* before being scheduled for interview).

There are two parts to the in-person interview process:

- 1) A MST Eligibility Specialist will ask the applicant questions to assess the applicant's ability to safely use both fixed-route and RIDES services.
- 2) Applicant will take a short walk to a bus stop and then a short bus ride. An MST Mobility Specialist will

observe how the applicant can navigate various aspects of the short trip including cross slopes, inclines, curbs and curb cuts, and street crossing. Physical skills such as strength, coordination, balance, range of motion, and cognition will also be evaluated. Also, an applicant's ability to use the RIDES service safely will be closely examined.

Upon completing the interview, an eligibility determination letter will be mailed to the applicant within 21 days from the date of the interview.

RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

Recertification for RIDES ADA Paratransit is required for each participant prior to the expiration of participant current eligibility. The MST RIDES office will attempt to notify participants of their recertification requirement between 60 and 90 days prior to their expiration date. The certification expiration date is stated on the previous certification letter as well as on the MST-issued RIDES photo ID card. It is the applicant's responsibility to assure that MST has a current mailing address and to recertify in a timely manner regardless of whether or not MST has successfully reached the applicant with a reminder letter.

Please call the MST RIDES certification office at 1-888-678-2871 if you move or change your home telephone number, or no longer require ADA paratransit service.

(Note: The certification process may take 60 days or more so do not delay in submitting application materials).

days within a 365-day period. Visitors will be required to provide eligibility verification from the transit system they are currently registered with while visitors who do not have this kind of eligibility will be asked for documentation of their disability and verification of their place of residence.

PHOTO ID REQUIREMENT

To ensure that only certified MST RIDES customers use the service, the RIDES vehicle operator must be able to accurately identify each rider boarding the vehicle. Therefore, each customer must be able to provide some form of valid photo identification to assist the driver in identifying you as MST RIDES Customers. MST will issue you a RIDES photo ID when you first certify or when you first recertify. (Eligible visitors can offer a photo ID issued by a government agency)

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Service is designed to be “comparable to” (or similar to) the fixed-route bus service. For this reason, it operates in the same areas and times as the fixed-route bus service.

SERVICE AREA

MST ADA Paratransit service is provided within a service corridor that extends $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from any of MST’s fixed route service. Both points of departure and destination of each trip must be within a RIDES $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile service corridor.

SERVICE HOURS

RIDES ADA Paratransit services are available whenever MST’s regular fixed-route bus service is in operation along the $\frac{3}{4}$ corridor. MST’s fixed-route schedules are subject to change.

SERVICE FARES

Fares are set by the Monterey-Salinas Transit District Board of Directors and are subject to change. (See “Service Fare” insert)

Exact fare in the form of cash or RIDES tickets is required. MST RIDES vehicle operators do not have the ability to make change. RIDES tickets may be purchased in person at MST ticket outlets at:

Salinas Transit Center

110 Salinas Street
Salinas, CA 93901

Marina Transit Exchange

280 Reservation Road
Marina, CA 93933

MST Bus Stop Shop

201 Pearl Street
Monterey, CA 93940
(This outlet also accepts orders by mail)

By Telephone: Toll Free 1-888-MST-BUS1 (1-888-678-2871)

Order online @ www.mst.org

RESERVING A PARATRANSIT TRIP

You may make a reservation up to **7-days** in advance of your trip. There are no restrictions on the trip purpose. Please have the following information ready when you call to make a reservation:

- 1) Your first and last name and RIDES ID number
- 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
- 5) The time you would like to arrive, i.e., appointment time, etc.
- 6) The time you will be ready to be picked up for a return trip
- 7) If you use a mobility aid such as a cane, walker, wheelchair or scooter. (This will provide additional information regarding the type of seating that will be reserved for you)
- 8) If you have a personal care attendant or guest(s) that will be traveling with you. (No more than 3 children are allowed to ride, children 46” and under ride free with a paying passenger. Children under age 5 must be accompanied by a fare-paying passenger)
- 9) If any of your contact information, i.e., mailing address or telephone numbers, has change, please provide current information to the RIDES reservationist.

Due to variations in vehicle availability, MST RIDES may need to schedule a pick up or drop off time within an hour of the time requested. There is also a 15-minute ready window on either side of the assigned pick up or drop off time that the RIDES bus may arrive. There is no same-day service.

SCHEDULING TIPS

- When you call to schedule a trip(s), please have a pen and paper handy to write down the reservation information.
- Have all of the information for each trip available when calling. This will help reservationist provide more efficient service. Allow extra time for the trip if not certain of exactly when a return pick up is needed.
- If the trip is for an appointment, remember to allow some extra time to get from the MST RIDES vehicle to the final destination. (Example: If an appointment is at 10A.M, request a 9:45A.M. drop off time).
- Likewise, allow time to get to the place where the MST RIDES vehicle will arrive for the return trip.

WHEN TO CALL

RIDES will accept reservations between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM weekdays and between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM on weekends. The more advanced notice provided the better chance of getting the time slot desired. It is generally recommended that a trip be scheduled as soon as the need for paratransit service is known.

To schedule or cancel a trip, call:

From Salinas	(831) 754-2804
From Monterey	(831) 373-1393

If an automated recording begins the caller will be given instructions on how to schedule or cancel a trip

WHERE TO CATCH THE RIDES VEHICLE

Last-Door to First-Door:

MST offers “last-door to first-door” service meaning each MST RIDES customer needing assistance to or from a RIDES bus to the first door of their destination may request such assistance when making a trip reservation but no later than the 5:00 PM the day before the scheduled trip. MST RIDES vehicles do not enter residential driveways, travel off of paved roads, or travel on private property.

VEHICLE ARRIVALS

MST RIDES vehicles are expected to arrive within 15± minutes of the scheduled pick up time. Vehicles will wait at the curbside for no more than 5 minutes for a passenger to board. If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the 15± minute ready window, call MST RIDES at (831) 754-2804 or (831) 373-1393.

RETURN TRIPS

When most customers schedule a trip with MST RIDES, they usually request a round trip reservation. Although it can be difficult to estimate how much time is needed at a particular appointment, it is important to remember that if the appointment runs overtime, a return trip may be missed. It is always a good idea to schedule a return trip late enough to assure being ready to travel when the RIDES vehicle arrives. This is especially important for dialysis appointments.

Should a return trip be missed the customer will have to make alternative transportation arrangements.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

The RIDES Subscription Service allows customers to submit a “standing order” for trips that occur on a routine basis, i.e., trips to and from work, school, dialysis treatments, etc. However, subscription service may not be available under some circumstances.

If you are receiving Subscription Service, it is important to let a RIDES reservationist know in advance if a ride is not needed on a particular day. (Example: A trip is not needed on a holiday or when on vacation) This will help RIDES avoid unnecessary trips thereby keeping cost down.

(Note: If a trip is not cancelled 2 hours before scheduled the subscriber will be charged with a “No Show” which can result in loss of service for a period of time for repeated occurrences)

CANCELLATION/NO-SHOW POLICY

It is important to remember that every time a trip is scheduled, MST RIDES will send a bus to the desired pick up location. If a customer fails to show up for a scheduled trip, or cancels a trip without sufficient notice, an important resource is wasted that potentially deprives another customer of the use of the service for that time slot.

To cancel a scheduled ride, customers should contact MST RIDES Dispatch (754-2804 or 373-1393).

Late cancellations and no shows cause a tremendous strain on system resources. Please be considerate of other's needs too.

Failure to cancel a scheduled trip within two (2) hours of the scheduled pickup-time will be considered a NO-SHOW event.

A NO-SHOW will be recorded into the customer's transportation record for the following reasons:

1. The trip is cancelled by the customer or designee with less than two (2) hours notice,
2. The vehicle arrives within the ready window but the customer fails to board within five (5) minutes, or
3. The vehicle arrives within the ready window, but the driver is unable to locate the customer at the requested pick-up location within five (5) minutes.

PENALTIES FOR NO-SHOWS AND LATE CANCELLATIONS

1. NO-SHOWS that exceed 10% of the scheduled trips in any month shall be considered a violation of MST's NO-SHOW Trip Cancellation policy.

2. Upon the first occurrence of a violation, a warning letter shall be issued to the RIDES passenger.
3. Should any subsequent violations occur, the passenger shall be denied service for a period of time as follows:

Monthly Delinquencies	
>10%	5-Day Suspension
>20%	10-Day Suspension
>30%	15-Day Suspension
>40%	20-Day Suspension

4. The passenger will receive a 30-day written notice of an impending suspension.
5. NO-SHOW violations will be tracked from January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year and NO-SHOW violations will reset to zero on the first day of each January thus requiring a written warning letter for the first violation of the new year.
6. Passengers scheduling fewer than ten (10) trips in any month may be exempt from policy violation penalties at

the discretion of MST. Violations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are not subject to appeal.

APPEALING A NO-SHOW CHARGE: A passenger who believes that a NO-SHOW event has been recorded into their transportation record in error, may

appeal that entry by contacting the MST at (888) 678-2871 or may submit a request for appeal in writing:

MST CTSA Manager
19 Upper Ragsdal Drive
Monterey, CA. 93940

Circumstances of each violation will be reviewed and investigated on a case-by-case basis, and a written decision shall be issued to the appellant within 10 business days.

APPEALING A NOTICE OF SUSPENSION: Passengers may appeal a notice of suspension by providing a written request for a hearing within 15 days from the date of the suspension letter. Passengers should address the written request to:

MST General Manager/CEO
Monterey-Salinas Transit
19 Upper Ragsdal Drive
Monterey, CA. 93940

Once a request for an appeal is received, MST's General Manager, or his/her designated representative, shall notify the appellant of a hearing date. If the appellant or designated representative is not present at the hearing, a decision will be based on the written documentation submitted. The General Manager/CEO or his/her designated representative shall provide the appellant with a written final ruling within 15 days of the hearing date. The appellant will be able to continue to make reservations and utilize the service pending this review. Subsequent NO-SHOWS during the appeal process will also be considered in the final penalty determination.

CONDUCT ABOARD MST RIDES POLICY

Passengers are required to follow MST Rules of Conduct to ensure the safety and comfort of all passengers and the RIDES ADA Paratransit operator.

Riders, companions, and personal care attendants

MUST NOT

- 1) Eat, drink or smoke on board
- 2) Use sound-generating electronic equipment without ear phones or a headset and only then if the volume is low enough as to not disturb other passengers or the coach operator
- 3) Shout or talk loudly
- 4) Use abusive, threatening, or obscene language

- 5) Harass other riders or operators or use racial, religious, sexual, gender, or age-related disparaging speech
- 6) Carry fireworks, flammable liquids, or weapons aboard the vehicle
- 7) Commit or threaten violent or other illegal actions
- 8) Discharge bodily fluids, ride with open wounds, or fail to maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene, including foul odors or strong scents such as perfumes, colognes and aftershave applications
- 9) Evade fare payment
- 10) Distract the coach operator or interfere with the vehicle equipment
- 11) Leave seat while the vehicle is in motion

MST RIDES recognizes that an individual's disability or medical condition may cause a passenger to unknowingly and/or unintentionally violate the Conduct Aboard MST RIDES Policy. For this reason, MST looks at each violation individually.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

Firearms are prohibited except for handguns carried by peace officers or other persons authorized by permit to carry concealed weapons. Explosives, gasoline, and materials, which produce objectionable odors, are also prohibited.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS (PCA)

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated by a registered RIDES customer, or specifically employed to help the customer, to meet his/her travel needs. Registered PCA(s) may use MST RIDES services and are not required to pay a fare when they are accompanying an eligible RIDES customer.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS RESPONSIBILITY

Accompany riders who are mentally or cognitively impaired, or have severe memory problems, such that the rider cannot be safely left on their own at either the pick-up or drop-off location. It is the responsibility of the rider's PCA or family to clearly identify the rider to RIDES so that RIDES can inform the driver and take appropriate precautions. The RIDES driver cannot act as an attendant for these riders. These riders will be allowed to travel without an attendant only as long as they exhibit safe behavior in the vehicle and are able to care for themselves. If the rider cannot be left alone, the PCA or family member must be present at the pick-up and drop-off location. If the PCA or family member is not present when the driver attempts to pick-up or drop-off the rider, it can seriously disrupt the driver's schedule. If the PCA or family member has been warned and the practice of PCA or family member absence continues, service to the rider may be suspended and the situation reported to child or adult protective services.

REGISTERING OF PCA'S

Designated PCA's will be registered once applicants have completed the RIDES application interview. PCA's will either receive their identification card in the mail or obtain a PCA identification card at the MST RIDES Office located at 201 Pearl Street, Monterey, CA 93940.

PCA'S BOARDING MST RIDES VEHICLES

In order for a registered PCA to board an MST RIDES Vehicle they must:

1. Accompany a registered MST RIDES customer.
2. Present their PCA Photo ID card to the MST RIDES vehicle operator when boarding.

If a PCA does not present a valid PCA Photo ID card to the MST RIDES vehicle operator, they must pay full fare. MST RIDES vehicle operators will verify that PCA's accompanying eligible customers are in fact those persons as stated on the PCA's Photo ID card.

In order to ensure there is adequate room for PCAs on the MST RIDES vehicle, customers must notify the MST RIDES dispatch office that a PCA will accompany the customer. This notification should be made when the trip is scheduled.

GUEST

In addition to the customer's registered Personal Care Attendant, one other individual may accompany an MST RIDES customer as a companion on a per trip basis

provided they have the same origin and destination as the RIDES customer, adequate space is available for them on the vehicle, and that it will not result in a denial of service to another MST RIDES customer. In order to ensure there is adequate room for companion(s) on a MST RIDES vehicle, customers must notify the MST RIDES dispatch office of the number of companion(s) that are expected to accompany the customer on the trip. This notification should be made when the trip is scheduled. Each request for service for additional companion(s) will be considered on an individual basis dependent upon available space. All companions **shall pay full fare.**

SERVICE ANIMALS



The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires public transportation agencies such as MST to allow people with disabilities to bring service animals onto public transportation vehicles. Service animals include guide dogs, signal dogs, or other animals individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. MST RIDES vehicle operators may exclude any animal when that animal’s presence poses a direct threat to the health or

safety of others. Each situation will be considered individually.

MOBILITY AID SPECIFICATION

All MST RIDES vehicles are equipped with industry standard lifts that have a minimum lifting capacity of 600 pounds. In order to ensure the safety of all MST RIDES customers and that of the vehicle operators, the following policy is in force:

- A. The MST RIDES program shall carry the wheelchair and occupant if the lift and vehicle can safely accommodate the wheelchair and occupant.
 1. MST may decline to carry a wheelchair occupant on any RIDES program vehicle if the combined weight exceeds that of the lift specifications, or if the carriage of the wheelchair is demonstrated to be inconsistent with MST safety requirements.
 2. MST shall not permit a wheelchair to ride in places other than designated securement locations in the vehicle.
 3. The MST RIDES program shall carry individuals with a disability who use a Segway as a mobility device and shall permit the individual to use the lift when boarding the service. MST shall not permit Segways to ride in places other than designated securement locations in the vehicle.

CARRY- ON BAGGAGE

Baggage is limited to items carried by the customer and must not block the aisle. No baggage shall have any

dimension in excess of five feet in length. Fishing rods must have the hooks removed.

CUSTOMER SERVICE CONTACT

Should you require any additional information about the MST RIDES Program, or have a comment or service complaint, please contact us at:

MST CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT

19 Upper Ragsdale Drive

Monterey, CA 93940

Phone: 1-888-678-2871

TDD: Hearing Impaired: (831) 393-8111

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Contact: Call **211** or refer to www.211mc.org

FREE TRAVEL TRAINING

MST offers free travel training to all customers whether they ride MST fixed-route buses, RIDES buses, or both. Call the RIDES office for information or email mobility@mst.org.

MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC)

The MAC advises the MST Board of Directors and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) on matters of broad interest to persons with transportation challenges in Monterey County. Members are appointed by the MST Board of Directors and include both consumers and social service professionals who can represent a cross section of the county's population.

ADA PARATRANSIT RIDE (ADAPT-R)

The ADAPT-R is a standing subcommittee of the MAC that provides advice on matters specifically related to the MST RIDES ADA Paratransit program. Members are appointed by the MAC chairman and can include both MAC members and non-MAC members who are qualified to the needs of RIDES consumers.

Both MAC and the ADAPT-R meetings are open to the public and guests are welcome. For more information, visit www.mstmobility.org/advisory-committe or contact MST staff at mobility@mst.org.

