

Carroll Area *Transit System*



Rider Policies & Procedures

Carroll Area Transit System – Rider Policies and Procedures

MISSION STATEMENT

Carroll Area Transit System is a team of transportation professionals committed to providing safe, dependable and affordable transportation in Carroll County. This includes our CATS Demand Response (reservation) service, Carroll Transit Shuttles and agency transportation.

WHAT IS CATS?

CATS is our countywide, shared-ride, curb-to-curb para-transit. This service is available to anyone in Carroll County. Anyone can ride. Passenger trips will be coordinated to serve as many people as possible and to use our vehicles in the most efficient manner.

POLICIES

General Policies

The following policies apply to all of Carroll Area Transit System's services, including CATS, Carroll Transit Shuttles and Agency Transportation:

1. Passengers must pay the fare upon boarding the vehicle unless prior billing arrangements have been made. Exact change, valid ticket or pass is required.
2. For the comfort of all passengers, smoking, eating, drinking, chewing, and using illegal substances in Carroll Area Transit System vehicles are prohibited.
3. Passengers may not play an audio device unless using a headset and keeping the volume low so that others are not disturbed.
4. The driver's attention must be on safe driving! For the safety of all passengers, riders should refrain from speaking with the driver while the vehicle is in motion.
5. A driver may refuse to transport a passenger who appears to be under the influence of alcohol, illegal or dangerous substances, or whose behavior or language appears abusive, offensive, disorderly or dangerous to himself, the driver or other passengers.
6. Carroll Area Transit System will attempt to accommodate a reasonable amount of passenger packages provided that they do not disrupt or delay transportation for other passengers. Packages should be held by the passenger or secured under the seat, but must be safely secured. Passengers shall not place articles in the aisles. Carroll Area Transit System is not responsible for lost or damaged items.
7. Strollers are permitted on Carroll Area Transit System vehicles only if folded. Please fold the stroller before boarding and carry your child on the bus.

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8. Children under age 12 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

9. Service animals trained to assist an individual in living independently are permitted on board Carroll Area Transit System vehicles. Service animals must be registered with Carroll Area Transit System. Other small pets may be transported in approved pet carriers and must not exceed 20 lbs.

The remaining policies are specific to CATS.

Eligibility

Passengers must be registered with CATS before transportation service can be scheduled.

Geographic Areas Served

CATS is available throughout Carroll County.

Days and Hours of Operation

Regular hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In some limited areas, earlier or later service may be available. In order to complete your travel by 5:00 p.m., you should schedule your appointment no later than 2 p.m.

Service is not provided on the following County holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following day, and Christmas Day. For specific dates of these holidays during the current year, please Call the Carroll Area Transit System office at (410) 876-RIDE.

Advanced Reservation Policy

Trips must be scheduled at least two (2) business days in advance of the time requested. Reservations are accepted as much as two weeks (14 days) in advance.

Late Policy

In order to provide service to as many people as possible, it is essential that all passengers be ready at their scheduled time. Passengers who are not ready for their scheduled pickup time cause the driver to fall behind schedule and inconvenience other passengers. Therefore, there is a five-minute limit, from the scheduled pick-up time, to the amount of time CATS drivers will wait for a late passenger.

It is the passenger's responsibility to be ready and waiting at their door (or curb, if they are able) by their scheduled pick-up time. If the passenger is not waiting outside

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when the driver arrives, the driver will go to the door and knock. If the passenger is not ready and at the door within five minutes of the scheduled pickup time, and has not called the dispatcher to cancel the trip, the driver will notify the dispatcher and depart for next pickup, and the late passenger will be considered "no-show."

"No-Show" Policy

From time to time, it may be necessary for a scheduled passenger to cancel a trip for unexpected circumstances beyond their control. Last minute cancellations, or "no-shows," are detrimental to the efficient and effective operations of a demand response transportation system. No-shows waste resources that could be used to provide transportation to other passengers. Therefore, CATS has instituted a "no show" policy to prevent and remedy abuse.

What Constitutes a "No-Show"?

If a passenger is unable to make his or her scheduled trip, and does not call the dispatcher to cancel the trip at least 1 hour in advance of the scheduled pick-up time, the trip will be considered a "no-show." Passengers who are not ready by their scheduled pick-up time may also be considered a "no-show" if they are more than five minutes late; the driver will leave after waiting five minutes and contacting the dispatcher.

Consequences

A "no-show" has the following consequences:

1. The "no-show" fee will be equivalent to that days scheduled fee.
2. A rider will be suspended from CATS service for one month if they have 3 or more no-shows in a 30-day period of time, or if there is an unpaid balance for any no-show more than 30-days in arrears.

Appeals Process

The passenger may appeal any of the above four actions if he or she feels a "no show" occurred because of unexpected circumstances beyond his or her control (e.g. medical or family emergency). Written appeals should be addressed to the Director within ten (10) calendar days of notification of the offense.

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FARE POLICY

The fare policy effective 12/1/11 For Demand Response is as follows:

0 -5 miles	\$4.00
5 – 10 miles	\$6.00
10 – 15 miles	\$7.00
15 – 20 miles	\$8.00
20- 25 miles	\$9.00

Demand Response discounted for seniors going to the Senior Center from
9 am to 2pm: \$2.00

Dialysis Clients outside of the Westminster area: \$5.00

Shuttle Deviations: \$3.00

All Children under 6 years of age ride for free. Discounts may apply to Senior Citizens and persons with disabilities.

Passenger Assistance Policy

All CATS drivers are trained in passenger assistance techniques and will provide passenger assistance in boarding and disembarking from the vehicle. Passenger assistance may include guiding the passenger to the vehicle, lending a steady arm for balance in boarding the vehicle, finding a seat or securing a wheelchair.

CATS drivers will not provide assistance that involves bearing weight, including lifting and carrying passengers. Individuals who need extensive assistance in traveling must arrange for a Personal Care Attendant to accompany and assist them. CATS does not provide Personal Care Attendants. The driver may refuse service if the passenger cannot safely travel to and from the vehicle without the driver lifting or carrying the passenger. For passengers using wheelchairs, the path between the door and the vehicle must be wheelchair-accessible. When service is first provided to a new passenger, a supervisor may be present to assess assistance needs of the new passenger.

CATS drivers will not enter passengers' homes. For the safety and protection of both drivers and passengers, it is against our policy to provide this type of assistance.

CATS is not a delivery service. Passengers are generally responsible for carrying their own belongings. Packages which cannot be stowed on your lap or the seat beside you are not permitted unless space provides and packages can be properly secured.

CATS is not responsible for any items lost or damaged on the vehicle.

Personal Care Attendant Policy

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone designated or employed specifically to help an individual with a disability meet his or her needs in daily living activities. Individuals who need extensive assistance in traveling (beyond that which the CATS driver can provide), including lifting, carrying, support during the ride, and behavior control, must arrange for a PCA to accompany and assist them. CATS does not provide PCA.

Passengers needing the assistance of a PCA must register the PCA with Carroll Area Transit System. A registered PCA may accompany the passenger free of charge. A PCA will be required to pay regular fare when not providing assistance.

It is required that a person who requires the use of a PCA to travel always travel with their PCA since drivers cannot provide assistance beyond that which is described in the previous section.

All residents of an assistant living facility must have a PCA with them.

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Policy on Portable Breathing Aids

Portable oxygen supplies and respirators are permitted on board CATS with proper notification. Oxygen tanks must be secured so they do not move during transport. Information about the use of this equipment must be provided to the dispatcher when scheduling service.

Passenger Securement Policy

Wheelchairs

All standard wheelchairs (those measuring no more than 30" wide, from outer sides of wheels, and 48" long, from the back wheels to the footrests, and weighing no more than 600 pounds total combined weight of chair and person) will be accommodated. If the total combined weight of the individual and their wheelchair exceeds 600 pounds, Carroll Area Transit System's ability to accommodate the wheelchair will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

All wheelchairs must be secured to the vehicle in the designated area. The driver will provide assistance in securing the wheelchair.

Wheelchairs which cannot be properly secured (i.e. three-wheeled scooters) will be accommodated so long as they meet the size and weight restrictions above and fit within the securement area.

An individual using a wheelchair may transfer to a regular seat on the vehicle so long as they are able to accomplish the transfer independently or with the assistance of a personal care attendant. Drivers will not lift passengers.

Seat Belts

Carroll Area Transit System requires that all passengers wear seat belts in vehicles equipped with them. Persons using wheelchairs should be secured to their chairs in addition to having their wheelchairs secured to the vehicle. The driver will provide assistance in fastening seatbelts upon request.

Child Safety Seats

All passengers must follow the Maryland Child Passenger Safety Law which states:

Every child under age 8 years old must ride in an appropriate child restraint unless the child is 4ft 9in or taller or weighs more than 65 pounds.

Every child from 8 years to 16 years who is not secured in a child restraint must be secured in a vehicle seat belt. (Effective June 30, 2008).

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Lift Use Policy

Carroll Area Transit System strongly recommends that persons who wish to use the lift to board do so only when seated in a wheelchair. Persons who do not use wheelchairs but wish to use the lift to board or de-board the vehicle must inform the dispatcher when scheduling service. This is necessary for vehicle scheduling considerations. Also, if requested in advance, Carroll Area Transit System will provide a manual wheelchair for use when riding the lift.

PROCEDURES

How to Schedule a Trip

Call the Carroll Area Transit System Dispatcher at (410) 876-RIDE Monday-Friday, at least two (2) business days before your appointment time (reservations accepted up to 14 days in advance). Transportation is solely based on availability. When scheduling, the customer must have all information (exact address, suite #, etc).

Hearing-impaired customers can use the Maryland TDD Relay System, 1-800-735-2258 to contact Carroll Area Transit System to schedule a trip.

When to schedule your ride with CATS

7am – 8am Calls for cancellations only. There will be **NO** scheduling during this hour.

8am -10am Calls for **Same Day Scheduling** only.

10am – 2pm General Scheduling Time. Calls for all other scheduling up to 2 in advance.

2pm – 3pm Processing next day schedules. NO scheduling calls.

3pm -5pm Calls for next day only. As always, this is based solely on availability.

What Information the Dispatcher Will Need

When you call to schedule your trip, please be prepared to give the dispatcher the following information:

- . Your name (and Medical Assistance card number, if applicable)
- . Your daytime telephone number
- . The date you would like to schedule your trip
- . Where and when you need to be dropped off (complete address and phone number)

- . Where and when you would like to be picked up

. Special assistance needed or other considerations (for example, if you use a Wheelchair or travel with a Personal Care Attendant or service animal, or need the driver to meet you at your door).

Trips will not be scheduled until complete trip information is received.

You will be advised what time to be ready for pick up. CATS has a 15 minute window (please see "Late Policy")

If your trip can be made using our shuttle-route bus service (deviated fixed-routes), the Scheduler may recommend making your trip on the appropriate bus route.

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How to Request the Return Trip

Your return trip will be scheduled when you make the initial trip request. This reduces the possibility that you will have to wait when you are ready to return.

If you are not ready when the driver arrives for your return trip, you may call to request your return trip when you are ready. Return trips are provided on a first come, first-served basis. Please be patient as we cannot anticipate when all of our passengers will be ready to return. Most trips will be scheduled within 30 minutes after notification.

How to Cancel a Trip

If you change your mind or are unable to make your scheduled trip, please let the Dispatcher know as soon as possible, but at least one hour in advance of your scheduled pickup. If you do not cancel your trip at least one (1) hour in advance, it will be considered a "no show" (see "No Show" Policy) and could result in suspension of service.

How to Pay the Fare

Each time you board the vehicle you must either pay the fare in the form of money or tickets. You must pay for only the ride you are currently taking. Payment for return trips should be made on the return trip.

How to Purchase Tickets

Tickets are \$1.00 each and are sold in books of 10 for \$10.00. You may call to request tickets be ready for your next pick up. Please not you must give 24 hours notice.

By Mail

To purchase tickets by mail, send a check or money order payable to CATS, along with a Carroll Area Transit System order form stating the number of CATS books requested to:

CATS Tickets
Carroll Area Transit System
1300 Old Meadow Branch Road
Westminster, Maryland 21158

Please allow 1-2 weeks for delivery.

There will be NO REFUNDS on used ticket books.

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How to File a Compliment, Complaint, or Suggestion

If you would like to recognize a driver or other member of our staff for excellent service, to file a complaint, or to make a suggestion for how we can provide you with better service, please use one of the mail-back cards supplied on the vehicle or write to:

Executive Director
Carroll Area Transit System
1300 Old Meadow Branch Road
Westminster, Maryland 21158

Or call the CATS Hotline at (410) 857-0886.

PASSENGER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The passenger has a right to:

1. Safe, comfortable, and courteous service.
2. On-time service as scheduled by the dispatcher.
3. Information presented in an appropriate format.
4. Appeal any actions which result in a denial of service.

The passenger has the responsibility to:

1. Be ready for the driver by the scheduled pick-up time.
2. Inform the scheduler of any special assistance needs.
3. Inform the scheduler of cancellations at least one (1) hour before the scheduled Pick up time.
4. Inform the Executive Director of any service problems (or exemplary service).

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OTHER SERVICES WHICH MAY MEET YOUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Carroll Transit Shuttles

• Carroll Area Transit System operates four deviated fixed route (shuttle) services. These routes operate on a regular schedule for use by all customers and can deviate within a 3/4 mile corridor for passengers who are functionally unable to board the bus at a scheduled time point because of a disability. These shuttle routes include:

- Westminster Shuttle
- South Carroll Shuttle
- Taneytown Shuttle
- Westminster-Eldersburg Shuttle

• For more information, please call (410) 876-RIDE, Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or check website: www.carrolltransit.org. Schedules are also available by mail, on board Carroll Area Transit System vehicles, or at the following additional locations: Libraries, senior centers, county offices, and many other community service organizations.

Reduced Fare Program

Senior citizens and persons with disabilities are eligible for reduced fares on our deviated fixed-route (shuttle) bus services upon presentation of a reduced fare I.D. card.

Travel Training

Carroll Area Transit System offers a travel-training program for anyone who needs a little help in learning to use deviated fixed-route (shuttle) bus service. If you would be interested in this program, please call the office at (410) 876-RIDE, Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Connecting you to Carroll County with 4 Shuttles

Westminster Shuttle

Westminster to Eldersburg Shuttle

Eldersburg Shuttle

Taneytown Shuttle

No need to schedule!! Just be at the stop of your choice, at the designated time listed on the schedule, and we will be there!! It's that easy. The fare for this service is \$2.00 per person. The fare is \$1.00 for senior citizens, those with disabilities and those with a medicare card. Children under 6 are FREE.

These shuttles run Monday through Friday 8am – 5pm. Please see the attached shuttle schedules to find the stop nearest you!!

CATS is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

To file a complaint, or for more information, please contact:

Jolene G. Sullivan, Director
10 Distillery Drive, Suite 101
Westminster, MD 21157
Phone: 410-386-3600
Email: jsullivan@ccg.carr.org

If you have any questions about this service, please feel free to call

C.A.T.S at
410-876-7433