

Paratransit Users Guide



Introduction

The City of Steamboat Springs offers Paratransit transportation service to those who are unable to independently use Steamboat Springs Transit (SST) bus service, or other fixed-route services due to a disability or health related condition some, or all of the time. This service is provided as part of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The ADA is a federal law that requires paratransit transportation be provided for persons when their disability in combination with their functional abilities prevents them from using regular public transportation.

There are specific eligibility requirements for Paratransit services. All Paratransit clients must submit an application and conduct an in-person interview to determine eligibility. Please call us at (970) 879 3717 to schedule an interview.

Steamboat Springs Transit takes pride in providing high quality, safe, reliable and courteous transportation service. We provide Paratransit service for free, while the overall cost of a trip is approximately \$30 one-way.

Scheduling a Trip

For local trips within the city of Steamboat Springs, service is offered daily starting at approximately 6:40 AM during the summer schedule and 5:40 AM during the winter. The last trip from downtown would be 10:40 PM during the summer and 12:30 AM during the winter.

Reservations can be made from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM daily. All trips must be scheduled by 4:30 PM the prior day. Trip requests may be made up to seven days in advance and all trips are scheduled on a first come, first served basis.

Call the Transit office at 970-879-3717 to schedule a ride, or you can submit your request via email to transit@steamboatsprings.net. Please understand that your trip is not guaranteed until you have received a response from us.

If you call during the weekends, you may reach an answering machine. Please leave your name and phone number, and a staff member will return your call.

Areas Served

Steamboat Springs Transit only provides curb to curb Paratransit services within the city limits of Steamboat Springs. The Paratransit service area is up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from any active city transit bus stop and the service times are the same for each stop as posted for the fixed route service. This meets the requirements set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Trip Purpose Priority

Trips are scheduled on a “first come, first served” basis. Trips may be reserved from one day to seven days in advance. The service is a shared ride so you may have additional passengers with you.

Passenger Responsibilities

SST complies with the ADA Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities Guidelines provided by the Federal Transportation Administration and the Department of Transportation.

It is the policy of SST to ensure safe and effective transportation for all passengers and staff along with the proper operation of all vehicles. The following list of Passenger Responsibilities has been established to ensure this policy; however, they are not meant to be all inclusive. Violation of any Passenger Responsibility can result in the passenger receiving a warning letter and temporary suspension from SST Paratransit services.

1. Inappropriate Social Behavior

- All passengers, including SST staff, have the right to participate without any threat or fear of physical or verbal abuse and with personal comfort. Passengers are therefore expected to exhibit appropriate social behavior while interacting with other passengers and with SST staff.

2. Disruptive Behavior

- Sudden or loud verbal outbursts which could threaten the health of fragile riders or the driver's safe attention while driving.
- Soiling the vehicle with bodily fluids or waste, or thereby creating a hazard to others.
- Failing to maintain reasonable personal hygiene, resulting in excessive body odor.

3. Dangerous Behavior and Physical Abuse

- Dangerous behavior and physical abuse are defined as any threat or action that could cause any physical harm to the driver, other passengers, the individual or SST staff or equipment, including the vehicle.

- “Direct threat” is defined as “a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.” The penalty for a proven incident of dangerous or unsafe behavior or physical abuse will be determined by SST and the City of Steamboat Springs Transit Department. Penalty can range from a warning letter to permanent suspension from SST Paratransit service.
4. Verbal Abuse
 - Verbal abuse is defined as any oral presentation that is offensive to a passenger, driver, or SST staff.
 - The penalty for a proven incident of verbal abuse will be determined by SST and the City of Steamboat Springs Transit Department. Penalties can range from a warning letter to temporary suspension from Steamboat Springs Transit Paratransit service.
 5. Causes for Refusal of Service
 - Dangerous behavior or physical or verbal abuse towards drivers or other passengers on the vehicle, are grounds for immediate refusal of SST Paratransit service.
 6. Escorts, Aides and Guests
 - Paratransit clients are permitted to bring along one escort/aide to assist them during their trip. Clients may also bring along friends and family members.
 - Reservations are required for everyone traveling with the client. The client can reserve space for themselves, their escort/aide and one guest. Additional guests are welcome provided space is available in the vehicle. SST schedulers must be informed of the total number of people taking the trip when the trip is scheduled. Everyone traveling with the Paratransit client is required to disembark at the same destination. An ADA eligible individual may not schedule a trip then send an escort or aide on a trip alone. SST Paratransit vehicles are required to transport ADA eligible individuals.
 7. Late Cancellations/No-Shows
 - Call SST as soon as possible if you need to cancel your reservation. By cancelling well in advance, you help SST improve service to all customers.
 - If you are unavailable for your initial pick up or cancel your trip without the minimum two-hour notice, SST Paratransit will make every effort to contact you to see if you still need your scheduled return trip. If SST Paratransit is unable to contact you, they will assume you still need your scheduled return trip and will be at that location within 20 minutes (10 minutes before or after) the originally scheduled pick-up time.
 - A No-show happens when riders do not cancel a scheduled trip at least two hours in advance or are not available to board within five minutes of the vehicle’s arrival within the pickup window. SST will attempt to contact the passenger when a No-show occurs.
 - Riders can avoid No-show situations when they:
 - i. Review times and dates with the schedulers to be sure the information is correct.
 - ii. Call SST and cancel rides as soon as the ride is no longer needed.
 - iii. Cancel at least 2 hours in advance of the scheduled pickup time.

- iv. Are prepared to board at the starting time of the pickup window and within 5 minutes after the bus arrives.

8. No-Show Policy

- SST Paratransit's Late Cancellations/No-Show policy is modeled in accordance with the industry standard. Its purpose is to address chronic abuse of Paratransit service. Abuse of the Paratransit system affects the ability to provide Paratransit services to other eligible clients.
- Every time a Late Cancellation/No-Show occurs it is recorded in the rider's trip record. If you have two or more Late Cancellation/No-shows within any 30-day period the rider's trip record will be reviewed. If a pattern or practice of missed trips, repeated or intentional, is determined, the client will be warned. Continued violations may result in suspension of SST Paratransit service.
- When there are circumstances outside the rider's control, it is not considered a No-show. If, for some reason, SST arrives after your 30-minute pickup window and you have made other arrangements or cancelled your ride, it is not considered a No-show.

9. Lateness

- All passengers are expected to be ready at their scheduled pickup time to prevent other passengers from facing avoidable delays. SST is not required to wait more than five minutes for a passenger upon arriving at a scheduled pickup time. Because of traffic irregularities, SST is considered "on time" when the Paratransit vehicle arrives five minutes before the scheduled time or up to thirty minutes after the scheduled time. Please plan your trip with this 35 minute flexibility in mind.

10. Accessibility

- Drivers can or will escort passengers to and from the front door of the primary building upon arrival at both origin and destination with the following limitations:
 - i. Paratransit drivers cannot enter any interior area of a home or apartment.
 - ii. Paratransit drivers can never lose sight of a Paratransit vehicle or leave a vehicle unsupervised with passengers aboard.
 - iii. Drivers cannot assist passengers in wheelchairs or other mobility devices up more than one step.

The ADA does not recognize a difference between door-to-door service and curb-to-curb service. The ADA recognizes origination to destination service only. Drivers are prohibited from doing any lifting, pushing or pulling to accommodate barriers. Any barriers that might risk the health or safety of the passenger, or SST staff or volunteers must be removed. If safe access is not available, SST will only provide curb service.

11. Child Safety Seats

- Children must be placed in an approved safety seat in accordance with state and federal laws. No child may ride on a passenger's lap. The client is responsible for bringing and setting up the child safety seat.

12. Mobility Aids and/or Devices

- SST requires all Mobility aids and devices to be secured to the floor of the vehicle at all times the vehicle is in motion. Mobility aids and devices that cannot be safely secured with SST tie downs, or that are not safe to carry on the lift, will not be allowed on SST vehicles. If using a scooter, it is strongly encouraged that you transfer to a seat if possible. If a rider needs assistance with transferring from a scooter or wheelchair to a seat, it is strongly encouraged that he/she bring along an aide/escort to perform this service. The overall intent of this guideline is to try to find a safe way to accommodate each passenger. If no safe method exists for a passenger to board, ride, or disembark a SST vehicle, SST will provide curb service only.
- All passengers using mobility devices are required to use the provided lap belts. It is strongly recommended that the shoulder belts be used as well.
- How Big Can My Wheelchair or Scooter Be?
- When purchasing a new wheelchair or scooter, riders should consider if it will fit on SST vehicles.
- Under ADA guidelines, Paratransit vehicles and equipment are designed to carry wheelchairs. Section 37.3 of the DOT regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38) defines a “wheelchair” as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

13. Packages

- Passengers are advised to limit their carry-on bags or packages to four, with each package no heavier than twenty pounds. Please remember that Steamboat Springs Transit is not responsible for any lost or stolen items left on the bus.

One small shopping cart is allowed.

- Cart is 37" high from the floor to the top of the handle.
- Large basket area measures:
 - i. 13" side to side
 - ii. 11 ½" front to back
 - iii. 20 ½" top to bottom
- Small basket area measures:
 - i. 12 ½" side to side
 - ii. 5" front to back



iii. 11 ½" top to bottom

- Folds for easy storage

14. Luggage

- Luggage that can be stowed in front of or on the lap of the passenger is allowed. This luggage must comply with the same guidelines as airline carry-on luggage
- Carry on bags: One carry-on bag not to exceed 24" x 10" x 16"



15. Seat Belts

- All passengers are requested to wear seat belts.

16. Service Animals

- A service animal is defined by the ADA as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government.
- When scheduling a trip, please advise the scheduler that a service animal will be riding. The service animal must stay on the floor of the vehicle and be under control and well behaved at all times. Any service animal will be removed if it signs of aggression or any other inappropriate behavior such as urinating or defecating on the Paratransit vehicle.

Helpful Hints for Reserving a Ride

1. Before calling SST, write down the:
 - Date and time of your trip.
 - Name of person you are going to see.
 - Complete street address, including apartment or suite number of your destination.
 - Phone number at your destination.
 - Time you will be ready to return, if you want a round trip.
 - 2. If your request is for a busy time of the day (7:00 AM to 9:00 AM or 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM), call to make your reservation as far in advance as possible.
2. Remember, a trip request may be made up to seven days in advance and all trips are scheduled on a first come, first served basis.
3. If you have time flexibility in your trip, please let the SST schedulers know this at the beginning of your call.

Demand for Paratransit service is very high and SST is always trying to maximize the number of trips provided each service day. If you are requesting a ride on a day that isn't busy, it will only take a few minutes to schedule your trip. However, if you need to travel on a busy day or at a busy time of day, it will take the scheduler a few minutes longer to include your trip in that day's schedule.

Let us know how we are doing!

Feedback from our riders is a valuable source of information. Comments and suggestions can be delivered to us by mail, fax, in person or by telephone. Contact information is below. If you would like a response to your comment or suggestion, include your complete name and mailing address and a written response will be provided within 14 days. If you are unhappy with the service you received, please be specific and include the time, date, vehicle number, driver name, and nature of your concern.

Steamboat Springs Transit Department
Jon Snyder
1463 13th Street
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
(970) 879-3717