

Los Alamos County

# Dial-a-Ride Rider's Guide

Policies & Procedures



**ATOMIC CITY  
TRANSIT**

**Approved by the Transportation Board: March 7, 2024**

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## OVERVIEW

This Dial-a-Ride Rider's Guide outlines the policies and procedures for using our Dial-a-Ride services.

Atomic City Transit's mission is to improve and strengthen mobility in Los Alamos County through an effective, efficient, and dependable transit system. In order to achieve this mission, we provide three different types of service:

- **Fixed Routes** – These are our routes that operate on a fixed schedule throughout Los Alamos, White Rock, and Bandelier National Monument (seasonally). All of our vehicles are accessible and include at least one bike rack.
- **Dial-a-Ride** – This service is currently meant to supplement our fixed route services by providing on-demand service before and after the fixed routes operate.
- **ACT Assist** – This is our Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Complementary Paratransit services that serves the needs of customers who, because of a disability, are unable to use the fixed route system and who meet the definition of “ADA paratransit eligible”.

Dial-a-Ride is an “origin to destination” service, and curb-to-curb transportation is the primary means by which service will be provided. It is open to the general public to use. Riders will not be able to hail a Dial-a-Ride vehicle from the curb or bus stop, like they would a cab or bus. Trips must be scheduled for same day service.

If you need additional information, alternative formats, or have any questions, please feel free to contact Atomic City Transit at (505) 661-7433 (RIDE).

## SERVICE AREA

Dial-a-Ride shall provide service to origins and destinations within Los Alamos County.

## FARES

Dial-a-Ride does not charge fares for use of the service.

## TRIP PURPOSE RESTRICTIONS

Dial-a-Ride shall not impose restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose.

## HOURS AND DAYS OF SERVICE

Dial-a-Ride currently has the following hours and days of service:

- **Morning Dial-a-Ride** operates from 5:15 a.m. to 6:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. We begin taking same-day reservations at 5:00 a.m.
- **Evening Dial-a-Ride** operates from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. We begin taking same-day reservations at 6:00 p.m.

Dial-a-Ride service is not offered on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- Christmas Day

Additional Dial-a-Ride service are offered on the following holidays when fixed routes do not operate:

- Juneteenth – 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We will begin taking same-day reservations at 6:00 a.m.
- Indigenous Peoples' Day – 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We will begin taking same-day reservations at 6:00 a.m.

## **HOW TO MAKE A RESERVATION**

### **Plan Ahead**

Be sure to make your reservation as early as possible on the day of service. For the Morning Dial-a-Ride service, the earliest we will take a reservation is 5:00 a.m. For Evening Dial-a-Ride service, the earliest we will take a reservation is 6:00 p.m. The earlier you schedule your ride, the better opportunity to get your requested trip without the need for negotiation for an adjustment. If your requested time is not available, you may be offered a negotiated time before or after your request. If an available time within those guidelines is not workable for you, have an alternate plan for other transportation or for rescheduling at another time or day.

It is the responsibility of the customer to let the scheduler know if there are any special instructions needed at the pickup or destination, such as security gated entries, apartment building number, or multiple entries to large institutions. Otherwise, our drivers will pick-up and drop-off at the main entrance or designated/predetermined locations. If the customer fails to inform the scheduler of special instructions and the trip is missed as a result, it will be recorded as a "no-show."

### **Plan Your Trip Carefully**

Dial-a-Ride is a "shared-ride" service, so you will often be traveling with other customers. Remember to allow for time spent picking up and dropping off other customers before reaching your destination and be prepared for the possibility of delays due to traffic or bad weather. For example, if you must be somewhere at 7:00 p.m., let us know and your pick-up time will be scheduled on that basis. When scheduling a return trip, please consider any unexpected delays you may encounter. For example, if you expect to be ready at 7:00 p.m., please ask for a 7:15 p.m. return time. It is better to wait a few minutes than miss your scheduled ride. The scheduler can help you determine the most efficient way to schedule your trip.

Allow ample time to finish appointments. This is needed so you will be ready to board the vehicle at your scheduled pick-up time. Be aware of opening and closing times at your destination to avoid waiting outside the building before or after business hours.

### To Schedule a Ride

Dial-a-Ride may be reached at (505) 661-7433, Monday - Friday, 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Calls on weekends and holidays will not be accepted, with the exception of Juneteenth and Indigenous Peoples' Day.

- 1) Service is provided as available and will be scheduled in the order received
- 2) When making a reservation, please schedule a time for your return trip. Waiting until the last minute to schedule a return trip could result in a long wait.
- 3) When making a reservation, please be ready to provide:
  - Your name
  - The number of passengers that will be riding with you, if any
  - The telephone number where you can best be reached regarding scheduling and service
  - Your pick-up address
  - The time at which you wish to be picked up (or, if you have an appointment, the time of your appointment)
  - Your drop-off address
  - The approximate time at which you wish to be picked up for your return trip
  - Whether you will be using a wheelchair or other mobility device

**NOTE:** Dial-a-Ride will carry a wheelchair/mobility device and its user as long as the lift/ramp can accommodate the size and weight of the device and its user, and there is space for the device on the vehicle. Dial-a-Ride will NOT carry a wheelchair/mobility device if, in fact, the lift/ramp or vehicle is unable to accommodate the device and its user, consistent with legitimate safety requirements.

**NOTE:** All companions MUST have the same origin and destination as the customer they are accompanying.

### HOW TO RIDE

ACT fixed-route buses, ACT Assist paratransit vehicles, and ACT Dial-a-Ride vehicles are ADA compliant and accessible by wheelchair/mobility device. Riding Dial-a-Ride is equivalent to riding the ACT fixed-route system in that there is a scheduled arrival time for the vehicle, and you must be ready when the vehicle arrives. Also, there may be additional stops before reaching your destination.

**Please remember:**

- Dial-a-Ride is an “origin to destination” service
- Dial-a-Ride is a “shared-ride” service
- The driver may not make unscheduled stops
- If other customers get on or off the vehicle before your stop, you may need to temporarily move to accommodate these customers
- No assistance will be provided beyond the origin or destination building door-threshold. If you require further assistance, a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or companion should accompany you
- You may ride to/from any location in the service area for any legal purpose as long as a reservation has been scheduled

The vehicle will arrive within a 15-minute window of your scheduled pick-up time. For example, if your pick-up time is scheduled for 5:30 a.m., the reservationist may tell you, “We will pick you up between 5:30 a.m. and 5:45 a.m.” The vehicle will wait 5 minutes after it arrives at the designated pick-up site within the 15-minute window. For example, if the vehicle arrives right at 5:30 a.m., it will wait until 5:35 a.m. If the vehicle arrives before 5:30 a.m., it will wait until the window begins, plus the 5 minutes. It is your responsibility (along with your PCA or companion) to be available to board the vehicle during the 15-minute pick-up window.

If the vehicle is more than 15 minutes late for your scheduled pick-up time, please call Dial-a-Ride at (505) 661-7433 and a dispatcher may calculate a new anticipated arrival time.

Eating, drinking (including consumption of alcohol), chewing tobacco, smoking (including e-cigarettes), vaping, littering or listening to audio devices without earphones will not be permitted. Shirts, shoes (or equivalent) and other appropriate clothing must be worn. Customers should refrain from engaging in inappropriate/distracting conversation with the driver.

### **Please Keep in Mind:**

It is our goal to provide the greatest number of customers with safe, prompt, efficient and friendly service. Therefore, we are unable to honor specific requests for the following:

- Specific drivers
- Specific seats
- A particular vehicle
- Specific routes with certain customers

### **USE OF PORTABLE OXYGEN**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, provides that transportation service must be provided to a customer who needs to bring along a supply of oxygen. **For safety reasons, the customer must maintain control of the oxygen bottle(s).** If the customer cannot transport the oxygen bottle(s) safely or maintain control of the bottle(s) on his/her own, then the customer shall provide a PCA to perform those functions.

### **SERVICE ANIMALS**

Service animals are permitted on Dial-a-Ride vehicles. Please let the Scheduler know that your service animal will be accompanying you on your trip. All service animals must be controlled by the customer, PCA, or companion at all times.

## **PETS**

Animals that are not service animals, including emotional support animals, are not permitted on Dial-a-Ride vehicles at any time.

## **DRIVER ASSISTANCE POLICY**

Drivers are not permitted to enter any home or go beyond the threshold of any building. Drivers are required to maintain visual contact with the vehicle at all times. Drivers may enter into the main lobby of a business or institution open to the public for the exclusive purpose of notifying a customer that the vehicle is available for boarding, provided they are able to maintain line-of-sight contact with the vehicle at all times.

In locations where drivers cannot maintain line-of-sight with their vehicle and go to the door to notify customers of the arrival of their ride, customers may request telephone notification of the vehicle's arrival for that specific location. As this request may require special arrangements with third parties and is subject to review, please contact us at (505) 661-7433 to make the request.

Drivers are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs. Drivers are not permitted to physically lift customers. Drivers will assist the customer to board and alight the vehicle but cannot load and unload the customer's belongings or carry-on items. Customers needing more assistance than the drivers are allowed to provide are encouraged to make other arrangements for assistance at their pick-up and drop-off points. One PCA may ride with the customer as needed, and space is guaranteed for one companion to accompany the customer. Additional companions will be accommodated on a space available basis.

## **GROCERIES, SHOPPING BAGS, AND LUGGAGE**

1. You may carry only as many bags as you can carry on and off the van in one trip by yourself. Drivers will not assist in carrying items on or off the van.
2. If carrying items on or off the van, you may request the use of the lift or ramp if needed.
3. All bags must be completely out of the aisle and secured by you. If this is not possible, the driver may refuse to transport you.
4. If the vehicle is full, you must keep your bags at your own seating area.
5. Under no circumstances will the bags be stored in the wheel well area or in an area that blocks access to either the front or rear doors.
6. The bags may be stored in the wheelchair securement area if they are secured by you. If the wheelchair securement area is needed for a passenger who uses a wheelchair as a mobility device, you must move the bags to another area.

7. If you use a wheelchair as a mobility device, you are limited to the number of bags and other items that can safely be attached to the wheelchair. The number and location of the items must not interfere with the process of safely securing the wheelchair using a four-point tie-down.
8. If the bags cannot be accommodated under these guidelines due to the number of bags blocking or narrowing the aisle, the driver may deny you a ride.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU MUST CANCEL YOUR TRIP**

If you need to cancel a trip, call Dial-a-Ride at (505) 661-7433 at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Failure to do so may result in you being assessed a "late cancellation."

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU MISS YOUR TRIP**

If you miss your scheduled trip, you may be assessed a "no-show." Contact Dial-a-Ride at (505) 661-7433, Monday - Friday, 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., to request a new trip to be scheduled on a same day, space available basis.

### **NO-SHOW AND LATE CANCELLATION POLICY**

Dial-a-Ride customers who establish a pattern or practice of no-shows or late cancellations may lose their riding privileges for a designated period of time.

"No-show" is defined as when a customer does not cancel a scheduled trip and is unavailable at the agreed upon pick-up time window and location - and ALL of the following occur:

- The vehicle is at the correct pick-up location within the 15-minute window (no earlier than the scheduled pick-up time and no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time);
- The vehicle has waited 5 minutes for the customer;
- The driver has contacted the dispatcher to report a possible no-show;
- The dispatcher confirms the scheduled pick-up time and correct location with the driver; and
- The dispatcher has attempted to call the customer at the telephone number of record.

"Late cancellation" is defined as when a customer does not cancel either part (originating and return, if a round trip) of a scheduled trip at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time.

Because no-shows and late cancellations may cause lost trips for other customers, it is necessary to enforce a no-show and late cancellation policy. This policy is as follows:

- Three (3) no-shows and/or late cancellations within any thirty (30) day period

will result in a warning letter.

- Five (5) no-shows and/or late cancellations within any thirty (30) day period will trigger a review of the customer's no-show and late cancellation frequency.
- Customers who are found to have a pattern or practice of abuse representing at least fifteen (15) percent of their total scheduled trips within any thirty
- (30) day period will be suspended from Dial-a-Ride service for a period of two consecutive operating days.

If subsequent reviews reveal a continued pattern or practice of abuse, the customer will be suspended as follows:

- Two (2) violations within one year - suspension for three (3) consecutive operating days.
- Three (3) violations within one year - suspension for four (4) consecutive operating days.
- Four (4) violations within one year - suspension for five (5) consecutive operating days.
- Five (5) or more violations within one year - suspension for seven (7) consecutive operating days.

Dial-a-Ride is committed to working with individuals to address the causes of no-shows and late cancellations so these persons can continue to use the service.

A no-show or late cancellation due to ACT error will not be counted. Likewise, a no-show or late cancellation due to circumstances beyond your control will not be counted, if you notify Dial-a-Ride at (505) 661-7433 during normal business hours. Documentation may be required. You may also contest a no-show or late cancellation that has been assessed by contacting Dial-a-Ride at (505) 661-7433.

**NOTE: Dial-a-Ride will not cancel the return leg of any scheduled round-trip, when the first leg was missed or a no-show, unless Dial-a-Ride has made contact with the customer to confirm that the return trip is not needed.**

## **EXCESSIVE CANCELLATION POLICY**

Even when a trip is cancelled at least one hour before the established pick-up time, a pattern of excessive cancellations causes the paratransit service to not be available at the times other customers desire service. Please be courteous to your fellow riders by scheduling and using only the trips you need to allow others the opportunity to use the program.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES**

In the event of service cancellation due to inclement weather, Atomic City Transit will attempt

to contact all scheduled passengers at the telephone numbers provided during the reservation.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Atomic City Transit is not responsible for items left behind by passengers, but we would like to provide a convenient mechanism for assisting in the return of items to the owner. If you believe that you have lost something on Dial-a-Ride, call (505) 661-7433 for assistance. Items will be held for a maximum of sixty (60) days.

## **HOW TO COMMENT ON DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE**

We can only resolve problems if we are informed, so please do not hesitate to contact us. Should you have questions or comments about the service, please call Dial-a-Ride at (505) 661-7433 or send us a letter to: Dial-a-Ride, 101 Camino Entrada, Building 1, Box 1, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

If you would like to file a complaint alleging any action in violation of this Dial-a-Ride Policies & Procedures manual, you must submit the complaint to Dial-a-Ride, 101 Camino Entrada, Building 1, Box 1, Los Alamos, NM 87544. We will promptly address all complaints and respond appropriately.

## **SAFETY**

A customer may be subject to any reasonable accommodation requirement that will ensure the safety of themselves, other customers and drivers. For example, a customer may be required to ride with a PCA if the customer is unable to safely board a vehicle on his/her own.

Please remain seated with your seat belt fastened at all times on Dial-a-Ride.

## **CUSTOMER CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is Atomic City Transit's policy to provide the safest and most efficient service to our customers. Please find the Code of Conduct on ACT's website at [www.AtomicCityTransit.com](http://www.AtomicCityTransit.com) under the Public Transit Basics section on the main page. Customers who abuse these guidelines can adversely affect the Dial-a-Ride program.

Approved

*Anne Laurent*

3/19/2024

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Anne Laurent

Date

County Manager

Incorporated County of Los Alamos