



Manatee County

Transportation Disadvantaged Program

Effective August 1, 2017



Public Works

Manatee County Area Transit
2411 Tallevast Road
Sarasota, FL 34243
(941) 747-8621
www.myanatee.org/mcat

Paratransit Serving
All of Manatee County
MCAT
Cat On The Go

WHAT IS THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) PROGRAM?

The Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program is a **discretionary program which provides transportation assistance to those in the community who, because of low income status, cannot afford transportation services.** The TD services are provided through an ongoing funding partnership between the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) and Manatee County Government.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PROGRAM?

Manatee County residents who, because of low household income, cannot afford to access transportation are eligible for TD Program funding. The TD transportation benefits must also be utilized for established TD trip priorities.

WHAT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO TD CLIENTS?

1. Regular MCAT bus service is available at a reduced rate for TD eligible riders.
2. Handy Bus door-to-door services are



available to those TD clients who cannot access and use the regular MCAT bus service, due to their disability.

HOW DOES A PERSON UTILIZE THE TD BUS PROGRAM?

1. Complete the TD application form and provide the required household income, residency, travel information, and supporting documentation. Return this to MCAT by mail or in person. Expect written eligibility notification within a two (2) week period.
2. **Provide a \$20 check or money order before the 15th of each month.** This is the cost for a 31-day monthly unlimited ride TD bus pass.
3. Pick up your bus pass at the designated pick up location (designated Transit Station) **between the 1st and the 10th of the month.**

WHAT ARE THE COST AND TRANSPORTATION ADVANTAGES FOR THE TD BUS PASS?

- The \$20 co-payment entitles the TD client to an unlimited number of bus rides each month.
- **There are no restrictions on the type of trip or number of fixed route bus trips.**
- The \$20 bus pass provides independence and freedom to travel for the entire 31-day activation period for each bus pass.

HOW MUCH COULD A CLIENT SAVE ON THE REGULAR BUS SYSTEM COMPARED TO HANDY BUS?

Each round trip on Handy Bus is \$4.00, so after five round trips the cost is already \$20. **The \$20 TD Bus Pass provides an**

unlimited number of trips for \$20 each 31-day period. Over the course of one-year, this could equate to significant personal savings, maybe hundreds of dollars in a year.

IS IT TRUE THAT THE TD BUS PASS PROVIDES REAL TRAVEL INDEPENDENCE?

Yes. The TD Handy Bus services are limited, according to available operating resources and trip priorities. The TD Bus Pass affords travel opportunities that are not limited; and daily bus operations are prescribed in each route schedule.

IS TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR NEW FIXED ROUTE BUS USERS?

Yes. Manatee County provides travel training so that new clients learn when/where to catch a bus, how to use their bus pass and “swipe” it at the farebox, how to make bus transfers, etc. This is a personalized program tailored to specific travel needs!

HOW DOES A TD CLIENT APPLY FOR TD SERVICES?

Riders wishing to benefit from TD services should first call a Customer Service Representative (CSR) Monday – Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at (941) 747-1739. **Please provide your name and mailing address and request a TD application form.**

The CSR will help explain TD program eligibility, the TD application process and the documentation required.

HOW DOES A TD CLIENT SCHEDULE A HANDY BUS TD TRIP?

Please Call Monday – Friday between 9:00

a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (941) 748-2317. Reservations may be made up to (2) weeks in advance, but a minimum of (2) business days in advance of your desired appointment day is required. Trips are provided on a first-come, first-served and availability of service basis between 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Monday – Friday, excluding major holidays.

The TD bus medical trips occur Monday through Friday. Non-medical trips (life-sustaining, food, and nutrition) are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays (these trips are prioritized by trip purpose, days, times, and location). These restrictions are in place in order to remain within the available operational and TD funding resources; **and the Handy Bus operational “priority” is the required ADA paratransit service.** If the time requested is not available for TD clients, alternative days and/or times available are offered.

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 ARE THE TD PRIORITY TRIPS?

The TD services on Handy Bus are limited to only the highest priority trip purposes, due to increasing demand. **The ADA complementary paratransit is a required service, so TD Handy Bus services are limited to the remaining available operating resources.** It is not unusual for TD trips to be prioritized and limited by trip purpose, days, times, and locations, to provide service within existing resource limitations. **The TD Trips are prioritized as follows: Dialysis clients, school trips, work trips and acute care needs. Reservations are based on origin to destination services for eligible riders within Manatee County.**

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES FOR MANATEE COUNTY AREA TRANSIT (MCAT) FIXED ROUTES?

For TD eligible clients 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,**

TD PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS (EFFECTIVE AUGUST 2017)

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

WHAT ARE THE TD PASSENGER FARES?

The cost for the 31-day TD bus pass is \$20/month. The current fare to ride the Handy Bus is \$2.00 for each one-way ride.

ARE PRE-PAID FARES AVAILABLE?

All TD fixed route clients pre-pay for their 31-day bus pass. Handy Bus fares can be paid in advance of travel; **and the minimum pre-pay fare deposit is \$50.00 and can be paid by check or money order.**

HOW DOES A CLIENT PROVIDE FEEDBACK?

MCAT makes every effort to meet the transportation needs of its customers. We encourage your feedback and suggestions for potential service enhancements. **Feel free to contact MCAT's Paratransit Coordinator at (941) 747-8621 ext. 3567 to discuss any service improvements.** The TD customers may also contact the State of Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged Ombudsman hotline at (800) 983-2435.

- The provision of TD program services are not required. **In fact, the TD program is discretionary, and services are curtailed as necessary to match available funding and operational resources.**
- The TD program eligibility is based upon three (3) required elements: 1. Household Income; 2. Residency in Manatee County; and 3. A Travel profile that corresponds with TD Program Priorities.
- **A new element of the TD program is a focus on utilization of the fixed route system.**
- A new discounted 31-day unlimited ride bus pass is available to TD clients on a first come - first served basis.
- The new TD program bus pass requires that TD eligible clients pay \$20/month for their TD bus pass. These payments can be made by check or money order by the 15th of each month (i.e. for a bus pass to be used the following month).
- **Mail the payment to: MCAT 2411 Tallevast Road, Sarasota, FL 34243, Attn: TD Bus Pass Program**
- Bus pass distribution occurs between the 1st and the 10th of the month at the DeSoto and Downtown Bradenton Transit Stations. **Each TD bus pass client**

must provide a valid picture ID and sign for their bus pass.

- All fixed route buses and trolleys are wheelchair accessible, priority seating is available for persons with disabilities, and Transit Operators announce major intersections, transfer points, Transit Stations, and requested bus stops.
- **Bus stop accessibility features include 5'x8' concrete boarding pads and passenger seating, with accessible routes to/from adjacent sidewalks.**
- For those unfamiliar with the TD bus fixed route system, please call (941) 747-8621 ext. 7622 for Travel Training assistance.
- **The household income requirement for TD program eligibility is 200% of current Federal Poverty guidelines.**





PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS 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, call (941) 747-8621, email mcat@mymanatee.org, or visit our administrative office at 2411 Tallevast Road, Sarasota, FL 34243. A complainant may file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

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



CONTACT INFORMATION

Handy Bus Registration (8 a.m. – 5 p.m.)	(941) 747-1739 www.mymanatee.org/mcat
TD Reservations/Cancellations (9 a.m. – 2 p.m.)	(941) 748-2317
TD Cancellations (Before 8 a.m.)	(941) 748-1135
Customer Service/Complaints	(866) 642-3318
Dispatch (Saturday)	(941) 747-8621 Ext. 0
TTY (for the hearing impaired)	(941) 747-7868
State of Florida Commission for TD Ombudsman Hotline	(800) 983-2435
Medical Transportation Management	(844) 239-5974
Si necesita información en español, llame	(941) 747-8621
Lost and Found	(941) 749-7116