

MOVE



All the news on Access-A-Ride

Moving Forward!

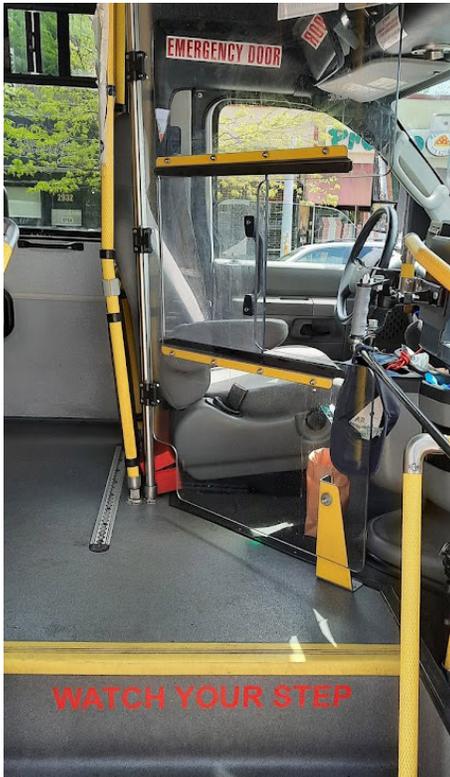


“When ridership was decimated at the height of the pandemic, and service shifted to essential service, our paratransit service never scaled back, so we understand the importance of accessibility. It must and will always remain a core priority,” said Craig Cipriano, Interim President of New York City Transit, at an event held on July 26, 2021 to

celebrate the 31st anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

AAR customers are returning at a higher rate than that of any other MTA mode of public transportation. Weekday ridership on paratransit is currently around 85% of pre-pandemic levels. We are also proud to announce that the MTA has replaced 40% of its older diesel fleet with gas-powered vehicles that have better lighting, climate control, reliability and maneuverability to the fleet.





We continue to remain vigilant with safety measures designed to protect against the transmission of COVID-19 and to ensure a safe ride for our customers, PCAs, guests and drivers. All dedicated vehicles are disinfected daily and customized permanent polycarbonate driver barriers have been installed on 1,300 dedicated vehicles. Broker services follow similar disinfection requirements. Face coverings are required on all trips for both customers and drivers. We continue to offer special transportation for those customers who are COVID positive or symptomatic.

Paratransit is now providing customers with a larger portion of trips on the Authority's enhanced broker service, which allows for-hire-vehicles and yellow and green taxis to provide Access-A-Ride service. The MTA is expanding broker capacity with the award of a new contract in July. AAR is further improving service through the deployment of a new state-of-the-art scheduling system and moving to the next phase of the popular E-hail On-Demand pilot program.



Visit AAR's performance metrics at our interactive dashboard:
<http://aardashboard.mta.info/>.

Moving Forward with Our City



As the City continues its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and demand for paratransit service returns to near pre-pandemic levels, AAR resumed shared ride service on Tuesday, July 6th. Shared rides are those that include multiple customers with similar origins and destinations. The decision to resume shared rides was made in accordance with public health guidelines, and follows similar decisions taken by the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, as well as by paratransit agencies across the country, including those in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and San Francisco.

The resumption of shared ride service enables us to continue meeting demand and making service available to every AAR customer. As we phase shared rides back in, we will make every effort to minimize any impact to trip time and closely monitor service metrics, including customer wait times, vehicle availability and on-time performance. Also, as we gradually return to normal operations, we are pleased to announce that customers are once again able to travel with guests, in addition to their personal care attendant (if approved during eligibility process).

As always, safety remains the key driver in our decision-making process, and we will stay in continuous and close communication with our customers regarding any changes to our service.

The MTA encourages all AAR users and guests to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Masks continue to be required for operators, customers and their guests, regardless of vaccination status, in all vehicles providing AAR service.



Clad with their masks, MVT driver Antonio assists AAR customer Dorothy Sacks off an AAR vehicle. Mrs. Sacks was celebrating her 99th birthday with her PCA Gwen at a favorite restaurant that reopened this spring as restrictions were lifted across the city and state. The recent retiree, praises all her drivers for their, “kind and professional care!”

Maximum Ride Times

During the state of emergency, our providers could navigate with ease through the boroughs as there was very little traffic.

Now that our city has re-opened and restrictions have been lifted, this summer’s traffic is back to nearly pre-pandemic levels. Therefore, we kindly ask our customers to please remember our 30-minute service window (see “On the Day of Your Trip”) and allow extra time to get to/from your destinations. To also help you determine the time needed to get to/from your destination, please follow the Maximum Ride Times. This is the amount of time you can anticipate traveling, based on trip miles:

Miles	Maximum Ride Time
0-3	50 Minutes
3-6	1 hour 5 minutes
6-9	1 hour 25 minutes
9-12	1 hour 55 minutes
12-14	2 hours 15 minutes
14+	2 hours 35 minutes

On the Day of Your Trip

After the 30-minute service window, you may call Travel Services (prompt #5) to get your carrier's name, the vehicle number, and its location or estimated time of arrival (ETA).

* You may also use the MYmta app to track your vehicle

Please:

- Be at your pickup location ready to travel at your scheduled pickup time. If you need to take an elevator or walk a distance to your pickup location, please allow extra time.
- Be prepared to wait up to 30 minutes after your scheduled pickup time. The 30-minute service window begins at your scheduled pickup time and ends 30 minutes later.
- AAR vehicles arriving within 30 minutes of your promise time are considered on time. You may call Travel Services to check on your vehicle's location or ETA.
- When the vehicle arrives, please show the driver your AAR MetroCard/ID (or any photo ID) and pay the exact fare as you board.
- Drivers must wait 5 minutes after your scheduled pickup time, even if they arrive early. Drivers arriving after your scheduled pickup time must also wait five minutes before leaving.

Dispatchers are requested to call you if you are not at the pickup location. If contact is made with the customer, the driver will wait an additional 5 minutes.

Cell phone users: Please call Eligibility and request that your cell phone number be entered into your permanent record so that dispatchers can contact you before the driver leaves.

Manage and monitor your AAR trips online or via your smartphone. For info and guides, visit: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/making-a-reservation-and-managing-trips/faqs>

Eligibility Process Update

At this time, four AAR Assessment Centers have reopened at 25% (pre-pandemic) capacity with appropriate safety and social distancing protocols in place. The reopening of the centers supports the return to a closer-to-normal eligibility process.

Those interested in applying for AAR should call the Eligibility Unit at 877-337-2017 and press prompt #1. Agents are available to assist callers Monday – Friday from 9 AM – 5 PM.

Current AAR Customers, please call the Eligibility Unit to check on your status and to ensure that we have the most current information on record such as cell phone, emergency contact, email, home phone and address.

For more information about how to apply or recertify, please visit: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/how-to-apply-orrecertify-for-access-a-ride>

Changes to the Designated Transfer Point at Green Acres Mall

With closing of JCPenney, we are now dropping off and picking up customers from the Panera bread (2034 Green Acres, Valley Stream 11581) next to the old location.

This is where customers of both AAR and Able-Ride can transfer. There are no free transfers as each Paratransit service operates independently.

Paratransit Leadership Team welcomed Janno Lieber, Acting MTA Chairman/CEO, Craig Cipriano, Interim NYCT President and Frank Annicaro, Acting President MTA Bus, Sr. VP NYCT DOB to the Paratransit HQ in LIC, Queens on Aug 16 and Aug 17.



Frank Camp, Executive Vice President Global Contact Services explains on the central data screen how the call center queue is monitored by GCS management.



Observing the reservation process in which a call is handled by an agent.



Congratulation to Edward Friedman, the former Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator at the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. Ed starts the Juris Doctor Program at Yale Law School this fall and we here at Paratransit want to thank him for his conscientious collaboration on many issues, especially during PAC meetings, and wish him much good luck!

Access-A-Ride (AAR) Telephone Directory

Call 877-337-2017 toll-free from area codes in the NY Metro Area and adjacent counties. Reminder that we have a 718 number and from other area codes, call 718-393-4999. Customers who are deaf/hard of hearing can use their preferred relay service or the free 711 relay service.

After an important announcement, callers will be guided to

- press “1” for English. If “1” is not pressed, callers will hear choices in each of the respective languages:*
- press “2,” for assistance in Spanish*
- press “3,” for assistance in Russian, Chinese, French Creole, Korean or Bengali,*
- press “4.” for all other languages,*

Callers will then be directed to press one of the following prompts:

Prompt #1 – Eligibility Unit

Agents are available Monday – Friday from 9 am - 5 pm to assist with eligibility, appeals, certification or application questions, requests for updates to customer’s contact information, visitor/reciprocal service etc.

Prompt #2 – Trip Planning

Agents are available to make a reservation 7 days a week from 7 am - 5 pm

Prompt #3 – Agents are available 7 days a week from 7 am - 5 pm to change a trip.

Prompt #4 – Agents are available 24/7 to cancel a trip.

Prompt #5 – Travel Services

Agents are available 24/7 assistance with same day trip. This may include getting information about your vehicle and its estimated arrival time, help with delays that may arise with your pick-ups or with your return trip such as rescheduling a later pick-up, etc.

Prompt #6 – Subscription Service

Agents are available Monday – Friday from 9 am - 5 pm to help arrange, re-schedule or cancel subscription service. This service is offered to any customer who travels from the same location to the same destination at the same time of day for each trip at least one day a week.

Prompt #7 – Automated system to check status of your same day service.

Prompt #8 – Customer Comment Line

Agents are available Monday – Friday from 9 am - 5 pm to submit suggestions, commendations, complaints, along with requests for publications, and outreaches. If one prefers, submit online.

Callers may repeat the prompt menu by pressing “0.” They may also hold for assistance if they don’t have a touch-tone phone. Conversations with AAR personnel are recorded and may be monitored.

The most updated AAR information, including AAR policies, newsletter and customers' bill of rights are available Online at new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit or via the [MYmta app](#).

On the Move is posted online quarterly at: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/newsletter-and-announcements>. To ensure that you are alerted to postings and all other AAR updates, please provide AAR with a viable email address. If you don't have an email address, please consider sharing one of a trusted family member or friend who will alert you to these communications.

Your questions and comments about On The Move are welcome.

Please send them to:

MTA NYC Transit, Department of Buses Paratransit Division,
130 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Or go to: <https://new.mta.info/customer-feedback>

Follow us on Social Media @nyctAAR

Take our MTA Customers Count & COVID Travel Survey!

Visit <http://www.mta.info/surveys> to register to receive an email invitation for the survey when it opens on September 20, 2021.