

All the news on Access-A-Ride

Travel Safe on AAR!



“...I strongly urge everyone to closely follow state guidance on safe practices and local governments to enforce that guidance. Being New York tough means being New York smart: wear a mask, wash your hands and practice social distancing.” – Governor Cuomo

To find out more about AAR’s response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, please see page 4.

Happy 30th Birthday ADA!

What is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

July 26, 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of President George H.W. Bush signing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public.



*AAR marching in 2019 Disability
Pride Parade*

How does the ADA relate to Access-A-Ride?

The ADA requires public transit agencies that provide fixed-route service to provide “complementary paratransit” service to people with disabilities who cannot use the fixed-route bus or rail service because of a disability. Paratransit services are designed to complement public transport options, not as a standalone system, hence the prefix “para-” which means “alongside of.” Paratransit in New York City is called Access-A-Ride (AAR).

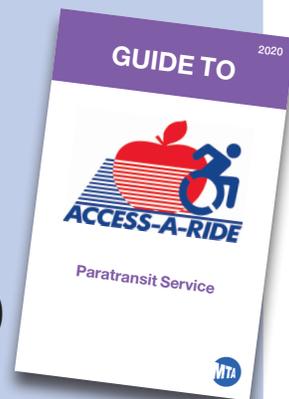
We want to acknowledge this important anniversary and recognize the important work we continue to do to promote equal opportunity for people with disabilities. AAR has made big strides by expanding the types of trips offered and leveraging more taxis and for-hire vehicles. Seven hundred new lift-equipped vans were added to the carrier fleet to replace older vehicles and we rolled out enhanced broker service in Staten Island.

In addition to improving our existing AAR service, we also worked with advocates and NYC DOT to allow AAR vehicle usage in bus lanes for better service to our customers. As always, we continue to work closely with our contractors to provide safe and efficient service.

Our overall strategy continues to focus on matching the best service options to meet our customer needs. In fact, the 2019 MTA NYCT Paratransit AAR Customer Satisfaction Survey Final Report issued this May once again highlighted the improvements in service. With an overall satisfaction rate of 84%, many customers indicated that such factors as ease of use, on-time performance, convenience, good service, and how the service allows them to be independent contributed to their overall satisfaction. In 2019, an overwhelming majority (95%) of AAR customers continue to consider the service to be a “good value for the money,” similar to the 2018 survey results of 96%, and a significant improvement over the 2017 survey results

of 91%. Overall, almost half of all AAR users reported that the services had improved in the past year, compared to 53% in 2018. Additionally, 25% of customers indicated that they expected to use AAR more often in the next year or so. A copy of the survey is available on our website at new.mta.info/accessibility/paratransit

The new 2020 Guide to AAR Paratransit Service is available online. Please visit mta.info and use the menu (“hamburger”) on the left, top of the page to locate the link for Access-A-Ride. Recently streamlined, our website is a valuable resource where you can find:



- Guidance in using the MYmta / MY AAR app
- AAR Dashboard
- Paratransit Advisory Committee Minutes
- 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Guide to AAR
- ... and much more!

AAR's Response to COVID-19

AAR service saw significant changes because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. While full service has been provided throughout the Pandemic, many customers heeded the stay-at-home orders issued by the Governor. Reductions in reservations and traffic conditions allowed for optimum on-time performance. However, traffic congestion is slowly returning to pre-pandemic volume so please keep this in mind when making reservations. We also kindly ask our customers to be mindful of our policy pertaining to bags and parcels: "Customers must fold shopping carts and board AAR vehicles with only two bags or parcels totaling 40 pounds or less. A very bulky item that fills a seat or is a safety hazard is not permitted on an AAR vehicle, even if the item weighs less than 40 pounds." Remember many grocery stores and warehouse clubs offer delivery – this is a safe and simple option during these cautious times.

Paratransit continues to aggressively clean and disinfect vehicles. A directive from the Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC)

was issued about vehicle cleaning/ disinfecting and safety steps like washing hands and facial coverings.

The Governor's Executive Order mandates the wearing of facial covering when using public transportation, including drivers and all passengers.

Currently, cash fare collection has been ceased for the safety of our drivers and customers.

We are not scheduling shared rides but our customers can still travel with their personal care attendant or a guest.

The AAR eligibility process was temporarily adjusted. Our assessment centers are temporarily closed. Those who wish to apply for AAR may call Eligibility at 877-337-2017, prompt #1 and speak with an agent for assistance. Those customers whose service is scheduled to expire shortly should also call Eligibility.

Phase II of the Pilot service was placed on hold until further notice. We have been continuing under Phase I temporarily.

Access-A-Ride Telephone Directory

Call **877-337-2017** toll free from area codes 212, 929, 646, 718, 347, 516, 631, 914, 845, 917, 332.

From all other area codes, call 718-393-4999. Customers who are deaf / hard of hearing can use their preferred relay service or the free 711 service relay.

For assistance in English, press “1.” If “1” is not pressed, callers will hear choices in each of the respective languages: for assistance in: Spanish, press “2.” For assistance in Russian, Chinese, French, Creole, Korean or Bengali, please press “3.” For all other languages, please press “4.” Conversations with AAR personnel are recorded and may be monitored.

These prompts may be selected after an important announcement is heard:

Prompt #1 – Eligibility Unit: Appeals / Certification / Application / AAR MetroCard / Update Your Records

Prompt #2 – Trip Planning: Reservations

Prompt #3 – Trip Planning: Change your reservation

Prompt #4 – Trip Planning: Cancel your reservation

Prompt #5 – Travel Services: Help with same day service 24 hours, 7 days a week

Prompt #6 – Subscription Service

Prompt #7 – Automated System

Prompt #8 – Commendations / Questions / Complaints / Outreach Requests / Publication Requests

To repeat, please press “0.” Hold for assistance if you do not have a touch-tone phone.



MTA New York City Transit
Department of Buses
Paratransit Division
130 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

This past year has been incredibly hard for the city and the entire MTA family. The Paratransit team has worked and continues to work tirelessly throughout the pandemic to provide essential services for our customers and in support of our larger community.

Your questions and comments about On The Move are welcome. Please send them to:

MTA NYC Transit, Department of Buses Paratransit Division, 130 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Or go to: <https://new.mta.info/customer-feedback>

Follow us on Social Media @nyctAAR