JACKSON AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

ADA PARATRANSIT RESERVE-A-RIDE RIDER'S GUIDE

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Introduction

Welcome to Jackson Area Transportation Authority (JATA) Reserve-A-Ride service for people with disabilities. It is our pleasure to serve you! This guide will give you a basic understanding of paratransit service, what it is, and how it can work for you.

Our goal is to provide independence to riders who are unable to ride JATA's fixed-route service because of a disability. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be your transportation provider now and into the future!

What is Reserve-A-Ride?

Reserve-a-Ride is a curb-to-curb transportation service that uses small, lift-equipped vehicles to provide public transportation service throughout Jackson County. Buses meet passengers at the curb of their requested pick-up location and bring them to the curb of their requested drop-off location.

Reserve-A-Ride is a shared ride service; meaning more than one passenger may be on the bus at one time. Customers should schedule trips in advance by calling (517) 788-8410 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. There are two categories of Reserve-A-Ride service:

1. Reserve-A-Ride for People with Disabilities (PWD): This service is required by the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) for people who cannot ride fixed-route bus service for some or all of their trips due to a disability. Drivers will help passengers on and off the bus and to/from the first outside door of the building upon request whenever possible. Customers must be certified to ride.

2. Reserve-A-Ride General Public: This is a first come, first serve transportation service. Anyone can ride and there are no eligibility requirements. Call the number listed above for more information or to receive a brochure.

This guide focuses on the Reserve-A-Ride serving people with disabilities, as described in #1.

Service Area & Hours

Reserve-A-Ride for People with Disabilities (PWD) provides service within ¾ of a mile of all fixed routes during the following days and times:

Monday - Friday from 6:15 AM to 6:15 PM
Sat. from 10:15 AM to 6:15 PM

No trips will be available on the following holidays:

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

Out-of-Town Riders

Riders from outside Jackson County may ride Reserve-A-Ride for people with disabilities for any combination of 21 days during a 365-day period. Visitors must show documentation of certification from their home transit system to ride Reserve-A-Ride for people with disabilities. Riders who have not been certified by another system must provide documentation of their place of residence and proof of their disability (i.e., a doctor's letter explaining how you are prevented from riding fixed route services). After 21 days, visitors must apply to continue to use Paratransit.

Fare

Full fare must be paid when boarding the bus. Drivers do not carry change. Transportation will be denied if the fare is not paid.

Fare Type	Zone 1* to Zone 1	Zone 1 to Zone 2**	Zone 1 to Zone 3***	Zone 2 to Zone 1, 2, or 3	Zone 3 to Zone 1, 2, or 3
Senior/Disabled	$2.00	$2.50	$3.00	$3.00	$3.00

*Zone 1: City of Jackson
**Zone 2: Blackman, Summit and Leoni Townships
***Zone 3: Remaining outlying areas of Jackson County

Scheduling a Ride

Please call (517) 788-8410 to schedule a trip. Trip reservations can be made from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday. Callers can leave a message if calling outside of office hours. **Trips must be scheduled no later than 5:00 PM the day before the trip request.**

When scheduling a ride, please have the following information ready:

- Rider name
- Date and time of trip, include return trip information if requesting a round trip
- Appointment time (if you are travelling to a scheduled appointment)
- Address and specific entrance of pick-up and drop-off location
- If you are traveling with a companion, personal care attendant, or service animal

Scheduling a Ride (Next-Day Service, Sunday and Holidays)

You may call the day prior to schedule a ride. For Monday service or service requests the day after a holiday, a message can be left with the after-hours answering service requesting a ride. Your ride will be scheduled the following morning and will be between your requested pick-up time and 30 minutes later. If requesting a drop-off for an appointment, you can expect that

your pick-up will be between 1 hour to 30 minutes prior to your requested drop-off time.

Establishing a Pick-up Time

We will always try to give you the pick-up time you request. If that time slot is not available, we will try to offer a pick-up time up to 1 hour earlier or 1 hour later.

Pick-up Window

When you schedule your ride, you will be given a time range for pick-up, known as your pick-up window.

The driver may arrive at any time during this **30-minute** window. For example, if your pick-up window is between 10:00 AM and 10:30 AM, you must be ready to board the bus at any time in that 30-minute period.

Passengers should be ready to leave at any time during this 30-minute time period.

If the driver arrives within the pick-up window and you are not ready, the driver will wait three minutes before leaving without you.

Subscription Trips

If you are going to and from the same place at the same time regularly (for example, work or dialysis trips) you can ask to set up a regularly scheduled ride, also called a subscription trip.

If you have subscription service, you only need to call when you will **NOT** ride, such as when you are ill or on vacation.

Paratransit Travel Tips

For the smoothest ride possible, consider the following:

- Schedule early - from 1 to 14 days prior to the date you want to travel.
- Tell the scheduler if you need to reach your destination at a specific time (i.e. for a 9:00 appointment) and plan to arrive early.
- When possible, try to schedule appointments and plan activities outside of our busiest hours to enjoy a shorter ride. The best times to take a trip or schedule a ride are between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM or after 4:00 PM.
- Allow enough travel time. Paratransit is a shared-ride service. Unexpected delays can happen because of weather, traffic, other riders, etc.

Late Cancellations & No Shows

When customers do not show up for a scheduled trip or cancel less than one hour before beginning of the scheduled pick-up window, it wastes Reserve-A-Ride's limited resources and

prevents other riders from using that time slot. Please call (517) 788-8410 to cancel your trip as soon as you know you will not need it.

Customers with a history of not showing up for scheduled rides or of cancelling at the last minute, could face suspension. The following are examples of no-shows:

- A driver arrives within the scheduled pick-up window and the customer says he/she no longer needs a ride.
- A passenger is not ready to leave within three minutes of driver arrival for pick-up.
- A driver cannot find a passenger at the scheduled pick-up location.
- A passenger calls and cancels a trip less than one hour before the scheduled trip time (for example, if the pick-up window is from 10:00 AM to 10:30 AM, the trip must be cancelled no later than 9:00 AM or it will be counted as a no-show).

No-shows will not be counted against a customer if they happen because the Reserve-A-Ride vehicle was late or because of other factors outside of a customer's control.

Subsequent Trip Policy

If a passenger is a no-show for one trip, all other trips scheduled for that day will remain scheduled. We request that the passenger notify the dispatch office to cancel any subsequent trips if you will not be needing the service.

Suspension Policy for Excessive No-shows and Late Cancellations

JATA Reserve-A-Ride reviews all recorded no-shows and late cancellations for accuracy before recording them on a passenger's account. Each verified no-show or late cancellation will count as 1 penalty point.

Passengers will be subject to suspension after they meet all of the following conditions:

- Accumulate 5 penalty points in one calendar month
- Have booked at least 15 trips that month
- No-showed or cancelled late at least 33% of those trips (example: 5 out of 15 trips)

A passenger will be subject to suspension only if both the minimum number of trips booked and the minimum number of penalty points are reached during the calendar month. JATA will notify passengers by phone after they have 3 penalty points and would be subject to suspension should they get 2 more penalty points that month.

Customers will be notified of suspensions in writing. All suspension notices will include a copy of this policy, information on disputing no-shows or late cancellations, and information on how to appeal suspensions.

Suspensions begin on Saturdays. The first violation in a calendar year triggers a warning letter but no suspension. Subsequent violations result in the following suspensions:

- Second Violation: 1 day suspension
- Third Violation: 3 day suspension
- Fourth Violation: 5 day suspension
- Fifth and subsequent violations: 10 day suspension

Policy for Disputing Specific No-Shows or Late Cancellations

Passengers wishing to dispute specific no-shows or late cancellations must do so within 3 business days of receiving suspension letters. Passengers should contact the Reserve-A-Ride office at 517-788-8410, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM to explain the circumstance, and request the removal of the no-show or late cancellation.

Policy for Appealing Proposed Suspensions

Passengers wishing to appeal suspensions under this policy have the right to file an appeal request, which must be in writing by letter or via email. Appeals must be submitted to:

Jackson Area Transportation Authority
2350 E. High Street
Jackson, MI 49203

Or by email to: **info@mijata.org**

Passengers must submit written appeal requests within 7 business days of receiving suspension letters. Riders who miss the appeal request deadline will be suspended from the complementary paratransit service on the date listed on the suspension notice. All suspension appeals follow JATA's appeal policy.

Passenger Assistance

The driver will meet you at the curb outside of your building unless you request additional assistance. Examples of how drivers can help you upon request include:

- Helping you walk from the outside door of a building to the bus
- Pushing your wheelchair to/from the first outside door of a building
- Assisting you on and off the lift

Drivers will try to accommodate reasonable requests for assistance when possible. However, drivers cannot serve as a personal care attendant for customers. Examples of how drivers cannot help you include:

- Operate a powered wheelchair
- Go past the 1st set of doors in offices, medical facilities, apartment buildings, etc. to tell you of their arrival or to assist you to the bus
- Walk so far away that they lose sight of the bus
- Feed or dress a passenger

Personal Care Attendants (PCA)

If you need help above and beyond what Reserve-A-Ride drivers can provide in order to make your trip, you may bring a PCA with you at no extra charge. You must be approved to travel with a PCA during the ADA application process.

- PCAs ride for free, but must get on and off the vehicle with you. The driver will help you

enter and exit the vehicle, and secure you within the vehicle.

- A PCA can be a different person each time you travel, and can be anyone who will be assisting you on your trip (i.e. a relative, friend, neighbor, or employee).
- Let the person scheduling your trip know if you will be riding with a PCA so that a seat can be saved.

Companions

A companion is someone you want to bring along to share the trip with you, but is not considered a personal care attendant.

Companions must pay the full fare, and must get on and off the vehicle with you. You can bring one companion and additional companions can ride if space is available. Let the person scheduling your trip know if you want to bring a companion so a seat can be saved.

Children

Children over the age of 12 traveling as companions pay full fare. If you are travelling with small children you must supply your own safety/booster seats. Seats must meet state safety requirements. You are responsible for safely securing the child in the seat.

Non-collapsible strollers are not allowed on the bus.

Service Animals

Only service animals as defined under Department of Transportation Code of Federal Regulations 4710.1 §37.3 are allowed. Service animals are animals that are trained to perform tasks to aid an individual with a disability, such as:

- Guiding passengers with impaired vision.
- Alerting passengers with impaired hearing to sounds.
- Pulling a wheelchair.
- Fetching dropped items.

No fare is charged for service animals. Please tell the person scheduling your trip that you will be traveling with a service animal. Service animals should be properly groomed and behavior must be controlled at all times.

Respirators, Concentrators, and Portable Oxygen

Passengers who use medically necessary respiratory equipment, including respirators, oxygen concentrators, or portable oxygen, may use these devices while riding JATA vehicles, provided the equipment can be safely accommodated.

Passengers are responsible for ensuring that their equipment is properly secured and does not block aisles, doorways, emergency exits, or access for other passengers. Portable oxygen cylinders and other equipment must remain under the passenger's control and may not create a safety hazard.

JATA operators may provide reasonable assistance with boarding and securing mobility devices or equipment when appropriate; however, operators are not responsible for operating, adjusting, or administering medical equipment.

Passengers using oxygen or respiratory equipment should notify the operator if assistance is needed. JATA may require equipment to be positioned or secured in a manner that complies with applicable safety requirement

Reasonable Accommodations

It is JATA's policy to make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, or procedures when requested to do so by individuals with disabilities when such accommodations are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability.

Requests for accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be denied on one or more of the following grounds:

- Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of our services, programs, or activities;

- Granting the request could create a direct threat to the health or safety of the requestor or others;
- Granting the request would create an undue financial or administrative burden for the JATA; or
- Without such modification, the individual with a disability is otherwise able to fully use JATA's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.

Requests for reasonable accommodations can be made when scheduling your ride. Please notify your scheduler what modification/s are needed as you are providing your ride request.

In determining whether to grant a requested modification, JATA will be guided by the provisions of United States Department of Transportation at 49 CFR Appendix E to Part 37.169. When possible, we ask that customers make accommodation requests in advance. However, requests made on location will be considered.

Carry-On Items

The following policy applies to carry-on items:

- Passengers may bring as many packages/bags on the bus as they and/or their assistant or companion can carry in one trip, assuming space is available.
- Wheelchairs and walkers are not considered carry-on items.
- JATA is not responsible for lost items.

Passenger Conduct

Passengers must follow driver directions getting on and off buses and while in transport. Disruptive or unsafe behavior may result in suspension from Paratransit service.

Passenger Safety

Drivers are required to ensure that all passengers are safely secured in Reserve-A-Ride vehicles.

- Riders who can sit in a seat must wear a seatbelt.
- Riders who use wheelchairs must be secured using wheelchair securement straps and a shoulder belt.

Wheelchairs and Other Assistive Devices

Reserve-A-Ride accommodates most mobility devices as long as the device does not pose a safety risk to any person and does not put the vehicle at risk of damage. The following rules apply to wheelchairs and other mobility aids:

- Wheelchairs must be able to be secured to the van floor. Riders in scooters may be asked to transfer to a seat if they cannot be firmly secured in the device.
- If the total weight of you plus your mobility device exceeds lift weight limits you may be denied transportation unless you and the mobility device can be lifted separately. Most Reserve-A-Ride lifts are certified to hold up to 800 pounds. If your mobility device exceeds

that weight, please notify the scheduler.
- Please call (517) 788-8410 if you are unsure if your mobility device can be safely accommodated.

Severe Weather Rules & Recommendations

In the event of severe weather, please refer to the guidelines listed below:

- Ramps, steps, and walkways must be clear of snow and ice and shoveled wide enough to permit safe passage (including a wheelchair). Driveways or walkways at the curb must also be clear to permit safe lowering of the vehicle ramp or lift.
- Expect delays and increased trip times.
- Make sure the location you are traveling to is open, and will not be closing early due to weather conditions.
- Consider rescheduling your trip for the following day.
- Cancel your trip as soon as possible if you do not plan on traveling.

Other Services

In addition to Reserve-A-Ride, JATA offers fixed-route bus service – large buses traveling designated routes on a set schedule.

Even if you use Reserve-A-Ride for some trips, you may still be able to used fixed-route service for some trips. Please note:

- All JATA buses have wheelchair accessible ramps.
- Drivers are trained in passenger assistance and wheelchair securement.
- Passengers pay only half the regular fare when boarding with their Reserve-A-Ride for people with disabilities eligibility card.

Call JATA at (517) 787-8363 for route and schedule information or go to our website: www.mijata.org

Visitor Service Requests

We look forward to hearing from you JATA will process visitor and rider service requests as promptly as possible. Requests received during normal business hours will generally be reviewed and processed the same day. If a request cannot be completed the same day, JATA will process it no later than the following business day.

Some requests may require additional information, coordination, or review and may take longer to resolve. In these situations, JATA will provide the rider or visitor with an update regarding the status of the request and, when appropriate, an estimated timeframe for completion.

Passenger Comments & Suggestions

JATA welcomes your feedback. Please call (517) 787-8363 or email info@mijata.org to share your Reserve-A-Ride experience. Please provide as much

information as possible, such as the time and day of your trip and your pick- up/drop-offlocations. We look forward to hearing from you!

Procedure to File a Complaint under the ADA

If you have a complaint about the accessibility of our transit system or service, or believe you have been discriminated against because of your disability, you can file a complaint. The complaint should be in writing and should contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant; and location, date and description of the alleged

discrimination. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the complainant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 180 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

Jackson Area Transportation Authority
Attn: Customer Service Department 2350
E. High Street
Jackson, MI 49203
Phone: 517-787-8363, Ext. 101
Fax: 517-796-6023
Email: info@mijata.org

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the JATA Public Relations Representative and/or his/her designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible resolution. Within 15 calendar days of the meeting, the Public Relations Representative or his/her designee will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print, Braille or audio tape. The response will explain the Public Relations Representative's position and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the initial response does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to JATA's Executive Director or his/her designee.

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the Executive Director or his/her designee will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the Executive Director or his/her designee will respond in writing, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

All written complaints received by the Public Relations Representative or his/her designee, appeals to the Executive Director or his/her designee, and responses from these two offices will be retained by JATA for at least one year. Complaints can also be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration's Office of Civil Rights at:

FTA Office of Civil Rights 1200
New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Title VI

The Jackson Area Transportation Authority (JATA) 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.

Title VI may file a complaint with JATA. For more information on JATA's civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact (517) 787-8363, email info@mijata.org; or visit our administrative office at 2350 E. High Street,Jackson, MI 49203. For more information, visit www.mijata.org.

A complaint may filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office ofCivil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 NewJersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.