

ON THE

Online Volume 20 | Winter 2020/2021

MOVE



All the news on Access-A-Ride



**Please be vigilant against the spread of COVID-19
& wear a face covering when using AAR!**

<https://forward.ny.gov/protect-yourself-and-your-family-coronavirus-covid-19>

Paratransit Monthly Stats

Paratransit weekday trips remain steady at about 70% from pre-COVID levels, even as COVID-19 numbers continue to grow. As service has increased, performance has remained stable. On-Time Performance has exceeded the goals for both the 30-Minute and 15-Minute windows. Average trip duration or ride time continues to remain low (29 minutes) in October. Visit AAR's performance metrics at our interactive dashboard: <http://aardashboard.mta.info/>.

How We Are Working to Keep You Safe

We continue to remain vigilant with safety measures designed to protect against the transmission of COVID-19 and to ensure a safe ride for our customers and drivers. All dedicated vehicles are disinfected daily and temperature checks are required for drivers. Broker services follow similar disinfection requirements. Face coverings are required on all trips for both customers and drivers, and we continue direct, non-shared ride trips at this time. Customers may ride with one PCA or guest for a maximum of two per vehicle. Other customer focused policies that we have implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic include the temporary curtailment of feeder service, reduction of the prescribed time gap between customer drop-off and the return trip, and special transportation for those customers who are COVID positive or symptomatic. We have also extended Phase 1 of the On-Demand E-hail Pilot Program.



Eligibility Process Update

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, all six citywide Access-A-Ride assessment centers were closed, and all in-person paratransit interviews and eligibility assessments were suspended.

In November, MTA New York City Transit reopened two of the Access-A-Ride Assessment Centers and added a third on Wednesday, December 16th. The reopening of the centers supports the return to a closer-to-normal eligibility process with the appropriate safety and compliant protocols in place, including reopening at 25% (pre-pandemic) capacity.

Paratransit Assessment Centers:

- New York Doctors Urgent Care - 65 West 13th St, MANHATTAN
- Horizon Healthcare - 101 Ellis St, STATEN ISLAND
- Excellence Physical Therapy - 1811 Hone Av, THE BRONX

Existing customers who were due for recertification during this time were granted an extension of their current level of service. Likewise, all new customers that presented a critical need for paratransit services and could provide supporting documentation were presumed eligible for AAR and enrolled in the program. These presumptive eligibility enrollments were made pending future in-person assessments.

Customers will continue to have their current level of eligibility service extended until we resume normal operation or schedule an in-person assessment whichever occurs first.

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

Customers who have questions about their eligibility status or need to update their equipment or personal contact information, may also

call the Eligibility Unit.

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

Communication Corner

We want to speak with you more often. Therefore, it's critical that you update your contact information!

We are looking to expand our communication strategies and will be using email and text messaging to ensure that our customers receive more frequent messaging and the latest on AAR program updates. We will also be publishing On The Move four times a year!

Please call Eligibility (see phone directory on pg 8) to check that we have your most current contact information on record: Cell Phone / Email / Home Phone / Address. You may have shared contact information with a reservation agent, but this does not automatically update your permanent records. Thank you for helping us make successful connections on your day of service (and before) by providing Eligibility with your up to date contact information.

For the latest updates regarding service or weather alerts (yes, it is that time of year), you can call AAR (see phone directory on pg 8), consult the MTA website at new.mta.info and follow AAR on Twitter or Facebook @nyctAAR

Fare Collection Resumes

AAR Fare collection will resume on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Customers will be required to pay the full fare of \$2.75, in exact change. Guests will also be required to pay the full fare, but if you have a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) they still travel for free. Those customers who are also enrolled in New York City's AAR specific Fair Fares program will have to pay \$1.35, also in exact change. As a reminder, masks are required and we are still operating non-shared rides.

Before You Make Your Reservation

As many begin to return to worksites or venture out for essential services, be aware that many locations may have limited hours, screening check points and occupation restrictions in order to maintain social distance regulations. Some locations, such as hospitals, may have closed some entrances and are redirecting patients to alternate entrances blocks away. So please, before making your reservations, verify that the location you are traveling to is open and if you will need extra time due to added restriction. Of course, on the day of service, if you need assistance, please call Travel Services (see phone directory on pg 8). Staff is available 24/7 to assist.



Your smart phone is a critical tool to help you track your AAR trips and so much more! Please download the MYmta app at your preferred app store and sign-up.

For more information: [click here](#).

If you need assistance, please call AAR and press prompt #8 to make a request.

Online Taxi/Car Service Reimbursement – NEW!!

Your authorized reimbursement can now be submitted online! Simply go to the AAR website: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit> and scroll down to Policies and Forms to find the “Online Taxi/Car Service Reimbursement Request.” Simply complete the form and attach a PDF (Scan) or Photo (JPEG) of the receipt and press “submit.” For those who prefer to mail the request/receipt to AAR, that option is still available. Please remember, the Taxi/Car Service Reimbursement Policy still applies.

About Taxi/Car Service Reimbursements: In order to provide efficient service and enable expedient travel, taxicab/car service reimbursement authorization may be offered to customers at the time of the reservation (when traveling within their borough) or in the event of a day of service issue. Customers are not required to accept a taxicab/car service reimbursement authorization; however, all taxi reimbursements must be pre-authorized.

When a taxicab or car service is authorized, the customer is responsible for paying the full fare plus any tolls and obtaining a valid receipt from the driver. Only valid licensed NYC Taxi and Limousine commissioned taxi or For-Hire Vehicles (FHV) service receipts are qualified for reimbursement. For more information visit: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/policies-and-forms/taxicab-car-service-reimbursement-policy>

“Taxi Seat Belt Law” – Now requires seatbelts to be worn in the rear of the vehicle!

The “Taxi Seat Belt Law” - NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law section 1229-c - was recently amended to eliminate the previous restriction that only front-seat passengers must fasten their seatbelts. The change took effect on 11/1/2020 and only applies to taxi and for-hire livery vehicles (ie: our enhanced broker service and E-Hail). Therefore, all passengers traveling in a taxi or for-hire-vehicle must wear a seatbelt wherever they sit in the vehicle or else they may be ticketed. The law provides a medical exemption for those passengers with a physical disability that prevents them from using a safety seat or belt; passengers with such an exemption should be prepared to demonstrate proof to the ticketing officer in the event they are stopped under this law.

AAR vehicles cannot accommodate wheelchairs or scooters wider than 33 inches, longer than 51 inches and weighing more than 800 lbs. when occupied.

For your safety, we strongly recommend that you wear your seatbelt or seatbelt/shoulder harness (if traveling in a wheelchair/scooter) even if you are traveling in a vehicle from our dedicated carrier fleet. Upon request, drivers will assist customers with fastening and unfastening their seatbelts and seatbelt/shoulder harnesses for those using a wheelchair/scooter. Remember, please ask if you need assistance with your seatbelt.

Access-A-Ride Telephone Directory

Call **877-337-2017** toll-free from area codes in the NY Metro Area and adjacent counties.

From all other area codes, call 718-393-4999. Customers who are deaf / hard of hearing can use their preferred relay service or the free 711 service relay.

For assistance in English, press “1.” If “1” is not pressed, callers will hear choices in each of the respective languages: for assistance in: Spanish, press “2.” For assistance in Russian, Chinese, French, Creole, Korean or Bengali, please press “3.” For all other languages, please press “4.” Conversations with AAR personnel are recorded and may be monitored.

These prompts may be selected after an important announcement is heard:

Prompt #1 – Eligibility Unit: Appeals / Certification / Application / AAR MetroCard / Update Your Records

Prompt #2 – Trip Planning: Reservations

Prompt #3 – Trip Planning: Change your reservation

Prompt #4 – Trip Planning: Cancel your reservation

Prompt #5 – Travel Services: Help with same day service 24 hours, 7 days a week

Prompt #6 – Subscription Service

Prompt #7 – Automated System

Prompt #8 – Commendations / Questions / Complaints / Outreach Requests / Publication Requests

To repeat, please press “0.” Hold for assistance if you do not have a touch-tone phone.



MTA New York City Transit
Department of Buses
Paratransit Division
130 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

This past year has been incredibly hard for the city and the entire MTA family. The Paratransit team has worked and continues to work tirelessly throughout the pandemic to provide essential services for our customers and in support of our larger community.

Your questions and comments about On The Move are welcome. Please send them to: MTA NYC Transit, Department of Buses Paratransit Division, 130 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201 Or go to: <https://new.mta.info/customer-feedback>

Follow us on Social Media @nyctAAR

Paratransit Service and past issues of On the Move, please visit: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit>