



Policy #62

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transportation Policy and Procedure

Established: 11/15/2007


Exemptions from this Policy:

There will be no exemptions to this policy.

Refresh Schedule:

All policies and referenced documentation identified in this policy will be subject to review and possible revision annually or upon request by the Board of Directors, Federal Transit Administration and/or the State of Texas.

Policy Revision Log:

Change Date	Change Description	Author and Organization	Board Chairman Signature
3/2/2010	Staff Requested Amendment	Omega Hawkins	See Board Minutes
11/23/2010	Staff Requested Amendment	Omega Hawkins	See Board Minutes
3/22/2011	Staff Requested Amendment	Omega Hawkins	See Board Minutes
3/12/2013	FTA Requirements	Ashley Ando	See Board Minutes
10/27/2014	Revision to Driver Assistance & Carry-on Baggage Limit	Teresa Elliott	See Board Minutes
8/25/2015	FTA Requirements	Teresa Elliott	See Board Minutes
11/17/2015	FTA Requirements	Teresa Elliott	See Board Minutes
5/16/2017	TxDOT/FTA Requirements	Teresa Elliott	See Board Minutes
2/19/2019	Staff Requested Amendment	Teresa Elliott	See Board Minutes
2/18/2020	FTA Compliance/Staff Annual Update	Teresa Elliott	

FTA C 4710.1 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, & 38. DOT Section 504 Regulations: "For entities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, compliance with applicable requirements of this part is a condition of compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and of receiving federal assistance. (§37.21(b)) STAR Transit services were developed to provide safe and efficient transportation to the general public and to persons with special needs as specified by Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and shall not discriminate against an individual with a disability in connection with the provision of transportation service.

STAR Transit shall make available to individuals with disabilities adequate information concerning transportation services. This obligation includes making adequate communications capacity available, through accessible formats and technology, to enable users to obtain information and schedule service.

All publicized services are made in accessible formats (i.e. large print, braille, etc.) by contacting STAR Transit at 877-631-5278.

Goal and Objective

It is STAR Transit's goal to provide transportation services to implement and maintain an efficient transportation system to serve the general public and individuals with disabilities.

The specific objectives of STAR Transit transportation services are:

- To provide transportation designed to accommodate the general public and individuals with disabilities; and,
- To maintain a trained staff for the operation and control of the system.

Certification Process

Certification of Eligibility – At this time, STAR Transit does **not** use a certification of eligibility to receive transportation services from STAR Transit.

STAR Transit will utilize the certification criteria as established in the ADA, as listed below at the time certifications will be necessary:

1. Any individual with a disability who is unable to independently board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed route system that is accessible to such persons.
2. Any individual with a disability who is able to independently board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the fixed route system which is accessible to such persons, except when such a vehicle is not available on the needed route(s).
3. Any individual with a disability whose impairment-related condition prevents him/her from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on the fixed route.

A copy of the certification form may be obtained at the STAR Transit Operation Center located at 500 Industrial Blvd., Terrell, TX 75160 and are available upon request through the mail. Requests can be made in writing or by calling STAR Transit at 877-631-5278.

The application must be legible and properly completed. Also, the applicant must sign that the information given is correct and sign the release of information form which is included in the application. A health care provider familiar with applicant's condition must complete the attached physician form.

After the completed application is received, a STAR Transit staff member will call to schedule an in-person interview and physical assessment. Interviews/assessments are conducted by appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays and are conducted at the STAR Transit office, 500 Industrial Blvd., Terrell, TX 75160. Transportation will be provided free of charge both to and from the interview/assessment.

An interview is required for certification unless other arrangements are made with the Mobility Management Department.

Determination of Eligibility

STAR Transit will determine eligibility status of a passenger based on the information provided during the eligibility process within twenty-one (21) business days from receipt of the completed application. A person may be determined to be ADA-eligible, temporarily ADA-eligible, or conditionally ADA-eligible on certain trips.

STAR Transit provides assistance with applications via phone at 877-631-5278. If the application has not been processed by the 21st day of receipt, applicants are treated as ADA paratransit service eligible and provided service starting on the 22nd day until a decision is made to approve or deny the application. Applicants that are denied ADA paratransit service will be mailed a letter of determination detailing the reason for the denial.

Following the determination by STAR Transit, the applicant will be notified of the findings.

Renewal of Certification Process

STAR Transit will renew certification of all ADA-eligible passengers every three (3) years.

SERVICES

STAR Transit is a curb-to-curb transportation provider.

Service Description

Transportation service is provided by STAR Transit vehicles. Operators are not trained to provide medical assistance.

Curb to Curb service includes:

- The operator will come to the curb of a residence or pick up location.
- The operator will attempt to notify passengers of arrival by sounding horn and/or a complementary call from a STAR Transit Dispatcher.
- The operator will assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicle if needed.
- The operator will deliver the passenger to the curb of his/her destination.

Minimal assistance includes:

- Curb-to-Curb service at pick-up and drop-off locations.
- Attempt to notify passengers of arrival by sounding the horn and/or a complementary call from a STAR Transit Dispatcher.
- Assist passengers with boarding and exiting the bus.

Minimal Service DOES NOT include:

- Assistance getting in or out of wheelchair.
- Assistance in getting ready for the trip.
- Administering medication or oxygen.
- Assisting passengers in wheelchairs up or down stairs.
- Assisting passengers up and/or down ramps at residence or destination.
- Assistance in carrying personal belongings or purchases.

PLEASE NOTE THAT STAR TRANSIT'S POLICY DOES NOT ALLOW AN OPERATOR TO LOSE VISUAL CONTACT WITH THE STAR TRANSIT VEHICLE AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON.

Service Hours

Trips can be scheduled 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Public Transportation is NOT provided on Saturday and Sunday or on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Presidents Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Service Parameters

All of STAR Transit geographic service areas are ADA service areas. STAR Transit's service areas are listed below:

Kaufman County

Cities in Kaufman County include: Combine, Cottonwood, Crandall, Elmo, Forney, Grays Prairie, Kaufman, Kemp, Mabank, Oak Grove, Post Oak Bend, Rosser, Scurry, Talty and Terrell. Demand Response buses operate from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. STAR Transit operates a fixed route in the City of Kaufman known as the "Kaufman Trolley". This route has 16 designated stops along the route and runs from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. STAR Transit also operates a fixed route in the City of Terrell known as "Route 803 – The Loop". This route has 24 designated stops along the route and operates Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Fares for Fixed Routes is \$1.00 per boarding for General Public and free for Qualified Seniors 60+/Veterans/Disabled. STAR Transit offers same day service inside the city limits of Terrell. Same day service "STARnow" is available Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Pick up and drop off points must be inside the Terrell City Limits. Rides are based on vehicle availability. To book a same day service trip, download the STARnow app from the Apple App store and/or Google Play store or call 877-631-5278 and press 5 to book a ride. Same day scheduling agent is available Monday – Friday, 5:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. STARnow fares within the Terrell travel zone is \$3.00 for general public and \$1.50 for qualified seniors 60+/Veterans/Disabled. For Demand Response fares please refer to the fare structure section of this policy.



ROCKWALL COUNTY

Cities in Rockwall County include: Fate, Glen Hill, Heath, McClendon-Chisholm, Mobile City, Rockwall, Rowlett (Rockwall County) and Royse City. Hours of Bus Operation: Monday – Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.



CITY OF BALCH SPRINGS

Demand Response Hours of Bus Operation: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. STAR Transit also provides two bus routes in the City of Balch Springs known as the Balch Springs Midtown Express. The Balch Springs Midtown Express Route 101 (MTX 101) starts at the Wal-Mart and ends at the Peachtree Senior Living Apartments. There are 10 designated stops along this route. This service also connects you to the DART Rail Green Line at the Buckner Station (8008 Elam Rd.). Balch Springs Midtown Express Route 102 (MTX 102) loops around Balch Springs. There are 20 designated stops along this route. This service connects to the MTX 101 bus with connecting points at the Balch Springs Recreation Center, Seagoville Rd. and Peachtree Rd. and Walmart. These services operate Monday – Friday, 5:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Midtown Express has no holiday service on days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.



CITY OF SEAGOVILLE

Demand Response Hours of Bus Operation: Call for availability. STAR Transit also provides a bus route in the City of Seagoville known as the Seagoville Express. The Seagoville Express starts at the Villas of Seagoville and ends at the Seagoville Senior Center. There are 11 designated stops along this bus route with flex service to the DART Rail Green Line at the Buckner Station (8008 Elam Rd.). Seagoville Express operates Monday through Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 8:29 a.m., 10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 4:05 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. . Seagoville Express has no holiday service on days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.



CITY OF MESQUITE

Demand Response Hours of Bus Operation: Monday – Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. STAR Transit can also connect you to the DART Rail Green Line via Express Bus Route COMPASS Route 201 from the Mesquite Park & Ride. COMPASS Route 201 is a weekday express bus service between Mesquite's Hanby Stadium and Lawnview Station on the DART Green Line and runs from 5:02 a.m. – 7:58 p.m. STAR Transit also offers same day service inside the city limits of Mesquite. Same day service "STARnow" is available Monday – Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Pick up and drop off points must be inside the Mesquite travel zone. Rides are based on vehicle availability. To book a same day service trip, download the STARnow app from the Apple App store and/or Google Play store or call 877-631-5278 and press 5 to book a ride. Same day scheduling agent is available Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. STARnow fares within the Mesquite travel zone is \$3.00 for general public and \$1.50 for qualified seniors 60+/Veterans/Disabled. For Demand Response fares please refer to the fare structure section of this policy.



CITY OF HUTCHINS

STAR Transit operates the Hutchins Shuttle Route 401. This route serves the UNT Dallas Station on the DART Rail Blue line, FedEx Home Delivery, the Hutchins Senior Center, Cedar Valley College and Hutchins Gateway Apartments. The Hutchins Shuttle is available to the public, company identification badges are not required to ride. No reservations are required. This route operates Monday – Friday, 5:30 a.m. – 11:59 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. – 12:29 a.m. and Sunday 12: p.m. – 1:29 p.m., 6:00 p.m. – 8:59 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. – 2:44 a.m. . Hutchins Shuttle Route 401 has no holiday service on days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.



CITY OF DESOTO

Demand Response Hours of Operations: Monday – Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. STAR Transit operates DeSoto Route 501 that serves the City of DeSoto, including area industrial parks with stops located at the Kohl's e-Fulfillment Center and Wal-Mart Distribution. The route also accesses Methodist Charlton Medical Center and the UNT Dallas Station on the DART Rail Blue Line. This route connects DeSoto to cities located in the inland port area with transfer points at The Crossing Shopping Center and the UNT Dallas Station on the Hutchins Shuttle Route 401. Route 501 operates Monday – Friday 4:45 a.m. – 9:36 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. – 6:36 p.m. DeSoto 501 has no holiday service on days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.



Subscription Services

Subscription service is transportation provided to the same location, on the same day of the week, at the same time, week after week. If availability of subscription becomes limited, it is STAR Transit's option to list clients on a waiting list.

Fare Structure

Fare for STAR Transit is established by the STAR Transit Board of Directors. On August 15, 2017, the STAR Transit Board of Directors approved a fare restructure for all service areas. This includes a reduced fare for qualified elderly, veteran and/or disabled riders. To qualify for the reduced fare, riders must complete an eligibility form for STAR Transit to review. STAR Transit will make a decision based on the information provided.

Once approved, a photo is taken for the STAR Transit Reduced Fare ID pass. There is a \$2.00 processing fee.

Contact our Mobility Management Department at 469-474-2435 or MobilityDpt@STARtransit.org for more information.

Based on Shortest Distance	Age 60 plus/ Veterans/Disabled	General Population
Any trip 5 miles or less	\$1.00	\$2.00
More than 5 miles/less than 10	\$2.00	\$4.00
More than 10 miles/less than 15	\$3.00	\$6.00
More than 15 miles/less than 20	\$4.00	\$8.00
More than 20 miles/less than 25	\$5.00	\$10.00
More than 25 miles	\$6.00	\$12.00

Fares for bus routes with scheduled time stops for General Public is \$1.00 each way. Qualified Seniors 60+, Veterans, Disabled Riders ride FREE by showing their Reduced Fare ID PASS.

Fare Payment Options

There are several ways to make a fare payment.

- Tickets may be purchased at following location:
STAR Transit Operation Center
500 Industrial Blvd.
Terrell, Texas 75160

Between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. by calling 877-631-5278, via the website; www.STARTransit.org through online payment system or to a driver with a check for exact amount of tickets and they will be mailed to you.

- Cash payment to the fare box upon boarding the bus (must be exact change)
- Pre-pay with credit cards by calling 877-631-5278.

Reservations

To reserve a ride, client(s) need to call STAR Transit at 877-631-5278. Client(s) should be prepared to provide name, the addresses of the pick-up and drop-off points, arrival and departure times, and any special accommodations needed.

Clients are required to telephone STAR Transit to reserve a ride at least one (1) business day but not more than two (2) weeks in advance of the desired trip. Reservations are accepted from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily, Monday through Friday. If a return ride is required, it should be scheduled at the same time Reservations can also be made on weekends and holidays by leaving a message on our automated system. Client should be prepared to provide name, the addresses of the pick-up and drop-off points, arrival and departure times, and any special accommodations needed. A return call

will be made to verify information and confirm that the reservation is available when normal operating hours resume.

Scheduling Tips

Many factors can affect travel plans. Weather can affect traffic conditions and slow service. Medical appointments, for example, are often delayed, so it is better to overestimate rather than underestimate travel and appointment times. Please take into account any conditions that may affect your pick-up and drop-off times.

Alternate Destinations

Changes to scheduled destinations are allowed only when the alternate destination will not substantially affect the driver's schedule. Dispatch will determine whether the request for an alternate destination can be accommodated.

The Day of Your Trip

Clients are expected to be ready and waiting just inside the entrance door or other pre-arranged location at the agreed upon time. Clients finding that they will be unable to meet the STAR Transit driver at the location or time scheduled are expected to call STAR Transit and advise them as soon as possible. In the event that STAR Transit is unable to meet the client at the agreed upon time, STAR Transit will make every effort to alert the client of this change.

Client Responsibilities

- Pay your exact fare.
- Be courteous to other customers and STAR Transit operators. Customers who behave in an abusive manner may be suspended from STAR Transit service.
- Wear a seat belt. If you use a mobility device (wheelchair or scooter), allow the driver to secure it.
- While riding in STAR Transit vehicles, do not smoke, eat, drink, play personal radio, consume alcoholic beverages, use illegal drugs, use obscene or abusive language, behave in ways that are violent or seriously disruptive, shove, push, or behave in a disorderly manner or cause damage to the vehicle.
- Keep your service animal under control at all times.
- Make your reservation at least one day in advance.
- Be prepared to give the reservationist the necessary information to properly schedule your trip such as exact address and which entrance to meet.
- Be ready for pickup within the pick-up window for your scheduled trip.
- Be willing to share the vehicle with other customers.
- Cancel your reservation as soon as you know you cannot make the scheduled trip.
- Keep all of your personal information updated with STAR Transit.
- Be prepared with another transportation resource, should you have an unanticipated need to travel on a same-day basis. STAR Transit is not obligated nor is the service intended to meet same-day transportation needs.

Cancellations Policy

A trip cancelled from three (3) hours up until arrival of the vehicle will be recorded as a no-show. An individual is allowed three (3) no-shows per calendar month without penalty.

A trip cancelled on the day of service will be recorded as a late cancellation. An individual is allowed four (4) late cancellations per calendar month without penalty.

Accommodation to this requirement will only be allowed to individuals with trips scheduled in the early morning. They will not be penalized if they are unable to cancel a ride in a timely way because cancellation calls are not taken early enough before their scheduled trip.

No-Shows/Missed Trips/Denials

STAR Transit understands riders may sometimes miss schedule rides or forget to cancel rides they no longer need. STAR Transit also understands that riders may sometimes miss schedule trips or be unable to cancel trips in a timely manner for reasons beyond their control. However, repeatedly missing scheduled trips or failing to cancel trips in a timely manner can lead to suspension of service.

A suspension of services is defined as a temporary loss of STAR Transit service.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulation allows STAR Transit to suspend, for a reasonable period of time, the provision of paratransit service to riders who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips, also known as no-shows.

A pattern or practice involves intentional, repeated or regular actions, not isolated, accidental, or singular incidents. Moreover, only actions within the control of the individual count as part of a pattern or practice. Missed trips due to operator error are not attributable to the individual passenger for this purpose. If the vehicle arrives substantially after the scheduled pickup time and the passenger has given up on the vehicle and taken a taxi or gone down the street to talk to a neighbor that is not a missed trip attributable to the passenger. If the vehicle does not arrive at all, or is sent to the wrong address, or to the wrong entrance to a building, that is not a missed trip attributable to the passenger. There may be other circumstances beyond the individual's control that make it impracticable for the individual to travel at the scheduled time and also for the individual to notify STAR Transit in time to cancel the trip before the vehicle comes. Therefore, a missed trip beyond the passengers control will not be counted as a no-show.

Denials are considered to be trip requests that are not accepted, examples of trip denials, but not limited to are as follows:

- Example 1: The rider requests a trip the day before that is within the service area during the hours of operation and STAR Transit responds that it cannot provide that trip.
- Example 2: The rider requests a trip anytime within the 14 day scheduling period, the time requested is not available, agents begin to negotiate a time and the rider refuses, or only accepts a return trip. This represents a denial regardless of whether the rider accepts such an offer.

WHAT IS BEYOND THE RIDER'S CONTROL?

There are many circumstances that may be beyond the rider's control, including but not limited to:

- Family emergency
- Illness that precluded the rider from calling to cancel
- Personal attendant or another party who didn't arrive on time to assist the rider
- Rider was inside calling to check the ride status and was on hold for extended time
- Rider's appointment ran long and did not provide opportunity to cancel in a timely way
- Another party cancelled rider's appointment
- Rider's mobility aid failed
- Sudden turn for the worse in someone with a variable condition
- Adverse weather impacted rider's travel plans, precluding the rider from cancelling in a timely way

Transit agency error, which may not be counted as a rider no-show, includes but not limited to:

- Vehicle arrived late, after the pickup window
- Vehicle arrived early, before the pickup window, and rider was not ready to go
- Vehicle never arrived
- Vehicle went to the wrong location
- Driver didn't follow correct procedures to locate the rider
- Rider cancelled in a timely way but the cancellation was not recorded correctly or wasn't transmitted to the driver in time

Riders should contact STAR Transit Operations Center when experiencing no-shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control.

Penalties and Suspensions

Suspensions will be limited to a reasonable period of time.

<i>PENALTY</i>	<i>NON-FINANCIAL</i>	<i>FINANCIAL (optional)</i>
1 st Suspension	5 Days	\$20
2 nd Suspension	10 Days	\$40
3 rd Suspension	15 Days	\$60
4 th Suspension	20 Days	\$80

Passengers have a right to appeal any suspension decision before penalty is imposed. After the appeal process, he/she can select the Non-Financial or Financial penalty. STAR Transit cannot suspend services during this due process procedure. Passengers who do not appeal the penalty phase should be presented with the options above which to select immediately.

Appeals / Grievance Procedures on Penalties and Suspensions

1. Before sanction(s) may be imposed, the individual has the option to appeal the sanction(s). The STAR Transit Executive Director will first hear appeals. If the Executive Director upholds the sanction, the individual may request to speak to the STAR Transit Board of Directors
2. If an individual requests an appeal to the Board of Directors, the Board will hear all current violations. For example, if an individual appeals sanction(s) for May 2 and the Board does not meet until May 17, and this individual has three (3) additional no-shows during the interim, all violations will be heard during the same meeting.
3. Before service may be suspended, the individual will have the opportunity to be heard and to present information justifying the violations.
4. STAR Transit service will not be suspended while an appeal is being considered.
5. STAR Transit will notify the individual, in writing, of the Executive Director's or Board's ruling on all appeals. This notification will outline the ruling and reasons for it.
6. Once the individual has been informed of the Executive Director or the Board of Directors ruling, sanctions will either be dismissed or imposed on the next day of service.
7. STAR Transit requires that all appeals must be made within 60 days of notification of sanctions.
8. All decisions made by the Board of Directors are considered final.

Service Denial Due to Rider Conduct

It is not discrimination under this part for STAR Transit to refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities because that individual engages in violent, seriously disruptive, illegal conduct, or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others. However, STAR Transit shall not refuse to provide service to an individual with disabilities solely because the individual's disability results in appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience employees of STAR Transit or other persons.

Passenger Wheelchairs and Other Mobility Aids

All STAR Transit vehicles comply with the ADA and the Code of Federal Regulations and are designed to carry passengers utilizing wheelchairs. A "wheelchair" is defined as any mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or four-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

STAR Transit may decline to carry a wheelchair/occupant if the combined weight exceeds that of the lift specifications or if carriage of the wheelchair is demonstrated to be inconsistent with "legitimate safety requirements." Legitimate safety requirements include such circumstances as when "a wheelchair was of a size that would block an aisle and would interfere with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency."

STAR Transit may transport any wheelchair that does not exceed the capacities of the vehicle and its equipment (lifts/ramps) as recommended by the manufacturer.

STAR Transit utilizes straps to secure wheelchairs, scooters, or other mobility aids. The vehicles are designed to utilize four (4) straps: two in the front and two in the back. All four straps must be secured to the mobility device prior to moving the vehicle.

STAR Transit provides seatbelts for all passengers. STAR Transit's policy requires that all passengers utilize them for their own safety as well as the safety of other passengers.

Personal Care Assistants (PCA)

STAR Transit allows client(s) to travel with portable oxygen and other life support equipment. STAR Transit shall not require an individual with disabilities to be accompanied by an attendant, however, STAR Transit recommends a PCA accompany the passenger including, but not limited to, the following conditions. The PCA is not charged a fare.

1. Immobility – If the client is incapable of self-mobility, or if self-mobility is possible but risk of falling or physical injury exists, and the assistance of a PCA would provide mobility or lessen the danger of injury.
2. Disorientation – If the client, due to a visual or mental impairment, is unable to properly orient him/herself and navigate to reach a destination, and the assistance of a PCA is required.
3. Non-Comprehension – If the client, due to mental impairment, is unable to adequately perform those mental processes necessary to handle common occurrences, or is unable to effectively control his/her own actions.
4. Communication Impairment – If the client is unable to effectively transmit or receive communications due to sensory or mental problems and these problems would prevent the client from using the service.

Clients can request a Client Advocate, employed by STAR Transit to go to medical appointments (medical appointments do NOT include dialysis treatments), grocery shopping and/or to pharmacy.

Client Advocates are required to specifically assist the client, including, but not limited to, the following duties:

- a. Assisting the client from his/her door to the vehicle and back again;
- b. Opening doors;
- c. Pushing wheelchairs;
- d. Carrying packages; and
- e. Communication with the driver (if customer client is unable).

In addition, STAR Transit may suggest that a PCA or an assigned Client Advocate attend the ride under the following circumstances:

1. Clients unable to orient him/herself and navigate to reach a destination;
2. Clients unable to effectively control his/her own actions;
3. Clients who will not remain seated and belted;
4. Clients using non-conventional wheelchairs and who are unable to independently transfer;
5. Children under twelve (12) years of age; and
6. Others, as required by Management.

Service Animals

STAR Transit shall permit service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in vehicles and facilities.

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

Moreover, an animal whose sole purpose is to provide comfort or are used for moral support are not considered service animals. STAR Transit cannot require the service animal to be kenneled while traveling on the bus.

When it is not obvious whether or not the animal with a passenger is a service animal, the ADA allows staff to ask two (2) questions:

1. Is the animal a service animal required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

No additional fee or deposit will be charged to transport service animals.

STAR Transit may refuse to transport service animals that are deemed to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of drivers or other riders, create a seriously disruptive atmosphere, or are otherwise not under the rider's control.

A passenger's request that the driver take charge of a service animal may be denied. Caring for a service animal is the responsibility of the passenger or a PCA.

STAR Transit shall not limit the number of service animals that accompany riders on a single trip. Different service animals may provide different services to a rider during trips or at the rider's destination.

Driver Assistance

STAR Transit drivers will assist clients when boarding and exiting the vehicle. Drivers will secure wheelchairs; assist with seat belts, small parcels, and up to 5 shopping bags or 2 boxes the client is able to manage independently. Drivers are **not** permitted to carry groceries or parcels up and down stairs or steps, enter homes, or accept gifts or tips.

Limits of Carry-On Baggage

Clients are only permitted to carry on up to five (5) shopping bags or up to two (2) boxes that the client is able to manage independently without assistance of the driver. All items must be secured with no loose items. The following are examples of securement:

1. Under the seat of client where it will be secured by the clients' feet
2. Held in clients' lap
3. Seat belted in the seat next to client (if available)

Complaints

If you think STAR Transit is not in compliance with the ADA, there are several avenues available for enforcement. You may pursue them in any order; you are not required to use them in the order listed below.

1. File a local complaint

Any person who believes himself/herself or any specific class of individuals to be harmed by failure to comply with ADA regulations may, personally or through a representative, file a written complaint with the Complaint Resolution Officer. A complaint must be filed not later than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination, unless the time for filing is extended by STAR Transit.

It is best to file the complaint as soon as possible after the alleged discrimination, and keep a copy of it. Include as many details as possible (who, what, when, where, and so on).

STAR Transit has the following options for filing the complaint: email to: telliott@STARtransit.org; website: www.STARtransit.org; call 469-474-2309; and/or by mail: STAR Transit, Complaint Resolution Officer, P.O. Box 703, Terrell, TX 75160. The complaint form can be located in **Attachment B** of this policy.

Complainant does not have to file with STAR Transit first in order to file with the Federal Transit Administration.

2. Engage in local advocacy

You can also engage in a variety of efforts to advocate for changes by STAR Transit.

You may be able to obtain assistance from local, state, and national disability rights organizations, including:

- Texas Protection and Advocacy Agency, which you can find by going to <https://www.disabilityrightstx.org> or by calling 1-800-252-9108.

3. File an ADA complaint in Washington D.C.

You can file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in Washington D.C., by:

- Going to the FTA ADA website at www.fta.dot.gov/ada and select ADA Technical Assistance File and ADA complaint with the FTA
- Sending a complete letter to:
Director
FTA Office of Civil Rights
East Building – 5th Floor, TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington D.C. 20590
888-446-4511

You should include specific details such as names, dates, time, route numbers, witnesses, and any other information that would assist in your investigation of your allegations. Please also provide any other documentation that is relevant to the complaint.

4. File a lawsuit

The other method of enforcing the ADA is to file a lawsuit.

Complaint Process

Once STAR Transit's Complaint Resolution Officer (CRO) receives a complaint, it is reviewed, coded and logged. The complaint will be classified as the following: Service Complaint, Policy/SOP Complaint, and/or ADA Complaint. The investigation process will begin regardless of classification. If a complaint is classified as an ADA Complaint, ADA is added to its code for identification of complaint.

After the investigation of an ADA Complaint, the complainant will be notified of finding(s) by preferred method of contact and will also receive a written response with the reason for response.

The complainant will have sixty (60) days from the date of letter to appeal a determination.

If the complainant chooses to appeal a determination, then the complainant will be required to submit to STAR Transit their appeal of determination within sixty (60) days to STAR Transit's Complaint Resolution Officer.

The appeal will be reviewed by the Executive Director, after review, STAR Transit will notify the individual, in writing, of the Executive Directors determination and reason for response. The individual may request to speak to the Board of Directors if still dissatisfied with determination.

Reasonable Modification Requests

STAR Transit shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability or to provide program accessibility to their services, subject to the following limitations:

- Class 1: if granting a request would fundamentally alter STAR Transit's services, programs, or activities.
- Class 2: if granting the request would create a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
- Class 3: if without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use STAR Transit's services, programs, or activities for the intended purpose.
- Class 4: only applies to STAR Transit, if granting the request would cause an undue financial and administrative burden.

It is STAR Transit's goal to operate a safe, efficient, and effective transportation system that provides mobility and accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Requests for Modification/Accommodations should be made in advance of when the modified service is being requested to be provided by STAR Transit. The request should be as specific as possible and include information on why the requested modification is needed in order to allow the individual to use STAR Transit services. STAR Transit will make every effort to communicate determinations on requests for modifications in advance of when the service will be needed verbally or in writing.

To request a modification/accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, please use the Reasonable Modification Request Form or to obtain information about procedures or how to file a complaint, contact Teresa Elliott; Complaint Resolution Officer by one of the methods listed below:

Mail to:
STAR Transit
Attn: Complaint Resolution Officer
P.O. Box 703
Terrell, TX 75160

Pick up a form at Operations Center:
500 Industrial Blvd.
Terrell, TX 75160

E-mail: telliott@STARtransit.org
Phone: 469-474-2309
Fax: 972-563-0048

Website: www.STARtransit.org

Reasonable Modifications requests will be processed in the following manner:

All requests will be logged into a Reasonable Modification/Accommodation spreadsheet noting the requestors name, date, contact information, specific modification request, outcome, and requestor date of notification. Individuals requesting modifications will be asked to supply sufficient detail within the request so that agency staff may effectively evaluate the request. Individuals are not required to use the term "reasonable modification" when requesting modifications or accommodations.

All requests for modifications (reasonable or otherwise) will be reviewed and evaluated by the STAR Transit Safety Committee.

All reasonable modification requests will be acknowledged within three (3) business days of receipt. The resolution and response to the requestor will be made timely, within fifteen (15) business days and the response must explain the reasons for the resolution. The response must be documented in the Reasonable Modification/Accommodation log.

Any requests requiring more than fifteen (15) business days to resolve must be reviewed at the authorized staff level and documented as to why the resolution requires additional time for full resolution.

If information is needed in another language, large print, or braille, contact STAR Transit at (877)-631-5278.

Si necesita información en un otro idioma, llame al 877-631-5278.

The Request for Reasonable Modification Form can be found in Attachment A.

ATTACHMENT A



Reasonable Modification Request Form

Use this form to request a modification to current STAR Transit policies, practices and procedures. Be specific and provide as much detailed information as possible. This will allow us to effectively process and evaluate your request. Before filling out this form please review STAR Transit's Reasonable Modification Request Process.

Please include the following items in your request:

- Why, based on a disability, is the modification necessary?
- Provide a description of your limitation(s) and how it is affected by STAR Transit's policy and procedures.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Best way to contact you: _____

Modification Request:

Please send your request form to one of the following:

Mail to:
STAR Transit
Attn: Complaint Resolution Officer
P.O. Box 703
Terrell, TX 75160

Pick up a form at Operations Center:
500 Industrial Blvd.
Terrell, TX 75160

E-mail: telliott@STARtransit.org
Phone: 469-474-2309
Fax: 972-563-0048

ATTACHMENT B

ADA COMMENT FORM

SECTION1: TYPE OF COMMENT (Choose One)*				
Compliment____	Suggestion____	Complaint____	Other____	ADA Related? Y / N
SECTION2: CONTACT INFORMATION				
Salutation [Mr./Mrs./Ms., etc.]:				
Name:				
Street Address:				
City, State, Zipcode:				
Phone:		Email:		
Accessible Format Requirements:	Large Print____	TDD/Relay____	Audio Recording__	Other_____
SECTION3: COMMENT DETAILS				
Date of Occurrence:		Time of Occurrence:		
Name of Employee or Others Involved:				
Vehicle ID/Route Name or Number:				
Direction of Travel:				
Location of Incident:				
Mobility Aid Used (if any):				
If above information is unknown, please provide other descriptive information to help identify the employee:				
Description of Incident or Message:				
SECTION IV: FOLLOW UP				
May we contact you if we need more details or information?		YES	NO	
What is the best way to reach you? (Choose One)*		Phone	Email	Mail
If a phone call is preferred, what is the day and time to reach you?				
SECTION V: DESIRED RESPONSE (Choose One)*				
Telephone response____				
Email Response____				

Response by U.S. Postal Mail_____

FORMULARIO DE COMMENTARIO DE ADA

SECCIÓN 1: TIPO DE COMENTARIO (Elija Uno)*

Cumplido_____	Recomendación_____	Queja_____	Otro_____	Relacionado ADA? S / N
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SECCIÓN 2: INFORMACIÓN DE CONTACTO

Saludo [Sr./Sra./Srta., etc.]:

Nombre:

Ciudad, Estado, Código Postal:

Teléfono:

Correo Electrónico:

Formato
accesible
Requisitos:

Impresión Gran_____

TDD/Relé_____

Grabación de Audio_____

Otro:_____

SECCIÓN 3: COMENTARIO DETALLES

La Fecha del Incidente:

La Hora del Incidente:

Nombre del Empleado u Otras Partes Implicadas:

El Vehículo ID/Nombre de Ruta o Número:

La Dirección de Viaje:

El Sitio del Incidente:

Ayuda de Movilidad Utilizado (si hay alguno):

Si la información anteriormente es desconocida, favor de proveer otra información descriptiva para ayudar a identificar al empleado:

La Descripción del Incidente o Mensaje:

SECCIÓN IV: EL SEGUIMIENTO

Podemos ponernos en contacto con usted si necesitamos más detalles o información?

SÍ

NO

¿Cuál es la mejor manera de contactar a usted? (Elija uno)*

Teléfono

Correo Electrónico

Correo

Si una llamada es preferido, cuál es el día y la hora para llamar a usted?

SECCIÓN V: RESPUESTA DESEADA (Elija Uno)*

Respuesta Telefónica_____

Respuesta del Correo Electrónico_____

Respuesta del Correo Postal de EE.UU._____