

Link Complementary Paratransit is a shared ride service operated by the City of Burlington. This brochure provides you with the information you need when traveling on Link Paratransit Service. Observance of the rules and regulations are the responsibility of all customers.

What Areas Are Served

The service area for Link fixed route and paratransit services are primarily within the city limits of Burlington and Gibsonville. Fixed route service does travel within other municipal limits with limited bus stop locations in these areas. The Alamance Community College is also served by the Link Transit System.

What Is the Visitor Policy

Your Link Paratransit certification will allow you to ride any complementary paratransit system nationwide for up to 21 calendar days within a 365 day period. If you plan to be in an area for more than 21 days you may be required apply to use the local paratransit service.

If you are a visitor to Burlington, North Carolina you should contact Link Paratransit Service in advance of travel and provide a copy of your complementary paratransit identification card.

What Are the Days and Hours of Service

The hours and days of LINK fixed route and Paratransit operation are:

Monday through Friday - 5:35 a.m. to 8:00p.m.

Paratransit does not operate on Holidays. Limited medically-required service may be available on Thanksgiving Day only for persons who use wheelchairs.

What Does It Cost To Ride

The one way fare is \$2.00 for eligible riders and their guests. If you are certified to travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) they ride for free. All passengers must pay the fare when boarding the bus.

Any individual certified as eligible for Link Paratransit Service may use Link's fixed-route service free of charge; simply present your Link Paratransit Identification Card. PCAs ride free on fixed route when accompanying the certified rider.

Link Paratransit Identification Cards may **not** be used by anyone other than the certified rider.

Can I Bring Someone with Me When I Ride Link Paratransit

You may always bring along an authorized Personal Care Attendant (PCA). You may also bring one guest in addition to your PCA but additional guests will be scheduled on a space available basis. Your PCA and traveling companions must board and alight with you.

Children may function as a PCA as long as they will be providing for your personal needs. Two certified paratransit riders may not act as the PCA for each other; one passenger must pay a fare.

How Do I Make a Reservation

Reservations may be made up to seven days in advance and at least one day in advance of travel by calling the Paratransit Reservations Line at (336) 417-5338 Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. On Saturday and Sunday you may leave a message to request a trip for **Monday only**. If you require a TDD to make a reservation please call (336)-417-5346.

Please remember, a reservationist is the only person who may make a trip reservation; drivers are not allowed to make reservations for a passenger.

Every effort will be made to accommodate your requested pick-up time, however, demand at certain times of the day may require that you adjust your desired time by up to one hour before or one hour after the desired pick-up or drop-off time. Link Paratransit Service will **not** require you to schedule a trip to begin more than one hour before or after your desired departure time.

Whenever you makes a reservation for a trip, please be prepared to provide the following information:

- First and last name and the ID number on your identification card.
- Exact address of pick-up location including an apartment number if appropriate.
- Exact address of your destination and return pick-up location. Without an exact address a trip cannot be scheduled.
- Requested pick up time or appointment time and desired return time.
- Information about a companion, Personal Care Attendant, or child who will be traveling with you and whether you or any of your guests will be using a mobility device.

- Let the reservationist know if you need Curb to Curb service or Door to Door service.
- You are encouraged to register your cell phone so we can contact you upon arrival or in the event of a service change.

A reservationist is required to ask for complete information and will repeat the information back to you to make sure everything is correct. You will be given a 30 minute pick-up time for your trip.

A driver or passenger cannot change the location of the pick-up or drop-off on the day of the trip.

Remember that you are traveling on a shared ride service and travel time will be longer than if you are traveling by car. If you choose to schedule trips too close together and the return trip vehicle arrives before you are ready to leave, a no-show will be recorded for the return trip. The vehicle will not return to pick you up after it leaves the pick-up location. If you are not ready for their return trip when the vehicle arrives and do not board the vehicle, a no-show will be issued.

What is the 30 Minute Pick-Up Window

Link Paratransit Services will operate on a thirty (30) minute pick-up window. When you make your reservation you will be given a scheduled pick-up time. You may expect the bus to arrive any time 15 minutes before the scheduled pick up time or 15 after. For example, if the pick-up time for a trip is 8:00am, the van could arrive anytime between 7:45am and 8:15am. A vehicle arriving at any time during this 30-minute window shall be considered "on-time."

A vehicle arriving for a pick-up will wait up to five (5) minutes for the passenger to board the vehicle. If the driver arrives early you are welcome to board the vehicle but you are not required to board until the scheduled time.

Call (336) 417-5338 if the vehicle has not arrived after the end of the pick-up window.

What is Curb to Curb Service

Curb to Curb service is available to riders who are able to travel to/from the sidewalk to the door of the final destination unassisted. Link Paratransit drivers will assist the passenger between the vehicle and a sidewalk no more than 15 feet from the vehicle. Drivers will assist passengers to board or alight from the vehicle.

Riders who arrive before the vehicle are to wait at the sidewalk or other safe waiting area by the curb in front of or adjacent to the main entry of the pick-up location.

For curb-to-curb drop-offs, drivers will stop at the curb in front of or as close as possible to the designated destination. Drivers are to assist riders in alighting

What is Door to Door Service

Door To Door service requires the driver to meet/escort the passenger from/to the threshold of a residence, building or main lobby of a public building. Door service cannot be provided for those individuals whose pick-up or drop-off locations would cause the driver to lose sight of the vehicle or where the assistance by the driver may harm the individual, the driver or both. An exception may be made for dialysis centers upon approval by dispatch.

Drivers may never enter a rider's residence.

How Will I Know When the Bus Has Arrived

The driver will take following actions to alert you to the waiting vehicle by any or all of the following means:

- Telephoning the rider using the 24-hour notification phone number listed for that rider;
- For Door-to-Door riders, operator will exit the vehicle to approach the rider's door to knock/ring doorbell for rider to answer;
- Alerting Paratransit Dispatch to the non-appearance of the rider and asking for assistance in contacting the rider, a family member or origin agency representative by telephone; and
- At a medical facility or office building with a lobby, exiting the vehicle and announcing the vehicle's arrival and the rider's name at the entrance to the origin facility.

Remember the driver will wait 5 minutes for you to board the vehicle. Passengers must alert the driver that they will board the vehicle for the driver to wait beyond the 5 minutes.

Are There Special Circumstances at Some Pick-Up/Drop-Off Locations

You may request to be picked up at home, at a door other than the front door as long as the requested pick-up location does not pose a direct safety threat to other customers or the driver.

Similarly, in the case of frequently visited public places with multiple entrances like shopping malls, employment centers, schools and hospitals the paratransit driver will pick up and drop off the passenger at the entrance requested when the reservation is made.

Link will designate a main pick-up and drop-off point for convenience of customers who do not have a preference.

Link Paratransit passengers may request to be picked up on private property such as a gated community or parking lot, or government building where vehicle access requires authorized passage through a security barrier. The Link Paratransit Service will attempt to gain access to such location and work with the passenger to get the permission of the property owner to permit access for the paratransit vehicle. Link Paratransit Service is not required to violate the law or lawful access restrictions to meet the passenger's requests.

Do I Always Have to Call for a Reservation

You may request a subscription or standing trip if you are traveling to or from the same destination, on the same day of the week, at the same time for a minimum of 90 days. This allows you to make regular trips without telephoning to reserve your trip. The same rules apply about cancelling a trip and if any information for a subscription trip changes you will need to make a new trip reservation.

This is a premium service and is offered on a space available basis. Link Paratransit reserves the right to accept or deny requests for subscription service. Call the Reservation Line to request a subscription trip.

What if I Miss My Return Trip to My Home

If you miss your return trip for a reason beyond your control you may request another return pick up within a reasonable time period based upon availability. Contact the Link Paratransit Service Reservations Line at (336) 417-5338 and provide the reason for your request. Link Paratransit will schedule another trip based upon availability. There is no guarantee that the vehicle will return within an hour.

Cancelling or Confirming Your Trip

You can call Link Paratransit Service Reservations Line at ((336) 417-5338 Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to cancel or confirm your trip. On Saturday and Sunday you may leave a message to cancel a trip for **Monday only**. You will need your identification number and date of birth.

Trips must be cancelled at least 1 hour prior to your scheduled pick-up. Failure to do so could result in a No Show.

No Show and Late Cancellation Policy

The Link Paratransit Service No Show and Cancellation Policy has been designed to discourage unnecessary cancellations and no shows. No shows and cancellations reduce the efficiency of the service and cause inconvenience to other passengers. Link recognizes that there are times you cannot help cancelling your service or not showing up for a scheduled trip.

The definition of a No Show is as follows:

A no-show occurs when a vehicle arrives within the pickup window and you cannot be located at the specific pick-up location, you refuse a trip once the vehicle arrives, or if you do not have the proper fare.

A no-show shall not be assessed if the reason is beyond your control, for example if you are sick and unable to travel and there is not adequate time to notify Link Paratransit Service. You are responsible for calling to cancel any remaining trips for that day if they are no longer needed. Link will not automatically cancel you trips and you may be subject to additional No Show violations if you no longer plan to make these trips and fail to cancel.

You will not be charged with a No Show if the vehicle arrived at your pickup location late and or missed the trip because of a Link Paratransit scheduling error.

The definition of a Late Cancellation is as follows:

A Late Cancel occurs when a passenger or care giver fails to cancel a trip at least one (1) hour before the scheduled trip pickup time.

When a call is received in dispatch for a late cancellation, the Dispatcher will ask for a reason for the late cancellation. The specific reason will be noted in the trips booking information. If you cancel at the door the Operator may ask you the reason and record it.

A no-show will be added to your record when you have a pattern or practice of scheduling trips and cancelling late or not riding when the bus arrives. If you receive a minimum of (3) unexcused “no-shows” or “late cancellations” and “no-shows” or “late cancels” for 10% of your total trips in one (1) month you are subject to No Show/Late Cancellation Policy sanctions.

Examples: *If a rider books (4) trips and no-shows or late cancels (3) of those trips in one (1) month, sanctions will apply.*

If a rider books (30) trips and no-shows or late cancels (3) of those trips in one (1) month, sanctions will apply.

If a rider books (40) trips and no-shows or late cancels (3) of those trips in one (1) month, sanctions will not apply.

For purposes of this policy, sanctions are applied in the following manner, based on a six month time period. Unexcused No Shows, Late Cancellations, and Cancellations at the Door are evaluated on a monthly basis.

1. First Time that rider reaches or exceeds the 10% Threshold in the Six Month Period: Link Paratransit issues a notice of warning.
(All notices and warnings will be issued in writing using accessible formats where necessary. The notice shall state in detail the circumstances causing a no-show/late cancellation to be recorded against them.)
2. Second Time that a rider reaches or exceeds 10% Threshold in the Six Month Period: Rider is suspended from service for 7 calendar days.
3. Third Time that a rider reaches or exceeds 10% Threshold in the Six Month Period: Rider is suspended from service for 14 calendar days.
4. Fourth and Subsequent Time that a rider reaches or exceeds 10% Threshold in the Six Month Period: Rider is suspended from service for 21 calendar days.

Link may allow an exception when a suspension would prevent a rider from receiving medical services that are deemed life-sustaining by the rider's medical provider, the Paratransit Transportation Manager with approval of the City Transit Staff may grant an exception to a rider's suspension for the life-sustaining trips. Such special exception medical trips will be provided as demand trips and require individual trip reservations.

You may request that Link Paratransit Service excuse a No-Show or Late Cancel within five (5) business days of receipt of a notice of violation. Contact the Link Paratransit Customer Service Representative and provide any available documentation to support the request. The Paratransit Manager or designee has the discretion to purge the violation from your record. If the violation is not purged there is no further appeal unless you receive notice of suspension.

You or your representative may appeal any suspension to the Link Paratransit Manager or designee within five (5) business days of receipt of the notice of suspension. All Appeals must be in writing addressed to:

Link Transit
Transit Manager
P.O. Box 1358
Burlington, North Carolina 27216

The suspension shall be stayed until the appeal is decided. If you or your caretaker disagrees with this decision you may appeal to the Director of Transportation, City of Burlington at the following address:

City of Burlington
Director of Transportation
P.O. Box 1358
Burlington, North Carolina 27216

The decision of the City of Burlington Department of Transportation Director is final and is not capable of further appeal.

Link Paratransit reserves the right to challenge the rider if a pattern of abuse or fraud is determined.

Carry On Items, Shopping Carts, Strollers, Walkers and Other Wheeled Items

Customers are permitted to bring no more than four (4) packages the size of a regular shopping bag or other small packages or parcels equivalent in combined number and/or size. They must be able to carry their carry-on items safely onto and off of the LINK or Paratransit vehicle as well as safely control these items during vehicle operations. Packages or parcels may not obstruct the aisle, interfere with the operation of the passenger lift, or prevent seats from being used by other passengers. Personal bags or pocket books that are attached to mobility aids will not be counted towards the limit on carry-on items, as long as they do not impede the securement of that mobility aid and do not require special assistance from the operator. Further, carry-on items must not jeopardize the safety, or disturb the reasonable comfort, of the passengers or transit operator.

No other large carry-on items (with the exception of wheelchairs, shopping/utility carts, strollers, car seats, bicycles, walkers and small luggage that can be safely stowed under the seat, or otherwise controlled by the passenger without obstructing the aisle), will be allowed on the vehicle. In the event the Link Paratransit vehicle arrives and the passenger exceeds the allowed number or

size of carry-on items, the operator will notify the dispatcher and the dispatcher will advise.

Shopping/Utility Carts:

Shopping or utility carts must be folded prior to boarding and they meet the following guidelines:

- Items must not block the aisle at any time.
- Items or carts must not restrict passenger movement, or impede the evacuation of the bus in an emergency situation.
- All items must be controlled by the passenger.
- Packages or bags must not occupy the bus seat at any time if the bus is crowded.
- Shopping/utility carts are not allowed within the wheelchair securement area at any time.

Walkers:

Walkers should be folded whenever possible and must not block the aisle at any time.

Other Wheeled Items:

Other wheeled items, i.e. skateboards or roller blades/skates may be carried aboard. These items should be stowed in their own bag or held in the riders lap. Small luggage that can be stowed safely under the seat, or otherwise controlled by the passenger without obstructing the aisle, may be permitted on a space available basis only. At no time should the items be stored on the floor of the bus as to avoid them rolling around while the bus is in motion. At no time will wagons, tricycles, or other wheeled devices that do not qualify as an ADA mobility device, be permitted on Link vehicles.

Rules for Your Safety and the Safety of Others

Following the safety regulations listed below will insure your safety and the safety of others.

- For safety purposes, children must be removed from the strollers/car seats prior to boarding the bus. All strollers must be folded and stowed so that they do not block the aisle at any time. Link Paratransit does not provide a child safety seat. If you are traveling with a child you are required to provide our own car seat. The driver will assist you in securing the seat. You are responsible for securing your child.
- Link wheelchair lifts meet ADA size and weight standards. Mobility devices not meeting these standards will not be transported.
- You may not stand while the vehicle is in motion. Please remain in your seat until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Only service animals are permitted on the vehicle. You must always be in control of your service animal.

- As is the case on fixed route, there is no smoking, eating, drinking or radio playing permitted on the vehicle.
- If you exhibit disruptive or unsafe behavior you will be removed from the vehicle and may be subject to disciplinary action under the Link Transit System's Disruptive Behavior Policy.

Other Information

- Link Paratransit will provide you with materials in accessible formats upon request.
- Tipping is not permitted.
- For a lost item or identification card call (336) 417-5338

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