



## Long Island Bus

**Date** March 19, 2010  
**To** Long Island Committee Members  
**From** Joseph J. Smith, President  
**Re** **Able-Ride Service-Related Changes**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Smith", with a large flourish extending to the right.

This is an informational update on the Able-Ride proposed service-related changes required to address the MTA's unanticipated 2010 budget shortfall. This memo reiterates the overall approach taken to achieve the cost reductions and clarifies how the feeder service will be implemented, as there were numerous comments at the public hearings on this service-related change.

The total of all proposed Able-Ride service-related changes and other Able-Ride cost reduction proposals is estimated to save \$1.2 million in 2010. Please note that the Able-Ride service-related changes presented here are informational items.

### Overview

In creating the 2010 Service-Related Changes, LI Bus Paratransit staff were mindful of the effect that any change in service has on current customers. The guiding principles for the creation of these proposals were as follows:

- Maintain compliance with ADA regulations
- Improve the cost efficiency of the service provided

The 2010 Service-Related Change Proposals are:

- Eliminate service to geographic areas not required by ADA to be covered ("non-ADA trips")
- Replace door-to-door service with feeder service to and from fixed-route transit, where applicable
- For customers with conditional eligibility based on weather and/or temperature conditions, determine their eligibility for service trip by trip, rather than by season.

## **2010 Able-Ride Service-Related Changes**

These proposals are valued at \$1.0 million.

### Eliminate Non-ADA Trips

ADA regulations require Able-Ride to provide paratransit service to all origins and destinations within its core service area, and outside of that area, to origins and destinations within corridors on both sides of all fixed-route service. However, Able-Ride currently provides paratransit-eligible customers with paratransit trips to and from all areas of Nassau County, including areas that do not have fixed-route service, and which Able-Ride therefore is not required to cover. The cost reduction proposal is to eliminate the provision of trips beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of the core service area.

In 2009, approximately 9% of all Able-Ride trips (32,000 trips) were classified as non-ADA.

### Feeder Service

ADA regulations allow paratransit service for certain ADA paratransit-eligible persons to be provided through paratransit feeder service to and/or from an accessible fixed route. However, Able-Ride currently provides door-to-door service for all trips. The proposal is to have paratransit service connect customers to fixed-route service whenever possible, so that the customer uses fixed-route bus, rail, or subway service for at least a portion of the trip.

The distance that customers can travel on their own (i.e., 2 blocks or 5 blocks) is part of the eligibility determination. If the customer can travel the distance to or from an accessible fixed-route service, then Able-Ride service will transport them to that accessible service. The path to/from the fixed-route service will also be evaluated to make sure the customer is able to travel that path on their own. Transfers will also be taken into consideration. Each trip request will be evaluated against these criteria before determining whether to provide feeder service or door-to-door service or inform the customer that the entire trip can be accomplished by fixed-route bus or subway service.

Able-Ride estimates that approximately 1% of annual scheduled trips (3,200 trips) can be accomplished through paratransit feeder service.

### Trip-by-Trip Eligibility

Some persons receive conditional eligibility for paratransit service, which makes them eligible for service on some trips but not others. For example, the ability of some individuals to use fixed-route service is based on weather and/or temperature, so that their eligibility depends on the weather conditions in place at the time of the trip. Medical

authorities have determined the ranges of climate temperatures that incapacitate individuals with certain medical conditions. Currently, such individuals are authorized to use Able-Ride at any time during certain months of the year, when the problematic weather conditions are expected to occur (extreme cold or extreme heat). The proposal is to instead determine each individual's eligibility for each requested paratransit trip, using the medically-established temperature ranges, along with the National Weather Service forecast at the time of the reservation request.

Able-Ride estimates that this change will reduce the number of annual scheduled trips by approximately 0.16% (500 trips).

#### **2010 Able-Ride Non-Service-Related Cost Reduction Proposals**

The non-service-related cost reduction proposals include the following:

- Implement use of car service/livery service in Nassau County to operate paratransit trips currently provided by Able-Ride. Able-Ride estimates this step will affect approximately 0.6% of trips (1,800 trips) in 2010.
- Apply more rigorous determination procedures for ADA eligibility. Able-Ride estimates this step will reduce the number of annual scheduled trips by approximately 0.9% (2,900 trips).

cc: T. Del Sorbo  
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