



All the news on Access-A-Ride

Summer 2022

Happy Birthday ADA!!

This summer we mark the 32nd Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act. Paratransit looks forward to providing service for the return of annual events sponsored by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD), in conjunction with other organizations, that celebrate the signing of this landmark, civil right law. We look forward to seeing our customers at these special events!

Special events may have specific AAR designated stops created for the event with input from MOPD and the venue. When make reservations, please speak directly with a reservation agent to ensure your trips are scheduled correctly.

If your organization is planning a big event (at least 10+ are using AAR), please be sure to let us know by calling our Comment Line (prompt #8) at least two weeks in advance. A member of our Outreach team will follow-up.



The On-site Command Center at the July 17, 2022, Disability Unite Festival providing support to AAR customers using the service to travel to and from this special event.

On July 26, 1990, then-President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodations, commercial facilities, telecommunications, and state and local government services.

Local and National Staff Shortages

The impact COVID has created a serious staff shortage. This is a great challenge for those companies focusing on customer service – from lifeguards and airline pilots to truck and bus drivers – all require skill sets / certifications / qualification / licensing and training.

AAR is not immune to these shortages and continues to contend with industry-wide driver shortages that have posed a challenge at the local and national levels (compounded by increased traffic volumes and unprecedented demand for AAR service), we recognize the significant impact these issues have on our service and our customers, who may experience trip delays. We continue to work with our AAR providers daily to find innovative solutions to deliver the level of service our customers deserve. Our dedicated carriers are offering great incentives and training bonuses for drivers with CDL licenses. (our AAR Van Operators must have this and undergo 80 hours of training). With the increase in demand for AAR, supplemental companies with lift-equipped vans have been added to our fleet.



D & J Service Inc is one of AAR's new supplemental companies.

Summer Storms – Be Prepared!

Please take steps to prepare before that storm is upon us.

Ready New York: My Emergency Plan is a workbook designed to assist New Yorkers with disabilities or access and functional needs create an emergency plan. My Emergency Plan walks users through establishing a support network, capturing important health information, planning for evacuation, and gathering emergency supplies. First responders or caregivers can also use the workbook to help people during an emergency: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/disabilities-access-functional-needs.page>

Notify NYC is the city's source of information about emergency events. Notify NYC is available through email, text, telephone, RSS, Twitter and in many cases American Sign Language videos. To register for Notify NYC, call 311, 212-639-9675 or 711 for Video Relay.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/mopd/resources/emergency-alerts.page>

Please remember, AAR is not emergency services and cannot provide same-day services. Our vehicle and driver cannot enter flooded streets or highways. If possible, please seriously reconsider traveling on days when heavy rains or storms are predicated and make arrangement to evacuate flood prone areas in advance.

AAR will issue weather alerts via automatized phone messages, text and emails. Do we have your most recent contact information on file? Update your contacts by call our Eligibility and Compliance unit.

Welcome President Davey!

The Paratransit Access-A-Ride team welcomes new NYCT President Richard Davey (top, 3rd from right) on his second day as President of NYCT. President Davey took the opportunity to tour the Access-A-Ride operation at 3300 Northern Blvd. in Long Island City, where he met with staff and learned about Access-A-Ride operations.



Assistance When traveling on AAR

Some of our customers require the assistance of a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). A PCA is someone who regularly assists the customer. When the customer travels, the PCA performs personal duties that drivers are not allowed to do. Some of these duties may include, but are not limited to:

- Guiding a child or adult with an intellectual or developmental disability.
- Assisting a customer diagnosed with Alzheimer's or Dementia.
- Directing a customer who is unable to travel independently.
- Calming a customer who tends to become upset in unexpected situations.
- Preventing a customer from leaving their seat or opening a door when the vehicle is in motion and/or
- Assisting a customer with managing their schedule and trip commitments in order to prevent excessive missed trips and potential suspensions of AAR service.

We strongly suggest that customers who are authorized to travel with a PCA, and who need a PCA to perform some of the duties mentioned previously, always travel with a PCA on Paratransit trips. The customer's AAR MetroCard/ID will note "YES" next to Personal Care Attendant. Please tell a reservationist when a PCA will be traveling with you.

Remember: AAR does not have staff to monitor or supervise its customers. An AAR vehicle is just like a city bus, except that it transports its customers door-to-door. If you think it's unsafe to let your family member or the individual you assist travel alone on a fixed-route bus or subway, you should not let them travel alone on AAR.

Summer Activities

NYC has so many wonderful outdoor attractions to enjoy this summer. But before making that reservation, check with the venue to confirm the entrance address and if it is accessible. Some special venues, like Citifield and Yankee stadiums, have a designated AAR stop <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/newsletter-and-announcements/designated-aar-pickup-locations>

Some attractions in NYC, such as parks, may not allow an AAR vehicle onsite. Advance planning and research is recommended.

Terms to Know Before You Book Your Trip

“Pickup time” is the time you wish AAR to arrive. Since AAR is a shared-ride service, you may be offered a pickup time that is up to an hour earlier or later than the time requested.

“Appointment time” is the time you wish AAR to arrive at your destination.

You can request either a pickup time or appointment time.

Maximum Ride Times

A trip’s maximum ride time is based on trip distance. The chart below indicates the amount of time a customer can anticipate traveling, based on trip miles.

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

Fastest Way to Submit Authorized Taxi/Car Reimbursement Requests: ONLINE!!

- Go to the AAR website: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit>
- Scroll down to Policies and Forms to find the “Online Taxi/Car Service Reimbursement Request” link.
- 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>

Your AAR Eligibility

To prevent any lapse in your AAR service, take a moment to review your eligibility status by looking at your AAR MetroCard/ID.

Whether you are applying or recertifying for AAR, please call our Eligibility & Compliance Unit to start the process (see telephone directory on page 10).

Our AAR assessment centers are open, and those who need to be reassessed and agree to visit an assessment center will be sent an application and a letter providing the date, time, and location of their in-person interview and eligibility assessment appointment, including instructions for scheduling a round-trip visit to the assessment center (there is no fare charged for these trips). The documents should arrive within five days. Please call if the documents do not arrive.

To learn more about AAR eligibility, visit: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/how-to-apply-or-recertify-for-access-a-ride>

Guidance When Using AAR

Our new [2022 Guide to AAR Paratransit Service is available on-line](#) or upon request by reaching out to prompt #8.

Your safety is our utmost concern, and it is especially important that customers are aware of our policies when bringing additional items onboard. As a reminder (and seen on page 21 in the Guide):

Guidance When Using AAR (continued)

- You are prohibited from bringing items on the vehicle that are very bulky (fill a seat) or exceed two bags/parcels weighing more than 40 lbs.
- AAR cannot accommodate additional shopping carts, bags or parcels your PCA or guest is carrying.

We would also like to remind our customers that disruptive or abusive language and behavior, along with the fraudulent use of the service by those other than the authorized AAR customer, may lead to the suspension or termination of service.

AAR is operated in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA permits the refusal of paratransit service to AAR customers who engage in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct (49 CFR §37.5). Section 1035 of the MTA rules governing paratransit service implements the enforcement of ADA-permitted suspensions/terminations. All AAR customers must adhere to the policies and rules pertaining to the AAR service and are responsible for the conduct of their PCAs and guests, including children.

For more information, please see pages 41 and 42 in our guide or [visit: https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/policies-and-forms/conduct-policy](https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/policies-and-forms/conduct-policy)

Masks are still required for all traveling on AAR.



Access-A-Ride (AAR) Telephone Directory

Call 877-337-2017 toll-free from area codes in the NY Metro Area and adjacent counties / other area codes, call 718-393-4999.

Customers who are deaf/hard of hearing can use their preferred relay service or the free 711 relay service.

After an important announcement, callers will be guided to

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

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

Prompt #1 – [Eligibility Unit](#)

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

Prompt #2 – [Trip Planning](#)

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

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

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

Prompt #5 – **Travel Services**

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

Prompt #6 – **Subscription Service**

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

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

Prompt #8 – **Customer Comment Line**

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

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

AAR Resources

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

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

Follow us on social media @nyctAAR.

On the Move is posted online quarterly at: <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit/newsletter-and-announcements>.

To ensure that you are alerted to postings and all other AAR updates, please provide AAR with a viable email address. If you don't have an email address, please consider sharing one of a trusted family member or friend who will alert you to these communications.