

CITY UTILITIES OF SPRINGFIELD
ACCESS EXPRESS SERVICE
POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Updated on June 23, 2011

ABOUT YOUR ELIGIBILITY

You have applied for Access Express Paratransit Service. Please read your eligibility letter and policy carefully. The different eligibility categories define the level of service available under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Eligibility codes A and B relate to the person's ability to board, ride and disembark from a fixed route bus equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp.

Eligibility code C relates to the person's ability to travel to and from bus stops on the fixed route system.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Eligibility for this service is dependent upon the individual's inability to use the regular fixed route buses. All riders must complete an application for certification for paratransit eligibility unless they are visitors to the Springfield area. A physician, health professional, or rehabilitation professional must verify all applications.

If two individuals from the same household are approved for paratransit service on their own merits, then both shall be responsible for payment and scheduling of their rides taken separately or together.

SERVICE HOURS AND DAYS

The Access Express Service operates Monday through Saturday, between the hours of 6 A.M. and 11 P.M., and on Sundays from 7 A.M. until 11 P.M., except for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Services will be available on these holidays from 8 A.M. until 6 P.M., except for Christmas, which is from 11 A.M. until 4 P.M.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires service to be provided within a defined service area, which includes an area within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from any City Utilities bus route. City Utilities is currently providing more service than the ADA requires by serving the city limits of Springfield. In the future City Utilities may have to limit this service outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile buffer zone based on the current ADA service guidelines.

While complementary paratransit service for ADA paratransit eligible persons shall be origin-to-destination service – the basic mode of Access Express service in Springfield is a curb-to-curb service.

RESERVATIONS

Reservations are made on a first come, first serve basis and must be made by Transit Services office personnel only. Bus operators are not allowed to take or cancel reservations. Reservations can be made for next day service and up to one week (7 days) in advance. To make a reservation you may call 417-831-8782 between the hours of 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday and 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. on Saturday and Sunday.

Reservations will be made to allow sufficient time for the driver to reach the destination on a timely basis. If the bus has not arrived at the pickup point within twenty minutes after the schedule time, the customer should call the Transit Services office to verify his or her reservation.

ACCESS EXPRESS FARES

The fare for the AE service is \$2.50 per one way ride. Passes are available for a discounted rate of 30 rides for \$54.00 and 60 rides for \$90.00.

WHERE TO BUY BUS PASSES

- **City Utilities Main Office** at 301 E. Central from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **City Utilities Transit** at 1505 N. Boonville from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. – Now accepts debit and credit card purchases by phone or in person. To purchase by mail, send check or money order, payable to City Utilities (no cash please) to: City Utilities Transit, 1505 N. Boonville, and Springfield, MO 65803. Please include name, address, and category of pass requested. The discount pass is non-transferable and non-redeemable.
- **Ozarks Technical College**, Cashiers – semester and adult passes.
- **Missouri State University**, Bursar's Office in Carrington Hall – semester passes only.

CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations can be made by calling 417-831-8782 from 4:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, 4:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, 5:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, and 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Major Holidays. Cancellations of reservations are to be made the day before the scheduled pickup time, to allow for rescheduling of the time slot. If the appointment is canceled before 5:00 p.m. of the day before, that cancellation will not be considered a late cancellation.

If you call when our offices are closed and have a change to your Access Express ride that is scheduled for that evening or your bus has not arrived 20 minutes after the scheduled appointment time, please call 417-831-8782 and press option (4) in the option menu. This will allow you to leave a message for the supervisor on duty and they will return your call promptly. All other calls concerning Access Express appointments or inquiries must be addressed during office hours as posted above.

Each leg of your trip is counted as one cancellation for reporting purposes. A “late cancel” is any cancellation made after 5:00 PM of the day before a scheduled ride. **You will be allowed six “late cancellations within a 30 day period,” before you would receive a verbal warning and reminder letter. The second occurrence you will receive a written warning. The third occurrence will result in a suspension for two weeks; after the fourth you will be suspended for one month. To avoid any additional suspensions, you cannot have more than six late cancellations within a 30 day period for the following six months.**

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT/ COMPANIONS

A personal care attendant (PCA) must accompany persons who cannot travel independently. The attendant, if required, will not be charged for the ride, but must be included when scheduling your ride.

Attendants must board and disembark with the registered passenger. ADA eligible persons who require an aide for travel will not be transported without an attendant. The passenger must provide this attendant.

RULES FOR THE BUS

- You must have the exact and correct address including street number and name when booking trips.
- You must be very clear when giving times when you want to travel. We schedule trips by either appointment time or request time. If you have an appointment, tell the dispatcher you need to arrange your trip by appointment time and give them the time you must be at your appointment.
- If we are transporting you for a medical appointment, we need the physician’s name, phone number, time of appointment, and office or suite number of your doctor. Also, give the entrance of the building when you are making your reservation. This information is mandatory.

- Our drivers are not permitted to carry sacks or packages to the door. Passengers should only bring packages they can carry, load and unload themselves. If the passenger needs assistance with packages, they may bring a companion or personal care attendant to assist them. Companions will be charged \$2.50 for their ride, and you must tell the dispatcher at time of reservation.
- Drivers can assist the passenger on and off the bus and if requested from origin-to-destination. They are not allowed to go inside any residence or business. All service provided is origin-to-destination with the basic mode being curb-to-curb.
- All passengers on the paratransit bus must wear seat belts.
- You must be ready 20 minutes on either side of your appointment time. In order to provide the best service available to our customers, please be ready 20 minutes before each time scheduled. Please be considerate of our other passengers' scheduled appointment times by being ready 20 minutes early. Once the bus arrives, it will wait only 3 minutes before proceeding on to their next scheduled pickup.
- Cancellations that we receive at least one day before the day of service cause the least impact on our service, making that service available to other passengers. We prefer that you cancel by 5:00 PM the day before your trip if at all possible.
- We require at least one-hour notice if you must cancel your trip the day of service. Trips not cancelled at least one hour in advance will be classified as a "no-show." Once the driver arrives they will wait no longer than 3 minutes before proceeding on to their next scheduled pickup. If the driver leaves without the passenger, this will result in a "no-show" trip.

NO-SHOWS

Cancellations made less than one hour before the scheduled pick-up time and failing to appear, both are considered "no-shows". It is your responsibility to cancel your other ride or to make other arrangements. If we do not hear from you within an hour of your "no-show", any ride scheduled later that day would be cancelled.

After the first occurrence of a "no-show" you will receive a verbal warning and reminder letter. The second occurrence you will receive a written warning. The third occurrence you will be suspended for two weeks; after the fourth you will be suspended for one month. To avoid any additional suspensions, you must have no more additional no-shows during the following six months.

MO HEALTHNET (MEDICAID) RECIPIENTS

For our MO HealthNet (Medicaid) riders who are eligible for transportation services, we provide rides for “non-emergency medical trips” free of charge. If you are eligible for MO HealthNet (Medicaid), please tell the dispatcher when making your ride on the Access Express.

ELIGIBILITY CODE A

Any individual with a transportation disability who is able to board, ride, or disembark from a bus equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp. This category includes disabled people who are able to travel on an accessible fixed route bus if one is available to them at the times and locations that are needed. These people are able to board, ride and disembark from a bus that is equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp without the assistance of another person, except that of the driver who will operate the wheelchair lift or ramp and announce street locations and stops as required.

Eligibility for paratransit would be limited to those occasions when the appropriate fixed route buses are not wheelchair accessible or the appropriate bus stops do not accommodate the lift or ramp.

ELIGIBILITY CODE B

Individuals with this eligibility code qualify for the service on an unconditional basis because of a disability that affects their ability to use the fixed route bus. They are unable, because of their disability, to navigate the fixed route system under any circumstances.

We will not refer an individual certified as code B to the fixed route system. Eligibility for paratransit would be limited to those occasions when the person could not travel unassisted.

ELIGIBILITY CODE C

Individuals with this eligibility code qualify for the service on a conditional basis because of a disability that affects their ability to use the fixed route bus. They are able to use the fixed route service under certain circumstances, but may need paratransit service at other times.

These individuals will have their transportation provided by the paratransit service, the fixed route service, or a combination of the two. That determination will be made on a trip by trip basis by the dispatcher. Paratransit service will not be provided in a situation where the fixed route service could be utilized. Providing paratransit to a passenger who could utilize the fixed route service is a costly duplication of our own service. Each situation is different; depending on the individual’s specific disability and the trip that has been requested. Please ask a dispatcher to explain how this affects you.