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HARTPlus

Paratransit Rider's Guide

Sección en Español



HARTinfo Line (813) 254-4278
www.GoHART.org

HARTPlus Paratransit Rider’s Guide

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WELCOME TO HARTPlus

HARTPlus paratransit service is a door-to-door public transportation service for people with disabilities who are unable to use HART local route buses. HARTPlus is a shared-ride service operated with accessible American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant vehicles. Service is available one and a half miles on either side of a local bus route. Express service is not included in the HARTPlus Service Area.

TRAVEL TRAINING

HART offers Travel Training to people with disabilities wishing to ride public buses. Riding the bus gives you the freedom to set your own schedule without having to make reservations or worry about the availability of rides. HART's Travel Training Program is available free to anyone who wants to use accessible fixed-route bus transportation. Training for bus services does not make you ineligible for Paratransit services. For more information, call HART Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

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HARTPlus ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

HARTPlus service is available for people with disabilities that prevent them from using HART's fixed route bus services. A disability in and of itself does not imply eligibility for HARTPlus services.

To use HARTPlus services, submit an application to HART. Applications are available by contacting Customer Service at (813) 254-4278 or online at www.GoHART.org. Applications can also be picked up at Marion Transit Center and the University Area Transit Center. Assistance in completing applications is available upon request.

A functional ability assessment is also required as part of the eligibility determination process. Free transportation to and from this interview can be provided upon request.

The eligibility determination will be completed within 21 days of completion of the application process. If the eligibility determination is not made within 21 days of completion, temporary service begins on the 22nd day, by calling HART Customer Service.

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HARTPlus SERVICE HOURS

Service hours mirror the local fixed route bus serving your point of origin and destination. HARTPlus service is not available on days, times or locations when the corresponding local fixed route service is not operating.

Holiday service hours may follow a Saturday or Sunday schedule. Contact Customer Service for specific service hour information.

RESERVATIONS - SCHEDULING TRIPS

Trip reservations can be scheduled the day before the trip, and up to three days in advance. Reservation can be made seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please make sure you have the correct address and times before scheduling.

To make a trip reservation, call HART Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

Be prepared to provide the following information:

1. First and last name
2. Date(s) of travel
3. The time you would like to be picked up OR the time you need to reach your destination.
4. Complete pick-up and destination address, including an apartment number, suite number, and gate or security code, building identification, zip code and telephone number
5. If traveling with a personal care attendant (PCA), service animal or an assistive device, such as a wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, oxygen tank, etc.

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CUSTOMER CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

HART partners with transportation providers to offer same-day service to our HARTPlus customers. If you are interested in same-day service, reach out to HART Customer Service for detail and information on the current provider.

CONFIRMING TRIPS

Trip(s) will be confirmed at the time you schedule your reservation(s). Since we are unable to process same-day changes, we ask that you verify dates, times and addresses before ending the call to ensure the accuracy of your scheduled trip.

RIDING HARTPlus

Participants are required to present their HARTPlus ID and pay exact fare or a valid HART Coupon when boarding vehicles.

ON BOARD RIDE TIME

Travel time on HARTPlus is comparable to the amount of time it would take to make the same trip using our fixed route bus with connections. The average trip length can be 60 minutes or more, and a trip may exceed or fall below that average depending on the circumstances.

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TRIP PICK UP POINTS – WHERE TO WAIT FOR YOUR RIDE

Operators will assist you to and from the threshold of a building. Operators must maintain physical sight of the vehicle at all times, and they are not permitted to enter beyond the threshold or ground level of any building. If a rider will need further assistance the pick-up location, a companion or Personal Care Attendant (PCA) should travel with the rider to assist.

Door-to-door service does not include any of the following:

- Assisting passengers on unsafe or steeply inclined mobility ramps or stairs
- Entering beyond the door threshold
- Locking/unlocking doors or activating/deactivating house alarms
- Loading/unloading personal items

If a rider cannot be left unattended (as a result of his or her age, disability or impairment), a companion or PCA is required to receive the passenger upon the vehicle's arrival.

PICK UP WINDOW – 30 MINUTES

HARTPlus has a 30-minute pick-up window, meaning that you must be ready 30 minutes prior to your scheduled pick-up time. For example, if you are scheduled to be picked up by 10 a.m., the HARTPlus van can show up as early as 9:30 a.m.

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VEHICLE ARRIVAL - FIVE MINUTE RULE/WINDOW TIME

Paratransit operators will wait five-minutes for a rider to board the vehicle. If a rider does not board the vehicle within the five minute wait time, the operator will mark the rider as a No-Show and will depart the location. HART is not required to call the rider when the vehicle arrives or before leaving the pick-up location; riders are expected to be ready to board the vehicle upon its arrival.

VEHICLE IS LATE - NEXT STEP

If the vehicle has not arrived by your scheduled pick-up time, please call Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

USING WHEELCHAIRS OR OTHER MOBILITY DEVICES

HARTPlus will make every attempt to accommodate standard wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility devices. The HARTPlus vehicles can accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices having widths from a range of 30" to 33" and 50" to 63" in length. All HARTPlus vehicles have a maximum weight limit of 800 pounds.

Note: Mobility devices larger than these standards may be denied service aboard HARTPlus vehicles.

Securement on Boarding

Operators will make all attempts to secure standard wheelchairs and scooters. If a wheelchair or scooter exceeds the normal size, the operator may ask the rider to transfer to a seat, as it may be difficult to safely secure the passenger within the mobility device. It is the rider's choice to transfer or remain in his or her mobility device.

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SUBSCRIPTION TRIPS

A subscription trip is defined as travel that will take place for more than 30 days and repeated at the same times and days of the week. Once the rider makes the request, riders are required to book this trip on demand for a two-week period before it is eligible to become a subscription trip. Changes in frequency or time to a subscription trip will result in an additional week call-in period for those modifications to become effective. No more than two changes can be made within a 30-day period. Frequent/Excessive cancellations and no-shows could result in termination of a subscription. Subscription holds over 90 days are subject to cancellation.

NEGOTIATED TRIP TIMES

Occasionally, the exact time you wish to travel may not be available. In that case, a representative may offer you other choices up to one hour earlier or one hour later than the time you wish to travel. If you need to arrive at your destination by a specific time, tell the representative. If your travel time is more flexible, you may be offered a negotiated trip time.

NO-SHOWS

A No-Show occurs when you:

- Fail to board the vehicle within five minutes after it arrives
- Violate HART policies and as a result you are not transported.
- Do not cancel trips at least two hours before your window time.

If alternative transportation is not available, contact Customer Service who may be able to dispatch a vehicle to your destination within 2 hours based upon availability.

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CANCELLATIONS

Same-day cancellations must be done up to two hours before the start of your window in order to not be considered a No-Show.

For cancellations and inquiries, Customer Service Representatives are available Monday - Friday from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on weekends and holidays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. For after-hours cancellations, call (813) 384-6418.

NO-SHOW - SUSPENSION OF SERVICES

When you accumulate four or more No-Shows and the calculated result of trips/No-Shows is 15% or higher within a rolling 30-day time period, you will receive a written Notice of Service Suspension, and a seven-day service suspension will be imposed. A second suspension (four or more No-Shows and the calculated result of trips/ No-Shows is 15% or higher) in a six-month period may result in an additional van service suspension of 14 days. If more than two suspensions occur in a six-month period, van service will be cancelled for 21 days.

Note: If the No-Show is found that it was due to circumstances beyond the customer's control. The No-Show will be excused and removed.

NO-SHOW - SUSPENSION APPEAL PROCESS

A rider has a right to appeal a suspension of service, termination of service, or loss of subscription privileges by calling or writing the office of HARTPlus at

Phone Number: (813) 384-6312

Mailing Address: HARTPlus
1211 North Marion Street
Tampa, Florida 33602

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TRAVELING WITH PCA'S/GUESTS/SERVICE ANIMALS

Personal Care Attendant

A personal care attendant (PCA) can accompany you at no additional charge. Your file must indicate that you are eligible to have a PCA travel with you, and you must reserve space for the PCA when scheduling your trip.

Guests

One guest is welcome to ride with you at the regular HARTPlus fare per trip. You must reserve space for your guest, whether adult or child, when scheduling your trip. Seating for more than one guest is on a “space available” basis when scheduling your trips. Children age four and under must be accompanied by a paying adult. Florida law requires that all children under the age of four or weighing less than 50 pounds must be properly restrained in a child safety seat. **HART DOES NOT PROVIDE CHILD SAFETY SEATS.**

Service Animals

Service animals are allowed to accompany you if this need is indicated in your file. When scheduling a trip, please inform Customer Service if a service animal will be accompanying you on the trip.

Pets

Small pets are allowed on all transit vehicles. Pets must be contained in secure, clean, hand-held, and leak-proof cages. The cage/carrier must be small enough to fit on owner's lap. During times when the transit system is likely to be crowded, passengers are asked not to transport pets.

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TRAVELING WITH PACKAGES - TWO PACKAGE LIMIT

Carry-on packages are limited to two bags or similar-sized packages that can be carried by the rider onboard HARTPlus vehicles. Operators do not assist riders with personal belongings. Riders can keep travel carts loaded if the cart fits fully between the seat next to the passenger and the seatback in front of that seat. Riders must fold grocery carts if the cart cannot fit between the seat and the seatback in front of it and secure their carry-on items to keep aisles and exits clear on the van. Riders must fold their own strollers or grocery carts when required.

TRAVELING WITH OXYGEN TANKS

If a rider requires the use of oxygen, it must be identified. Any change in the size or number of oxygen storage container(s) identified during the certification process must be reported to HART prior to making a trip reservation. Any change in rider's status regarding the use of oxygen must be reported to HART immediately.

HARTPlus FARES

All eligible riders, regardless of age, must pay exact fare when boarding. Operators cannot give change. HARTPlus fare coupons can be purchased online at www.GoHART.org, at HART Transit Centers or via mail order form.

For the most up-to-date information on HARTPlus fares, call Customer Service at (813) 254-4278. You can also go to HART's website at www.GoHART.org for the latest fare information.

Please note:

Operators are not allowed to accept tips or gratuities.

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CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION

Eligible riders are certified for services for a period of up to three or five years. The eligibility period will depend on the participant's specific disability and, if temporary, its duration.

RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

Recertification for services will be required of each HARTPlus participant prior to expiration of his or her current eligibility period. We recommend submitting applications two months prior of the expiration date. Recertifying riders will complete an in-person assessment to identify their potentials, rather than limitations in their ability to use accessible bus service.

Here is a summary of the certification process:

1. Visit www.GoHART.org to print the application or call Customer Service for an application at (813) 254-4278.
2. Once original paperwork is received, complete and correct, we will contact you to set up an appointment at the assessment center.
3. At the assessment we will evaluate your abilities in using transit services.
4. After the assessment, HART will notify you via mail if you were approved or denied service and whether your service will be conditional, unconditional or temporary.

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CONDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for HARTPlus may be on a “conditional” basis, meaning service will only be provided for those trips in which ADA paratransit eligibility standards have been met. Riders will be required to use HART’s bus services, or find alternative transportation, for trips that are not deemed ADA paratransit eligible.

Note: If you change your address, lose your HARTPlus ID, or your disability needs change, call Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION APPEAL PROCESS

Applicants have the opportunity to appeal, if the applicant disagrees with the eligibility that has been granted by HART. The appeal must be received in writing within 60 days, which will begin 5 days after the initial determination letter is mailed. The applicant will have the opportunity to be heard in person by an official other than the one who turned them down, and may present additional information and arguments regarding the disability and inability to use the regular fixed-route bus service.

The appeal hearing levels will consist of the following:

- Level 1 - Van Transportation Manager, Van Transportation
- Level 2* - Manager of Transportation Supervision, Bus Transportation

* *Committee Member (Optional)*

If a decision is not made within 30 days of the completion of the appeals process, the applicant will be considered “presumptively eligible,” and HART will provide service to the applicant until a decision by the appeals committee is made. The decision of the appeals committee will be final, and the applicant will be notified in writing and by phone (if possible) within seven days of the appeals committee’s decision.

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NO DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

HART will provide reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination unless the modifications (1) would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity, or (2) would result in undue financial and administrative burdens. All request for modifications should be made in advance whenever possible. Emergency modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Request for modifications can be obtained by calling or writing the office of HARTPlus at:

Phone Number: (813) 384-6312

Mailing Address: HARTPlus
1211 North Marion Street
Tampa, Florida 33602

All customers have the ability to appeal any reasonable modification request denial made by HART. If you wish to appeal this decision by HART, call or write the office of HARTPlus at the address or phone number listed above.

VISITORS ON HARTPlus SERVICE

Out-of-town visitors who are ADA eligible can use HARTPlus services. Visitors can present documentation that they are ADA paratransit eligible in the jurisdiction in which they reside or a certification by the visitor that they are unable to use fixed route transit a day prior to the start of service to

CustomerService@GoHART.org or fax (813) 384-6281.

Reservations can be made one to three days in advance.

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RULES OF CONDUCT

Riders are asked to follow these rules of conduct to ensure the safety and comfort of all riders and the operator:

- No loud conversations on cell phones
- No eating, drinking unless medically necessary or No smoking on board
- No riding under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- No abusive, threatening or obscene language or actions
- No discharge of bodily fluids or open wounds
- No deliberate fare evasion
- No physical abuse of another rider, or the operator
- No operating or tampering with any equipment while onboard a HARTPlus vehicle
- No radios or other sound generating equipment are to be played aboard the vehicles
- For safety reasons, please limit unnecessary conversation with operators when the vehicle is in motion

Riders who violate the rules of conduct are subject to penalties, up to and including suspension of service.

Note: Riders who engage in physical abuse or cause physical injury to another rider or operator may be subject to immediate and permanent suspension, and possible criminal prosecution.

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HARTPlus OPERATOR ASSISTANCE

At the request of the customer, a HARTPlus Operator may assist the customer from the outside door of their pick-up location to the outside door of their destination. HARTPlus Operators may not lock or unlock doors, lift or carry a customer, search for a customer in a building, carry or load bags or personal belongings, call the customer at home, or perform any other assistance that should be undertaken by a personal care attendant (PCA).

HELPFUL HARTPlus TELEPHONE NUMBERS

We hope this guide answers some of your questions. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to provide safe, reliable, dependable and efficient public transportation to persons with disabilities.

- Customer Service, Travel Training,
HART Lost and Found
and HARTPlus Eligibility.(813) 254-4278
- After-hours Trip Cancellation.(813) 384-6418

HARTPlus PHYSICAL ADDRESS

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority
Marion Transit Center
1211 North Marion Street
Tampa, Florida 33602

HART WEB ADDRESS

www.GoHART.org

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