



Your Rider Guide

Effective October 2000

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POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Texarkana Urban Transit District to provide a complementary Paratransit service to those individuals determined to be ADA Paratransit eligible when these individuals are unable to use the T-Line fixed route service to meet particular trip needs.

This document may also be obtained in other formats by contacting T-Line at 903-255-2530

GENERAL INFORMATION

Information on T-Line Paratransit service will be provided in the following areas:

- I. Service Description
- II. Certification Process
- III. How to Schedule a Trip
- IV. T-Line Paratransit Fares
- V. No-Show/Cancellation Procedures
- VI. Miscellaneous
- VII. Frequently Asked Questions

For additional information, please call 903-255-3530

I. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Transportation service is provided by lift and low-floor buses. Operators are trained to provide minimal assistance. Operators are not trained to provide medical assistance.

Minimal assistance includes:

- The operator will come to the curb of a residence or pick-up location.
- For Individuals whose disabilities necessitate additional service, door-to-door service will be provided.
- The operator will attempt to notify passengers of arrival.
- The operator will assist passengers in boarding and exiting the bus.
- The operator will deliver the passenger to the curb of his/her destination.

Minimal assistance DOES NOT include:

- Assistance in getting ready for the trip.
- Administering medication or oxygen.
- Assisting passengers in wheelchairs up or down stairs.
- Providing personal care for individuals who cannot be left unattended.

PLEASE NOTE THAT T-LINE POLICY DOES NOT ALLOW AN OPERATOR TO LOSE VISUAL CONTACT WITH THE T-LINE BUS AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON.

Service Hours

1. Trips can be scheduled for pick-up as early as 5:30 a.m. and as late as 6:45 p.m., Monday through Saturday.
2. Service is provided Monday through Saturday throughout the year, except for the following observed holidays:

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

Currently, there is no Sunday service.

Service Parameters

The ADA Service Area is defined as the area within 3/4 of a mile on either side of a fixed route. The fare for service is \$2.50 per one-way trip.

II. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Certification of Eligibility

T-Line utilizes the certification criteria as established in the ADA, as listed below:

1. Any individual with a disability who is unable to independently board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed route system that is accessible to such persons.
2. Any individual with a disability who is able to independently board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed route system which is accessible to such persons.
3. Any individual with a disability whose impairment-related condition prevents him/her from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on the fixed route.

A copy of the certification form may be obtained at the T-Line Offices located at 1402 Texas Blvd Texarkana TX, downloaded from www.t-linebus.org or by calling T-Line at 903-255-3530. The application must be legible and properly completed. Also, the applicant must sign that the information given is correct and sign the release of information form which is included in the application. A health care provider familiar with applicant's condition must complete the attached physician form.

After the completed application is received, T-Line will review the application for approval.

Determination of Eligibility

T-Line will determine eligibility status of a passenger based on the information provided during the eligibility process. A person will be determined to be ADA-eligible, temporarily ADA-eligible. Following the determination by T-Line Paratransit, the applicant will be notified of the findings in writing.

Renewal of Certification Process

Certification of all ADA-eligible passengers will be renewable every three (3) years.

III. HOW TO SCHEDULE A TRIP

Requests

Requests for service can be made during normal business hours or by phone or by answering machine on Sundays and Holidays on the day before service is needed.

1. Additional notice is appreciated. Trips can be scheduled up to fourteen (14) days in advance.
2. The T-Line at 903-255-3530 shall receive requests for Paratransit transportation from 8:00 a.m. through the end of the business day, Monday through Friday.

Scheduling

1. T-line is a shared ride, public transportation service. As such, other passengers may be onboard and the vehicle may stop for other pick-ups and/or drop-offs on the way to a destination. Additionally, the bus may arrive for pick-up up to fifteen (15) minutes before and up to fifteen (15) minutes after the originally scheduled pick-up time. Whenever possible, T-Line will attempt to notify all passengers that the bus will be late. This will allow the client time to make other arrangements if the bus is unavoidably detained. Please make sure that we have a current telephone number and address on file.
2. Passengers may request any pick-up time within T-Line service hours. However, if the requested pick-up time is not available, the T-Line may offer an alternative pick-up time within one (1) hour of the originally requested time.
3. Some passengers may elect to provide a drop-off time instead of requesting a pick-up time. Drop-off times are the times passengers need to arrive at a designated location for a scheduled appointment.
4. The T-Line bus may arrive at a drop-off location anywhere from fifteen (15) minutes before the drop-off time up to fifteen (15) minutes after the drop-off time.
5. Scheduled pick-up and drop-off times should be carefully selected in order to allow ample travel time to arrive at a destination on time. The T-Line scheduler may suggest alternative pick-up times in order to accommodate a passenger's needed arrival time. Passengers may travel onboard the T-Line bus for up to one (1) hour.
6. Passengers traveling to or from buildings with multiple entrances should be prepared to specifically state the door or location designated for pick-up and drop-off when scheduling the trip.

Alternate Destinations

1. Changes to scheduled destinations are allowed only when the alternate destination will not substantially affect the T-Line Paratransit schedule.
2. The T-Line Paratransit operator will determine whether the request for an alternate destination can be accommodated.

IV. T-LINE FARES

Fares for T-Line service are established by the Texarkana Urban Transit District Board. The current fares are as follows:

\$2.50 per trip for ADA-eligible (Paratransit) service.

Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

A PCA is someone who is designated or employed to help a passenger meet his or her personal needs. PCAs must be picked up and dropped off at the same address as the T-Line Paratransit client. Scheduling should be alerted when a PCA is needed to travel along with a passenger.

Please note that if a passenger cannot be left alone at a destination, or if the passenger must be under constant care or supervision, T-Line may require the passenger to travel with a PCA. T-Line is unable to alter or modify procedures or policies in order to provide specialized services to passengers who need services beyond the minimum assistance guidelines. T-Line will not be responsible for clients that cannot be left alone at their destination without care or supervision. If a T-Line client needing care or supervision is delivered to a destination where a caregiver is not available to assume responsibility,

T-Line will transport the client to the T-Line administrative facilities located at 1402 Texas Blvd Texarkana TX. It will be the responsibility of the family or caregiver to pick-up the passenger at the T-Line facility upon being notified. T-Line reserves the right to contact Protective and Regulatory Services in cases where responsible parties have not provided appropriate care.

Companions

A companion is anyone who travels with an ADA-eligible T-Line client. Companions may accompany you on your trip. A companion will be charged the same applicable rate as the T-Line client. A companion must be picked up or dropped off at the same address as the client. An aide does not count as the one companion. Companion(s) must be scheduled at the same time you call in to schedule your trip.

Tickets

Tickets may be purchased at the following location:

T-Line Office
1402 Texas Blvd
Texarkana TX
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tickets are 11 for \$12.50 or a \$1.25 each. You will use 2 tickets for each trip.

Fare Collection

Passengers may prepay for trips that will be taken on a given day. However, prepayment will be accepted only on the first trip of the day. Passengers may not ride until the appropriate fare for the first trip has been paid.

V. NO-SHOW/CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

No-shows

Operators will utilize the following guidelines concerning a person's failure to meet the T-Line bus. T-Line will work with passengers in a positive way to reduce No-Shows.

1. For trips scheduled with a requested pick-up time, the T-Line operator will not wait longer than five (5) minutes from the arrival time for clients to board the vehicle. If the bus arrives within the thirty (30) minute window (fifteen (15) minutes before and fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time), the client must board the bus within five (5) minutes of arrival.
2. For trips scheduled with a requested drop-off time, the bus may arrive anytime within one (1) hour prior to the drop-off time. If the bus arrives anytime within one (1) hour prior to the requested drop-off time, the client must board the bus within five (5) minutes of arrival.
3. Failure to meet the bus within five (5) minutes from the time of arrival will constitute a no-show, unless it is beyond the passenger's control.
4. Passengers or their associates should not ask operators to delay the five (5) minute interval under any circumstance; this is to assure the timely pick-up and transportation of all T-Line clients.

5. T-Line scheduler will not hold or otherwise detain the T-Line bus because a passenger is late for a scheduled pick-up. The scheduler will facilitate an alternative pick up time with the passenger and then relay it to the operator.

Cancellations

- A trip cancelled from two (2) hours up until the scheduled time will be recorded as a late cancellation. A trip cancelled from two (2) hour before the scheduled time will be recorded as an advance cancellation, and will not be penalized.

No-Show Penalties

A pattern of successive no-shows may result in service suspension. No-show suspension guidelines are as follows:

No Shows are EXCUSED when the trip is missed for reasons beyond the customer's control

Although no shows will not be issued for reasons beyond the customer's control, the customer (or the customer's advocate) should **ALWAYS** make every effort to cancel scheduled trips in a timely manner. It is the customer's (or the customer's advocate) responsibility to provide the reasoning for not canceling a trip. Contact should be made with T-Line as soon as reasonably possible. Lack of any contact will result in a No Show being issued. Any patterns or practices of excessive volume of excused No Shows will be reviewed for appropriate action.

Below is a table indicating the volume of No Shows that may be accumulated per month before action will be taken:

Trips Booked per Month and not cancelled in advance	Maximum Number of No Shows per Month
1 - 14	2
15 - 39	4
40 - 59	6
60 - 79	8
80 - 99	10
100 or more	12
<p>Please do not consider this guideline as a justification for not calling when a trip is not needed.</p>	
<p>Consequences for an Established Pattern/Practice of No Shows as defined in the table above:</p>	
1st Violation	Letter of warning and/or phone contact
2nd Violation	2 Day Suspension
3rd Violation	5 Day Suspension
4th Violation	10 Day Suspension
5th Violation	30 Day Suspension
<p>Violation history covers a 6 month floating period.</p>	
<p>Example: In January you book between 15-39 trips and you receive 4 or more No Shows - you would receive a letter of warning and/or a phone call as a 1st violation. In February, you book the same volume of trips and continue to No Show and receive 4 or more No Shows, you would face suspension for 2 days. Your history would continue for a six month period from your 1st violation. On the first of July, your January history of no shows and violation would go away.</p>	

Appeal Procedures

Appealing Suspensions

A customer receiving notification of a suspension may appeal the decision in writing within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the notification. See the Paratransit Appeals Process section for more details.

PARATRANSIT APPEALS PROCESS

Right to Appeal

The ADA requires that transportation providers establish a process for persons to appeal decisions if they are denied access to Paratransit service.

TUTD has established an appeals procedure for persons whose applications for Paratransit eligibility are denied or for persons who have received suspension notices for other reasons.

An individual may file an appeal when TUTD denies Paratransit service for any of the following reasons:

- Denial of Eligibility
- Suspension resulting from excessive No-Shows or Cancellations
- Suspension for Disruptive Behavior

The Appeals Process

TUTD will inform an applicant of a decision to deny eligibility status or to suspend service by letter.

Requests to appeal a denial of eligibility must be received in writing within 60 days of the date on the eligibility denial letter. Requests to appeal a suspension must be received in writing within 10 calendar days of the date of the notice of suspension letter.

Requests for an appeal must be sent in writing to TUTD Paratransit Services at the following address:

Texarkana Urban Transit District
Attn: Paratransit Services
P.O. BOX 5307
Texarkana, TX 75505-5307

Once the request for an appeal is received, it will be reviewed by the Executive Director of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments.

The Executive Director will issue a written decision within 10 days of the appeal hearing.

TUTD is not required to provide service to individuals who are pursuing an eligibility appeal. However, if the Executive Director has not made a decision within 30 days after the hearing, temporary service will be provided. This temporary service will continue until a decision on the appeal is reached.

Persons requesting an appeal will be notified in writing of the time, date and location of the appeal hearing. Individuals are encouraged to attend the appeal hearing although attendance is not mandatory. If Individuals requesting appeals cannot attend, they may request a telephone interview or have another person(s) represent them at the hearing. If the individual or a designated representative is not present at the appeal hearing, the Executive Director's decision will be based on the documentation submitted. All copies of the appellants' application and all supporting materials used in the appeals process will remain confidential.

Upon appeal for a No-Show or Cancellation suspension, Paratransit service will be provided pending the appeal; suspension of service will not begin until the appeals process is complete. If a decision is not made within 30 days of the completion of the appeal hearing, the individual appealing the suspension shall be granted service until a final decision has been reached.

Questions about Appeals

If you have questions about your right to appeal, call the TUTD Customer Service Center. Our telephone number is (903) 255-3530.

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: *When can I start riding T-Line?*

A: As soon as you receive your approval letter.

Q: *What if I run late at the doctor?*

A: You must notify T-Line that you will not make your pick-up time and that you will call when you are ready. T-Line will send a ride as soon as possible. The missed ride will not result in a no-show being recorded.

Q: *Does the time of a cancellation left on voice mail count as the time the ride was cancelled?*

A: Yes, the system time stamps each message and that time will be listed as the cancellation time.

Q: *Do I have to call everyday for a trip if the time and days that I travel are the same week-to-week?*

A: No, subscription service is available when travel is at the same time and day each week. However, when necessary, a passenger must remember to cancel a subscription ride to avoid a no-show being recorded.

Q: *Will I be taken directly to and from my destination?*

A: Not necessarily, T-Line is public transportation and sometimes passengers share rides.

Q: *What is the Service Area?*

A: The service area includes the sections of Texarkana TX, Texarkana AR, Wake Village TX and Nash TX that T-Line can pick you up and drop you off.

Q: *Where does a T-Line pick-up a passenger when there are many entrances to a building?*

A: If the client has a specific pick-up location identified, the location should be provided to the scheduler when the trip is scheduled. However, T-Line has specific pick-up points designated for many facilities and buildings. For details regarding designated pick-up locations, contact T-Line scheduling.