

HARTPlus

Paratransit Rider's Guide

Effective June 2015



HARTinfo Line (813) 254-4278 • TDD (813) 626-9158
www.goHART.org

 **HART**
Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority

www.goHART.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO HARTPlus	1
TRAVEL TRAINING	1
HARTPlus SERVICE AREA	2
HARTPlus ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	2
HARTPlus SERVICE HOURS	3
RESERVATIONS - SCHEDULING TRIPS.....	3
CONFIRMING TRIPS	5
RIDING HARTPlus	5
HARTPlus VEHICLE TYPES	5
ON BOARD RIDE TIME.....	5
TRIP PICK UP POINTS - WHERE TO WAIT FOR YOUR RIDE..	5
VEHICLE ARRIVAL - FIVE MINUTE RULE/WINDOW TIME..	8
VEHICLE IS LATE – NEXT STEP.....	8
USING WHEELCHAIRS OR OTHER MOBILITY DEVICES	9
SUBSCRIPTION TRIPS	9
NEGOTIATED TRIP TIMES	10
NO-SHOWS	10

NO-SHOW - SUSPENSION OF SERVICES	11
NO-SHOW SUSPENSION APPEAL PROCESS	11
TRAVELING WITH PCA'S/GUESTS/SERVICE ANIMALS	11
TRAVELING WITH PACKAGES - TWO PACKAGE LIMIT	13
TRAVELING WITH OXYGEN TANKS.	13
HARTPlus FARES.	13
CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION.	14
RECERTIFICATION PROCESS.	14
CONDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY	15
ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION APPEAL PROCESS	15
VISITORS ON HARTPlus SERVICE	16
RULES OF CONDUCT	17
HARTPlus OPERATOR ASSISTANCE	17
HELPFUL HARTPlus TELEPHONE NUMBERS	18
HARTPlus PHYSICAL ADDRESS.	18
HART WEB ADDRESS	18

WELCOME TO HARTPlus

HARTPlus paratransit service is a door-to-door public transportation service for people with disabilities who are unable to use HART buses. HARTPlus is a shared-ride service operated with accessible ADA compliant vehicles. Riders who are unable to access vans by using steps can use the wheelchair lift/ramp. HART also offers free travel training to persons with disabilities who are capable of riding accessible bus services.

TRAVEL TRAINING

HART offers Travel Training to people with disabilities wishing to ride public buses to reach a wide variety of destinations. Riding the bus gives you the freedom to set your own schedule without having to make reservations or worry about the availability of rides. HART's Travel Training Program is available free to anyone who wants to use accessible fixed-route bus transportation.

With this free Travel Training program, you will receive step-by-step instructions on using the transit guide, reading a passenger schedule and riding the bus. You will also be provided with route schedules, a transit guide and informational brochures. If you are interested in more information regarding the Travel Training Program, please call our Travel Training office at (813) 384-6307. Training for bus services does not make you ineligible for Paratransit services.

HARTPlus SERVICE AREA

Federal regulations define the ADA paratransit service area as being within 3/4 of a mile on either side of a local bus route. Express service is not included in the paratransit service area.

HARTPlus ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

HARTPlus service is available for people with physical, cognitive, visual or other disabilities that prevent them from using HART's fixed route bus services. A disability in and of itself does not imply eligibility for HARTPlus services.

To use HARTPlus services, submit an application to HART. Applications are available by contacting Customer Service at (813) 254-4278 or online at www.goHART.org. Applications can also be picked up at Marion Transit Center. Telephone assistance in completing applications is available upon request.

A functional ability assessment is also required as part of the eligibility determination process. Free transportation to and from the evaluation appointment can be provided upon request. For information about eligibility evaluations, please call HART Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

Per the ADA, the department will complete certification process within 21 days. After the face-to-face interview, clients with conditional or temporary eligibility may be called for travel training. If the eligibility determination is not made within 21 days of completion, temporary service begins on the 22nd day.

HARTPlus SERVICE HOURS

Service hours mirror the local fixed route bus serving your point of origin and destination. HARTPlus service is not available on days, times or locations when the corresponding local fixed route service is not operating.

Service may be available in your area during the following hours:

Monday - Friday 4:00 a.m. - 1:30 a.m.
Saturday 5:00 a.m. - 12:00 midnight
Sunday 6:00 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Holiday service hours may follow a Saturday or Sunday schedule. Contact Customer Service for specific service hour information.

RESERVATIONS - SCHEDULING TRIPS

Trip reservations can be scheduled from one day and up to three days in advance. Customer Service Representatives are available seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to schedule paratransit trips. Reservations must be made at least the day before a scheduled trip before 5:00 p.m. daily. HARTPlus does NOT offer same day service. Same day changes to a pick-up or drop-off time and address cannot be made so be sure to have the correct information when scheduling a paratransit trip.

For cancellations and inquires, Customer Service Representatives are available Monday - Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on weekends and holidays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For after-hours cancellations, call (813) 384-6418.

To make a trip reservation, call HART Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

Be prepared to provide the following information:

1. First and last name
2. Date of travel
3. The time you would like to be picked up OR the time you need to reach your destination. (Appointment Time)
4. Complete pick-up address, including an apartment number, suite number, gate or security code, building identification, zip code and telephone number. **Note:** Same day changes to a pickup time or address cannot be made, so make sure the trip information is correct.
5. Complete destination address, including building, suite or apartment number, zip code and telephone number. **Note:** Same day changes to a return time or address cannot be made, so make sure the trip information is correct.
6. If a personal care attendant (PCA), service animal and/or companion or child will accompany the rider.
7. Inform the customer service representative if you are traveling with a service animal, an assistive device, such as a wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, oxygen tank, etc.

CONFIRMING TRIPS

Trips will be confirmed at the time you schedule your reservation(s). Please confirm dates, times and addresses before ending the call to ensure the accuracy of your scheduled trip.

RIDING HARTPlus

Certified program participants are required to present their HARTPlus ID and Pay Exact Fare or a valid HART Coupon when boarding vehicles.

HARTPlus VEHICLE TYPES

HARTPlus uses a variety of branded vehicle types including lift-equipped vans and mini-vans with ramps that meet the Federal ADA Regulations. Rides will be scheduled in a vehicle to best meet service needs.

ON BOARD RIDE TIME

Travel time on HARTPlus is comparable to the amount of time it would take to make the same trip using our fixed route bus with connections. The average trip length can be 60 minutes or more, and a trip may exceed or fall below that average depending on the circumstances.

TRIP PICK UP POINTS – WHERE TO WAIT FOR YOUR RIDE

Operators will assist you to and from the threshold of a building. Operators must maintain physical sight of the vehicle at all times, and they are not permitted to enter beyond the threshold or ground level of any building. If a rider will need assistance exiting the pick-up location, a

companion or personal care attendant should travel with the rider to assist.

Door-to-door service DOES NOT include any of the following:

- Assisting passengers on unsafe or steeply inclined mobility ramps or stairs
- Entering beyond the door threshold
- Locking/unlocking doors or activating/deactivating house alarms
- Loading/unloading personal items

If a rider cannot be left unattended (as a result of his or her age, disability or impairment), a companion or personal care attendant is required to receive the passenger upon the vehicle's arrival.

Apartments/Office Complexes

When scheduling your trip, please provide Customer Service with a specific building name and number within the complex. The operator will pick up the rider at that specific building. If a rider's building is located within a gated community and requires special entry, provide Customer Service with an entry code or notify the security office to arrange entry for the Paratransit vehicle before pick-up time. If the rider does not arrange entry, and the vehicle is unable to enter the pick-up area, the rider will be considered a No-Show. (See NO-SHOWS)

Nursing Homes

Riders with pick-ups at nursing homes should meet the operator in front of the main lobby. Operators are not permitted to go to rooms to pick up riders. Operators cannot assist riders in and out of a nursing home. Nursing home staff should be ready to assist the individual out, if necessary. Riders will be dropped off in front of the main lobby of the nursing home.

Adult Program/Day Care Centers

Riders attending adult programs or day care centers should be ready when paratransit vehicles arrive. Operators cannot assist riders in or out of adult program/day care centers. Center staff must be ready to assist the individual out of the center, if necessary. If the adult/day care center requires special entry, center staff should arrange entry for the paratransit vehicle before pick-up time. If the rider does not arrange entry, and the vehicle is unable to enter the pick-up area, the rider will be considered a No-Show.

Hospitals

Unless otherwise requested by the customer, the default drop-off location at all hospitals will be at the main entrance of the facility. The customer may request another drop off location if there is a safe place at an entrance nearer to the office he/she is going to. Please keep in mind that, unless a specific pick-up location is requested, the pick-up location for the return trip will default to the main hospital entrance.

Shopping Malls

When scheduling a trip to a shopping mall, the customer must specify the exact store entrance nearest to the street where he/she wishes to be dropped off and picked up (for example “Macy’s East side entrance” or “food court entrance”). The default drop-off and pick-up locations will be at the street entrance nearest to the food court. Should the customer wish to be picked up for his/her return trip at any entrance other than the default location, the customer must request the pick-up location nearest to the street when scheduling a trip.

VEHICLE ARRIVAL - FIVE MINUTE RULE/ WINDOW TIME

Paratransit operators will wait five minutes for a rider to board the vehicle when arriving within the 30-minute ready-time window. If a rider does not board the vehicle within the five minute wait time, the operator will mark the rider as a No-Show and will depart the location. HART is not required to call the rider when the vehicle arrives or before leaving the pick-up location; riders are expected to be ready to board the vehicle upon its arrival. When your vehicle arrives, you are required to present your HARTPlus ID and the exact fare or a valid coupon. Please note: The operator cannot take you to your requested destination without the required fare.

VEHICLE IS LATE - NEXT STEP

If the vehicle has not arrived by the end of your 10-minute pick-up window, please call Customer Service at (813) 254-4278.

USING WHEELCHAIRS OR OTHER MOBILITY DEVICES

HARTPlus will make every attempt to accommodate standard wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility devices. The HARTPlus vehicles can accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices having widths from a range of 30" to 33" and 50" to 63" in length depending on the vehicle type. All types of HARTPlus vehicles have a maximum weight limit of 800 pounds. Mobility devices larger than these standards may be denied service aboard HARTPlus vehicles.

Securement on Boarding

Operators will make all attempts to secure standard wheelchairs and scooters. If a wheelchair or scooter exceeds the normal size, the operator may ask the rider to transfer to a seat, as it may be difficult to safely secure the passenger within the mobility device. It is the rider's choice to transfer or remain in his or her mobility device.

SUBSCRIPTION TRIPS

A subscription trip is defined as travel that will be repeated at the same times and days of the week for a specific purpose (work, education, medical treatment, etc.). This trip must be made a minimum of twice a week for a minimum of 30 days. Patrons are required to book this trip for a two-week period before it is eligible to become a subscription trip. Any changes in frequency or time to a subscription trip will result in an additional week call-in

period for those modifications to become a subscription. No more than two changes can be made within a 30-day period. Frequent cancellations could result in termination of a subscription.

NEGOTIATED TRIP TIMES

Occasionally, the exact time you wish to travel may not be available. In that case, Customer Service may offer you other choices that may be up to one hour earlier or one hour later than the time you wish to travel. If you need to arrive at your destination by a specific time, tell the Customer Service Representative; they will attempt to give you a pick-up time that will get you to your destination on time. If your travel time is more flexible, you may be offered a negotiated trip time.

NO-SHOWS

A No-Show occurs when you fail to board the HARTPlus vehicle within five minutes after it arrives within the pick-up window or if you violate HART policies and as a result you are not transported. Trips that are not canceled at least two or more hours before your scheduled time will be considered a No-Show.

If you receive a No-Show on your trip leaving from home and have a return trip that you will not need, be sure to cancel the return trip or you will receive an additional No-Show. If you No-Show your trip going home and alternative transportation is not available, contact Customer Service who **may** be able to reschedule your

return trip. Pickup is based upon vehicle availability and may take up to 2 hours to dispatch to your destination.

NO-SHOW - SUSPENSION OF SERVICES

When you accumulate a total of four No-Shows within a 30-day period, you will receive a written Notice of Service Suspension, and a seven day service suspension will be imposed. A second suspension (four more no-shows) in a six-month period may result in an additional van service suspension of 14 days. If more than two suspensions occur in a six-month period, van service will be cancelled for up to 21 days. **Note:** If the No-Show is found that it was due to circumstances beyond the customer's control. The No-Show will be excused and removed.

NO-SHOW SUSPENSION APPEAL PROCESS

A rider has a right to appeal a suspension of service, termination of service or loss of subscription privileges by calling or writing the office of HARTPlus at:

Phone Number: (813) 384-6312

Mailing Address: HARTPlus
1201 E. 7th Avenue
Tampa, FL 33605

TRAVELING WITH PCA'S/GUESTS/ SERVICE ANIMALS

Personal Care Attendant

A personal care attendant can accompany a registered HARTPlus rider at no additional charge. Your file must

indicate that you are eligible to have a personal care attendant travel with you, and you must reserve space for the attendant when scheduling your trip.

Guests

One guest is welcome to ride with you at the regular HARTPlus fare per trip. You must reserve space for your guest, whether adult or child, when scheduling your trip. Seating for more than one guest is on a "space available" basis when scheduling your trips. Children age four and under must be accompanied by a paying adult. Florida law requires that all children under the age of four or weighing less than 50 pounds must be properly restrained in a child safety seat. HART DOES NOT PROVIDE CHILD SAFETY SEATS.

Service Animals

Guide dogs and other service animals are allowed to accompany you if this need is indicated in your file. When scheduling a trip, please inform Customer Service if a service animal will be accompanying you on the trip.

Small non-service animals are allowed on all transit vehicles. Pets must be contained in secure, clean, hand-held, and leak-proof cages. The cage/carrier must be small enough to fit on owner's lap. During times when the transit system is likely to be crowded, passengers are asked not to transport pets.

TRAVELING WITH PACKAGES - TWO PACKAGE LIMIT

Carry-on packages are limited to two bags or similar-sized packages that can be carried by the customer onboard HARTPlus vehicles. Operators do not assist riders with personal belongings. Customers can keep travel carts loaded if the cart fits fully between the seat next to the passenger and the seatback in front of that seat. Customers must fold grocery carts if the cart cannot fit between the seat and the seatback in front of it and secure their carry-on items to keep aisles and exits clear on the van. Customers must fold their own strollers or grocery carts when required.

TRAVELING WITH OXYGEN TANKS

If a customer requires the use of oxygen, it must be identified, inspected and evaluated at the certification interview. Any change in the size or number of oxygen storage container(s) identified during the certification process must be reported to HART prior to making a trip reservation. Any change in customer status regarding the use of oxygen must be reported to HART immediately.

HARTPlus FARES

For the most up-to-date information on HARTPlus fares, call Customer Service at (813) 254-4278 or refer to the most current HART Route Schedule Book. You can also go to HART's website at www.goHART.org for the latest fare information.

All eligible riders, regardless of age, must pay exact fare when boarding. Operators cannot give change. HARTPlus fare coupons can be purchased online at www.goHART.org or at HART Transit Centers.

Please note: Operators are not allowed to accept tips or gratuities.

CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION

Eligible riders are certified for services for a period of up to three or five years. The eligibility period will depend on the participant's specific disability and, if temporary, its duration.

RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

Recertification for services will be required of each HARTPlus participant prior to expiration of his or her current eligibility period. HART will notify participants of the recertification requirement at least 60 days prior to the expiration of their eligibility period. Recertifying riders will complete an in-person assessment to identify their potentials, rather than limitations in their ability to use accessible bus service.

Here is a summary of the certification process:

1. Call Customer Service for an application at (813) 254-4278. You can also go to www.goHART.org to print the application.
2. Once paperwork is received, complete and correct, we will contact you to set up an appointment at the assessment center.

3. At the assessment we will evaluate your abilities in using transit services.
4. After the assessment, HART will notify you if you were approved for or denied service and whether your service will be conditional, unconditional or temporary.

CONDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for HARTPlus may be on a "conditional" basis, meaning service will only be provided for those trips in which ADA paratransit eligibility standards have been met. Riders will be required to use HART's bus services, or find alternative transportation, for trips that are not deemed ADA paratransit eligible. If you change your address, lose your HARTPlus ID, or your disability needs change, call the Eligibility Coordinator at (813) 384-6305.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION APPEAL PROCESS

If the applicant disagrees with the eligibility that has been granted by HART, the applicant has 60 days from the date of receipt to file an appeal. The appeal must be received in writing within 60 days. The calculation of the time period will begin 5 days after the initial determination letter is mailed to the applicant. The applicant will have the opportunity to be heard in person by the appeals committee, and to present additional information and arguments regarding his or her disability and inability to use the regular fixed-route bus service. The appeals levels will consist of the following:

- Level 1 - Van Transportation Manager, Van Transportation
- *Level 2 – Manager of Transportation Supervision, Bus Transportation
- *Committee Member (Optional)

To maintain fairness to all, neither professional can be the person who provided verification for the applicant. If a decision is not made within 30 days of the completion of the appeals process, the applicant will be considered "presumptively eligible," and HART will provide service to the applicant until a decision by the appeals committee is made. The decision of the appeals committee will be final, and the applicant will be notified in writing and by phone (if possible) within seven days of the appeals committee's decision.

VISITORS ON HARTPlus SERVICE

Out-of-town visitors who are ADA eligible can use HARTPlus services. Visitors must contact the HARTPlus Office Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at (813) 384-6305, no less than seven days before service is required. Once this is done, advance reservations can be made up to three days in advance.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Riders are asked to follow these rules of conduct to ensure the safety and comfort of all riders and the operator:

- No loud conversations on cell phones
- No eating, drinking unless medically necessary or No smoking on board
- No riding under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- No abusive, threatening or obscene language or actions
- No discharge of bodily fluids or open wounds
- No deliberate fare evasion
- No physical abuse of another rider, or the operator
- No operating or tampering with any equipment while onboard a HARTPlus vehicle
- No radios, MP3 players, compact disc players or other sound generating equipment are to be played aboard the vehicles
- For safety reasons, please limit unnecessary conversation with operators when the vehicle is in motion

Riders who violate the rules of conduct are subject to penalties, up to and including suspension of service.

Note: Riders who engage in physical abuse or cause physical injury to another rider or operator may be subject to immediate and permanent suspension, and possible criminal prosecution.

HARTPlus OPERATOR ASSISTANCE

At the request of the customer, a HARTPlus Operator

may assist the customer from the outside door of their pick-up location to the outside door of their destination. HARTPlus Operators may not lock or unlock doors, lift or carry a customer, search for a customer in a building, carry or load bags or personal belongings, call the customer at home, or perform any other assistance that should be undertaken by a personal care attendant.

HELPFUL HARTPlus TELEPHONE NUMBERS

We hope this guide answers some of your questions. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to provide safe, reliable, dependable and efficient public transportation to persons with disabilities.

Customer Service.....	(813) 254-4278
Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD).....	(813) 626-9158
After-hours Trip Cancellation.....	(813) 384-6418
Travel Training Program.....	(813) 384-6307
HARTPlus Eligibility.....	(813) 384-6305
HART Lost and Found.....	(813) 384-6301

HARTPlus PHYSICAL ADDRESS

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority
Marion Transit Center
1211 N. Marion Street
Tampa, Florida 33602

HART WEB ADDRESS

www.goHART.org