

ISLAND TRANSIT DIAL-A-RIDE GUIDE

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ISLAND TRANSIT DIAL A RIDE TRANSIT SYSTEM (DART)

RIDE GUIDE

REVISED

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ISLAND TRANSIT DIAL-A-RIDE GUIDE

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All information complies with federal, state, and local regulations and is subject to change.

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SECTION 1 SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION

A. Island Transit operates a complementary paratransit service that meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Island Transit is a department of the City of Galveston. Island Transit's complementary paratransit service is known as Dial-A- Ride or DART.

B. Island Transit and DART are located at:

3115 Market Street
Galveston, Texas 77550

Phone: (409) 797-3909
Fax: (409) 797-3901

Website: www.islandtransit.net

C. Island Transit and DART hours of operation are 6:00 AM to 6:30 pm Monday through Friday and 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday, except on designated holidays.

D. *DART office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, and 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Saturday and Sunday. Reservations are accepted Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM; and Saturday through Sunday, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

SECTION 2 ELIGIBILITY FOR ADA SERVICE

The DART is available to individuals who are eligible to use its services. Island Transit will provide DART service to:

A. An individual who is unable to board, ride, or exit any vehicle independently on the fixed route system that is readily accessible and usable by persons with disabilities.

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- B. Any individual who requires a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance or cannot be accommodated because of the inadequacy of boarding or disembarking locations.
- C. Any individual who is unable to travel to a fixed route location because of impairment or a related condition.
- D. Any individual who is unable to complete a transfer on the fixed route system due to a physical or cognitive impairment.
- E. Visitors to Galveston who have been certified with their local paratransit service, or who can provide documentation of their place of residency and their disability, will be provided service for up to twenty-one (21) days within a 365-day period initiating on the first day of service.

SECTION 3 APPLICATION FOR DART SERVICE

Individuals who wish to apply for DART service and who have a permanent or temporary disability which prevents him/her from using the fixed route system as described in Section 2 must complete the following:

- A. You must fully complete the Application for Certification of Eligibility form, including the certification by a qualified healthcare professional, a duplicate healthcare professional signature on letterhead or prescription pad, and the permission for release of information form.
- B. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. All questions must be answered and all forms must be complete. A second signature of your qualified healthcare professional on letterhead or prescription pad must be included. If assistance is needed to complete your application, please call DART at (409) 797-3909. DART does not charge a fee for the application, certification process, or assistance in completing the application.

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- C. The Application for Certification of Eligibility form may be picked up at the Island Transit headquarters at 3115 Market Street, Galveston, Texas, 77550, or requested by mail (please include a self-addressed and stamped envelope), or accessed from the Island Transit website, www.islandtransit.net, under the Dial-A-Ride information page.
- D. In addition to the completed forms, DART reserves the right to require a functional assessment by a qualified third-party professional or seek additional information from your healthcare provider in order to make a determination. You are entitled to receive service while your application is being considered.
- E. DART reserves the right to require all certified individuals to undergo a recertification every three (3) years. At DART's discretion, some individuals with permanent disabilities may be exempted from this requirement.
- F. DART will notify you in writing of its decision within twenty-one (21) days of receiving the application. In the event your application for service is denied, the passenger will be provided with DART service on the 22nd day and until such time a final determination of eligibility is made. You will have thirty (30) days in which to contest the decision. Contested applications will be heard by DART or Island Transit staff not involved in the original determination and a member of the disability community. You have a right to receive service during the period in which the contested determination is being heard.

SECTION 4 DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

This section provides a general description of the Island Transit DART service.

***Type of Service:** DART is a shared ride, door to door service for ADA-eligible passengers who have been accepted through the eligibility certification process (see Section 3, Application for Service). Drivers will pick up riders at the curb of the requested location unless assistance from the

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door as needed.

DART is not a taxi service or an emergency medical service. There are no restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose. Since you will be sharing the vehicle with other passengers, the driver may make a number of stops picking up and dropping off other passengers. Your trip may not follow the most direct route to your destination and it may take longer. Please be patient.

Service Area: DART operates within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile radius from each fixed route, which includes Beach Town Drive, east of 1st Street and 7 Mile Road, west of 103rd Street. If you are unsure whether you are in the service area, please call (409) 797-3909 for assistance.

Fare: The fare for a one-way trip is \$2.00. You can purchase a book of forty (40) tickets for \$80.00 or a book of 20 tickets for \$40 which can be used at any time. Passengers travelling to a UTMB clinic must pay \$ 2.00 as well. Personal Care Assistants (PCA) ride at no-charge. If a PCA is needed on regular basis, please indicate this need in the Certification of Eligibility form. For all trips, you must inform the scheduler at the time you make your reservation if a PCA will be accompanying you. A companion may also accompany you but he/she is required to pay full fare. Children accompanying ADA-eligible parents are required to pay full fare.

Fare Media: Cash or tickets. You must pay full fare as you board the bus. Exact change is required. The driver will not wait or stop for you to get change. NO CREDIT, NO TOKENS, NO PASSES – NO EXCEPTIONS.

You can purchase tickets at the DART office at 3115 Market Street, Galveston, Texas, 77550, or by mail. If you order by mail, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with a check or money order. Please do not send cash.

Day and Time of Service: DART operates the same days and times as fixed route service - Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 6:30 PM. Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, excluding these holidays.

Holidays: Closed Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

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Service Accessibility: All vehicles are wheelchair accessible as required by the ADA. Riders can use any mobility device as long as it can be physically accommodated by the vehicle and it does not cause a direct threat to safety to any passengers.

Service Eligibility: DART is operated for the benefit of ADA-eligible passengers (see Section 2 for more information).

SECTION 5 RESERVATIONS AND SCHEDULING

Reservation Phone Number: To make a reservation, call (409) 797-3909. If you are hearing impaired, please call (800) 735-2989 for Relay Texas TDD.

***Reservation Times:** You can call to make a reservation Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM; or Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, the day before you want to travel. You must reserve both your pick-up and return trip.

DART will schedule your pick-up times between fifteen (15) and fifty-five (55) minutes prior to your requested time for both your pick-up and return trip.

***Same Day, Will Call, or Open-Ended Reservations:** DART does not accept same day, will call, or open-ended reservations. All reservations must be made by 4:00 PM Monday through Friday and by 5PM on Saturday and Sunday the day before you wish to travel. You must schedule both your pick-up and return trips. If you finish earlier than your requested time, you will have to wait until your scheduled pick-up. The only exception to this policy is a late pick-ups from a doctor's appointment; for example, if your appointment runs later than scheduled due to delays, DART will adjust your pick-up time to account for this delay.

Advance Reservations and Subscription Service: You can make reservations up to seven (7) days in advance. Subscription service is also available for riders making the same trip (same pick-up and drop-off

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location, on the same day, and at the same time, for an extended period of time). Please notify the scheduler when you are making a reservation if you need to subscribe for regular service.

Excessive Rescheduling: Excessive rescheduling is prohibited. Dispatchers will make every effort to accommodate the initial reservation request. The department will allow a maximum of three (3) reschedules occurring per week.

Information You Need when You Call to Reserve a Trip: When you call to make a reservation, please have the following information ready:

- The day and date you want to travel;
- The time you want to be picked up for your outgoing trip;
- The complete street address and description of the pick-up and drop-off locations, including building, suite, or apartment number; provide the gate code if needed for access;
- Your appointment time;
- The time you want to be picked up for your return trip;
- Whether or not you will be traveling with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) or service animal; and
- Any other special information necessary to find the pick-up or drop-off locations.

Reservation Confirmation: Trips are confirmed by the scheduler at the time the reservation is made. No additional confirmation is provided.

Changes to Reservations: If you need to change or cancel your reservation, please call the scheduler at (409) 797-3909 as soon as possible. Drivers are not allowed to take, make, or change reservations. Drivers are not allowed to deviate from their assigned routes or times. ***Cancellations:** You can call to cancel a trip between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday and between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. If you call to cancel your trip less than one hour before your scheduled pick-up time, or at the door, this will be considered a No Show. When you call to cancel a trip, please be specific with your request. Failure to properly inform the scheduler will result in a cancellation for the entire day.

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Cancellation of Return Trips for No-Shows: If you miss your ride and are given a no-show, your return trip will remain on the schedule unless the passenger specially cancels. To avoid multiple no shows, passengers are strongly encouraged to cancel later trips.

SECTION 6 NO-SHOW POLICY AND SUSPENSION OF SERVICE

***No-shows:** A “no-show” occurs when a rider fails to appear to board the vehicle for a scheduled trip. This presumes the vehicle arrives at the scheduled pickup location within the pickup window and waits at least (5) minutes.

Pickup Window: The pickup window is defined as from 15 minutes before the scheduled pickup time to 15 minutes after the scheduled pickup time. **Riders must be ready to board when the van arrives.** Maximum wait time is (5) minutes.

Late Cancellations: A cancellation made less than (1) hour before the scheduled pickup time or as a cancellation at the door or a refusal to board the van within the pickup window time.

Suspension Policies for a Pattern or Practice of Excessive No Shows and Late Cancellations:

Island Transit will review all no shows and late cancellations to ensure accuracy before recording them in a rider’s profile. Each verified no show or late cancellation consistent with the above definitions count as (1) no show. Riders will be subject to suspension after meeting all of the following conditions:

1. Accumulate four(4) no shows in a calendar month
2. Have booked at least 20 trips in a calendar month and at least 20 percent of the trips are no show or late cancellations.

Passengers should contact DART dispatch when experiencing no shows or late cancellations due to circumstances beyond their control. Passenger’s usage of the system will be considered to establish a frequency and pattern of no show and late cancellations. Island Transit will notify passengers by written notification or by phone after (3) no shows and maybe subject to suspension should they accumulate one (1) additional no show that month consistent with the guidelines listed.

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Suspension of Service Notification:

All suspension notices will include a copy of this policy, information on Disputing no shows, late cancellations and how to appeal suspensions. Suspensions begin on Mondays. The first violation in a calendar year triggers a warning letter. Not a suspension.

.Second violation: Five (5) day suspension

.Third violation: Eight (8) day suspension

.Fourth violation: Eleven (11) day suspension

.Fifth and subsequent violations (14) day suspension

Policy for Disputing Specific No Shows and Late Cancellations

Passengers wishing to dispute specific no shows or late cancellations must do so within 30 calendar days of receiving a suspension letter. Passengers should contact the Dart operations center Monday through Friday 7:00am to 4:00pm to explain the circumstance, and request the removal of the no show or late cancellation.

Policy for Appealing Proposed Suspensions

***Suspension of Service Appeals Process:**

Passengers wishing to appeal this policy have the right to file an appeal in writing .The written appeal request **must be submitted within 30 calendar days of receiving suspension notice. Passengers who miss the suspension deadline will be suspended from DART on the dates listed. Please refer to Section 11 of this guide.**

All appeals are followed by Island Transit's appeal policy.

SECTION 7 RIDER READINESS AND ON-TIME, EARLY AND LATE VEHICLES

Rider Readiness Window: You must be prepared to board the vehicle fifteen (15) minutes before or after your scheduled pick-up time. This is called the “readiness window.” For example, if your scheduled pick-up is at 1:00 PM, you need to be ready to board the vehicle at any time between 12:45 PM and 1:15 PM.

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***Rider Time to Board:** If a vehicle arrives within the readiness window, you have eight (5) minutes to board the vehicle. You will need to wait in a place where you can safely watch for the vehicle's arrival. If needed, the drivers will blow the horn, knock on your door, or dispatch may call you to let you know the vehicle has arrived. If you do not board the vehicle within eight (5) minutes, the vehicle will depart and will not return. Your trip will be a "No Show"

Announcement of Vehicle Arrival and Departure: You should be prepared to board within the readiness window.

On-time Vehicles: A scheduled vehicle is considered on-time if it arrives within the 30-minute readiness window. For example, if your trip is scheduled for 1:00 PM, a vehicle can arrive anytime between 12:45 PM and 1:15 PM. Riders should be ready to board the vehicle at any time within this 30-minute time window. Riders will have eight (8) minutes to board the vehicle once it has arrived.

***Early Vehicles:** A vehicle is considered early if it arrives before the 15-minute readiness window begins. If a vehicle is going to be early, dispatch will call the rider to see if an early pick-up is acceptable. If early pick-up is not acceptable, a rider is required to board the vehicle no later than eight (8) minutes after the beginning of the 15-minute readiness window. For example, a rider with a 1:00 PM scheduled trip must be prepared to ride no later than 12:45 PM. An early vehicle arriving before 12:45 PM readiness window is required to wait eight minutes, or until 12:58 PM, for the rider to board. If the rider does not board within eight minutes, the vehicle will depart and the ride will become a "No Show"

Late Vehicles: A vehicle is considered late if it arrives after the close of the 30-minute readiness window. For example, a 1:00 PM scheduled trips requires the vehicle to arrive no later than 1:15 PM. A vehicle that arrives after 1:15 PM is late. If a vehicle is late, riders should call dispatch and request an estimated time of arrival. Riders who decline trips due to late vehicles will not be charged a no-show.

SECTION 8 RIDER ASSISTANCE

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***Driver Assistance to Riders:** The Demand Response Bus Service is a Door-to-Door Service. Drivers will not assist riders over the thresholds. However, drivers will assist to and from the vehicle, or help with packages, bags, or other personal items not to exceed 15 lbs. in weight. Drivers will also assist riders with mobility devices such as walkers, wheelchairs, oxygen tanks and scooters to secure the devices in the vehicle when needed. Island Transit personnel will not be liable for any damage to personal items or devices.

Personal Care Assistants: Personal Care Assistants (PCA) are allowed to ride free-of-charge. If a PCA is needed on a regular basis, DART asks that the rider indicate this on their eligibility form. You should let the scheduler know that a PCA will be riding when you are scheduling your trips. It is recommended that PCAs assist passengers with personal items, such as bags and packages.

Service Animals: Service animals are allowed. You are responsible for letting the scheduler know that a service animal will be accompanying you when your trip is scheduled. Service animals must be pre-authorized. To pre-authorize a service animal, you must complete the DART certification eligibility form and have it verified by a qualified healthcare professional that a service animal is required.

Only service animals trained to assist the disabled and must be under full control of their owner at all times will be permitted on a DART vehicle.

SECTION 9 SAFETY

Use of Seat Belts: All vehicles are equipped with seat belts. You are required to wear seat belts when the vehicle is in motion.

Child Safety Seats: Riders with children who are less than thirty-six (36) inches tall and weighing less than thirty-five (35) pounds must ride in a car safety seat. The rider will be responsible for providing and securing the child in the safety seat. Children cannot be transported in strollers or ride in a customer's lap. Drivers can assist riders to install the safety seat.

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Packages: Packages and personal effects may not block the aisle, displace another rider, occupy another seat or otherwise create a safety hazard. Packages and personal effects must be under the control of the rider at all times. Excessive packages or personal effects must be contained to a reasonable-sized basket. No exceptions.

Securing Mobility Devices: All mobility devices must be properly secured by the driver. Personal Care Attendants are permitted to use the wheelchair lifts when assisting DART riders.

Traveling with Life-Support Equipment: Riders may travel with life-support equipment, such as portable oxygen, provided such transport does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. The safety and use of this equipment is the responsibility of the passenger.

SECTION 10 RIDER CODE OF CONDUCT

Conduct: Passengers must refrain from abusive and rude language or behavior. Passengers who are verbally or physically abusive to the driver or other passengers may be suspended or terminated from the service.

Use of Music Players: No loud radios or music players are allowed. Riders may use these devices with earplugs or headphones.

Gratuities and Tips: Drivers are not allowed to accept gratuities or tips.

Prohibition on Eating, Smoking, and Drinking: For the comfort of all passengers, no alcohol beverages, no smoking, no electronic cigarettes eating and/or drinking are not permitted on any DART vehicle.

Prohibition on the Carrying of Weapons or Firearms: No weapons or firearms are allowed on DART vehicles. Violent, disruptive, or illegal behavior subjects a rider to suspension of service.

Personal Appearance and Hygiene: If DART receives a complaint from riders or drivers regarding, but not limited to, a rider's physical hygiene or

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body odor, or the use of excessively soiled wheelchairs or walkers such that they will disturb the reasonable comfort of other passengers or DART staff, the passenger will be notified in writing and given the opportunity to correct the problem immediately. DART staff will make a reasonable effort towards a solution that will benefit everyone. Failure to comply may result in suspension of service.

Any passenger dissatisfied with the results may appeal the decision in writing within sixty (60) working days to the Appeals and Complaint Process committee.

Passenger Requirements & Expectations: You must be able to: attend to your own personal needs; safely maneuver your mobility device, if one is used; count, gather, and place the correct fare in the fare box. DART strongly encourages passengers who cannot perform the above requirements to have a Personal Care Attendant.

SECTION 11 APPEALS PROCESS

- A. The Appeals and Complaint Process will be used when an applicant wishes to appeal the decision of DART staff regarding ineligibility of an applicant for service or for suspension of service. Service will be provided during the appeals process.
- B. In the event an individual has been determined ineligible for service, the individual may file a written appeal within sixty (60) working days after receiving the determination of ineligibility.

In the event an individual has been issued a suspension of service notice, the individual has thirty (30) days to contest the suspension by submitting a written statement. Written appeal should be sent to:

Island Transit
3115 Market Street

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Galveston, TX 77550

- C. Upon receipt of the appeal, DART staff will contact the individual within five (5) working days, Monday through Friday to schedule an appointment for the individual to be heard in person and to present information and arguments. The Director of Transportation, authorized representatives of Island Transit and DART, and a member of the disability community will conduct a hearing at the Island Transit and DART offices. Within five (5) working days of the hearing, DART will notify the applicant in writing as to the result of the hearing.

- D. Individuals, who are dissatisfied with the results of the appeals hearing, may appeal the decision of the hearing to the Transportation Commission. All such appeals will follow policy and procedures outlined by the City of Galveston for citizen complaints. The City of Galveston will forward complaints to an individual appeals board if necessary. DART will provide transportation for all appeals related to the hearings. Reservations for these trips will be made according to normal procedures.

- E. Complaints or compliments can be filed in person at the DART office 3115 Market Street, Galveston, Texas 77550, in writing, or by phone at (409) 797-3900 or (409) 797-3909, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Thank You in Advance for Your Complete Cooperation.

Island Transit Dial- A Ride Staff