

ADA Complimentary Paratransit Eligibility

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Paratransit service for disabled citizens was mandated. If you are eligible under the ADA, you can ride with the Bristol Virginia Transit System. If you feel you qualify for this service, please fill out the eligibility form and return it to the Bristol Virginia Transit Facility. If you are certified, you will be able to use this service. You will be notified in writing of your approval or denial. Specific reasons will be noted for the approval or denial.

The ADA states that each entity which operates a fixed route system, must provide Paratransit service to:

1. Any individual with a disability, who is unable, as a result of physical or mental impairment (including vision impairment) and without the assistance of another individual (except an operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device) to board, ride, or disembark from the vehicle on the system, which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.
2. Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device (and is able with such assistance) to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route on the system during the hours of operation of the system (or within a reasonable period of time) when such vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route:

or
3. Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or disembarking location on such system.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS

1. When a patron places a call for Paratransit service or to inquire about our service, they are advised of the ADA eligibility application form. The form will be given to the driver along with an addressed envelope for them to return to the Transit Facility.
2. Upon receipt of the completed application, a panel composed of the Transportation Planner, Driver Supervisor, and Bus Driver will determine eligibility. As part of the eligibility process, a medical professional may be contacted in order to verify the applicant's status. The applicant will give authorization to contact the medical professional.
3. If eligibility is confirmed, the applicant will be notified by mail, advising of the confirmation. The applicant's name and information will be kept on file at the Transit Facility. At this time, no identification card is issued. This may be amended in the future. Except in extreme cases, the

eligibility process will be completed within 21 days of receipt of the application. The applicant will be permitted to ride until determination of eligibility.

4. Should eligibility be denied, the applicant will be notified of the denial. The letter will include a detailed explanation as to why the applicant was denied. Except in extreme cases, the eligibility process will be completed within 21 days of receipt of the application. The applicant will be permitted to ride until determination of eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS PROCESS

Should your request be denied and you disagree with this decision you have the right to appeal. As per 49 CFR §37.125(g), Bristol Virginia Transit must provide you an opportunity to be heard. A description of the appeals process is presented below.

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you must submit intent to appeal in writing to Bristol Virginia Transit. The formal appeal must be made within 60 calendar days of the denial of your application. This appeal can be made by phone, email, and letter or in person. Bristol Virginia Transit will then schedule an in-person hearing for the appeal. At this hearing, you will have the opportunity to provide information to a third-party (someone not involved in the original denial of service) as to why you believe you were unjustly denied. While Bristol Virginia Transit may request that the individual appealing the decision provide supporting information with the appeal, Bristol Virginia Transit cannot require this information to accompany the request.

In the first stage of Bristol Virginia Transit's appeals process, the City of Bristol Virginia Transportation Planner shall review the material and listen to the in-person appeal. In reviewing the material, he/she may receive assistance from outside experts.

Bristol Virginia Transit is not required to provide paratransit service to you pending the determination on appeal. However, if the entity has not made a decision within 30 days of the completion of the appeal process, the entity shall provide paratransit service from that time until and unless a decision to deny the appeal is issued. A written notification of the decision and the reasons for it will be mailed to you within 30 calendar days of the hearing.

If the individual making the appeal is not satisfied with the outcome of the first stage, he/she may request that the appeal proceed to the second stage.

The City Manager or designee hears the appeal in stage two. He/she may also receive assistance from outside experts. This decision shall be made within 15 calendar days of the hearing. This decision is final.

Below is an explanation of our service.

Service is limited to curb-to-curb with additional assistance upon request. This request for additional assistance must be made during the reservation process.

Personal Care Attendants may ride at no charge when accompanying you. Personal Care Attendants must be approved by the Transit system. Companions may also accompany the eligible riders unless it prevents other certified Paratransit riders from being transported. Companions will be charged at the same rate as the eligible rider.

Visitors to the transit system who have been are eligible for ADA Complimentary Paratransit in one of two ways:

1. A visitor can present documentation from his or her “home” jurisdiction’s ADA system that he or she is eligible; or
2. If the individual’s disability is not apparent they can present proof of the disability, such as a letter from a doctor or rehabilitation professional and proof of residence somewhere else.

Visitors can only use Bristol Virginia Transit in this manner for a maximum of 21 days within a 365 day period.

Additionally, our service utilizes the same type vehicle(s) for Paratransit service as used for regular fixed route service. Once getting to the pickup point, our driver will assist you in using the lift, being seated/securement and transportation to the drop-off location. Upon arrival at the drop-off location, the driver will assist you in exiting the bus. Should you require assistance beyond this point, it is your responsibility to provide an attendant.

Bristol Virginia Transit’s on-time performance goal 100%. To that end, our Paratransit trip schedules are completed at least one day in advance of a rider’s scheduled trip request. If on-time performance (*including pickup and drop-off*) can be maintained, multiple passengers are accommodated on a single trip.

Bristol Virginia Transit does have a no show policy. A no show is defined as a pattern or practice that involves intentional, repeated or regular actions, not isolated, accidental or singular incidents. If the vehicle has not yet been dispatched to pick up a client then it is not considered a no show. If it has been determined that a client has violated this policy then a suspension from the service may occur. If it is determined that a client qualifies as a no show three times within a 30 day period then the client may be suspended for up to 10 days. The appeals process for this is the same as for the initial eligibility process.

The following is for informational purposes:

Rates

\$2.00 per one-way trip

Service Area

- Within the Corporate Limits of the City of Bristol Virginia.
- A three-fourths mile radius from fixed routes.
- Within a three-mile radius of the Transfer Station, located in downtown Bristol Tennessee so that the Bristol Regional Medical Center and surrounding medical offices can be served.

Should you desire transportation outside of these areas, the Bristol Tennessee Transit System is also available to transport to other areas. You are encouraged to contact the Bristol Tennessee Transit System for information on their service areas.

Administrative Office Hours of Service

- Monday-Friday: 7:00 AM-4:00 PM
- No service on Saturday or Sunday
- If you need to schedule a trip and it is after 4:00 PM please call 276-645-7384 and we will return your call the next business day. Next day service is only guaranteed if you call during our administrative hours of service.

Any additional questions can be answered by calling 276-645-7474 or emailing jdetrick@bristolva.org.

Approved May 26, 2015

Updated October 4, 2017



Jay Detrick, Transportation Planner