



## ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE GUIDE

### **Revision 13**

Scheduling handled by our call center: TripLink

### **Important Phone Numbers**

(603) 834-6010

Ride Scheduling

(603) 743-5777 ext. 121

Eligibility

(603) 743-5777, Option 4 or ext. 105

Operations Supervisor

TDD: 1-800-735-2964

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**Disclaimer**

The information in this guide is subject to change. Please consult COAST ADA staff for the most current information. Electronic copies of this document can be found online at:

[www.coastbus.org/General Information/Accessible Transportation](http://www.coastbus.org/General Information/Accessible Transportation)

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Welcome**

The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) is committed to providing quality transit services to all of our customers. We recognize that some customers' disabilities do not allow them to use traditional fixed-route bus services. COAST's ADA paratransit service provides comparable service to our fixed-route system on a point-of-origin to point-of-destination basis.

COAST's ADA paratransit service is limited to ADA paratransit eligible individuals who are unable to use accessible fixed-route services due to their disabilities. COAST's ADA paratransit is a shared-ride program, meaning that multiple individuals' trips may be grouped together in an effort to meet all trip requests and improve efficiency.

ADA paratransit service:

- Is an origin-to-destination transit program for ADA paratransit eligible customers;
- Is a shared-ride program;
- Operates on the same days and during the same hours, and in the same areas, as the fixed-route bus system; and
- Operates in compliance with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) ADA regulations.

## **1.2 What Is ADA Paratransit?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into federal law in 1990. It prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, public services such as transit, public accommodations, private services, and telecommunications.

The ADA requires all public transit operators to provide a special service to eligible disabled individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using accessible buses on fixed (regularly scheduled) public transit routes. This special service, called paratransit service, is required by the ADA to complement fixed-route public transit service. For this reason, it operates at similar times and in similar areas as public transportation (defined by the ADA as within minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of existing public non-commuter fixed transit stops). The ADA also requires transit operators to establish specific eligibility criteria for users of paratransit service and that there be no trip priorities given (for example, prioritizing medical trips over recreational trips).



## 2.0 Eligibility

Eligibility for ADA service is based on an applicant's disability and the extent to which it prevents their use of COAST's public bus system. No particular diagnosis will automatically qualify an applicant for ADA service. In addition, COAST does not take into account whether the bus schedule is convenient for the applicant or whether the applicant has access to other forms of transportation.

### **2.1 Eligibility Criteria**

In order to become eligible you must qualify under **one or more** of the following ADA eligibility criteria:

1. You are unable to independently board or exit an accessible COAST fixed-route bus, or similar transit vehicle, because of your disability.  
(Note: All COAST transit vehicles are equipped with a lift or ramp)
2. You are unable to independently take your ride on an accessible COAST fixed-route bus, or similar transit vehicle, because of your disability.
3. You are unable to travel to or from a transit stop because of your disability.

### **2.2 How to Apply for Services**

To be considered eligible for paratransit services, you must first complete the TripLink Common Application. Completing the Common Application will allow to apply for other services that you might also be eligible for. You can

complete the Application online at [CommunityRides.org](https://CommunityRides.org) or by submitting a paper application. The PDF for the paper application can be downloaded from [CommunityRides.org](https://CommunityRides.org) or you can call TripLink at 603-834-6010 to request that a copy be mailed to you. Providing false information on the Application may lead to a denial of eligibility at the time of application or termination of service when the false information is discovered.

You will be asked to submit a Medical Release along with your application. The Medical Release will allow COAST to request a Functional Evaluation from your healthcare provider. For questions about this process, or to request an application and release, contact COAST at 603-743-5777, extension 121 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964.

In addition to submitting your Common Application and Medical Release, COAST also conducts an interview by phone. This gives us a chance to walk through how to use the service, as well as answer any questions you may have.

Incomplete applications and/or limited availability for an interview can delay the process, so be sure to fill out your application correctly and completely and please respond to our inquiries for scheduling your interview to avoid any delay.

It can take up to 21 days from the time COAST receives your completed application for an eligibility determination to be made. If COAST has not made a decision within 21 days of receipt of your completed application, we will provide you with ADA paratransit services as if you were eligible until a final decision is made. During the determination process, COAST may

follow up with your physician or appropriate third party professional to validate disabilities and functional limitations.

You will be informed of COAST's decision concerning your eligibility in writing.

### **2.3 Types of Eligibility**

Eligibility status is determined at the end of the application process. If at any point your functional abilities change and you would like to be considered for a different level of eligibility you may re-apply.

**Unconditional eligibility** is given to those customers who are not able to ride the fixed-route bus independently under any conditions. Individuals with unconditional eligibility who are able to use the fixed-route buses with the assistance of a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) are encouraged to do so whenever possible. The initial Unconditional eligibility is valid for 3 months to 1 year, after which a recertification is required. This process is usually very simple, although COAST may ask for more information if your needs appear to have changed. After the initial recertification, eligibility will be extended in 3-year increments.

**Conditional eligibility** is given to customers who are eligible for COAST's ADA Paratransit service only when certain conditions exist (for example: wet or icy weather, cold temperatures, darkness, geographical/architectural barriers and distance.) Conditionally eligible customers are only permitted to use ADA paratransit services when the conditions under which they are eligible are in effect. The eligibility letter you receive from COAST will indicate the conditions under which you can schedule ADA rides. Initial Conditional eligibility is valid for 3 months to 1 year, after which a

recertification is required. This process is usually very simple, although COAST may ask for more information if your needs appear to have changed. After the initial recertification, eligibility will be extended in 3-year increments, or in less than 3 years should the reasons for conditional eligibility change.

**Temporary Eligibility** is given to customers with a short-term illness or injury that prevents them from using a fixed-route bus. Temporary eligibility typically lasts from 1 to 12 months. Customers with temporary eligibility will be assigned an expiration date indicating when their eligibility expires. If service is needed beyond that date, customers will need to reapply.

## **2.4 Notices of Eligibility Determinations**

### **Unconditional Eligibility Decision**

If you are found unconditionally eligible, you will receive a letter informing you of this determination. You will also receive a “COAST Certificate of Eligibility for ADA Paratransit Service” ID card. You should carry this card with you because drivers may ask to see it when they pick you up.

Customers who, under certain circumstances, are able to ride the fixed-route bus system can ride the fixed-route bus for half the regular cash fare by showing their ADA ID card.

### **Conditional or Temporary Eligibility Decision**

If you are found conditionally eligible you will receive a letter informing you of this determination and explaining the conditions under which you are eligible.

If you disagree with COAST's determination, please contact COAST to discuss any questions you may have.

If, after speaking with us, you are still not satisfied, you may file an appeal. Information about filing an appeal will be included with your Eligibility Decision Letter and is included in this Service Guide. (See "Eligibility Appeals Process")

## **Recertification**

Recertification of eligibility is required after the initial determination of Unconditional or Conditional eligibility. The recertification process is much abbreviated from the original application. It is very important that you return your Recertification paperwork in a timely manner to ensure that your service is uninterrupted.

As part of the Recertification process, your eligibility category could change (for example, changes in the conditions of your eligibility; going from conditional to unconditional eligibility; denial of eligibility if the disability or conditions no longer exist).

If you disagree with changes in your eligibility (for example, changes in conditional eligibility), please contact COAST. If, after speaking with us, you are still not satisfied, you may file an appeal. Information about filing an appeal will be included with your Eligibility Decision Letter and is included in this Service Guide. (See "Eligibility Appeals Process")

## **Denied Eligibility Decision**

If you submitted an application for COAST's ADA paratransit service but do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined, you will receive a letter of denial. The letter will include the reasons for the denial.

If you disagree with COAST's determination, please contact COAST to discuss any questions you may have.

If, after speaking with us, you are still not satisfied, you may file an appeal. Information about filing an appeal will be included with your Denial Letter, and is included in this Service Guide. (See "Eligibility Appeals Process")

## **2.5 Keeping Eligibility Information Up-to-Date**

It is very important that you keep your personal information with COAST up to date. Call COAST at 603-834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964 if there is a change in any of the following:

- Your address or telephone number (including cell phones)
- Your emergency contact's name or telephone number (including cell phones)
- The type, size, or weight of wheelchair or mobility aid you are using
- Your need for a service animal
- Your disability
- Your need for a Personal Care Attendant (PCA)
- Any guardian changes

## **2.6 Eligibility Appeals Process**

Applicants have the right to appeal COAST's eligibility decision. Appeals must be received within 60 days of notification of the eligibility determination.

To request an appeal hearing you have several options:

- Complete and return the Notice of Appeal form included in your letter (also found as Appendix V)
- Write your own letter notifying COAST of your intent to appeal

The following address should be used for any appeals correspondence:

ADA Eligibility Appeals  
c/o Director of Operations  
COAST  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820

You have the right to an in-person hearing with the COAST Appeals Committee; however, you may waive your right to an in-person hearing and have the COAST Appeals Committee review your case without your presence.

The Appeals Committee is comprised of members of COAST's leadership team. The Appeals Committee will review the original decision and will make a final decision as to eligibility by majority rule.

The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be communicated in writing within 30 days and will state the reason(s) for the decision. If a decision is

not made within 30 days of the date of appeal, full eligibility will be given until a decision is made. The Appeals Committee's decision will be final upon mailing of the written decision.

If you are an existing customer of COAST ADA paratransit who has been suspended for violation of the No-Show policy and you choose to appeal, your eligibility will continue until your appeal is heard by the Appeals Committee and a determination is reached to uphold or overturn the suspension.

If you have been suspended for behavior that is illegal or potentially compromises the safety of our driver, other customers, or our equipment, you will remain suspended until assurances that safety can be maintained are put in place.

## **2.7 ADA Eligible Visitors to COAST's Service Area**

ADA-eligible visitors from outside COAST's service area may also use COAST's ADA paratransit service for any combination of 21 days of service during any 365-day period beginning with the visitor's first use of service. Visitors who wish to receive service beyond this 21 day period must apply for eligibility through COAST.

We ask that visitors contact us at 603-834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964 to schedule a reservation. Documentation of eligibility for ADA paratransit service at another transit system for out-of-town visitors must be received prior to scheduling your reservation. If there is a concern regarding getting documentation from a transit system, please let us know. We will work with you to find a resolution, and are happy to reach out and speak with your home transit system regarding documentation.



If you are visiting from an area that does not have a transit system where you could have ADA eligibility, please let us know. You are still eligible to ride our ADA service as a visitor. We may request documentation of the presence of a disability and your home address so that we can verify your need for ADA complementary paratransit service and that you are in fact a visitor. However, you do not need to go through our normal eligibility process. If you have concerns about having any of this documentation, please let us know and we will work with you to find a resolution.

As a COAST ADA eligible customer, you are also eligible for visitor transportation at other transit systems. Your eligibility card should be sufficient documentation. However, if you need us to provide information to another transit system, please let us know and we will work with you.

## **3.0 Overview of Service**

### **3.1 ADA Paratransit – What it is and What it isn't**

Though paratransit provides a valuable service to those who cannot access the fixed-route system, it does not work for everyone in every situation. Due to the nature of shared ride services, paratransit customers may be riding with other customers. Your ride will often involve deviations to pick up or drop off other customers before taking you to your destination. It is important that you keep this in mind when making a reservation. Individuals requiring a nonstop trip to or from their destination are encouraged to consider other options (for example: public bus, taxi, volunteer driver).

Paratransit is not emergency medical transportation. Our drivers are not medical professionals so please call 911 if you are having a medical emergency. We are unable to transport individuals needing to ride on a stretcher or who are too physically frail or ill to safely complete their trip on COAST's ADA paratransit services. Additionally, we are unable to transport individuals who have a medical condition that requires they be isolated for their health or the health and safety of others.

Please understand that paratransit drivers are not caregivers. Drivers are there to safely transport you from your origin to your destination. Behaviors that keep drivers from being able to perform this duty may be grounds for removal from the service (for example: removing one's seatbelt and moving about the vehicle while it is in motion, uncontrollable screaming, etc.). In addition, while a driver may provide an arm for stability, you cannot support your weight on our drivers. If you need more assistance than we can provide, we highly recommend that you bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA).

### **3.2 When is Service Available?**

ADA rides are available on the same days and during the same hours that a comparable trip could be taken on a COAST fixed-route bus.

When scheduling a ride at the edge of a fixed route schedule (the first run of the morning, the last run at night, or a run next to a several hour break), your pick-up or drop-off time options will be based on the time the fixed route bus is scheduled at the closest stop. For example, if you want to schedule a ride leaving as early as possible, and the fixed route bus first leaves the closest stop to you at 6:30am, then the earliest your trip departure will be scheduled for is 6:30am. At COAST's sole discretion a trip may be negotiated within an hour of this time.

Bus schedules are subject to periodic review. As fixed-route services change, the service area and hours of ADA paratransit service availability will also change. Current schedules for COAST's fixed-route services can be found at:

[www.coastbus.org/schedules\\_maps.html](http://www.coastbus.org/schedules_maps.html)

COAST's fixed-route bus and ADA paratransit services do not run on the following days: Sundays (except some limited seasonal services), New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. (Civil Rights) Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

### **3.3 Are There Limitations On The Service?**

A basic rule of thumb is that an ADA paratransit trip must be comparable to a similar trip that can be taken on the public bus system in length, operating hours, and geographic area served.

However, eligibility for the service does not always mean that the service will be able to serve you in every situation. As with any service, there are limitations. The following are a few service limitations you may encounter.

The ADA requires paratransit service to be available within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of an active bus stop. Customers do not have to live within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile to be eligible for services. However, if your pick-up location is outside this area you need to be able to travel to within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of a bus stop to be picked up. Likewise, we will not be able to provide you a ride to a location that is farther than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from a public bus stop. We will pick you up or deliver you to the nearest point that is still within the  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile service area but you must travel the remaining distance on your own. For example, if you live more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from a COAST bus stop, you will need to travel to within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the bus stop on your own and we will pick you up there.

Another service limitation lies in the geographical location of some pick-up and drop-off locations. We are not able to serve locations that are not legal or safe to take one of our paratransit vehicles (for example, dangerous double parking, required backing of the vehicle, low hanging branches, snowbanks, no safe area for you to board, etc.). In these circumstances, COAST will drop you off or pick you up at the nearest safe and legal location.

Customers are not limited in the number of trips they can take or in the frequency they can ride. In addition, there is no restriction on the purpose of your trip (for example, you can use the service to get to medical appointments, shopping, work, or just to go out. We don't even need to know why you want to travel!)

### **3.4 Are Some Trips Prioritized Over Other Trips?**

COAST's ADA Paratransit service is a civil right and it is against the law to give priority to one ADA paratransit trip over another. Trips are scheduled to allow for the maximum number of individuals to ride within the parameters set forth by the ADA without prioritizing according to purpose or destination.

Early booking helps our Reservationists, as it provides more time to put together a quality schedule. However, early booking does not guarantee that your pick-up window will not be changed to accommodate others.

### **3.5 Will There Be Other Customers On The Vehicle?**

COAST paratransit service is a shared-ride system. Other customers may be on board during transit to your destination. Your scheduled pick-up window or route of travel may be altered so another customer can be accommodated. The vehicle may stop and pick-up other customers as it proceeds to your destination. Shared rides lower the cost of paratransit service by increasing system productivity. COAST Reservationists may schedule you for a pick-up time that is different from your original requested pick-up time. Your reservation time can be moved up to 1 hour earlier or later than you requested. More information on how this works is outlined in

Section 4.2: Reservation Windows. We ask that you be flexible; by changing your time more customers can ultimately be served.

### **3.6 How Long Will My Trip Take?**

As a shared-ride system, travel time can vary depending on the number of rides being accommodated. Rides are scheduled to ensure your time on board is no more than twice the length of time that a comparable trip would take if made on a regular fixed-route bus (including travel to and from the bus stop from your origin and destination, as well as any wait time and transfers needed to complete a similar trip). When scheduling your pick-up window with a reservationist, please keep this in mind to ensure you have enough time.

Sometimes extenuating circumstances do occur, creating exceptions over which COAST has no control (for example: traffic conditions, road construction, weather, vehicle breakdowns, etc.). Occasionally when this happens, some trips may exceed this standard. Customers are advised to discuss their travel times with COAST Reservationists if they have any concerns.

### **3.7 In Case of Emergency**

Paratransit is not emergency medical transportation and our drivers are not medical professionals. If you are at home or out in the community and have a medical emergency, call 911.

If there is a medical or health emergency on board the paratransit vehicle, the driver will pull over, call dispatch (who will in turn call 911 and your

emergency contact if appropriate) and wait for a medical professional to arrive.

### **3.8 Optional In-Person Orientation**

For those who want to better understand how a COAST vehicle is laid out, how to get into the vehicle or out of it, or how to use any of the accessibility features, COAST offers optional in-person orientations to new ADA customers upon request. During this orientation, we will bring one of our vehicles to you at your home address, provided it is within our service area. You can use the accessibility features without any concern about getting to an appointment or having other customers on board waiting for you. We are also able to answer questions during this orientation.

If you feel this orientation would be beneficial for you, simply let us know and we will schedule it with you.

## 4.0 Scheduling Rides

### 4.1 How to Schedule a Ride

You must schedule your COAST ADA paratransit rides in advance. Trip reservations will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. the day prior to your requested trip. Trip reservations can also be made a maximum of 14 days ahead of your requested trip. All reservations, scheduling, cancellations, changes, and other trip requests are handled by our call center, TripLink.

You can request a trip **by calling TripLink:**

TripLink

603-834-6010

TDD: 1-800-735-2964

8:00am until 5:00pm

Monday - Friday

On Saturdays, Sundays or Holidays trip requests must be left in a voicemail message at the number above.

or **by emailing:** [triplink@communityrides.org](mailto:triplink@communityrides.org)

Please put "Ride Request" in the subject line.

Reservations made by voicemail on Saturdays, Sundays or Holidays will be answered on the next scheduled business day. **If you leave a voicemail reservation, please be sure to speak clearly and provide your complete information: your name, date, time you wish to schedule the ride, phone number, and a description of your requested pick-up and drop-off locations. If the message cannot be understood or does not include all the required information your trip may not be able to be scheduled.**



If you request a reservation by voicemail, please call COAST on the following scheduled business day to confirm your reservation.

COAST will not be liable for any reservations lost in voicemail due to events outside its control such as a power outage, electrical storms, etc.

When making a reservation for your ride, please be prepared to provide the Reservationist the following information:

1. Your name (first and last)
2. The day, date and time you would like to arrive at your destination, and the time you would like to be picked up to return. When adjusting pick-up times, COAST will ensure you are scheduled to arrive by an appointment time for your first trip and will not be picked up earlier than requested for your return trip.
3. Your pick-up address and/or common name (for example, Feaster Apartments), as well as any details on the entrance location at pick up
4. Your destination's address and/or common name (for example, Portsmouth Regional Hospital), as well as any details on the entrance location at the drop-off point
7. Whether a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or companion(s) will accompany you and whether anyone will have any special needs (for example: children, service animals, pets in a carrier, etc.)
8. Whether you will be using a wheelchair (manual or motorized), and if your wheelchair is "oversized" (larger than 48 inches long by 30

inches wide) and the combined weight of you and your wheelchair if the total is over 600 pounds

9. Whether you will be using a walker or other mobility aid
10. Whether you are ambulatory or require the wheelchair lift or ramp to board
11. Whether you wish to transfer to a vehicle seat if you use a mobility device
12. The telephone number where you can be reached

COAST creates a schedule the evening before the day you will ride. This schedule is designed to maximize the number of customers the vehicle can carry in order to provide the most service to the most people possible. We may adjust your pick-up time up to one hour from the time you requested; however, we will ensure the time you are given will get you to your appointment on time and will not pick you up from an appointment earlier than requested.

Customers are notified of their estimated pick-up time through an automated phone call the evening before they ride (usually between 6:00pm and 7:00pm). You can choose to receive these notifications as a text instead. Please notify TripLink if you would like to use the text option.

Reservation requests made by email will be confirmed by email. If you have not received a confirmation by 4:00pm the day before your ride, please feel free to call TripLink to confirm your ride at (603) 834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-

735-2964 until 5:00pm. After 5:00pm, call COAST dispatch at (603) 743-5777 Option 1.

## **4.2 Reservation Windows**

When you make a reservation, you can request to prioritize either the time you are picked up, or the time you are dropped off. Every individual ride you schedule must prioritize one or the other and cannot be both. Our reservationists can select based on the circumstances, or you may select which end of the ride is more important to you. The times may still be adjusted up to an hour, but we will only adjust them in the direction that preserves the time you are trying to prioritize. How this works is described below:

If you want to prioritize the time you arrive at your destination, we will ensure you do not arrive later than that time. In this case, you may say they want to be dropped off by a certain time. This trip may be adjusted to have a drop-off up to one hour earlier, but it will not be adjusted to have a drop-off later than the time requested. This is useful for when you need to be at an appointment by a particular time. For example, you could make a reservation to be at an appointment by 10:00am. This would be a 10:00am drop-off priority. We may adjust your drop-off time to be anywhere from 9:00am to 10:00am, but we will not adjust the drop-off to be after 10:00am. Your pick-up time will be calculated based on how long it takes to get you to your drop-off with the other customers that are riding. A pick-up time cannot be specifically requested for a drop-off priority reservation.

If you want to prioritize what time you are picked up to start your trip, we will ensure we do not pick you up earlier than that time. This is used when the time you are picked up is more important to you than the time you arrive at

your destination. This trip may be adjusted to have a pick-up up to one hour later than the time you requested, but it will not be adjusted to have a pick-up earlier. This is useful for when you are being picked up from an appointment and know you will not be ready earlier than a specific time. For example, you could ask for a 10:00am pick-up priority. We may adjust your pick-up anywhere from 10:00am to 11:00am, but we will not adjust the pick-up to before 10:00am. Your drop-off time will be calculated based on how long it takes to get to your destination with the other customers that are riding. A drop-off time cannot be specifically requested for a pick-up priority reservation.

Many customers find it works best to schedule the ride from your home going out as a drop-off priority, and the ride back to your home as a pick-up priority. This best allows you to control the times you are at your destination.

You will receive a call the night before your ride letting you know the estimated times for your trip.

If you do not have an answering machine, are away from your phone during this period, or otherwise do not receive a call you are advised to call COAST after 5:00pm to check the status of your ride to ensure you are aware of any changes. You may do so by calling 603-743-5777, option 1 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964.

In certain instances, COAST may also have to request same day schedule changes in order to accommodate unanticipated changes to the schedule. In such instances, every effort will be made to advise you of the change(s) as soon as they are known.

### **4.3 Pick-up Windows**

The night before your ride you will be given a range of time for your pick-up. This is referred to as your pick-up window. This 20-minute period is when you can expect your pick-up to occur and runs from 10 minutes before until 10 minutes after your scheduled pick-up. **You must be ready to board the vehicle at any time during the pick-up window.** For example, if you have a 9:00 scheduled pick up, the vehicle could arrive anytime between 8:50 and 9:10.

### **4.4 Vehicle Arrival**

When your driver arrives to pick you up during your scheduled pick-up window, he/she will wait no more than **5 minutes** for you to board the vehicle. If you are not ready to leave within 5 minutes of the vehicle's arrival, the driver will be required to move on to their next pick-up and you will be marked a "No-Show." If you are not ready and you miss your trip we will not be able to send you another vehicle; therefore it is very important that you are ready to board the vehicle when your pick-up window begins.

Using the example in the Pick-Up Window above, the driver may arrive before 8:50 but you are not expected to board the vehicle until 8:50. If, however, your driver arrives at 8:50, he/she will wait until no later than 8:55 for you to board the vehicle.

## **4.5 Canceling Rides**

COAST's ADA paratransit service is a vital community resource, and there is limited public funding to support it. Cancellations are a major contributor to service costs and system inefficiency. Rides that are canceled too late to schedule another trip in their place can often result in wasted expense and unused capacity. Failure to cancel with enough advance notice (2 hours prior) so that rides can be reassigned impacts the system and can lead to suspension of service. (See "No-Show Policy")

You can help by making sure you only schedule rides you plan to take.

If you find you need to cancel a trip please call 603-834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964 at least 1 day in advance whenever possible. A cancellation made less than 2 hours prior to the scheduled pick-up will be recorded as a late cancellation.

When canceling a trip, customers are responsible for providing the following information:

1. Name of customer
2. Time and date of scheduled pick-up
3. Exact destination address
4. Whether or not another trip scheduled for that day is also being canceled

Please remember that the earlier you cancel a trip reservation, the greater the chance another customer will be able to use your time.

If you no show one trip during a day, your remaining trips are not automatically canceled. You still need to call to cancel your remaining trips to prevent them from being recorded as no shows.

#### **4.6 Early Return Trips**

In some cases an appointment may end earlier than anticipated. If this happens, please call us. If we are able to get to your pick-up location early, we will make every effort to pick you up earlier than your scheduled return trip.

There may be some times when your ride arrives before the beginning of the pick-up window because of a cancelation or especially light traffic. If your ride arrives prior to your scheduled pick-up window, you may wait to board or leave right away. It's your choice, but you are under no obligation to leave early if your ride arrives prior to the start of your pick-up window. Please remember, however, that your ride will not wait for more than 5 minutes once your pick-up window starts.

#### **4.7 Same Day Scheduling**

COAST is rarely able to accommodate same day reservation requests. Same day service is never guaranteed. If you need service, please plan ahead and make your reservation by 5:00pm the night before.

#### **4.8 Changes Made by the Customer**

We understand that you may occasionally need to adjust the time or location of your ride. We will attempt to honor requests for time or location

changes as long as it does not impact the overall schedule, or the schedule of other customers. When requesting a change to a scheduled ride, call 603-834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964, to make the change at least one day prior to the scheduled pick-up. COAST will make a good faith effort to accommodate requests for same-day changes but cannot guarantee that all changes can be accepted. Customers are responsible for providing the following information:

1. Time and date of scheduled pick-up
2. New destination address, if applicable
3. New day of scheduled trip, if applicable
4. New time of scheduled trip, if applicable
5. New telephone number, if applicable
6. Status of any other scheduled trips for that day

Please be aware that changes in location may result in changes in your fare.

#### **4.9 What if I am Late for My Pick-Up?**

If you find yourself running late for your initial pick-up, call COAST as soon as possible. COAST will try to adjust our schedule to accommodate you; however, this is not guaranteed. COAST drivers are only allotted a certain amount of time to make their pick-ups. When your driver arrives for your pick-up during your scheduled window, he/she can wait no more than **5 minutes** for you to board the vehicle. If you are not ready to leave within 5 minutes of the vehicle's arrival, the driver will be required to move on to their next pick-up and you will be assessed a "No-Show." If you are not ready and you miss your trip on the first pick-up of the day (or any pick-up where



you are at home), we will not be able to send you another vehicle; therefore it is very important that you are ready to board the vehicle when your pick-up window begins.

If you are at an appointment and the appointment is running late, please call and let us know. We will either adjust your pick-up time, or we will wait to send a vehicle until you call to say you are ready. If we arrive to pick you up from an appointment and you are not ready, the vehicle will leave and we will wait for your call. We will send a vehicle back to pick you up once you call. We will do everything we can to ensure you are not stranded; however, it is your responsibility to call. It may take some time for a vehicle to arrive to pick-you up, since we need to work it in around other scheduled customers.

#### **4.10 What if COAST is Late Picking Me Up?**

Many factors affect the on-time performance of COAST vehicles. These include other customers, traffic and weather conditions. If COAST finds we will be unable to meet your scheduled pick-up within 10 minutes beyond the pick-up window, COAST will make every effort to notify you. For this reason, when scheduling your ride, it is important to provide a phone number (if one is available) where you can be reached at each of your pick-up locations. If you have a mobile phone, that number is best.

#### **4.11 Subscription Service**

In an effort to best meet our customers' needs, COAST offers limited Subscription Service for customers who require recurring trips from the same origin to the same destination over an extended period of time. Subscription Service is for repetitive travel needs such as trips to work, work training, or repetitive medical care.

Subscription Service is available to customers after two weeks of using COAST's ADA paratransit service without incident. Subscription Service customers do not need to call to reserve each of their repeat trips. In order to qualify for the Subscription Service the same ride must be taken at the same time at least once a week for at least a four week period.

It is important to remember to call when you need to cancel or change a Subscription Service trip.

Failure to cancel trips appropriately and/or excessive cancellations or changes may result in dismissal from the Subscription Service program or ADA paratransit service suspension.

To inquire about Subscription Service please call 603-834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964.

#### **4.12 Will Call Policy**

If you are not ready at the time of your pick-up for your return trip, you will be placed on "will call." This means we will come pick you up for your return trip when you call. We will not return to pick you up until and unless you call.

COAST will make every effort to ensure you are not stranded in the community should you not be ready for your scheduled return trip. However, should you miss your return trip, it is your responsibility to call COAST when you are ready for pick-up and remain at your pick-up point until a vehicle can be dispatched to you. Be aware that it may be some time before we are able to send another vehicle to pick you up as other vehicles are already

scheduled to pick up other customers and may not be readily available to detour to pick you up.

#### **4.13 Ride Assignments**

We are unable to accommodate requests for a specific vehicle, driver, or to travel with or not travel with a particular customer who has a separate reservation. If you have questions or complaints about the condition of a vehicle or the vehicle driver's performance, report it promptly to a COAST supervisor at 603-743-5777, option 4, or TDD: 1-800-735-2964.

#### **4.14 Text Notification Option**

By default, you will be notified of the approximate pick-up time of your ride the following day by an automated phone call. You have the option to get this notification via a text message instead. If you would like to receive a text message instead of a phone call, please let us know you would like to use this option.

## 5.0 Fares

### 5.1 Fare Structure

ADA paratransit fares can be no more than twice the full cash fare on a comparable public bus service.

The base one-way cash fare for COAST's ADA paratransit service is \$3.00. Upon boarding, the fare may be paid by cash or the appropriate number of ADA tickets.

ADA paratransit trips that, if taken on the public bus, would require a single connection from one public bus route to another public bus route in order to get within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of your destination will only pay \$3.00. However, if the trip would require two connections, customers must pay the additional one-way fare (\$3.00).

Unless other arrangements are made with the COAST office, **payment of the full fare for each one-way trip is required at the time of boarding.** Paying for a round-trip is not allowed.

It is the customer's responsibility to plan ahead and ensure they are able to cover the fare. **Customers unable to pay the full fare to ride will not be transported.**

**Drivers cannot accept checks and do not carry change.** Overpaid fares will not be credited or reimbursed. For example, if you pay for an ADA trip using a \$5.00 bill, you will not receive \$2.00 in change, nor will you be credited for \$2.00 toward another trip.

Drivers are not allowed to accept tips/gratuities (including cash or gift cards).

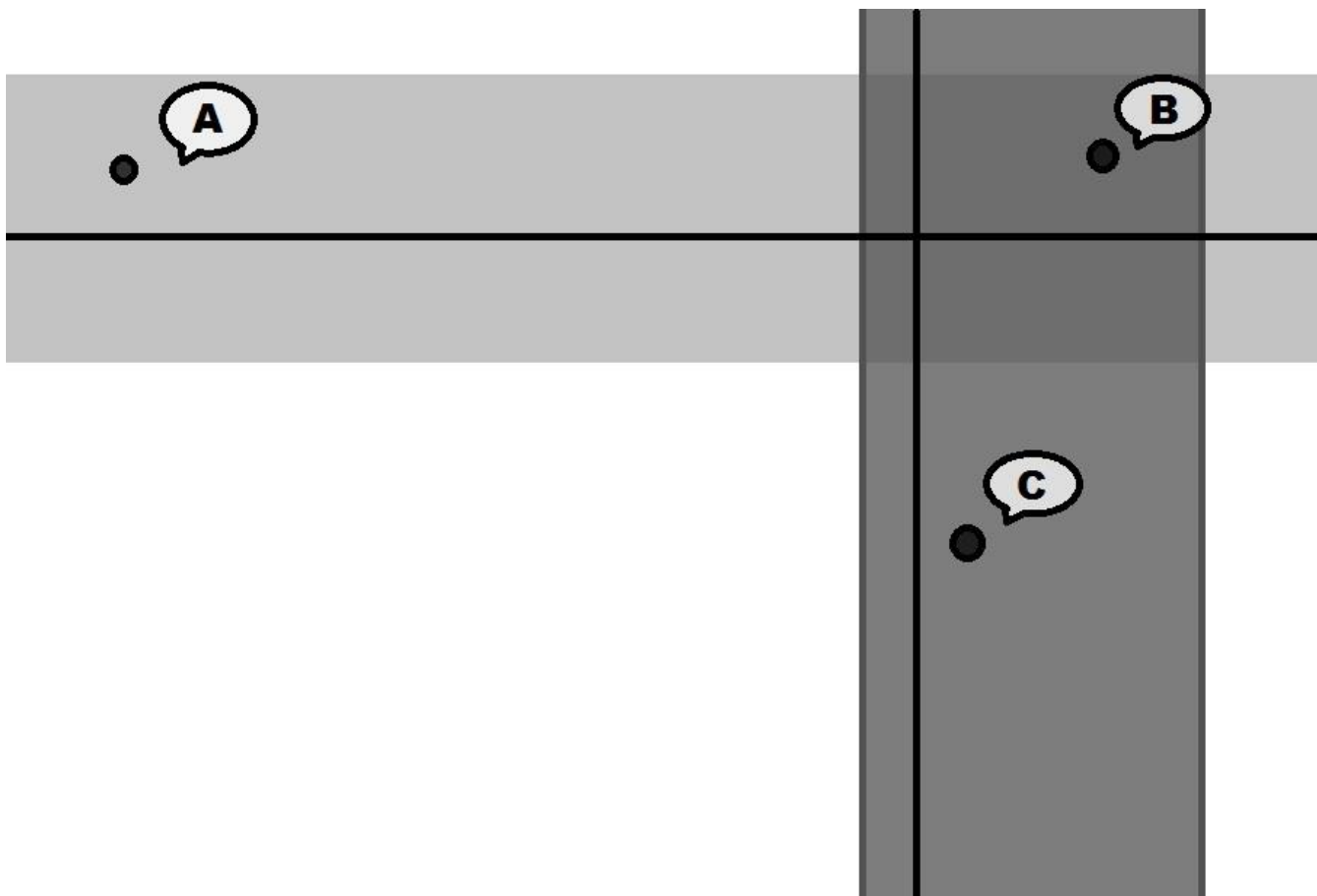
Example (see graphic on next page):

Your trip is from Rochester (A) to Portsmouth Regional Hospital (C), via Route 12 / 13. Your destination is within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of a COAST public bus route (Route 40), but your destination is more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  from Route 12 / 13 (your original route).

To determine the appropriate ADA paratransit fare, COAST looks at each ADA trip and compares it to how a bus customer would make the trip. In this case, a bus customer would have to make a connection from Route 12 / 13 to Route 40 and would get a free transfer. As an ADA customer, you will also benefit from this free transfer and the ride will cost the same as if you could take it on a single bus (\$3.00).

However, if you would have to take three buses to get to your destination, then on the public bus route you would pay for the first, get a free transfer to the second, and have to pay for the third.

The ADA fare is double the base fare on the equivalent bus trip, so, in this case, it would be \$6.00 to the destination. If a destination is within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of your original route and another route (A to B in the example below), the fare charged will be the least expensive fare possible.



## **5.2 ADA Punch Cards**

Instead of paying with cash, ADA customers may purchase ADA Punch Cards for \$30.00 each. Each Punch Card contains 10 \$3.00 punches. COAST does not sell individual tickets, so the minimum that can be purchased is a single Punch Card (of 10 tickets). Even though they are called punch cards, drivers typically mark off the number of \$3.00 slots needed to pay for the ride with a marker or pen.

Punch Cards can be purchased in any of the following ways:

- Through the mail using a check or money order made out to “COAST”
- In person at the COAST office using cash, check, money order, or a credit or debit card
- On a COAST vehicle, from the driver, for exact change cash only.
- Online using a credit or debit card at [www.coastbus.org](http://www.coastbus.org)
- Over the phone using a credit or debit card at 603-834-6010 or TDD: 1-800-735-2964.

All ADA Punch Card orders placed online or over the phone will be mailed within 1 business day from receipt of the order.

### **5.3 Paying by Check**

Checks should be made out to ‘COAST’. COAST does not accept post-dated checks. There is a \$25.00 charge for returned checks. Any customer that bounces a check forfeits the right to pay by check for 6 months. After 2 bounced checks, a customer permanently forfeits the right to pay by check.

Drivers do not accept checks for Punch Cards on the vehicle.

### **5.4 Receipts**

If you require a cash receipt for your trip, be sure to ask the driver at the time of boarding. If placing a Punch Card order with your credit card by phone a receipt will be included with your punch card(s). All online orders automatically generate and email you a receipt for your purchases. If you

need a printout of your rides over a given period, please contact the Reservationist at (603) 834-6010.



## 6.0 General Rules

### 6.1 Lost and Found

Customers are responsible, and COAST accepts no responsibility, for personal items left on a vehicle. Customers may call COAST to find out about any personal items they may have left on the vehicle. If you are not able to get to our office to retrieve the lost item, COAST will attempt to get the item back to you on your next trip. COAST will hold items for 14 days prior to disposal. Wallets, credit/debit cards and IDs will be turned over to the Dover Police Department immediately.

### 6.2 Packages and Personal Items

COAST wants your trip to be as useful as possible, but there are some limitations on what you can bring with you.

- Personal items can include walkers, canes, crutches (considered mobility aids), and life support equipment. Customers are advised to limit their personal items to what they can carry in their 2 hands.
- When shopping, customers are allowed to bring up to 20 reasonable sized shopping bags on the vehicles. Please let TripLink know when you make your reservation if you expect to bring multiple shopping bags.
- Luggage, suitcases, duffle bags, backpacks, and other larger bags are restricted to one per person. They should weigh no more than 20 lbs. and hard shell luggage (as pictured) should not exceed 22" by 9" by 14".



- Large items such as furniture or TVs are not permitted on COAST vehicles.
- Hazardous items such as propane tanks and lead-acid batteries are not permitted.
- For more information on prohibited items, see the Customer Code of Conduct in Appendix III.

Drivers will assist with bringing items on and off the vehicle as needed, and to the door upon request, but are not permitted to carry your bags or other property beyond the exterior step of a building.

One small (see dimensions below) shopping cart is allowed. However, depending on the vehicle and its limitations on securing shopping carts, you may be asked to remove your bags from the shopping cart and to fold and stow the cart while the vehicle is moving.

- Cart is 37" high from the floor to the top of the handle.
- Large basket area measures (maximum):
  - 13" side to side
  - 11-1/2" front to back
  - 20-1/2" top to bottom
  - Folds for easy storage



Packages or parcels may not obstruct aisles and doorways or prevent seats from being used.

### **6.3 Riding with Children**

Children age 12 and over may ride COAST independently (as long as their condition allows) and may be certified eligible for ADA paratransit Service. Eligible children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Regardless of age, eligible children may be required to travel with a Parent/Guardian or Personal Care Attendant (PCA) if the child is seriously disruptive or presents a safety hazard to themselves or others.

Children younger than age 5 are not charged a fare. Children age 5 and older must pay the full fare. Be sure to alert the Reservationist at the time of booking if you are traveling with children. All rules applying to adult customers also apply to children.

Safety restraints: Persons under the age of 18 must use safety restraints per NH RSA 265:107-A. If a child must use a “child restraint system” per RSA 265:107-A, the accompanying adult shall be responsible for providing that restraint and shall be responsible for properly securing it and the child with the vehicle’s restraints. For this reason, all children required by RSA 265:107-A to use a “child restraint system” must travel with an adult. COAST is not responsible for the safety of the child safety seat or booster or for its proper securement.

### **6.4 Service Animals**

Service animals are permitted to ride COAST ADA paratransit service.

The U.S. Department of Transportation defines a Service Animal as “any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.” These tasks include, but are not

limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work and pulling a wheelchair or fetching dropped items. Service animals are working animals and not pets. The work or task an animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

When scheduling a trip with COAST, advise the Reservationist that a service animal will be riding. Service animals are not required to have special ID cards or harnesses, but must be under the control of their owner at all times while in the vehicle. Service animals may not wander around at will and must be housebroken. If a service animal poses a threat to others (for example: growling, snarling, or biting) it will be removed.

In the interest of safety for you and your service animal, COAST asks that if you need to board the vehicle using the lift, your animal be boarded via the passenger door. This is to keep from having their tails, paws, head, or equipment from catching in the lift mechanism and to ensure ample room to ride the lift.

Service animals may not climb on or ride on seats.

## **6.5 Pets**

Pets can only be transported in an enclosed carrier provided that the carrier fits on your lap or under your seat. A carrier may not be a purse or other bag that was not specifically designed for the transportation of animals. Service animals are excluded from this policy (see "Service Animals")

above). Pets must remain in the carrier for the entirety of the trip. Pets are to refrain from barking, showing signs of aggression, or going to the bathroom in the vehicle. If a pet cannot refrain from these behaviors it will be removed.

Please let us know when booking your trip if you will be transporting a pet in a carrier.

## **6.6 Wheelchair and Mobility Device Size**

COAST ADA paratransit service can accommodate wheelchairs and mobility devices up to 33.5" wide, 55" long, and 1,000 lbs. total weight (mobility device plus occupant). However, not every vehicle in our fleet can accommodate these sizes. Therefore, if you plan to use a mobility device wider than 30", longer than 48", or heavier than 600 lbs., you must notify the reservationist when you make a reservation so we can ensure the vehicle scheduled to pick you up has an appropriately rated lift.

## **6.7 Motorized Mobility Devices**

If your wheelchair is motorized, the driver cannot assist you in its operation and you or your Personal Care Attendant will be expected to maneuver it safely on and off the vehicle. When boarding, exiting and moving about the vehicle you will be asked to put your wheelchair into a lower speed. While secured and in-transit you will be asked to power off your motorized wheelchair.

## **6.8 Wheelchair Securement**

If you ride in a wheelchair, your wheelchair will be secured to our vehicle via a four-point tie-down system or similar devices. If you will not allow your wheelchair to be properly and safely secured prior to transport, we will not transport you.

When securing you and your wheelchair within a COAST vehicle, you and your wheelchair will always be secured facing in the forward direction. The securement systems in COAST vehicles are specifically designed to function safely within this forward facing configuration. If you refuse to be secured in the forward facing direction, COAST will not transport you.

We will only transport customers sitting on a vehicle seat or in a wheelchair. Customers are not permitted to be transported while sitting on a walker.

COAST sometimes uses blue securement loops to aid in safe wheelchair securement. Customers who want to provide their own loops permanently attached to their chair may provide their own only if the loops have no buckles, are made from seatbelt strength material, and are first reviewed and approved by COAST. Otherwise, COAST will determine the safest location on your chair to secure. This is to ensure you and your wheelchair are properly and safely secured.

## **6.9 Wheelchair Condition**

For your safety, please be sure that your wheelchair is properly maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. If a driver sees that your chair may be unsafe to transport, the driver may bring this to your attention. If you choose to still ride, COAST will do our best to properly secure your chair and will provide the ride per ADA requirements. However, we strongly

recommend you do not ride in a chair that is not designed for vehicle transport, or that is not properly maintained.

### **6.10 Using the Lift/Ramp**

Ambulatory customers who have difficulty navigating steps may request to board the vehicle on the wheelchair lift or ramp. While using the wheelchair lift or ramp, ambulatory customers will be asked to utilize available handholds to steady themselves.

### **6.11 Seat Belts**

Seatbelts are required for all customers riding COAST ADA Paratransit service. This applies to customers in a vehicle seat, as well as those riding in wheelchairs. A seatbelt built into a customer's wheelchair does not meet this requirement: the belt provided with the vehicle must be used. Customers who refuse to wear seatbelts will not be transported.

As with all COAST policies and procedures, COAST will address reasonable modification requests made due to a disability per our Reasonable Modification Policy.

If you use a three- or four-wheeled scooter, the driver may ask if you are able and willing to transfer to a regular seat. This is done for your protection as these devices are typically not constructed to withstand the rigors of being used as a seat in a passenger vehicle (especially in the case of a collision). If you are unwilling or unable to comply with this request, you

may decline, and the driver will secure you and your scooter and continue with your ride.

### **6.12 Life Support Equipment**

You may bring your respirator, portable oxygen, or other life support equipment on the vehicle as long as it does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. Your equipment must be small enough to fit into the paratransit vehicle and be managed by you or your Personal Care Attendant (PCA). When calculating the amount of oxygen you should travel with, please plan to include more than 2 hours of travel time.

While in transit your equipment must remain out of the primary path of travel so that other customers can safely enter and exit the vehicle. A compressed oxygen cylinder must be secured so it is not free to move when the vehicle is in motion. Portable oxygen concentrators are not considered hazardous materials and do not require the same level of special handling.

### **6.13 Companions/Personal Care Attendants (PCA)**

You may bring additional customers along with you as long as they are traveling to and from the same locations. These additional customers do not need to be eligible for the service and are considered “companions.” Fares for companions are the same as they are for ADA customers.

You may also bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to assist you during your ride or while at your destination(s). This individual rides free of charge



and can be anyone you designate who is present to assist you due to your disability.

Every customer is allowed one companion and one PCA under ADA regulations. Additional companions are allowed as long as there is space available on board the vehicle. Be sure to alert the Reservationist at the time of booking if you will be traveling with a PCA, companion(s) and/or service animals or pets in a carrier. COAST is not required to—and may not be able to—accommodate companions that are present at the pick-up, if you did not reserve space for them at the time of reservation.

#### **6.14 Caregiver Responsibility**

COAST and its employees cannot act as an attendant for individuals who are unable to be alone. Drivers may leave a vehicle with customers onboard to assist other customers to a door up to 50 feet away. Drivers will also drop customers off at their destination, and are unable to wait with the customer if there is nobody present. If an individual cannot be left alone, it is the responsibility of the customer's caregiver(s) or family to ensure a qualified individual is present at the pick-up location and the drop-off location at the time of pick-up and drop-off.

If COAST is aware of an individual that cannot be alone, and encounters an absence of an attendant or caregiver at a drop off location, service to the customer may be suspended and the situation reported to the New Hampshire Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS).

#### **6.15 Illness and Bathroom Accidents**

Many of us have had times in our lives when we became ill or had an accident in public. At COAST, we realize this kind of thing happens. Should it happen to you on board the vehicle, please discretely notify the driver of the situation so that they can make arrangements to get you home quickly and return the vehicle to a clean state.

However, consistent problems of this nature cannot be accepted as they are a public health concern. If this is a concern for you, it is important that you take steps to prevent this from occurring on COAST services.

COAST vehicles are not permitted to make stops along your scheduled route of travel to allow you to use a restroom. Please take the proper precautions prior to departure to ensure you will be able to make your entire trip without incident.

### **6.16 Strong Scents**

Customers are requested not to wear strongly scented personal care products while onboard. This will ensure our vehicles are accessible for customers and staff with chemical sensitivity or environmental illness.

## **7.0 Expectations for COAST**

### **7.1 How Much Assistance Will A Driver Provide?**

Normally, COAST provides origin to destination service. This means that normally we will pick you up at the curb and drop you off at the curb; however, assistance to your door is available upon request. In order to provide assistance to the door, the door must be in reasonable proximity to the drop off location with no barriers which may make assistance unsafe (such as dangerous chained dogs). If assistance to the door is provided, the driver can only assist you from the outermost door or entrance of your location to the vehicle on pick-up and vice versa on drop-off. If the outermost door is reached by steps, the base of those exterior steps is as far as the driver can go. Under no circumstances may a COAST employee enter your residence.

Drivers may not leave the line-of-sight of their vehicle and travel more than 50 feet from their vehicle when other customers are present. The outermost door or entrance is often a lobby at a hospital or medical facility or the beginning of an exterior staircase at an apartment complex. We are unable to assist you past these points.

Drivers will help customers in manually-operated wheelchairs up and down no more than one step or a curb. Drivers will not operate powered or electric mobility devices.

Drivers may assist you with packages and personal items that fit into COAST's package policy. The driver may help a customer carry up to 2 grocery bags or similar sized packages totaling no more than 20 lbs. each on/off the vehicle. Please remember that drivers are not permitted to assist

you beyond the outermost door or, if the outermost door is reached by steps, the base of the outermost steps.

Customers with special needs requiring greater assistance are strongly encouraged to bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) and/or discuss their needs with COAST when apply for services or when scheduling the ride. There is no additional fare for a Personal Care Attendant (PCA).

## **7.2 Reasonable Modification**

COAST will make reasonable modifications to its policies and procedures upon request. To request a modification, please call 603-743-5777 ext. 101. COAST's Reasonable Modification Policy is attached as appendix VII to this service guide.

## **7.3 Driver Uniforms and Identification**

COAST drivers wear uniforms bearing the name "COAST" on the shirt, jacket, and/or cap. Drivers also wear badges with their first name and picture displayed prominently on the front.

COAST may partner with other area human service agencies and transportation providers to provide some of COAST's ADA paratransit service. In this case, drivers may not be wearing uniforms.

The vehicles will be marked with a logo similar to what you see below:



In all cases, drivers will greet you, give their name and the name of COAST or their agency name, and then confirm your name and destination for each scheduled pick-up.

## **7.4 Vehicles**

All COAST vehicles are kept in a safe and well-maintained condition. "COAST" is prominently displayed on all COAST vehicles.

All area human service agency and transportation partner vehicles used to transport COAST customers are held to the same standards as COAST vehicles.

## **7.5 Inclement Weather**

COAST will make every effort to accommodate life-sustaining medical trips (such as dialysis, radiation, and chemotherapy) as long as vehicles are allowed on the roads and there is no safety threat. Unfortunately, sometimes circumstances arise that make it completely unsafe for COAST to operate. COAST will notify you when service is canceled due to weather conditions.

**7.6 Non-Discrimination**

COAST is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in the receipt of, any of COAST's services on the basis of race, color, or national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI).

The public can request additional information on COAST's nondiscrimination obligations by contacting:

Title VI Coordinator  
COAST  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
603-516-0788

## 8.0 No-Show Policy

A No-Show is defined by COAST as when you or your representative has scheduled a trip on one of COAST's demand response services and:

- The vehicle arrives on time, but you no longer want the ride and cancel, or
- The vehicle arrives on time, but the driver cannot locate you at the requested pick-up location, or
- The vehicle arrives on time, and waits for 5 minutes, but you are not ready to go.

OR

- You or your representative call to cancel your scheduled trip less than 2 hours before the start of the scheduled pick-up window.

A No-Show usually results in a wasted trip. This is very expensive and takes away a trip that could have been scheduled for someone else.

When a No-Show occurs, the driver will verify the No-Show with the dispatcher. Before a No-Show is officially assessed, a COAST representative will attempt to call you to determine if the reason for the No-Show was beyond your control. You will not be assessed a No-Show if COAST determines that the reason was beyond your control.

Examples of circumstances beyond your control include, but are not limited to, family emergency; illness or hospitalization that prevented you from calling to cancel; a personal attendant or another party who didn't arrive on time to assist you; your appointment ran long and did not provide an

opportunity to cancel in a timely way; your wheelchair failed; adverse weather impacted your travel plans; or the trip is not performed due to an error in scheduling, dispatching or late vehicle arrival.

After discussion with the customer, or if no contact is made with the customer, and COAST has determined through investigation that the No-Show was under the control of the customer, the No-Show will be assessed to the customer and the customer will be notified via telephone.

The notification will provide information as to time, date, etc. If the No-Show results in suspension, and provided COAST has a mailing address for the customer, the notification will be in writing and will include information as to the appeals process. Only suspensions can be appealed.

**ADA Paratransit Services Only:**

If you No-Show the first leg of a trip, all later trips scheduled for the day will not automatically be canceled. It is your responsibility to cancel each scheduled trip you no longer need. Each trip that is No-Showed is assessed independently in accordance with ADA regulations. If you cancel your trip at the door, do not ask the driver to cancel your return trip. You must call and cancel the trip yourself.

**Non-ADA Demand Response Services Only (e.g., Route 7 On Demand, Portsmouth Senior Transportation, volunteer driver program):**

If you No-Show the first leg of a trip, all later trips scheduled for the day will automatically be canceled unless you call to preserve the trip. If you No-Show the first leg of your trip but want to keep the second leg, you must call and ask for the trip to remain on the schedule.



## **8.1 Penalties**

COAST keeps track of each trip you have requested, scheduled, taken, canceled or “No-Showed.” When a No-Show occurs, COAST will calculate the percentage of No-Shows for your scheduled trips for the preceding 6 months, or from your last suspension if more recent than 6 months. This will be calculated as follows:

$$(\text{No-Shows} / (\text{Scheduled Trips} - \text{Canceled Trips}))$$
$$\times 100 = \% \text{ of No-Shows}$$

COAST gives new customers a grace period of their first 5 scheduled rides because we understand it may take time to learn the system.

Suspensions are not usually assessed within the first 20 scheduled rides. However, riders who have No-Showed 4 of their first 20 scheduled trips, after the initial grace period, may be subject to the penalties below prior to completing their 20th trip.

### **First Penalty:**

All penalties imposed under this policy are first subject to the appeals process listed below. The first penalties for No-Shows based on a percentage of rides scheduled are:

5% - verbal contact, copy of policy mailed

10% - 6 consecutive service days suspension

**After a Suspension Has Occurred:**

After a rider has earned and served a suspension the rider will, once again, be eligible to schedule trips. The rider will be given a “clean slate” and each time another No-Show occurs the percentage of No-Shows will be recalculated.

In compiling the No-Show percentage, COAST will consider your trip history (scheduled trips, canceled trips and No-Shows) from the previous 6 months, or from your last suspension if it is more recent than 6 months.

Suspensions are not usually assessed within the first 20 scheduled rides after a suspension. However, riders who have No-Showed 4 of their first 20 trips after a suspension may be subject to the penalties below prior to completing their 20th trip.

If you earn a 2nd suspension it will be for 12 consecutive service days

If you earn a 3rd suspension it will be for 25 consecutive service days; and

For every suspension earned after a 3rd suspension it will be for 30 consecutive service days

## **8.2 No-Show Suspension Appeals**

Before a customer is suspended from COAST's demand response services, COAST will attempt to call the customer, and will attempt to notify them in writing of COAST's intention to suspend service if a mailing address is known. If the customer's file shows a legal guardian, then a copy of the warning, suspension and appeals process will also be sent to the guardian. The suspension notice will document the specific, verified occurrences of No-Shows. The suspension will go into effect 14 days from the date of the letter.

The customer will have 14 days from the date of the letter to file an appeal with the COAST Appeals Committee.

Once the letter requesting an appeal is received, an appeals hearing will be scheduled within 14 days. If the customer uses a COAST vehicle to attend the appeals hearing, the trip will be provided free of charge.

If a customer has filed an appeal with the COAST Appeals Committee COAST will allow the customer to use COAST's service while the appeal is being considered.

The customer (and their legal guardian if applicable) will receive a written decision from the Appeals Review Committee informing the customer of the decision within 14 days.

## **9.0 Disciplinary Process for Disruptive Behavior**

Our disciplinary process progresses from warnings to suspension. Typically a customer, or their legal guardian, is first warned by a telephone call from COAST. If the behavior or action continues, the customer will receive a written warning with an explanation of the violation. Finally, if the behavior continues unchanged, COAST will notify the customer of a pending suspension.

Any step in this process may be skipped should the severity of the behavior warrant doing so. For instance, suspensions can be immediate when the behavior is illegal or potentially compromises the safety of our driver, other customers, or our equipment.

## **10.0 Communicating with COAST**

### **Customer Feedback Procedure**

Your feedback is appreciated. Comments, compliments or complaints may be made directly to COAST using the contact information below.

For your convenience, all vehicles are equipped with Feedback Forms and envelopes for this purpose. Please place your completed Feedback Form in an envelope and give it to your driver or mail it directly to COAST. All feedback will be reviewed by COAST staff.

### **ADA Complaint Procedure**

COAST has ADA complaint procedures for prompt and equitable resolution of any complaints alleging any action prohibited by federal regulations. (See Appendix VII)

### **Contact Information**

Reservations/Scheduling	603-834-6010 triplink@communityrides.org
Cancelations	603-834-6010
Eligibility/General Questions	603-743-5777 extension 121 ada@coastbus.org
Demand Response Manager	603-743-5777, extension 119

By Fax 603-743-5786

Mailing address: COAST  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820

TDD: 1-800-735-2964

## **Appendix I – Glossary of Terms**

## **GLOSSARY OF ADA TERMS**

**Accessible Vehicles** ~ Vehicles which have equipment (for example: lifts or ramps) that allow for ease of boarding and travel by individuals with a variety of needs, including mobility devices and wheelchairs. All vehicles used by COAST are accessible.

**ADA** ~ The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is federal legislation requiring transit systems to offer accessible mainline services and complementary ADA paratransit service within a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor of a fixed route. The legislation prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities and is designed to ensure equal access and equal opportunities.

**ADA Paratransit Service** ~ see Complimentary ADA Paratransit Service.

**Companion** ~ Persons traveling with an ADA eligible customer who are not Personal Care Attendants (PCA).

**Complementary ADA Paratransit Service** ~ Service which operates in a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor of either side of COAST fixed routes and mirrors its days and hours of operation as required by ADA legislation.

Complementary ADA paratransit service operates throughout COAST's service area where fixed routes are operated. ADA reservations for this service must be taken at least 1 day in advance and fares must be no more than 2 times the equivalent fixed route service. The ADA legislation prohibits capacity constraints and trip prioritizing based on trip purpose.



It is not necessary for an individual to live in the ADA service area to use ADA service. However, for a trip to be eligible for ADA service, both the pick-up and drop-off locations must be within the ADA service area.

**Demand Response** ~ Demand response is any non-fixed route system of transportation of individuals that requires advanced scheduling by the customer, including services provided by public entities, nonprofits, and private providers.

**Eligibility** ~ The process by which, or conditions under which, an individual is authorized to use a particular service. In this case, the requirements for being able to use the ADA paratransit service.

**Fares** ~ The cost of a ride paid by a customer; varies by service.

**Fixed-Route Service** ~ Fixed-route services include any transit service in which vehicles run along an established path at preset times. Typically, fixed-route service is characterized by printed schedules or timetables, and designated stops where customers board and exit.

**Mobility Aid** ~ Equipment for increasing the mobility of people who have a disorder that affects their ability to walk. This includes walkers, crutches, canes, braces, and other similar devices.

**No-Show** ~ A No-Show is defined by COAST as when you or your representative has scheduled a trip on a COAST ADA paratransit vehicle and:

- The vehicle arrives on time, but you no longer want the ride, or

- The vehicle arrives on time, but the driver cannot locate you at the requested pick-up location, or
- The vehicle arrives on time, and waits for ten minutes, but you are not ready to go and the driver must leave to stay on schedule.

OR

- You or your representative call to cancel your scheduled trip within 2 hours of the start of the scheduled pick-up window.

**Paratransit Service** ~ Non-traditional transportation modes, such as ADA paratransit, that are not fixed route but generally complement or supplement them. Paratransit service is a type of demand response service.

**Personal Care Attendant (PCA)** ~ An individual designated or employed to help an ADA paratransit-eligible individual meet his or her needs when that eligible person needs assistance.

**Securement** ~ Wheelchairs must be properly secured to the vehicle. Drivers have been trained in the proper use of the securement systems. Optional lap belts and shoulder harnesses are available and strongly recommended. A waiver will be needed should lap belts and/or shoulder harnesses be refused.

**Service Animals** ~ The Department of Transportation defines a Service Animal as “any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.” These tasks include, but are not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work and pulling a wheelchair or fetching

dropped items. Service animals are working animals and not pets. The work or task an animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

**TDD** ~ Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

**Wheelchair** ~ The U.S. Department of Transportation defines a wheelchair as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

## **Appendix II - Customer and Driver Responsibilities**

**CUSTOMER AND DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES****CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Carefully read all Service Guide materials
- Follow all rules and regulations set forth in this Service Guide
- Make ride reservations at least one day in advance
- Be at the designated pick-up location on time
- Get aboard the vehicle promptly, remain seated once on board, wear your seat belt, and keep arms, legs, and head inside the vehicle
- If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of the pick-up window, call COAST
- Call to cancel an unneeded ride as soon as possible to avoid a “No-Show”
- Pay the correct fare (remember, drivers cannot make change)
- Wear seat belts at all times during transport or complete a waiver
- Avoid distracting the driver or annoying other customers with inappropriate behavior
- Maintain wheelchairs in safe operating condition according to manufacturer’s specifications
- Expect “shared-ride” service. Others may be picked up after you, and/or dropped off before you reach your destination
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene; please refrain from using scented products as they can bother other chemically sensitive customers
- Follow the Customer Code of Conduct (Appendix III)
- Provide feedback to COAST should your service be unsatisfactory by calling 603-743-5777, option 4
- Maintain a clear and safe path of travel between your exterior doorway and the typical pick-up point

**DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES:****Drivers Must:**

- Be courteous at all times
- Get out of the vehicle and let you know they have arrived, if possible
- Adhere to the same standards of common courtesy and personal hygiene as those required of customers
- Collect the fare listed on their schedule or manifest
- Be in proper uniform and visibly display a proper ID badge
- Carry only the customers assigned to them along with attendants and companions who have reservations
- Go only to the destinations listed on the manifest or as notified by their dispatcher. For safety reasons, maintain “line-of-sight” of vehicle at all times when other customers are on board
- Keep to the assigned service schedule for the convenience of all customers
- Provide reasonable assistance to customers entering or leaving the vehicle
- Assist customers using manually-powered wheelchairs up and down no more than one step or a curb (if safe to do so and while remaining in the line-of-sight of their vehicle)
- Assist ambulatory customers to and from their origin and destination, if requested, and if safe to do so and within line-of-sight of their vehicle
- Refrain from using electronic devices other than the vehicle’s two-way radio. Operators may use a cell phone as long as they are not in the driver’s seat, not in operation of any portion of the vehicle, and no needed to provide customer assistance at the time they are using the phone.

Drivers may never use a cell phone for any purpose behind the wheel of the vehicle

- Operate the vehicle and lift in a safe manner and safely secure wheelchairs on the vehicle
- “Assistance” includes, but is not limited to:
  - Offering ambulatory customers a steady arm or other appropriate assistance
  - Helping persons in wheelchairs maneuver onto standard ramps to and from the main door of their origin and destination (if safe to do so and while remaining in the line-of-sight of their vehicle)
  - Carrying packages that comply with COAST’s Packages and Personal Items policy for items on board the vehicle

**Drivers Are Not Permitted to:**

- Lift or carry customer, or support the majority of a customer’s weight
- Enter the residence of a customer
- Perform any personal care assistance for any customer, such as assisting with dressing
- Assist customers on non-ADA compliant or steeply inclined mobility ramps or steps
- Assist an ambulatory customer beyond the bottom-most exterior step of the pick-up or drop-off location
- Assist a customer using a manually-powered wheelchair up or down more than one step or a curb
- Wait for a customer to make an unscheduled stop to conduct business, such as at an ATM/Cash machine, pharmacy or video rental vending machine

- Accept tips/gratuities (including cash or gift cards)
- Perform errands for customers such as picking up prescriptions or groceries
- Take information from the customer about cancelations or changes in reservations
- Secure child safety systems in the vehicle or children into such systems
- If your wheelchair is power-driven, the driver may not assist you in its operation and you will be expected to maneuver it safely on and off the vehicle.



## **Appendix III - Customer Code of Conduct**

**CUSTOMER CODE OF CONDUCT**

To provide safe, comfortable, and reliable services, COAST has developed this Customer Code of Conduct to outline the type of behavior and cargo permitted on COAST vehicles, in COAST bus shelters, and in COAST facilities. COAST welcomes everyone to ride and encourages everyone to do so in a courteous manner. Enforcement of these standards is critical to maintaining a welcoming environment.

**All COAST Customers are expected to:**

- Pay the proper fare using a valid ticket, pass, or cash.
- Wear appropriate clothing for the public, including clothing that prevents indecent exposure and covers the bottoms of feet.
- Show acceptable ID or documentation if required for the type of fare being paid.
- Cooperate with the driver, or other COAST employee, seeking to verify fare and otherwise enforce COAST policies.
- Comply with requests from a COAST employee to change behavior on the bus.
- Be courteous and respectful toward COAST employees, customers, and others associated with the service.
- Be able to safely control themselves and any dependents or animals within their care.
- Leave the bus if directed to do so by a COAST employee.
- Follow COAST employee instructions in the event of an emergency.

**COAST Customers are not permitted to do the following on any COAST vehicle, in any COAST bus shelter, in any COAST building, or when otherwise interacting with COAST services:**

- **Smoking, Alcohol, and Illegal Substances**
  - Smoke, vape, or carry any lighted tobacco product.
  - Expel the residue of any tobacco product, including chewing tobacco and e-cigarettes. This includes spitting and breathing out smoke right after smoking.
  - Consume any alcoholic beverage or possess an open container of any alcoholic beverage.
  - Possess or use any unprescribed medications or illegal substances.
  - Sell any medications or illegal substances.
- **Language & Noise**
  - Use profane language toward others.
  - Insult, demean, harass, or verbally attack COAST employees or other customers.
  - Using derogatory language or slurs towards or about COAST employees or customers, based on race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation, pregnancy and gender identity), marital status, familial status, age, genetic information, disability (physical or mental), or veteran status.
  - Sexually harass, overtly or through innuendo, COAST employees or customers.
  - Threaten COAST employees or other customers.
  - Engage in loud conversation that disturbs others.
  - Play any electronic device loudly that disturbs others.
- **Safety & Cleanliness**
  - Physically assault COAST employees, customers, or any other person.
  - Carry, possess, or have within immediate access any dangerous weapon.

- Litter on any COAST vehicle, property, bus stop, or adjoining property when waiting for or using COAST services.
- Excrete any bodily fluid upon or at another person or object.
- Give off a strong or pungent odor or carry materials which give off a strong or pungent odor which may be offensive or irritating to other customers or COAST employees.
- Eat, except for small, contained snacks such as a granola bar.
- Use or leave behind hypodermic needles.
- Other
  - Ride without a destination, or for longer than necessary to reach your destination.
  - Loiter at bus stops when not waiting for a bus, or at a COAST building when not engaged in legitimate COAST business.
  - Vandalize any COAST vehicle or property.
  - Beg or solicit, including asking other customers to pay your fare or selling merchandise.
  - Engage in other obnoxious, disturbing, or disruptive behavior.
  - Steal from COAST, its employees, or customers.
  - Engage in any illegal activity.

**The following items may not be brought on a COAST vehicle or into a COAST building:**

- Food that is not in secure packaging (for example, groceries are okay, but a piece of pizza on an open plate is not).
- Drinks not in a secure container (the container should be able to tip over without spilling).
- Opened alcoholic beverages.
- Any illegal substance.
- Lit tobacco products.

- An animal that is not a service animal without an appropriate carrier. Animals whose purpose is to assist a person with a disability (service animals) are permitted.
- Any dangerous weapon (including firearms).
- Bicycles, which may go on the bike rack if the vehicle has one and there is space available, but they may not go inside a COAST vehicle.
- Large items that cannot be properly secured. The driver has sole discretion on whether a large item is permitted and/or properly secured.
- Flammable liquid, combustible materials, lead-acid batteries, gasoline, kerosene, propane.

COAST reserves the right to not allow an item on a COAST vehicle, or in a COAST vehicle, at its sole discretion.

### **Intoxication**

COAST permits people who are intoxicated to ride. However, those individuals are responsible to follow this Customer Code of Conduct. If intoxication results in any of the behaviors prohibited in this policy, that person will not be permitted to ride.

### **Consequences of Misconduct**

Customers who violate COAST's Customer Code of Conduct may be banned from riding. The length of the suspension will vary based on the severity of the violation.

COAST employees may immediately refuse service to any customer who does not comply with the Code of Conduct.

Incident Description	Length of Ban
If COAST contacts police to assist with a customer who violates the Code of Conduct, the ban is effective immediately upon COAST's call to police.	Minimum of 30 days.
Riding or attempting to ride after being informed of a current ban on riding.	Ban extended by 30 days per attempt.
<b>Class 1 Violations:</b> Non-physical harassment of COAST employees or customers, and violations that result in an unpleasant environment on the vehicle, at bus stops, or at COAST facilities but do not constitute a physical safety hazard.	
First offense	Up to 90 days.
Second offense	Up to 1 year.
Additional offenses	Up to permanent.
<b>Class 2 Violations:</b> Violations that result in safety hazards such as any kind of threat of physical harm to COAST, its employees or customers, theft, use of illegal drugs, smoking or vaping on the vehicle, and leaving behind drugs or hypodermic needles.	
First offense	Minimum of 1 year.
Second offense	Permanently.
<b>Class 3 Violations:</b> Assaulting COAST employees or customers, including throwing items at, spitting at, hitting, attempting to hit, or otherwise being physically aggressive. Includes non-physical acts that present the threat of ongoing harassment of COAST employees or customers, including theft of personally identifying items (wallets), contact information, following or contacting COAST employees	

outside of work to harass them, and similar types of behavior.	
First Offense	2 years to permanent.

COAST reserves the right to identify the type of violation committed, including whether behavior is threatening, considered harassment, or otherwise violates this Customer Code of Conduct.

### **No Fare Reimbursement**

Passengers who violate COAST's Customer Code of Conduct, and are consequently banned from the service, are not eligible for reimbursement of their fare. This applies to both one-time fare paid for a ride and monthly passes which a longer ban may render unusable.

### **Suspension Appeals**

Customers banned from COAST services for longer than 90 days may appeal to have their ban shortened after at least 90 days of their ban have been served. Appeals must contain documented evidence that the banned individual is unlikely to reoffend. Examples of documentation include the following, though not all will apply in every situation:

- Evidence of having completed a sentence ordered by a court for the violation that caused the suspension
- Evidence of restitution made

- Letters of support from community members with authority to speak on the subject, such as parole officers, social workers, mental health professionals, employers, etc.

Ban appeals will not be granted if material impacts continue to be experienced by COAST, its employees, or customers as a result of the original violation. Additionally, banned customers who repeatedly tried to defy the ban and board anyway are not eligible for appeal. COAST may request additional documentation or support if the originally submitted documentation is deemed insufficient.

Appeals are determined by COAST's Director of Operations and one additional member of COAST's management team. All appeals are determined at COAST's sole discretion.

### **Misconduct Related to a Disability**

Customers who violate the Customer Code of Conduct, but whose misconduct is the direct and immediate consequence of the customer's disability, may have the following restrictions placed on them:

- A customer may be required to ride with another individual who can assist them if this misconduct would have otherwise resulted in a suspension.
- A customer may be subject to any reasonable adaptation that will ensure safety. This adaptation may last for a time sufficient to allow the customer time to learn appropriate behavior or the adaptation may be permanent if the misconduct continues.



## **Appendix IV - Title VI**

## TITLE VI NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) is committed to providing non-discriminatory transportation services to all of its passengers and potential passengers. COAST prohibits discrimination in all programs and services on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

No person or group of persons shall be discriminated against regarding access, seating, routing, scheduling, or quality of transportation services furnished by COAST on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Any person who believes that he or she has, individually, or as a member of any specific group, been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin may file a formal complaint with COAST. A written complaint must be filed within 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination. All complaints should be signed, dated, and include contact information. You may file a written complaint to:

COAST Title VI Coordinator  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
[civilrights@coastbus.org](mailto:civilrights@coastbus.org)

For a Title VI Complaint Form please visit [www.coastbus.org/about-coast/civil-rights](http://www.coastbus.org/about-coast/civil-rights).

For more information about COAST's civil rights programs, the procedures to file a complaint, or to obtain this notice in other languages contact COAST's Title VI Coordinator at 603-743-5777 or by email at [civilrights@coastbus.org](mailto:civilrights@coastbus.org).

A complaint may be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration, Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Complaint Team, East Building, 5th Floor – TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

**Approved by the Board of Directors July 29, 2020**

Este documento está disponible en español bajo petición.

Ce document est disponible en français sur demande.

## **Appendix V - Notice of Appeal**

NOTICE OF APPEAL FOR ADA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY

I, \_\_\_\_\_, wish to appeal the  
paratransit eligibility decision on the date of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_:

Check one

☐ Eligibility to use COAST's ADA Paratransit Service was **denied** -  
Appealing for ADA Paratransit eligibility

☐ **Conditional** Eligibility was granted –  
Appealing for Unconditional ADA Paratransit eligibility

☐ **Temporary** eligibility was granted –  
Appealing for longer/permanent ADA Paratransit eligibility

Therefore, I am requesting an appeal hearing with COAST's Appeals  
Committee.

---

Signature

Date

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Telephone:

**PLEASE INCLUDE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU'D LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF YOUR APPEAL**

Your appeal must be received within 60 days of notification of eligibility determination.

### Process for Eligibility Appeals

Applicants who are granted temporary or conditional eligibility, or who are found to be ineligible for COAST's ADA Paratransit Service have the right to appeal COAST's decision. Appeals must be received within 60 days.

Appeals are conducted by the COAST Appeals Committee, comprised of members of COAST's leadership team. You have the right to an in-person hearing with the COAST Appeals Committee; however, you may waive your right to an in-person hearing and have the COAST Appeals Committee review your case without your presence.

If you decide to request an appeal hearing or if you decide to submit additional documentation as part of your appeal, please send items to the following address: ADA Eligibility Appeals, c/o Executive Director, 42 Sumner Drive, Dover, NH 03820

The decision of the COAST Appeals Committee is final. Applicants have the right to use the service if the Committee has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process.

## **Appendix VI – ADA Complaint Procedure**

These procedures cover all complaints filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, for alleged failure to adhere to the requirements of this Act or its supporting regulations in the operation of any program or activity administered by the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST).

These procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other State or Federal agencies or to seek private council for complaints alleging discrimination. Every effort will be made to obtain early resolution of complaints at the lowest level possible. The option of informal mediation meeting(s) between the affected parties and COAST may be utilized for resolution.

Any person, group of people or entity that has a complaint related to the Americans with Disabilities Act as it relates to COAST's services or activities may file a written complaint to the following address:

**ADA Complaint Officer**

**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation 42 Sumner Drive**

**Dover, NH 03820**

**Phone: 603-743-5777**

**Fax: 603-516-0592**

The following measures will be taken to resolve complaints filed under the ADA and related statutes:

1) A formal complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged occurrence. Complaints shall be in writing and signed by the individual or his/her legal representative, and will include the Complainant's name, address and telephone number; the name of the person alleged to have engaged in discriminatory behavior ; the basis for the complaint and the date of the alleged act(s). A statement detailing the facts and circumstances must accompany all complaints.



- 2) In the case where a Complainant is unable or incapable of providing a written statement, a verbal complaint may be made to the COAST ADA Complaint Officer. Under these circumstances, the Complainant will be interviewed, and the Officer will assist the Complainant in converting the verbal allegations to writing.
- 3) When a complaint is received, the ADA Complaint Officer will provide written acknowledgment to the Complainant within ten (10) days by registered mail.
- 4) If a complaint is deemed incomplete, additional information will be requested, and the Complainant will be provided 60 business days to submit the required information. Failure to do so may be considered good cause for a determination of no investigative merit.
- 5) Within 15 business days from the receipt of a complete complaint, COAST will determine its jurisdiction in pursuing the matter and whether the complaint has sufficient merit to warrant investigation. Within five (5) business days of the decision to proceed with an investigation or not, the Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will notify the Complainant and Respondent, by registered mail, informing them of the disposition.
  - a. If the decision is made to not investigate the complaint, the notification shall specifically state the reason for the decision.
  - b. If the complaint is to be investigated, the notification shall state the grounds of COAST's jurisdiction, while informing the parties that their full cooperation will be required in gathering additional information and assisting the investigator.
- 6) When COAST does not have sufficient jurisdiction, the Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will refer the complaint to the appropriate State or Federal agency holding such jurisdiction.
- 7) If the complaint has investigative merit, the Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will assign an investigator. A complete investigation will

be conducted, and an investigative report will be submitted to the Executive Director within 60 days from receipt of the complaint. The report will include a narrative description of the incident, summaries of all persons interviewed, and a finding with recommendations and conciliatory measures where appropriate. If the investigation is delayed for any reason, the investigator will notify the appropriate authorities, and an extension will be requested.

8) The Executive Director or his/her authorized designee will issue letters of finding to the Complainant and Respondent within 90 days from receipt of the complaint.

9) If the Complainant is dissatisfied with COAST's resolution of the complaint, he/she has the right to file a complaint with the:

**Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights Attention:  
Complaint Team East Building, 5th Floor – TCR 1200 New Jersey  
Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590**

or

**Intake Department NH Commission for Human Rights 2 Industrial Park  
Drive Concord, NH 03301**

## **Appendix VII – Reasonable Modification Policy & Procedure**

## **Reasonable Modification Policy & Procedure**

### **Policy**

COAST will make reasonable modifications/accommodations to policies, practices, and procedures to avoid discrimination and ensure that their programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

### **Procedures for Accommodating Reasonable Modification**

1. All requests for reasonable modification (fixed route, demand response, or facilities) will be processed in the following manner. Requests may be submitted via e-mail to [info@coastbus.org](mailto:info@coastbus.org), or written mail to:  
COAST  
Attn: Customer Service  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
Or by phone at (603) 743-5777
2. All requests will be logged into a Reasonable Modification/Accommodation spreadsheet noting the requestor's name, date, contact information, and specific modification request being made.
3. Information regarding requesting reasonable modifications will be available on the organization's website ([www.coastbus.org](http://www.coastbus.org)) as well as within various printed materials normally provided by COAST (i.e. riders guides, notices).
4. Individuals requesting modifications will be asked to supply sufficient detail within the request so that COAST staff may effectively evaluate the request. Individuals are not required to use the term "reasonable modification" when requesting modifications or accommodations.
5. Whenever feasible, requests for modifications shall be made in advance, before the requested modification is expected to be provided in service. COAST acknowledges that, due to the unpredictable nature

of transportation, some requests for reasonable modification may be made while in transit. As such, operating personnel shall make a determination of whether the modification should be provided at that time.

6. All requests for modifications (reasonable or otherwise) will be assigned to the COAST Director of Operations for review and evaluation. Prior to determination, the Director of Operations will consult with COAST operations staff regarding requests for reasonable modification.
7. Note that some requests for reasonable accommodations may be submitted during the paratransit eligibility process or through other customer service inquiries, and as such, operating personnel are trained and are empowered to determine whether the request should be granted at the time of the request or whether the request needs to be escalated to operations/management before making a determination to grant or deny the request.
8. Training regarding these procedures will be provided to COAST staff who interact with the public; specifically, office assistants, dispatchers, schedulers and supervisors.

All reasonable modification requests will be acknowledged within 3 business days of receipt. The resolution and response to the person who submitted a request will be made timely, within 15 business days, and the response must explain the reasons for the resolution. The response must be documented in the Reasonable Modification/Accommodation log

**Complaint Response Procedures**

1. Complaints may be submitted via email to [info@coastbus.org](mailto:info@coastbus.org) , or written mail to:  
COAST  
Attn: Customer Service  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820  
or by phone at (603) 743-5777, ext. 101.
2. All complaints will be logged into a Reasonable Modification/Accommodation spreadsheet noting the complainant name, date, contact information and specific complaint being made as well as the original request for modification associated with the complaint.
3. All complaints will be reviewed by the Complaints Resolution Officer prior to discussing with Director of Operations & Executive Director.
4. All complaints will be acknowledged within 3 business days of receipt. The resolution and response will be made timely, within 15 business days, and the response must explain the reasons for the determination. The response must be documented in the Reasonable Modification/Accommodation log, referencing the original request for modification. Any complaint responses requiring more than 15 business days for resolution must be reviewed by the Executive Director and documented as to why the resolution requires additional time for full resolution.

**Reasonable Modification Request Point of Contact**

The point of contact for Reasonable Modification Requests at COAST is:

Michael Williams, Director of Operations

(603) 516-0783

[mwilliams@coastbus.org](mailto:mwilliams@coastbus.org)

Requests may be reviewed by the following COAST staff: Operations Supervisors, Director of Operations, Director of HR & Compliance

**Denying Request for Modification**

Requests for modification of COAST's policies and practices may be denied only on one or more of the following grounds:

- Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of COAST's services, programs, or activities;
- Granting the request would create a direct threat to the health or safety of others (including drivers and other passengers, but not including the requesting party);
- Without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use COAST'S services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose; or
- In the case of recipients of federal financial assistance, granting the request would cause an undue financial and administrative burden.
- If COAST denies a request for a reasonable modification, COAST shall take, to the maximum extent possible, any other actions (that would not result in a direct threat or fundamental alteration) to ensure that the individual with a disability receives the services or benefit provided by COAST.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE  
ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE GUIDE**

The information provided in this Service Guide is an important factor in helping you understand COAST's ADA Paratransit Service. We encourage you to read it completely and to contact COAST if you have any questions regarding the information contained within this Guide.

It's important for COAST staff to know that you have received this Service Guide. By signing below, you acknowledge that you have received this Service Guide and will read it.

Please sign your name below, detach this page, and mail it to COAST at the address below.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

COAST  
42 Sumner Drive  
Dover, NH 03820