

Demand Response Service Guide

Pasco County Public Transportation System (PCPT) features a Demand Response Service as a complement to fixed-route service as stated in the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The service assists riders whose origins and destinations are within 3/4 mile of the fixed-route system, but are unable to access the fixed-route transit service because the customer qualifies as per the rules under the ADA. This guide was developed to help users understand the processes required to use the service and to ensure quality service for all passengers with disabilities. Pick-up window is thirty (30) minutes plus or minus.

Definitions

Trip Denials – A trip denial is a result of a trip that is not accepted.

On-time Performance – On-time performance means a driver arrives at the pick-up location within plus or minus 30 minutes of the requested pick-up time.

Missed Trip – A scheduled trip that did not operate for a variety of reasons including operator absence, vehicle failure, dispatch error, traffic, accident or other unforeseen reason.

Excessively Long Trips – Any ADA trip travel time longer than one hour.

Qualification

In order to utilize PCPT demand response service, users must be ADA eligible. Once the application is submitted to PCPT, it will be evaluated to determine eligibility for demand response services and other grant sources that pay for transportation.

Application Process

There are three ways to obtain an application to utilize PCPT demand response:

1. Visit PCPT website at www.ridepcpt.com and download a printable version of the application, or
2. Contact PCPT at (727) 834-3322 to request an application be sent via mail or email, or
3. Receive an application from our offices at 8620 Galen Wilson in Port Richey, Fl.

All applications will be reviewed in accordance with 49 CFR Part 37. After the applicant completes all necessary application requirements, PCPT will process the application within twenty-one (21) calendar days of submittal. If an application is not processed within that time, on the 22nd day, the applicant will be allowed to use the service until the application is approved or

denied.

Once a completed application is submitted to PCPT, an interview may be scheduled to review your application. If this requires a face-to-face interview, PCPT will provide transportation free of charge.

When applicants are determined eligible for the demand response services, PCPT will send applicants a written notification of ADA eligibility.

All applicants must be recertified every two (2) years.

If applicants are deemed not eligible, a written notice with the reason for the determination will be sent.

Appeals

All ineligible applicants have sixty (60) days to file a written appeal. After receiving the appeal, PCPT will schedule an appeal hearing (either in person or telephonically), within 30 days. The Transportation Operations Manager will hear this appeal. After the Transportation Operations Manager makes a determination on the eligibility, the Transportation Operations Manager will send a written notification of the appeal determination. If a decision is not made within 21 days of completing the appeals process, transportation is provided until a determination is made.

If the applicant wants to appeal the Transportation Operations Manager decision, they have 2-weeks after the decision is postmarked to the applicant to file a written appeal to the Transportation Director. The Transportation Director will schedule a meeting within 7-days of receipt of the appeal. The Transportation Director will make a determination and provide a written response within 14-days of the meeting.

Utilizing Demand Response

1) Scheduling a Trip

To schedule a trip, call (727) 834-3322 Monday thru Friday between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Trip reservations can be made up to three-days prior to the date of service and no more than 14-days prior to the date of service. Subscription trips for clients can be scheduled out to no longer than 6-months. Reservations for two-day or next-day service will be available on an as available basis. PCPT has an answering machine for clients to leave a message and a dispatcher will contact the customer on the next business day.

When calling to schedule a trip, please have the following information available:

1. Name
2. The exact pick up address. For ADA trips, origins and destinations must be within 3/4 mile on either side of the fixed-route system.
3. What is your critical time, pickup or drop off? PCPT will book all trips to meet your

critical time, one or the other. If you intend to use the service for a round trip, **you must schedule a return trip.**) Although there is a one-hour window before your pick-up time, we will make every effort to pick you up as close as possible to the time requested.

4. The exact address of where you are going
5. Whether you intend to travel with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). A PCA is someone to assist you with your personal needs.

We encourage riders to call during business hours when possible but in the event of emergency, rider may call after hours and leave a detailed message on the answering machine about their trip. At this time, same day emergency service is not provided.

Vehicles will only stop at predetermined origins and destination points. Bus operators will not make additional stops unless it is an emergency as determined by the Transportation Operations Supervisor.

Multiple appointments in one day can only be scheduled in two-hour intervals including ride time. For example, if you are dropped off at 11:00 AM at the grocery store, the earliest time that you can arrange your return trip is 1:00 PM.

If a trip needs to be cancelled for any reason, call (727) 834-3322 and leave a detailed message.

Destinations may not be changed on the day of the trip. Please review the “Late Cancellation/No-Show” section for further information.

2) **Riding PCPT Demand Response**

Riders should be prepared and waiting for the vehicle to arrive. The bus operator is only allowed to wait for 5 minutes.

- The bus operator will collect the fare upon boarding. All riders must have exact change since drivers do not carry change.
- Each trip should be paid when boarding.
- Visitors to Pasco County who are unable to use the fixed route service because of a disability are eligible to use the demand response service for up to 21 days. Visitors must present documentation from another transit agency that they are eligible for ADA services. If the visitor does not have ADA certification, the visitor is required to provide proof of visitor status, proof of their disability if it is not apparent and certify that they are unable to use the fixed route service. If a visitor will be staying longer than the 21-day, they will be required to fill out an application to continue service beyond the original 21-day window. All timing requirements will apply.
- ADA eligible riders may bring one PCA free. A PCA is defined as someone designated or employed specifically to help the individuals meet their personal needs.
- A companion may accompany the ADA eligible individual if requested at the time of reservation and space is available. Companions pay the same fare as the ADA-eligible rider.
- All individuals traveling with an ADA eligible rider must travel to the same destination as the ADA eligible rider.

- Service animals are welcome on all Pasco County Transit vehicles per Florida Statute 413.08. All other uncrated animals are prohibited.

3) **Bus Operator Assistance**

The bus operator will:

- Attempt to notify passengers of arrival by sounding the vehicle's horn, ringing the rider's doorbell, or knocking on the front door.
- Assist passengers in boarding and exiting the vehicle.
- Deliver the passenger to the door of their destination or nearest entranceway if additional assistance is required.
- Assist with the securement of wheelchair and mobility devices.

Minimal assistance DOES NOT include:

- Assistance getting in or out of a wheelchair
- Assistance in getting ready for the trip
- Administering medication or oxygen
- Assisting passengers in wheelchairs up or down stairs
- Assisting passengers up and/or down ramps
- Assistance in carrying personal belongings or purchases
- Providing personal care for individuals
- Any activity the driver considers a direct threat to the driver, their customers or others

Each passenger is responsible for their belongings, and all carry-on items are limited to what the passenger can physically carry aboard without making additional trips. Carry-on items must be properly stored underneath the seat or on the lap of the rider.

For your safety items cannot be stored in the aisles or in designated wheelchair spaces of the vehicles.

4) **Late Cancellation/No Show Policy**

The Demand Response Program acknowledges that occasionally situations will arise that result in a passenger needing to cancel or miss a scheduled trip. However, frequent and excessive late cancellation and/or no-show of scheduled trips negatively affect the ability of PCPT to serve all its customers. Our goal is to educate the passengers on this policy in order to reduce the incidences of late cancellations and/or no-shows.

A late cancellation is when users do not provide sufficient time for the transit system to adjust scheduling to not be affected by the cancellation. PCPT considers a late cancellation as anything less than one (1) hour before the originally scheduled trip. To cancel a trip, the passenger must call (727) 834-3322.

A no-show of a scheduled trip is when a passenger is not at the designated pick up location at the

scheduled time of the trip or refuses the trip. PCPT will take every step possible to ensure that a rider is an actual no-show before canceling the trip. Bus operator will wait up to five (5) minutes before determining the rider is a no-show.

No-shows that are out of the rider's control will not count against rider. PCPT will enter the late cancellation/no show into the rider's file and will keep track of the offenses.

Currently, PCPT has no penalty for no-shows or late cancelations. However, this may change and proper written notification will be provided to all customers on the policy and procedures implemented.

Complaints

The current Complaint Policy is located on PCPT's website at www.pascocountyfl.net/publictransportation. Complaints may be submitted by filing an ADA Complaint Form online, by downloading an ADA Complaint Form, or by calling 727-834-3322. If the complainant is unable to write a complaint, a representative may file on his or her behalf, or PCPT staff will provide assistance. Complaints must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged incident.

Contact Information

Please contact Pasco County Public Transportation at (727) 834-3322 or by email at www.ridepcpt.com. If this guide or any service document needs to be accessible in a format required by a rider to use the system, please contact PCPT for assistance.

Note: For Older American Acts clients only; Donations are accepted; however, your transportation services are funded by the Older Americans Act at no cost to you. You do have the opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the cost of the service. Please note that donations are strictly voluntary, under no obligation, and will remain anonymous. If you feel this is a financial hardship, please understand that any amount donated is greatly appreciated. Your services will not be denied because of failure to donate.