



LAKE CHARLES TRANSIT SYSTEM (LCTS)

PARA-TRANSIT SERVICE GUIDE



LAKE CHARLES TRANSIT SYSTEM (LCTS)
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THIS DOCUMENT IS **NOT FOR** THE
PHYSICIAN TO REVIEW. THIS IS
FOR THE PASSENGER'S
INFORMATION

Introduction

ADA Para-Transit is an origin-to-destination service as needed; shared ride transportation for individuals whose disabilities or health conditions prevent them from using Lake Charles Transit (LCTS) bus system, also referred to as a fixed-route. This guide is designed to assist you with understanding the service and your responsibilities while using it.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires public transportation agencies like LCTS to provide specialized transportation comparable to the public transit bus service for individuals who do not have the ability to ride public transit.

LCTS Para-Transit operates on a demand-response basis for residents and visitors within the Lake Charles City Limits who are certified as ADA Para-Transit eligible.

Service Days and Hours

Para-Transit Service operates during the same days and hours as the fixed-routes bus system. The Service area for Para-Transit Service is the corporate city limits of Lake Charles.

Fixed Route: Monday- Friday 5:45AM-5:45PM

Para-Transit: Monday-Friday 5:45Am-5:45PM

LCTS Holiday Schedule

The LCTS offices are closed on the following Holidays:

- New Years Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Mardi Gras
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Applying for Para-Transit

In order to utilize LCTS Para-Transit Service you must complete an application provided to you by LCTS. When your completed application is received, it will be evaluated by LCTS Personnel to determine how your disability or health related conditions may affect your ability to ride the LCTS fixed-route system.

Only applications received whose disabilities prevent them from using the regular bus service are eligible under the

ADA. The number to call to obtain an application for ADA Para-Transit Service is (337) 491-1267. No applications are to be faxed; the original copy must be mailed into the LCTS Para-Transit office for review. You will be notified by letter as to your eligibility status within 21-days of receipt of your completed application.

The 21- day processing time does not apply to incomplete applications or applications not received by LCTS.

Please ensure that all sections of the application have been completed prior to submittal, or the application will be considered incomplete. LCTS personnel will return the incomplete application to the applicant for completion.

Application's Status Notification

Upon approval, the ADA eligible applicant will receive a letter of approval with how to make reservations and general information on how the LCTS Para-Transit Service operates. Also, included will be a green card that **must** be shown each time an ADA Para-Transit eligible rider boards the ADA accessible vehicle.

Application Denial

Applicants will be notified by letter stating the reasons as to the denial of the LCTS Para-Transit Service. LCTS has an appeal process for riders who feel that they have not received service for which they believe they are eligible. We ask that appeals be made in writing and must include a detailed explanation from the applicant and his/her health care provider as to why the denied service are necessary. See appeals process on the last page.

Appeals for denials, no shows, and cancellations may be filed with the Transit Department in writing for further review.

The appeals process is reviewed by the following board:

- ❖ **Transit Manager**
- ❖ **Assistant Director**
- ❖ **Director of Public Works**
- ❖ **Office of Community Affairs**

Appeals will be processed within 21-days from receipt in the Transit Department. After the review process is completed a letter will be mailed to the individual with the decision. Until the appeal process is completed, service will continue for the individual. Service interruption will only occur after the Appeals process is completed and the individual has been notified by mail.

Re-certification

LCTS requires eligible ADA Para-Transit passengers to be re-certified a minimum of every three (3) years. If the qualifying condition is temporary, re-certification may be sooner. It is the responsibility of the passenger to reapply for service prior to the

eligibility expiration date and notify the administrative office of contact changes such as but not limited to phone numbers, addresses, and emergency contact(s). LCTS will notify the passenger whose certification is nearing its expiration. If a passenger fails to renew his/her Para-Transit eligibility, service will be discontinued.

All passengers are subjected to re-certification.

****Note: The Service area for Para-Transit Service is the corporate city limits of Lake Charles.****

Para-Transit Eligibility

Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (this including vision impairment) is eligible for LCTS Para-Transit Service. The ADA defines eligibility for complementary Para-transit service in [49 CFR Section 37.123] of the federal regulations. Eligibility is limited to people who fall within one of these categories:

Category One

The first category of eligibility includes people who are unable to use fully accessible fixed-route services. Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment, and unable to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed-route system, without assistance of another individual (except operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

All reasonable accommodations will be reviewed and considered.

Category Two

The second category of eligibility consists of an individual who cannot use buses without wheelchair lifts or other boarding assistance devices. These persons are eligible for Para-transit service if accessible buses are not available on the fixed-route on which they want to travel. All reasonable accommodations will be reviewed and considered.

Category Three

The third category consists of person with specific impairment-related conditions who cannot travel to a bus stop or from bus stop to their final destination. A person is eligible if traveling to and from a bus stop is impossible when architectural and/or environmental barriers are combined with the specific impairment-related condition. All reasonable accommodations will be reviewed and considered.

Temporary Disabilities

Individuals with temporary disabilities may be eligible for LCTS Para-Transit Service. The standards for eligibility are the same as those for permanent disabilities. Individuals with temporary disabilities who are eligible for service will be provided service only for the duration of their disability. Individuals may be ADA Para-Transit eligible on the basis of a permanent or temporary disability.

Reserving a Ride

To make a reservation please call our reservationist at (337) 491-1267. All reservations must be made at least one (1) day ahead of all scheduled rides. Ride reservations are accepted from 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. Mondays- Fridays. Reservations are made on a first come first serve basis. Reservations can be made via voicemail. If you receive the voicemail during your call or after hours, please leave a message and your call will be returned. Voicemails left after hours will not be scheduled until the following business day during regular office hours.

LCTS may negotiate pick up times with the individual, but LCTS shall not require an ADA para transit eligible individual to schedule a trip to begin more than one (1) hour before or after the individual's desired departure time.

When calling to reserve a ride the following information will need to be provided:

- Your first and last name
- Your preferred pick-up time.
- Your origin and destination address and phone numbers at those locations (including building name, specific drop-off information.) If medical appointment, include the name of the doctor and the suite number.)
- If you will be traveling with a Personal Care Attendant or companion or a service animal.
- If you or anyone accompanying you will be traveling with a wheelchair, scooter, or other equipment.
- Any other information the driver should know to help on your travel.

To schedule appointments please follow the chart below:

CALL ON	TO SCHEDULE FOR
MONDAY	TUESDAY
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
THURSDAY	FRIDAY
FRIDAY	MONDAY
*SATURDAY AND SUNDAY	MONDAY

***If a voicemail is left on Saturday or Sunday to schedule for a Monday ride, please remember that we are closed on all weekends. LCTS may negotiate pick up times with the individual and will make good faith effort to accommodate each individuals requested appointment.**

Personal Care Attendant (PCA)

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) assisting the passenger with daily life functions may provide assistance during the ride or at the destinations. If you need assistance to travel, riding with a PCA is strongly encouraged. The passenger's health care provider determines the need for a PCA. Authorized PCAs can travel with LCTS passengers at no cost. When making your reservations, please advise the LCTS reservation agent if you will be accompanied by your PCA. The PCA will be picked up and dropped off at the same locations as the passenger.

Guest/Companion

Passengers who are ADA Para-Transit eligible will be allowed to travel with a least one (1) guest/companion, such as a friend or relative, but not as a PCA. You may arrange to bring one companion along on each ride, in addition to one PCA.

Companions must be picked up and dropped off at the same locations. The fare for a guest (companion) will be the same as the fare for the ADA Para-Transit eligible passenger. Please note that LCTS Para-Transit requires that the Para-Transit passenger reserve a space for the companion when the passenger reserves their own ride.

Out-Of-Area Riding Privileges

Certifications of ADA Para-Transit individuals from other agencies will be honored. Individuals from out-of-town requesting service must present the name of the certifying Para-Transit provider, the telephone number of the provider's Para-Transit coordinator, an expiration date (if any), and any conditions or limitations on eligibility. If the individual has indicated the need for a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), this must be noted in the documentation.

LCTS Para-Transit will provide these services to visiting ADA Para-Transit eligible individuals for 30 nonconsecutive days per calendar year. Eligible clients may also apply for permanent ADA Para-Transit service as a member with the LCTS. All rules of the LCTS Para-Transit service rules must be observed. In order to receive continuation of service. All rules of LCTS Para-Transit service rules must be observed by visitors.

Trip Fare

ADA Para-Transit eligible riders are required to pay a fare for each one-way trip. The base fare is a \$1.00 and is payable in cash only. All fares are subject to change.

Drivers must collect fares upon boarding, so please have the exact fare ready as they cannot give change.

Using LCTS Para-Transit

Wheelchairs

LCTS will transport all types' wheelchairs as defined by the ADA regulations and those meeting our vehicle specifications.

Scooters

Scooter-type devices have been shown to be unstable on lifts and sometimes may exceed the weight and ADA allowable dimensions. Scooters can also be unstable once inside the vehicle. Passengers traveling with scooters should adhere to the same safety procedures as those for wheelchairs.

Transporting Packages

Passengers are only allowed up to three (3) packages, that they can handle on their own. They can be plastic grocery or shopping bags. Passengers should make other arrangements for packages exceeding three parcels. Excessive luggage and large boxes cannot be accommodated.

Service Animals

You may travel with a service animal such as a service dog. LCTS Para-Transit will not transport animals that are not service trained. Please inform the reservationist when booking trips that you will be traveling with a service animal.

***Note: For safety reasons, drivers are not allowed to carry cages or handle the service animals.**

Transporting Life-support Equipment

You may bring a respirator, portable oxygen, and/or other life-support equipment as long as it does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. Some oxygen tanks contain explosive materials; these tanks need to be secured properly.

No Show/ Cancellation/ Destination Changes

Riders are responsible for making sure they are ready on time for their scheduled ride. A driver is only responsible for waiting no longer than ten (10) minutes for any rider to appear for their scheduled pick-up.

To cancel a ride, a rider needs to give the LCTS a reasonable amount of notice. This ensures that the driver will have time to review the schedule and make note of this cancellation. This also allows time to schedule another rider who is wanting that ride time.

To change a destination, a rider must notify the LCTS Office before they are scheduled to be picked up. This is to ensure the driver is notified and does not attempt to drop a rider off at the wrong location and that the pickup driver will not go to the wrong location.

Passengers Responsibilities

Below is a list of responsibilities designed to ensure safety and comfort for passengers.

Passengers have a responsibility to:

- Read all sections of the Rider's Information Guide carefully
- Make reservations one day in advance of needed ride
- Be at designated pick-up location
- Board the vehicle as soon as it arrives
- Call to inquire if the vehicle has not arrived with your thirty (30) minute "pick-up window"
- Call to cancel rides that are not needed
- Call to change destination
- Pay the correct fare upon boarding
- Wear seat belts
- Avoid distracting the driver or annoying other passengers with inappropriate behavior.
- Maintain acceptable standards or personal hygiene.
- Bring a personal travel attendant if needed.
- Are prohibited from eating, drinking, or smoking on the vehicle at all times.

It is the responsibility of the passenger to watch for the bus. LCTS operators are not responsible for going inside establishments to look for passengers.

Passengers requiring medication or oxygen at regular intervals should be advised that travel time on the Para-transit vehicle is comparable to that of the fixed-route system. Rides are subject to delays that may result in a passenger's on-board time being longer than 60 minutes. Public transportation is subject to unpredictable conditions such as traffic delays and mechanical problems.

LCTS operators cannot be held responsible for the administration of medications. The administration of medication is the responsibility of the passenger. Any passenger requiring assistance of medication or oxygen while in a LCTS vehicle must travel with a PCA or companion. If the administration of medications or oxygen become necessary while on the LCTS vehicle, LCTS will contact emergency medical assistance to administer the medications or oxygen at the passenger's expense. Repeated incidents in which medication schedules disrupt or delay other LCTS passengers may result in the evaluation of the individual's suitability to use LCTS services.

Passengers may not operate or tamper with any equipment while on the vehicle. This rule includes the operation of the hydraulic lift, ramp and attempts to remove wheelchair tie-downs or passenger seat belts.

Each passenger must comply with the rules of conduct. Actions of misconduct, including illegal, violent or seriously disruptive behavior, will be grounds for suspension of service for the passenger. Anyone found acting in an unsafe manner, which may endanger other passengers, the driver, or the vehicle, will be terminated from the service immediately. LCTS will consider

an appeal for such suspension of services on a case-by-case basis.

Drivers Responsibilities

Below is a list of responsibilities designed to ensure safety and comfort for LCTS Drivers.

Drivers will:

- Provide assistance to customers from door to door when boarding/disembarking the LCTS vehicles.
- Be held responsible for the operation of the hydraulic lift, ramp, and security mobility devices safely in the vehicle.

Drivers will NOT:

- Wait longer than ten (10) minutes for any rider to appear for their scheduled pick-up.
- Leave a scheduled rider if the rider is within sight of the LCTS van and is attempting to make their way to the vehicle.
- Leave the LCTS vehicle unattended or out of sight with the engine operating.
- Pull or back into driveways of a passenger's dwelling.
- Transport any rider that is too ill to sit up and be secured in their seat, nauseous, vomiting, or bleeding. The LCTS Driver will first notify dispatch of the rider's condition then if necessary, advise medical authorities of either the rider's need for medical attention or that they must remain at the medical unit until they are well enough to travel on the LCTS van.

- Transfer passengers from their wheelchairs to a vehicle seats.
- Lift or carry riders.
- Carry riders or wheelchairs up or down steps.
- Carry packages.
- Accept tips or gratuities or act in a manner that would suggest that tipping is appropriate.
- Drivers cannot make change

Keeping Eligibility and Information Up-to-Date

Please call LCTS Para-Transit service provider at (337)491-1267 if there is a change in the following information:

- Your address or telephone number
- Your emergency contact's name or telephone number
- The type of mobility device you are using.

When a person is registered as eligible for ADA Para-Transit service and does not use the service for twelve (12) consecutive months, he or she is considered an “inactive” passenger. If a reservationist informs you that you are an inactive passenger, you will be asked to verify basic information on your file. If you are able to verify this information, your records will be reactivated and your service will be restored, provided your eligibility has not expired.

Suggestions, Comments, and Complaints

LCTS seeks to provide its passengers with safe, reliable and passenger-oriented service. We look forward to working with you to provide the best service possible. If you have any suggestions, comments or a complaint about our service, please call our Transit Manager at 337-491-1267.

**Lake Charles Transit
1155 Ryan Street
Lake Charles, LA 70601**

Specific details will help LCTS thoroughly address your suggestions, complaints, or comments in an expeditious fashion.

Please remember to include the following information when calling or writing us.

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Location, Day, and time of experience, if applicable.
- Vehicle number and/or driver's name/description, if applicable.
- Reservation or service agent's name, if concerning a telephone conversation.
- Explanation of incident, suggestions, or comment.

Complaints received by LCTS will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for investigation. If the supervisor or

other information staff is not available, the call will go to voice mail and a response will be provided as soon as possible.

Telecommunications Relay Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 took full effect on July 26, 1993. Title VI of the ADA requires all telephone companies across the United States to provide telecommunications relay services.

A telecommunications relay services (TRS) allows people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired to communicate through a communications assistant (CA) with people who use a standard telephone. A CA relays the TTY (text telephone or telecommunications device for deaf and hard of hearing people) input to the telephone user and types that person's response back to the TTY user. Telecommunications relay services can be reached by dialing 711.

Just as you can dial 411 for information, you can dial 711 to access all telecommunications relay services anywhere in the United States. The relay service is free.

CAs are trained to be as unobtrusive as possible during a call. A CA's responsibility is to relay the conversation exactly as it is received. All relay calls are confidential.

Regardless of which long-distance company or organization is providing a state's relay service, callers can continue to use the long-distance company of their choice.

Two options when using a telephone relay service are voice carry-over (VCO) and hearing carry-over (HCO). VCO allows a person with a hearing impairment to speak directly to the other party and then read the response typed by a CA. HCO allows a person with speech impairment to hear the other party and relay the TTY response back to the telephone user through the CA. This service allows individuals with communication disorders to communicate with all telephone users.

For more information on telecommunications relay services, please visit the Federal Communications Commission at www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs.html.

NIH Publication No. 94-3754

The City of Lake Charles fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Americans with Disabilities Act, and related statutes, executive orders, and regulations in all programs and activities. The City operates without regard to race, color and national origin. Any person who believes him/herself or any specific class of persons, to be subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI/Americans with Disabilities Act may by him/herself or by representative file a written complaint with the City of Lake Charles. The City's Title VI Coordinator/ADA Coordinator may be reached by phone at (337) 491-1440, the Mayor's Action Line at (337) 491-1346, or contact the appropriate Department Head.

Appeals for denials may be filed with the Transit Department in writing for further review. The appeals process is reviewed by board members and a written determination in writing to the applicant will be provided within 30 days and the opportunity to request an in person hearing will be honored if made within 30 days from the date of the notice of the board decision.

- ❖ Mayor's designated representative
- ❖ Director of Public Works/Designated Representative
- ❖ Office of Community Affairs

Appeals will be processed within 21 days from receipt in the Transit Department. After the review process is completed a letter will be mailed to the individual with the decision. Until the appeal process is completed, service will continue for the individual. Service interruption will only occur after the Appeals process is completed and the individual has been notified by mail.

Appellant's Name

Appellant's Signature

Date Received	Date of Meeting	Date of Ruling	Date of Notification