



Triangle ACCESS

▶ REGIONAL PARATRANSIT SERVICERIDER'S GUIDE

For more information, call

919.485.7468

This handbook will familiarize you with important riders' guidelines and covers the following topics:

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HOURS OF OPERATION

Regional paratransit service (GoTriangle ACCESS) is available:

- **Monday-Friday between 5:45 a.m. and 11:15 p.m.**
- **Saturday between 6:40 a.m. and 11:15 p.m.**
- **Sunday and Holidays between 6:40 a.m. and 9:15 p.m.**

Note: All trips must be scheduled in a manner that they will be completed by the end of service on the day of travel. For example: If a passenger books a trip between Monday and Saturday, the latest pickup time available will be 10:15 p.m. with the final drop-off time being 11:15 p.m. If a passenger books a trip on Sunday, the latest pickup time will be 8:15 p.m. with the final drop-off time being 9:15 p.m. Contact GoTriangle ACCESS at (919) 485-7468 or TDD at 1-800-735-2962 for more details and/or the Holiday Schedule.

FARES

GoTriangle ACCESS riders may use punch cards, passes, or cash (exact change only) to pay their fares when being transported on a GoTriangle ACCESS vehicle. Please have cash, cards, or passes ready and in an accessible location before you board the vehicle. Fares and tickets are for one way only. You must also have the exact cash fare, punch card, or pass for your return trip.

- ▶ The fare for a one-way trip is \$4.50.
- ▶ \$45 for a punch card (includes 11 one-way rides)
- ▶ \$153 for a monthly pass.

- ▶ Paratransit operators are not permitted to purchase or deliver fare media for paratransit riders.
- ▶ Paratransit operators do not carry or make change. All pass sales are final and are non-refundable. Lost, stolen, or altered passes will not be replaced.

Please note Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) ride for free.

TICKET LOCATIONS

Fare Media may be purchased at:

GoTriangle Regional Transit Center (RTC)

901 Slater Road

Durham, NC 27703

Or by mail:

Regional Call Center GoTriangle

ACCESS Services P. O. Box 13787

RTP, NC 27709

Or online at www.gotriangle.org

REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS / ACCOMMODATIONS GoTriangle reaffirms its commitment to upholding and ensuring that its policies and practices follow the rules concerning reasonable modification/ accommodation outlined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all related statutes. As a public transit agency, GoTriangle will make reasonable modifications/accommodations to its policies, practices, and procedures to ensure program accessibility.

Any person who believes he or she has not been provided reasonable accommodation under the law has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint must be in writing and submitted to GoTriangle's Title VI Coordinator within 180 days following the date of the alleged violation.

For additional information regarding GoTriangle's civil rights programs or to file a complaint, visit our website at www.gotriangle.org or contact:

Sylvester Goodwin
Title VI Coordinator
GoTriangle
PO Box 13787
RTP, NC 27709
(919) 485-7433

RESERVATIONS

It is easy to schedule a trip using the GoTriangle ACCESS service. The first step is to contact the Reservation line at (919) 485-4768:

- ▶ All trips must begin and end within three-quarters (3/4) of a mile from a GoTriangle all-day fixed-route bus service. Please call (919) 485-7468 or visit www.gotriangle.org for specific route information.
- ▶ Reservations can be made Monday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Any trip requests made after 5 p.m. can be left via voicemail and will be addressed on the next business day.
- ▶ Reservations must be made at least one day in advance before 5 p.m. of the desired date of the trip.
- ▶ Requests can be made up to seven (7) days in advance.
- ▶ Pickup times can only be requested, not guaranteed.

Scheduled times could vary greatly from your requested time depending on availability. For example, if you request a trip for an 8:30 a.m. appointment, it is possible that the only available trip would drop you off at your appointment at 7:30 a.m. Likewise, with a pickup, if you request a 4 p.m. pickup, it is possible that the only available time is at 5 p.m. due to increased volume. Please remember that as a public system, we need to accommodate many trips throughout the day. Your actual trip time will need to fit among the other scheduled trips.

Please be prepared to give the following information to the reservationists: Your

- ▶ name
- ▶ The date you want to travel
- ▶ The address and phone number of your origin and destination A change of address, if you have moved since the last reservation Travel time on GoTriangle ACCESS is comparable to the amount of time it would take to make the same trip using GoTriangle fixed-route bus service with transfer connections. The average trip length is about ninety (90) minutes and may exceed or fall below that average depending on the circumstances.
- ▶ Whether a Personal Care Attendant and/or companion will be traveling with you
- ▶ If you need door-to-door assistance or any other reasonable modification/accommodation for your trip
- ▶ The time you need to be picked up for your return trip

Please listen carefully while the reservationists confirm the information you have provided. A confirmation number will be provided to be used if you need to cancel or make changes to a scheduled trip.

PICKUP TIMES

As a part of the scheduling process, the GoTriangle ACCESS representative advises the rider when to expect the vehicle for pickup. You should know the following about pickups:

The time the GoTriangle ACCESS vehicle will arrive is called the “pickup window.” Your pickup window is a 30-minute time frame. You must be ready 15 minutes before to 15 minutes after your confirmed pickup time.

Please be at your pickup location ready and waiting where you can see the vehicle or be recognized by the operator at the beginning of your pickup window. The operator will wait five (5) minutes before leaving for the next trip. If you do not meet the vehicle within five minutes, you may be considered a “no-show.”

CANCELLATIONS

If you will not be using your scheduled trip, please call (919) 485-7468 to cancel as soon as possible. You must call at least one hour before your scheduled trip to avoid being counted as a “no-show.”

Canceling trips that you don’t need helps other riders who might otherwise not be able to travel that day.

PASSENGER ASSISTANCE

GoTriangle ACCESS operators are responsible for: Assisting

- ▶ you on and off the vehicle's lift or steps. Securing your
- ▶ wheelchair or scooter.
- ▶ Fastening seatbelts (at request only).
- ▶ Contacting dispatch staff and 911 in case of emergencies.

GoTriangle ACCESS operators are not responsible for:

- ▶ Assisting passengers past the door to the building. If you need additional help, please make sure that someone is available to assist you on your trips.
- ▶ Carrying groceries or packages—you must be able to carry your own packages or have a companion assist you (this includes child seats). A maximum of
- ▶ three (3) grocery-size bags are allowed.
- ▶ Booking and canceling trips—please call the office.

NO-SHOWS

You must call at least one hour before your scheduled trip to cancel. Calls made less than one hour will be labeled a “no-show.”

If you are not at the designated pickup point at least 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after the scheduled pickup time and the van arrived during that time, you will be charged with a “no-show.”

If a passenger is a “no-show” or cancels late or an “outbound” trip and has one or more additional trips (e.g., return) on the same day, GoTriangle ACCESS will not automatically cancel the subsequent trip(s). It is the passenger’s responsibility to either take the later trip(s) or cancel it/ promptly to avoid being charged with any additional “no-shows” or late cancellations. Please refer to the “no-show” policy below for more information.

No-Show Policy

No-shows increase GoTriangle ACCESS’ operational costs, waste taxpayers’ funds and cause an inconvenience to passengers who are riding the van or who wanted to but were unable to book a trip during the time of the no-show. An unchecked pattern of no-shows encourages waste and mistreatment of the service and passengers. Therefore, it is important to identify those passengers who have developed a pattern and practice of accumulating no-shows, based on their frequency of use.

In order to be subject to a Warning or Suspension, a passenger must have booked ten (10) trips or more in a calendar month. Example: If a passenger books ten (10) trips and no-shows 20 percent or more of these trips during the calendar month, he or she will be in violation of the no-show policy and subject to the progressive corrective action plan.

A passenger will be subject to the progressive corrective action plan only if both the minimum number of trips booked and the minimum number of no-shows are reached during a calendar month.

All suspension periods will begin on a Monday. The length of a passenger's suspension will adhere to the progressive corrective action plan described as followed:

First Calendar Month with 10 or more trips booked

When the no-show percentage of a passenger's scheduled trips reaches 20 percent of the trips booked during that calendar month, the passenger will be advised verbally of the no-show policy, and a letter will be sent to the passenger's residence with a copy of the policy enclosed. All written notices will include specific details and date(s) of the no-show and/or late cancellation. The no-show record can be wiped clean if the passenger does not have any more no-shows during the next calendar month.

Second Consecutive Calendar Month with no-shows

When the no-show percentage reaches 20 percent of the trips booked during the second consecutive calendar month, the passenger will receive a final warning letter and a copy of the no-show policy. All written notices will include specific details and date(s) of the no-show and/or late cancellation. The no-show record can be wiped clean if the passenger does not have any more no-shows within the next thirty (30) consecutive days.

Third Consecutive Calendar Month with no-shows

When the no-show percentage reaches 20 percent of the trips booked during the third consecutive calendar month, the passenger will receive a seven-day suspension.

Fourth Consecutive Calendar Month with no-shows

When the no-show percentage reaches 20 percent of the trips booked during the fourth consecutive calendar month, the passenger will receive a 14-day suspension.

Fifth Consecutive Calendar Month

When the no-show percentage reaches 20 percent of the trips booked during the fifth consecutive calendar month, the passenger will receive a 21-day suspension.

Sixth Consecutive Calendar Month

When the no-show percentage reaches 20 percent of the trips booked during the sixth consecutive calendar month, the passenger will receive a 30-day suspension.

RULES OF RIDING

- ▶ No profanity or lewd behavior is permitted.
- ▶ Eating, drinking, and smoking are not allowed in vehicles. Firearms and hazardous and flammable materials are not allowed on the vehicles
- ▶ Children under 40 pounds or 4 years of age or younger must have a certified car seat.
- ▶ You will not always be picked up and dropped off immediately. The operator may have other passengers to pick up or drop off along the route to your destination.

GoTriangle ACCESS requires the seatbelt and shoulder harness to be used by all passengers, including those who use wheelchairs as well as those who use vehicle seats. Paratransit operators will not be permitted to move the vehicle until all passengers are safe and secured within the vehicle.

RIDER SUSPENSION

GoTriangle ACCESS service suspension policy is designated to protect all riders. There are two main reasons why a rider could be suspended:

- ▶ Excessive no-shows/late cancellations
- ▶ Abusive or inappropriate behavior towards other riders or staff

The length of a suspension will be handled on a case-by-case basis, depending on circumstances.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

If you have comments, suggestions, or complaints about GoTriangle ACCESS service, please call the ACCESS office at (919) 485-7468.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS (PCAS)/COMPANIONS

An ADA-eligible person can have one companion, whether an adult or child, in addition to a personal care attendant (PCA). A PCA is a person who has been authorized to help you when you travel. A companion (guest) is anyone who rides with you who is not a certified PCA. There is no charge for PCAs; however, your companion(s) must pay the regular paratransit fare.

You may schedule a PCA and/or companion(s) to travel with you, and they must have the same pick-up and drop-off points. You must call reservations and inform the call-taker if a PCA and/or companion will accompany you. Seating for more than one companion is on a “space available” basis when scheduling your trips.

LIFT CAPACITY

49 CFR Part 38 requires that lifts have a minimum design load of 600 pounds and the lift platform accommodates a wheelchair measuring 30 inches by 48 inches.

The lifts on GoTriangle Access vehicles are rated to handle 1000 pounds, when occupied. If your mobility device exceeds these dimensions, it is not guaranteed to be accessible in GoTriangle Access vehicles.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

GoTriangle ACCESS service does not provide an ambulance service. If you need transportation for a medical emergency, please call 911.

VISITORS

Visitors to the Triangle area may be eligible for up to 21 days within a 365 day period of GoTriangle ACCESS service. Please call the ACCESS office for more information.

WHEELCHAIR/ SCOOTER MAINTENANCE

Please make sure your wheelchair/scooter is in good condition. Flat tires, bad brakes, low batteries, loose hand grips, or loose or bent wheels can be hazardous and may make it difficult to provide safe service.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Guide dogs, hearing dogs and other specially-trained service animals may ride GoTriangle's paratransit service. Please tell the reservationists if you will be traveling with a service animal.

RECERTIFICATION

Applications for recertification will be mailed to the certified passenger sixty (60) days prior to the expiration of the current certification.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Anyone affected by the No-Show Policy and/or disagreeing with the eligibility determination that you received is entitled to request an appeal. Any request for an appeal can be made in writing or by calling the Paratransit Manager within sixty (60) days of the date of the suspension or eligibility determination letter. Please address your request for an appeal to the attention of the Paratransit Manager. If you disagree with the decision made by the Paratransit Manager, you may appeal that decision in writing to the Director of EEO/DBE. Your written request for appeal must be received by the Director of EEO/DBE within 10 calendar days after the date of the written decision of the Paratransit Manager.

The Director of EEO/DBE will begin the formal process to review the appeal. The Appeals Committee will be notified and will conduct an appeal hearing within 30 days of receipt of notice. The applicant may provide additional documentation and appear in person at the hearing.

The decision of the Appeals Committee is binding. The applicant will be notified of the appeal determination by U.S. mail.

If the original finding is overturned, the applicant will be notified of the revised eligibility determination within seven days.

If the original finding is confirmed, the applicant will be notified of the decision within seven days.

GoTriangle ACCESS is not required to provide ADA service to the individual pending the determination on appeal. However, if GoTriangle ACCESS has not made a decision within 30 calendar days of the completion of the appeals process, GoTriangle ACCESS shall provide ADA service from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued.

RULES OF CONDUCT POLICY

It is the mission of GoTriangle to provide safe, reliable, convenient, and efficient public transportation to the citizens and visitors of the Triangle area. GoTriangle has established this Conduct Policy to promote the safety and comfort of its riders, protect its employees, facilitate the proper use of transit facilities and services, protect transit facilities and protect its vehicles.

I. Purpose

GoTriangle has established this Rules of Conduct and Exclusion Policy to outline conduct deemed inappropriate inside and outside areas of GoTriangle property, bus shelters, bus stops, transfer points, and on buses. This Policy also details the procedures for passenger exclusions and appeals.

II. Definitions

Facilities—means all GoTriangle property and equipment, including, without limitation, inside and outside areas of the property, bus shelters, bus stops, transfer points, signage, and buses used to provide public transportation service. No individual may engage in inappropriate conduct on, at, or in public transportation facilities.

Inappropriate conduct—is any conduct that is disruptive or injurious to other individuals' lawfully using GoTriangle facilities or services; damaging or destructive to transit facilities or services, or disruptive, harassing, or threatening to transit employees. Inappropriate conduct may also constitute a violation of an ordinance or criminal law. Not being charged or convicted by law enforcement of an incident of inappropriate conduct does not bar investigation and/or exclusion under this Policy.

Excluded—means an individual may not enter or remain on GoTriangle property and equipment used to provide public transportation services.

Assault—an act or attempt, with force and violence, to do immediate physical injury to another person.

III. Authorizations

A GoTriangle Operator may refuse entry onto a vehicle to any individual who violates these Rules of Conduct.

An Operator or a Supervisor may provide an oral or written warning and may order an individual to leave or exclude individuals from a vehicle or facility.

- If an Operator or Supervisor becomes aware that any individual is engaging in any inappropriate conduct, such Operator or Supervisor may give that individual an oral first warning to immediately cease engaging in the conduct and/or not to engage in the conduct again. If the individual does not cease engaging in the conduct or engages in Level II conduct, then the Operator or Supervisor may direct the individual to immediately leave the vehicle or facility.
- If an individual fails or refuses to leave a vehicle or other facility after being directed to do so by an Operator or Supervisor, such individual is subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing and/or disorderly conduct. Additionally, failing to leave a vehicle or facility after being directed to do so may also subject an individual to the exclusion procedure.

IV. Levels of Inappropriate Conduct

Inappropriate conduct will be categorized in Levels I, II, and III. Level I offenses will result in exclusion from transit facilities and/or services for not less than 30 days or more than three months. Level II offenses will result in exclusion from transit facilities and/or services for not less than 90 days or more than six months. Level III offenses will result in exclusion from transit facilities and/or services for not less than 180 days or permanently based on severity. Further legal action may be taken as applicable and appropriate for Level III offenses. The levels of inappropriate conduct are as follows:

A. Level I Offenses

1. Refusing to vacate designated wheelchair areas and/or seating for senior citizens and people with disabilities on the bus.
2. Eating or drinking on the bus (Note: food items in closed containers are permitted.)
3. Using an audio device (e.g., portable radio, tape, CD player, TV, etc.), unless such equipment is used with earphones so that the sound is limited to that person's own listening.
4. Standing in front of the yellow standee line at the front of the bus near the driver's seat or leaning on the rear doors.
5. Bringing any animal on buses uncaged or caged, except service animals that assist those with disabilities.
6. Bringing on board any large articles, packages, baggage, non-collapsible strollers, or baby buggies that block the aisle and restrict the free movement of passengers.

7. Engaging in indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, demeaning, and disrespectful behavior toward GoTriangle employees, contractors, and/or passengers.
8. Engaging in unauthorized canvassing, selling, soliciting, or distributing any material on board buses or at the transfer facility.
9. Boarding unattended minors: children 5 years of age and under must be closely accompanied at all times by an older responsible individual.
10. Roller-skating, roller-blading, or skateboarding on buses or at the transfer facility.
11. Hanging or swinging from stanchions or other bus equipment with feet off the floor.
12. Hanging out, reaching out, or putting anything out of bus windows.
13. Willfully refusing to pay a fare or to show appropriate identification or fare media to the Bus Operator.
14. Misusing fare media, including counterfeit or stolen fare media.
15. Obstructing or interfering with the Bus Operator's safe operation of the bus.
16. Otherwise disorderly or inappropriate conduct that is inconsistent with the orderly and comfortable use of buses for their intended purpose.

B. Level II Offenses

1. Smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar or cigarette on the bus or inside the transfer facility (this includes electronic cigars or cigarettes).
2. Fighting

3. Threatening GoTriangle passengers or employees, including following or stalking passengers or employees.
4. Obstructing or interfering with the Bus Operator's safe operation of the vehicle.
5. Drinking alcoholic beverages or possessing open containers of alcoholic beverages.

C. Level III Offenses

1. Bringing any items of a dangerous nature onboard buses including weapons (pistols, rifles, knives, or swords); flammable liquids; dangerous, toxic, or poisonous substances; vessels containing caustic materials, chemicals, acids, or alkalis; sheet glass and sharp objects.
2. Stealing or willfully damaging, defacing, or destroying GoTriangle property. GoTriangle will press charges against anyone who steals or willfully damages, defaces, or destroys GoTriangle property.
3. Lighting an incendiary device on the bus (e.g., match, lighter, torch).
4. Indecent exposure and/or any form of onanism.
5. Filing fraudulent claims about an injury sustained on a GoTriangle vehicle or at the transfer station.
6. Entering or remaining on GoTriangle buses after having been notified by an authorized individual not to do so, or boarding or remaining on GoTriangle buses during the period when an individual has been banned from the premises.
7. Spitting or expectorating on or at Bus Operators, employees, or passengers.
8. Assaulting or threatening to assault a Bus Operator, employee, or passenger.
9. Possessing, transporting, or distributing illegal or controlled substances.

10. Failing to comply with conditional ridership privileges agreed with GoTriangle.

V. Transit Exclusion Procedure

If it is determined that an individual should be excluded from GoTriangle facilities and/or services, the process is as follows:

- a. Authorized GoTriangle personnel will issue a written exclusion letter indicating the reasons for the exclusion, the duration of the exclusion, and the facilities and/or services to which the exclusion order applies. If continued use of transit facilities and/or services is made subject to safety conditions or restrictions (e.g., presence of a parent or guardian in the case of a juvenile; accompaniment by a personal care attendant or aide), a conditional exclusion letter may be issued specifying that the individual will be subject to exclusion unless the imposed restrictions are followed.
- b. The letter shall also advise the individual of his/her right to appeal the decision and include a copy of the appeal procedure.
- c. If an appeal is not filed by the excluded party within 10 days from the commencement of the exclusion to the GoTriangle Safety and Security Manager, then the right to appeal is considered waived.

VI. Appeal Procedure

- a. If the excluded person/s appeals to the exclusion, he/she can either submit an appeal in writing to the Safety and Security Manager to rescind or alter the terms of the exclusion. Appeals can be mailed to P.O. BOX 13787 RTP, North Carolina 27709. The appeal shall contain a) a copy of the exclusion letter and b) a statement of the reason why the exclusion is improper or should be altered.

- b. The Safety and Security Manager shall review the written appeal and may reconsider or modify the decision to exclude an individual, following an investigation of the matter, and shall specify in writing within fourteen (14) business days of receipt of the appeal the reasons for rescission or modification, if applicable, to the appellant.

- c. Should the excluded person wish to appeal the decision of the Safety and Security Manager, he/she may forward the written appeal to the Director of Bus Operations.

- d. For those requesting a hearing in person before the Director of Bus Operations, the Safety and Security Manager or designee will schedule a hearing within 10 days following receipt of the appeal to the Director of Bus Operations.

- e. The hearing shall be conducted as follows: a) presentation of documents and testimony supporting the exclusion, and b) presentation of documents and testimony opposing the exclusion. The Director of Bus Operations or

a designee may question those providing testimony and may tape record the proceedings.

f. The decision of the Director of Bus Operations will be in writing and shall be final.

VII. Notice

GoTriangle will mail a copy of the entire Appeal Policy to persons issued exclusion letters who provide a mailing address. A copy of this Policy is also available for review at GoTriangle's transfer center located at 901 Slater Road, Durham, North Carolina 27703.

