



Paratransit Program



For **reservations**, call **(559) 372-2290**
For **information**, call **(559) 623-0450**

The Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA) Paratransit (Dial-A-Ride and Route Deviation) service is a coordinated and accessible "origin-to-destination" service designed to provide comparable paratransit service for ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) certified individuals with disabilities that prevent them from riding the TCRTA fixed route buses. In addition, Paratransit provides same-day service to non-ADA passengers (seniors, disabled, and Medicare card holders) based on space availability.

ELIGIBILITY

Under the ADA regulations, there are three categories under which a person may be eligible for ADA Paratransit services:

1. An individual with a physical or mental disability who, without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), is unable to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the TCRTA fixed route bus system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

2. Equipment and/or stops on the TCRTA fixed route system are not accessible to a person in a wheelchair or a person using a mobility device such as a walker.

3. An individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents the individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on the TCRTA fixed route system.



THE ADA APPLICATION

The ADA application consists of two parts.

1. The first part must be completed by the applicant or a representative and requests information specific to the applicant (name, address, disability limitations, mobility aids, etc.).

2. The second part of the application must be completed by the applicant's doctor, rehabilitation counselor, physical therapist, or other licensed medical professional that can provide information regarding the applicant's disability.

The information provided on the application will help transit staff determine if the applicant qualifies for ADA certification. Therefore, it is important that the applicant and doctor thoroughly complete the application. The applicant may be required to participate in an in-person interview and may be contacted to set up an appointment. The original application should be submitted to the following address:

Tulare County Regional Transit Agency
Attn: Transit Coordinator
210 N. Church Street, Suite B
Visalia, CA 93291

Original applications must be submitted. Emailed, faxed, scanned, or copied applications will not be accepted.

ADA Application Review

Once an application is received, it will be reviewed by the Transit Coordinator. A determination of ADA eligibility status will be made within 21 days. If TCRTA is unable to make a determination within 21 days, an applicant will receive presumptive, temporary certification beginning on the 22nd day and continuing until official determination and written notice can be provided.

ADA Approval/Denial Process

Once a determination regarding eligibility status has been made, the applicant will be notified of the decision in writing. If the ADA application is approved, an appointment will be scheduled for a photo ID picture to be taken (for ID card). The certification is not final until this step has been completed.

TCRTA reserves the right to make the final determination of eligibility of ADA applications. Should an application be denied, TCRTA will provide a written reason for the denial and a copy of the appeal process. An appeal may be filed with the TCRTA, Transit Coordinator, or a revised application may be submitted.

ADA Appeal Process

Applicants who are denied certification and disagree with the decision may make an appeal within 60 days of the initial eligibility

decision. Individuals will have an opportunity to be heard in person and/or present additional information and arguments regarding their disability to the Transit Manager.

If this adjudication is not satisfactory to the applicant, a further appeal can be made to the TCRTA Board. The board will review the case and make a final decision. Once the appeal process is completed, the applicant will be notified of the final decision in writing within 30 days.

ADA Recertification

All applicants categorized as having a temporary disability will be given a specific date when ADA eligibility expires. Dates vary on a case-by-case basis. If the applicant’s disability persists beyond the expiration date given, a new application must be completed.



Visitors

Visitors who are ADA certified through another transit agency may use the TCRTA Paratransit service for 21 days within a 365-day period to make reservations in advance. TCRTA may request proof of residency and any evidence available to document the disability if it is not apparent. If you are ADA certified through another transit agency within Tulare County, you are not limited to the 21 days of service within a 365-day period. However, information regarding your ADA eligibility must first be updated in our database before the service is provided. The agency that certified your ADA eligibility will need to be contacted for that information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hours of Operation

Monday – Saturday.....Paratransit DAR 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Route Deviation 5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m.*
Sunday.....Paratransit DAR 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Route Deviation 8:30 a.m. to 6:42 p.m.*

*Note: Commuter hours of operation are general. Schedules vary by route.

Fares

When boarding, exact fare is required. Drivers do not carry change. The driver does not accept round trip fares. Passengers are required to place all monetary fares into the farebox, unless the

passenger specifically requests assistance from the driver to put the money into the farebox. ADA passengers must present their ADA ID card to the driver each time they board a bus.

Fares

Paratransit DAR: ADA/Senior/Disabled/Medicare.....\$3.00
Commuter Route Deviation: ADA/Senior/Disabled/Medicare.....\$3.00
Personal Care Attendant.....FREE

Holidays

TCRTA Paratransit services do not operate on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Easter Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

TCRTA Paratransit services operate on limited schedules (Sunday level service) on the following holidays:

- Martin Luther King Jr Day
- President’s Day
- Veteran’s Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- New Year’s Eve

See current holiday schedule or call 559-372-2290 for schedule details.

Service Area

The Paratransit service area includes the city limits of Dinuba, Porterville, Tulare, and unincorporated communities in Tulare County.

HELPFUL HINTS

- ADA identification cards must be shown to the driver when boarding the vehicle.
- Exact fare is required. Drivers do not carry change.
- Dial-A-Ride is a shared ride service. Shared ride service means that the driver may pick-up or drop-off other passengers along the way. Trips could last up to one hour. Please allow adequate time between reservations for travel to avoid schedule overlap, delays, and cancellations.

- When scheduling your trip, it is important to let the reservation agent know whether any part of your trip has a set appointment, so that your trip can be planned accordingly.
- Dial-A-Ride and route deviation provide curb-to-curb service. Curb-to-curb service means that the vehicle will pick-up the scheduled passenger at the nearest curb or accessible location to the pick-up address and drop the passenger off at the curb or nearest accessible location to the destination address.
- Door-to-door service is provided upon request at time of reservation only. Minimum of next-day notice is required. The driver is only able to escort the passenger to the first door (i.e. the front door). Drivers are not allowed to lose sight of the vehicle at any time and cannot enter the house or building to assist a passenger.
- Carry-on items are the passenger's responsibility. Passengers are limited to two small carry-on items that must fit on their lap or under the seat.
- Sound equipment may be used only with earphones.
- Boisterous or unruly behavior that disturbs others is prohibited.
- Buses will arrive at the pick-up location between 15 minutes before or after the designated pick-up time. Passengers are required to be ready and waiting within that 30-minute window. Buses will wait up to five minutes for passengers. Any passenger who has not boarded the bus within five minutes will be considered a no-show.
- Paratransit drivers cannot wait on passengers to conduct business.
- Return trips must be scheduled through Paratransit reservations. It is suggested that you make departure and return reservations at the same time, to ensure your trip can be accommodated.



up to two (2) weeks in advance. All non-ADA passengers (seniors or Medicare card holders) are limited to same day trips. Same day trip requests are scheduled depending on space availability.

All passengers, including ADA certified passengers, making same day reservations are subject to space availability.

TCRTA will make every attempt to accommodate a rider's requested trip time. However, the pick-up time being requested may not be available. Reservation agents may suggest alternative times for your trip. For ADA passengers, making reservations in advance will help to ensure you receive your requested pick-up or drop-off time.

Trip requests will be accommodated in the following priority order:

- ADA certified passengers
- Seniors/Disabled passengers that are not ADA certified/Medicare card holders

When scheduling a trip, please be ready to provide the reservation agent with the following information for each trip being scheduled.

- Passenger's name
- Passenger's phone number
- Passenger's pick-up address, including apartment number, building number, or specific directions
- Passenger's requested destination arrival. Based on the requested arrival time and the schedule of the vehicle, the reservation agent may negotiate a pick-up time with the individual that could be up to an hour before or an hour after the provided pick-up time. When scheduling an appointment, it is helpful to advise the reservation agent of the time you will be available for pick-up.
- Passenger's destination address
- Companions, children, Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or service animal that will travel with the passenger
- Type of mobility aids or equipment (walker, wheelchair, etc.)
- ADA certification ID number
- Return pick-up or drop-off time, if needed (a return pick-up reservation is recommended to ensure availability)

RESERVATIONS

Once an individual has been ADA certified to use the TCRTA Paratransit services, a rider may schedule a trip for any purpose by calling **(559)372-2290**.

ADA trips require next day reservations. Reservations may be made

Reservation Hours

Monday – Saturday7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday.....8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Next day reservations cannot be taken after 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 5:00 pm on Sunday.

Cancellations/Reservation Changes

If a passenger needs to cancel a ride, it must be cancelled at least one full hour before the scheduled pick-up time or it will be considered a no-show. Passengers are allowed one same-day schedule change per round trip. All other same-day changes will be recorded as a no-show.



Companions, Guests and Friends

All riders may have one companion travel with them. When making the reservation, passengers must notify the reservation agent that they will be traveling with a companion. Additional companions will be accommodated on a space-available basis. The companion must board and leave the vehicle at the same location as the ADA passenger. An ADA passenger's companion pays the same fare as the ADA passenger for Paratransit service.



NO-SHOW / LATE CANCELLATION POLICY

TCRTA Paratransit depends on efficient scheduling to accommodate as many customers as possible. Therefore, it is important that once a customer schedules a trip, the trip be used or cancelled within a reasonable amount of time. To ensure service efficiency and effectiveness, TCRTA has implemented a no-show policy for the Paratransit service.

For the purposes of this policy, a "no-show" is defined as:

- A passenger who is not at the designated pick-up location during the designated 30-minute pick-up window.
- A passenger who fails to cancel a scheduled trip, even if the trip is no longer needed.
- A passenger who cancels a scheduled trip less than one hour in advance of the scheduled pick-up time.

Please note that in the event of a no-show, all other trips scheduled for that passenger on the same day will be cancelled unless the office is notified within one hour after the first no-show.

OTHER INFORMATION

Policy on Lift and Securement Use

TCRTA Paratransit will accommodate all passengers in wheelchairs, as long as the wheelchair is within the vehicle's capacity. Wheelchairs and their users shall be secured at all times during the course of their trip. All non-ADA Paratransit passengers are also required to wear seatbelts. Passengers who use scooter-type wheelchairs who are capable of transferring to a vehicle seat are strongly urged to do so before transport. Passengers who need the lift to board but are not wheelchair users, may use the lift while standing.

Aides or Personal Care Attendants

An aide or Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is a person whose assistance is essential to the rider, as noted by a doctor on the ADA application form. The PCA must board and leave the vehicle at the same location as the rider. An aide or PCA traveling with an ADA passenger does not pay a fare. If an eligible ADA passenger should find he or she needs an aide after approval of the original application, the passenger must complete a new application for certification, which includes this requirement. Unless the need for an aide is documented on the application and in the passenger’s file, anyone accompanying the passenger will be viewed as a companion and will have to pay an ADA fare.

Service Animals

TCRTA allows passengers to board the Paratransit service with their service animal. When making a reservation, please notify the reservation agent that you will be boarding with a service animal to help ensure that adequate space is available for the animal.

Cargo and Cart Policy

Carts will not be allowed if they exceed 30" tall, 18" wide, and 18" deep (not including handle and/or wheels), cannot easily/quickly navigate vehicle door entrances and turns for any reason, contain loads that exceed the height and designated capacity of the carrying device, or contain items that are wet, leaking, or considered hazardous for any reason. Riders are limited to cargo items which can be boarded onto the vehicle in a single trip without assistance from another person, unless the person assisting is a PCA.

Reasonable Modification Request

It is TCRTA’s policy to make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, or procedures when requested to do so by individuals with disabilities. Requests for accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be denied if not in accordance with our reasonable modification policy.

Requests for reasonable modifications can be sent to:

Tulare County Regional Transit Agency
210 N. Church Street, Suite B
Visalia, CA 93291
Attention: Transit Coordinator

Complaint/Compliment Procedure

Complaints and/or compliments can be written or verbal and must include contact information in order to be considered valid. Please visit our website or contact TCRTA for more information.

Complaints may be submitted to:

Tulare County Regional Transit Agency
210 N. Church Street, Suite B
Visalia, CA 93291

Or by phone:
(559) 623-0450

All complaints will be investigated by TCRTA Staff. TCRTA will make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

Forms may be submitted by email. Please call TCRTA at (559) 623-0450 for further instructions.

Please visit our website to download our forms and for more information about our transit services: www.gotcrta.org

The information provided in this brochure is available in other accessible formats upon request.



Tulare County Regional Transit Agency
210 N. Church Steet, Suite B
Visalia, CA93291

Office: (559) 623-0450
Reservations: (559) 372-2290

www.gotcrta.org