

HANDY BUS ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE

Effective August 1, 2017



Public Works

Manatee County Area Transit
2411 Tallevast Road
Sarasota, FL 34243
(941) 747-8621



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HANDY BUS — ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE

MCAT, the ADA, AND YOU!

Public Transportation: For All of Us!

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that transit agencies provide services which are accessible to people with disabilities. **The ADA is an important civil rights law passed in 1990** that has greatly increased the transportation options for people with disabilities. The law requires improvements to transportation services, including the provision of paratransit services to complement fixed route services. The ADA does not require a transit agency “to meet all the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities;” however, it does ensure that people with disabilities who cannot utilize regular fixed routes receive **services comparable to those on the fixed route/regular bus system.**

What is ADA Paratransit Service?

The ADA Paratransit service is a **required “safety net” for people who, due to their disability, are unable to ride fixed route buses.** The ADA Paratransit service is a complementary service to fixed route transportation services. This means ADA paratransit services operate in the same area, and during the same days and hours as the fixed route service. **It is an on-demand service that must be reserved at least before 5 pm the day before a trip. The service picks up riders at their home (or origin) and takes them to their destination.** The vehicle may make several stops on the way to a rider’s destination to pick up or drop off other passengers; and just like the regular bus system, **it is a**

“shared-ride” service.

The origin and destination of each trip must be within a 3/4 mile corridor dimension of fixed route service.

What is The Handy Bus Service?

The Handy Bus service provides the **required ADA paratransit service to “complement” fixed route services.**

How Does Someone Qualify for ADA/Handy Bus Service?

Eligibility is based upon a person’s inability to use the fixed route system, and riders must apply for eligibility. Please call MCAT at (941) 747-8621, ext. 3567 for an ADA paratransit service application.

What is ADA Paratransit Eligibility?

Generally speaking, the test for eligibility is the inability to use fixed route buses, due to a person’s disability. The ability to use fixed route transit may be limited by a physical or cognitive disability. Difficulty using public transportation, or being diagnosed as having a disability, is not automatic grounds for ADA paratransit service eligibility. Similarly, **eligibility is not based upon age, income level, or for perceived inconvenience of bus service.**

What are the Categories for ADA Paratransit Eligibility?

There are three categories of ADA paratransit service eligibility:

- 1. Fully eligible riders** may utilize ADA Paratransit when/where the service is available.

- 2. Conditionally eligible** riders may utilize ADA Paratransit for select trips; and utilize fixed route transit for other trips.
- 3. Temporarily eligible riders** obtain eligibility for a very limited and specific period of time.

If you disagree with MCAT's eligibility determination, request an appeal in writing within 60 days of receiving eligibility notification. **Send the appeal to: Paratransit Coordinator/MCAT, 2411 Tallevast Road, Sarasota, FL 34243.**

Is Subscription Service Available?

Subscription Service is available for "regularly" scheduled, repetitive trips.

Are Pre-Paid Fares Available?

Handy Bus fares can be paid in advance of your travel. **The minimum pre-pay fare deposit is \$50.00 and can be paid by check or money order.**

Is There an Expiration for ADA Paratransit Certification?

Recertification is typically required every three (3) years from the date approved, or more frequently for those with temporary eligibility.

How is an ADA Paratransit Trip Scheduled on the Handy Bus System?

You may schedule an ADA trip on the Handy Bus by calling the Handy Bus reservation line at (941) 748-2317. The ADA trips are scheduled between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

- Maximum reservation lead-time: Two weeks before a trip.

- Minimum reservation lead-time: **No later than 5 p.m. the day before your trip.**
- The current one-way fare is \$2.00 per trip.
- Allow a 2-hour scheduling window – actual pick-up time may be 1 hour before or 1 hour after requested pick-up time.
- **No schedule changes on the day a trip is scheduled.**

Where/When do the Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) Fixed Routes Operate?

MCAT offers fixed-route bus transportation that serves Bradenton, Ellenton, Palmetto and the Gulf Beach communities. Buses generally run from 5:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday. No fixed route transit service is offered on Sunday except for the Anna Maria Island Trolley and Beach Express.

For most people using public



transportation, the most convenient and flexible way to travel is by using MCAT fixed routes. It costs less money and requires less planning than the ADA paratransit service. The fixed route accessibility features include:

- **Wheelchair lifts or low floor ramps, and accessible concrete boarding pads at bus stops**
- Priority seating for persons with disabilities
- Trained, competent, and helpful operators
- Announcement of requested bus stops
- **Individualized Travel Training Assistance**
- Discounted Cash Fares and Multi-Ride Bus Passes

For route and schedule information, please call MCAT at (941) 749-7116 or visit the MCAT website at: www.mymanatee.org/mcat.

What is The Holiday Service Schedule?

The MCAT fixed route and Handy Bus services are not available on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

What is a Personal Care Attendant (PCA)?

- **A PCA is someone specifically designated to care for personal needs and assists during travel. The PCA travels with a qualified rider at no charge.**
- A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is welcome to travel with qualified riders.

What are Handy Bus Trip Cancellations and No Shows?

A trip cancellation is when the passenger calls at least two (2) hours before a scheduled trip to cancel their ride. To cancel a Handy Bus trip, please call (941) 748-2317 or (before 8 a.m.), (941) 748-1135. **Failure to give MCAT Handy Bus a minimum of two hours' notice for a canceled trip is considered a "no show."** Handy Bus service may be suspended for a reasonable period of time when there is a "pattern or practice" of repeated no shows.

How are ADA Complaints Addressed?

Manatee County makes every effort to meet the transportation needs of customers. On occasion, problems arise. Please Feel free to contact the Handy Bus Customer Service Center at (866) 642-3318 to bring any service issues to the attention of staff.

Are Electronic Notifications Available?

Yes, the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system provides electronic notifications **(calls, emails, text messages) regarding scheduled trips and real-time alerts for Handy Bus arrivals. Please call (941) 748-2317 for IVR registration.**

- To ensure on time arrivals, plan for travel time – up to an hour.
- Pick-up "Window" – the bus may arrive 15 minutes before or after the scheduled pick-up time.
- If the bus has not arrived 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time, please call the Handy Bus Contact Center at (941) 748-1135.
- The Handy Bus will park as close to the curb in front of your pick-up location as possible.
- **Once the driver has arrived within the pick-up "window" and the customer is not available to board the vehicle within 5 minutes, the client may be considered a "no-show".**
- The driver is required to collect all fares prior to starting a trip. Please have exact funds ready when boarding.
- **When a no-show occurs, same day rescheduling is not provided.**
- For safety, passengers in a wheelchair device will have their seat belt and shoulder strap fastened, and their wheelchair device secured.
- Three-wheeled mobility device users and other wheelchair users may transfer to a seat in the bus – the choice to transfer is the passenger's. Manatee County is not responsible for injuries due to unsecured seating.
- Mobility devices and wheelchairs must be clean and in good working condition.
- No eating, drinking, chewing tobacco or smoking (this includes electronic cigarettes) is permitted on the bus.
- **The driver is not authorized to make unscheduled stops, provide change or wait while a rider performs an errand.**
- Please cooperate if asked to move temporarily while loading or unloading other passengers.
- **Drivers are not allowed inside the passenger's residence.**
- Riders may not operate any electronic equipment that may infringe on passenger comfort and safety or impair the driver's ability to transport riders safely.
- Handy Bus Customers are responsible for their carry-on packages, parcels, and groceries.





Handy Bus Registration (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)	(941) 747-1739
Reservations/Cancellations (9 a.m. - 2 p.m.)	(941) 748-2317
Cancellations (Before 8 a.m.)	(941) 748-1135
Customer Service/Complaints	(866) 642-3318
ADA Handy Bus Reservations (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)	(941) 748-2317
ADA/Veterans Handy Bus Reservations (Sunday/Holidays)	(941) 741-3572
Dispatch (Saturday)	(941) 747-8621 Ext. 0
TTY (for the hearing impaired)	(941) 747-7868
Medical Transportation Management (MTM)	(844) 239-5974
ADA Assistance Line	(888) 446-4511
ADA Complaints	(800) 514-0301 or TTY (800) 514-0383
Lost and Found	(941) 749-7116
IVR Notification Status	(941) 202-0282

Notifying Public of Right Under Title VI

Manatee County operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with Manatee County. For more information on the Manatee County Transit Division's civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact (941) 747-8621; email mcat@mymanatee.org; or visit our administrative office at 2411 Tallevast Road, Sarasota, FL 34243.

A complaint may be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration by submitting a complaint to the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East building, 5th floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Si necesita información en español, llame (941) 747-8621.

