

Transportation

Why This Is Important

Transportation is a key factor in advancing the independence of people with disabilities. **There seems to be no greater obstacle to personal choice and community involvement than lack of reliable, accessible, safe, efficient and affordable transportation.**

While you (the consumer) live at home, your family would probably not mind helping you out whenever possible, but at some point, getting around will be up to you. For instance, you will need to get to work, school, grocery stores, shopping centers, sports events, and other places in the community. **What will you do for transportation?**



CHECKLIST OF OPTIONS, ALTERNATIVES

- ✓ Family member transport
- ✓ Car-pool
- ✓ Obtain permit and driver's license
- ✓ Arrange for travel training
- ✓ Use buddy system for a while
- ✓ Use public transportation (regular TARC) and follow the schedule
- ✓ Medical Transportation (Logisticare)
- ✓ Passport (non-emergency medical transportation)
- ✓ Specialized transportation such as TARC 3
- ✓ TARC 3 subscription service

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (ADA) states that regular bus service, such as TARC, should be the primary means of public transportation for

everyone, including people with disabilities. For the most part, persons with disabilities use regular TARC services for transportation to and from their daily workplace or shopping and recreational outings. **Information on fixed route buses and fares is available** from the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) in Jefferson County by calling **585-1234** or **TTY 213-3240**. City buses are all wheelchair accessible. There is limited travel training from TARC available for riders who are not sure they have the skills to read a schedule or watch for stops. Travel training can be obtained for the short term by private pay from individuals recommended by TARC, such as Bob Alexander. Call TARC for further information.

TARC 3 – PARATRANSIT SERVICES

Under the ADA, mentioned above, TARC 3 will serve as a safety net for only those persons who do not have the functional capability to ride TARC's regular buses. **TARC 3 is a door-to-door public transportation service for people who are certified as ADA paratransit eligible.** Door-to-door service means that drivers will assist passengers from the outside door of the point of origin and to the outside door of the destination. TARC 3 is a shared-ride public transportation system, enabling routes and schedules to be structured to transport multiple passengers to multiple destinations.

Who is Eligible?

To qualify for TARC 3 services, the applicant must meet one of the following ADA Paratransit eligibility categories.

- 1) Persons who are unable, because of a disability to board, ride, or disembark from an accessible fixed-route bus.
- 2) Any person with a disability who is capable of using an accessible vehicle, but the desired trip cannot be made because a portion of the fixed-route service is not yet accessible.
- 3) Persons with specific impairments who cannot travel to or from a bus stop.

Under the ADA, transit agencies are prohibited from restricting a person's use of ADA paratransit service based on trip purpose. Therefore, every trip will be regarded in the same manner. There can be no preferences given due to trip purpose.

Application Process

Individuals interested in applying for TARC 3 service may call 213-3217 weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to receive an application by mail.

Things to Watch Out For

When you become eligible for TARC 3 service, be sure to read all the information on **Pick-up Times**. Tarc 3 has established a pick-up window of 30 minutes, which means they may arrive 15 minutes before or as late as 15 minutes after the passenger's ready time. Also important is the policy on **Cancellations/No Shows**. Scheduling a ride and then failing to use the service without proper cancellation causes serious problems. Customers will be given a "no show" under certain circumstances, and this can cause you to be suspended from the service for a specified time.

Will-Calls

If the trip request is for medical purposes and the return time is not known, a passenger may request a will-call pick up. When your medical appointment is completed, you may call Atlantic at 584-3777 for pick up and they will send the next available vehicle for passenger pick up. You may have to wait up to two hours for the next available vehicle.

Reservations:

Demand at certain times of the day makes it very difficult to schedule a ride and you may have to adjust your desired pick-up time by up to one hour. "Oldtimers" warn that whenever possible, you should make your reservations 14 days in advance to be assured of service at the desired time.

Customers can make a reservation for a trip up to 14 days in advance or before 4:30 p.m. for next day service. Same day service will be provided on a space available basis.

Trip reservations, call: 560-0333 or TTY 213-3240

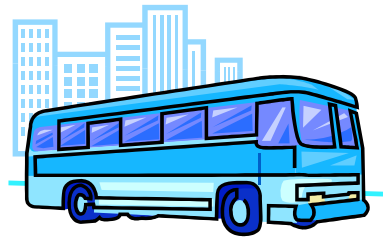
For cancellations, call: 560-0322 or TTY213-3240

TARC 3 SUBSCRIPTION/ROUTINE TRIPS

A subscription/routine trip is any trip made on a recurring/regular basis; i.e., on the same day(s) of the week, at the same time(s), from the same origin(s), to the same destination(s). Under the ADA legislation, no more than 50% of scheduled trips can be subscription at any given time.

To obtain subscription/routine service, call 213-3217 and talk to whomever answers. If problems arise, you may want to call Pauletta Leslie at 213-3250, Eligibility Specialist for this service.

TARC 3 Information Sheet



The following information is offered for your better understanding of TARC3 service and restraints by Karen Dennison, Paratransit Customer Service Manager.

- **TARC 3** serves approximately 7,000 people, with 25,000 trips/month.
- The average cost of each trip is \$23.00.
- **TARC 3** is a brokerage; it contracts with Laidlaw and the American Red Cross "Wheels." These two agencies run the dispatcher, while **TARC 3** runs the reservation line during business hours.
- If there is a problem with service during the business hours (daily, 8am-5pm) you should call the reservation line at 560-0333. If it is after this time, then you should call the dispatcher.
- Each driver follows a "manifest" a schedule of trips for the day. The driver generally works in a certain area.
- The customer can stay on the bus for 1 hour, 20 minutes, according to **TARC 3** policy.
- A "will call" service is available for medical appointments only. This is where there would be a set drop-off time, and then the customer would call when they are ready to be picked up. This could be a long wait, so this is not always the most appropriate option for all folks.
- Only 50% of **TARC 3** rider-ship can be on subscription service. This is why there is often a waiting list for this option.
- Many riders' TARC I.D.'S have expired because there are only 2 TARC staff working on the re-certification process. TARC drivers have been instructed to honor expired ID's.
- **TARC 3** I.D.'S can be used to ride city TARC buses for free.
- Currently there is nothing in place to suspend rider ship due to "NO-Show's." A plan is being worked on and it will be implemented soon.
- TARC eligibility determination decisions may be appealed.
- If you call on the same day that there's a problem with a pick up, **TARC 3** will do what they can to get you picked up as soon as possible.
- Call the reservation line to make a complaint. Sandra Fuqua who is in Customer Relations should follow this up within 2 weeks. If you still have not heard from **TARC 3** within that time, **contact Karen Dennison at 213-3245.**

- There is an Elderly and Disabled Advisory Council meeting, usually the first Monday of every month (unless it falls on a holiday). These are open meetings. They are held at the TARC'S boardroom in Union Station at 1000W. Broadway. The Council will have openings in January. If you are interested in serving on this Council contact TARC and request an application.
- For places that are frequented often, the reservationist has the information entered in their computer. It is good to double check that the reservationist has entered your exact information.



THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FOR TRANSPORTATION is long time rider, Jackie Koch. Jackie, a wheelchair user, rides about 12-13 different places a week, almost every day of the week. She is a person of great courage and good humor, as you will see from her comments. We asked her what some of the issues were in deciding whether to ride regular TARC or applying for TARC 3 service.

*"You would have to consider if you would know where the bus stop is, whether you will be able to get to the bus stop independently, know the bus to catch and what time. You have to be able to read a schedule (which is in fine print) pretty much by yourself, be able to read bus destinations and directions, what time it will get to the next point. Some of the stops on some bus routes do not have proper curb cuts so are not accessible to wheelchairs. So you might have to "jump off" the curb and hope you land right or do it backwards when you can't see where you are going. Be sure to know what you can handle and what you expect of them. They might let you off within ¼ mile of where you need to go on regular TARC and you have to know how to get to your destination from there. Each route is different so you have to know the information line number : **585-1234**.*

On TARC 3 you now can have a travel companion who can ride with you like a Personal Care Attendant and they can ride for nothing.

We then asked Jackie what her VISION would be for improved service. She says, *"It would be so great if we didn't have to call 14 days ahead to ride, I think 24 hours is reasonable. Also I think a reasonable riding time would be no longer than 25 minutes beyond the time it really takes to travel to your destination instead of one hour and 20 minutes on a typical ride. The perfect picture also would be to let you off at a curb cut and go with you into the building only through the interior door of the apartment complex, for example. Another thing that is hard is that they will only wait 5 minutes and if you're not there in that time, you get a "no show" and so they leave you at home. But you have to be ready 15 minutes ahead of*

One generation plants the tree; 5 another gets the shade . . .

when they are scheduled so I would like it if they would be able to wait 15 minutes for me. If you get a no show and call in within 2 hours to explain the situation, they will take it off. In a perfect world, the driver would go into your place and see if you are there. Another thing in a perfect world is that the drivers would all know their way around town and know how to read a map."

"The driver's attitude would also be important. The drivers need to be more patient and more considerate of the different disabilities because each disability is different from others. Some drivers don't like to be told what to do even if I know how to do it and they don't how to do it properly. I would like them to know how to tie my wheelchair down. I would like to be part of the driver training if they would be willing to listen to what I have to say. The straps strength from the ADA is stated and I would like them to be strong. On my chair I had an airplane cable installed because on ordinary chairs they have to put the belts on the main frame and it might break the frame. Sometimes they would put the tie-downs on the foot rest pieces and that will bend them and having the foot rests replaced is very expensive. Also if they put it in the wrong place on the main frame, they can torque the metal if they don't do it right. My manufacturer put some white out arrows on the back of my chair so the drivers know where to put the straps (my chair is from Immcare in Ohio). Also drivers should not drive my chair or touch my joy stick because it is very sensitive and if they have a heavy hand, it will really go wild."

SITUATIONS IN WHICH I DO NOT FEEL SAFE: *At Metro Parks over at Douglas Blvd. over at the police station, they have a ramp and when you go down that ramp, they have a very narrow sidewalk - barely wide enough for a wheelchair and a 2 inch drop off the sides. I have had 2 accidents over at Metro Parks.*

*Sometimes when I do not have anyone wait with me, I am worried to see if TARC 3 will not show up. So before I leave any deserted place, I ask someone to call the bus company to see where they are and when they will get there. **And know their phone numbers so you can tell someone if you need them to call for you. Remember to expect the unexpected and do not panic.***

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- Laidlaw Transit Services.....638-9400
- American Red Cross WHEELS.....561-3690
- TARC Customer Service.....585-1234
- TARC 3 Subscription Service.....213-3217
- Paratransit TTY.....213-3240
- TARC 3 Paratransit Reservations.....560-0333
- TARC 3 Paratransit Cancellations.....560-0322
- TARC Website www.ridetacr.org

One generation plants the tree; 6 another gets the shade . . .

BEST PRACTICES

TRAVEL TRAINING

A personalized program can be developed to teach someone with a disability how to properly and safely use the local bus system for transportation needs. In some cities, advocacy groups and the transit authority have joined forces to assist individuals in determining which form of public transportation is best suited for his/her needs. Part of the program includes a functional assessment of cognitive transit skills. An assessment built around a simulated transit trip helps the applicant become prepared for future bus riding. Through evaluations, assessments, and various training programs, they educate consumers on their rights and responsibilities according to the transportation provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as how fixed route services/paratransit services operate.

BUDDY SYSTEM

Riding the bus for the first time can be scary. Consumers will be teamed up with their own transit buddy who will “show them the ropes” until they feel at ease and comfortable enough to ride the bus alone.

(See “Travel Training Standards: Quality Assurance Standards in Travel Training” at <http://www.projectaction.org/coach/standard.htm>, also NICHCY Transition Summary “Travel Training for Youth with Disabilities”, Volume 9, June 1996.)

VOICE OF EXPERIENCE FROM A NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSMAKER: “Man Wants to Help Others Switch From Paratransit” The Neighborhood Section of the Courier Journal in 2002 featured an article on a person named **Brian Shofner with cerebral palsy who uses a power wheelchair and a word board for communication and rides regular TARC.** The article made so many good points in favor of riding a fixed route bus rather than TARC 3 that we wish we could reproduce it in its entirety. Some of Brian’s comments in the article relate his “can do” attitude and special recommendations:

“When asked what it took to make the transition, Shofner spells ‘just try’ on his word board. There was also a customer service representative who rode with him the first few times to get him accustomed to the change. In addition, Shofner got a signed letter from Joe Pinion, TARC’s director of transportation, telling drivers to seat him on the left so he can ring the bell when he wants to get off. Drivers tend to seat people in wheelchairs on the right to keep an eye on them.

Shofner said the fixed-route buses get him everywhere he wants to go, taking him from his Hikes Point neighborhood to the Center for Accessible Living on South Third Street or to shopping destinations along Bardstown Road. He says using TARC's fixed route system gives him more mobility and flexibility, and it gets him out of the house more.

Shofner believes many of the Paratransit riders could learn to use the fixed route bus system with a little assistance and he is eager to help them if TARC implements a program it is considering. The Travel Training Program would enlist travel trainers to serve as "buddies" for people with disabilities, teaching them how to read and understand bus schedules, how to catch and board buses, and how to pay fares.

Susan Hill, information officer for TARC hopes others follow Shofner's lead, 'Paratransit has limited resources, so the more folks we can have on fixed route, the more availability we can have on Paratransit for people who really need it,' Hill says.

If you want to know how you can help bring about Travel Training and other needed changes, join committees or councils such as those below, or just attend the meetings.

TRANSPORTATION COUNCILS/COMMITTEES

1. Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Advisory Council:

"The E&D Advisory Council was formed in January, 1987, to advise and comment on TARC's programs for transportation that may affect the elderly and people with disabilities. The Council presents their comments to TARC for consideration. The Council attempts to understand and voice the needs and interests of the constituency group that they represent.

The Council consists of representatives from public and private human service agencies, local government, metropolitan planning organizations, and individuals interested in the accessible services of TARC. There is a chairperson who establishes sub-committees and appoints committee members as needed."

All members of the community who would like to participate are welcome to attend council meetings. Meetings are held in TARC's Board Room on the 2nd Floor of Union Station, 1000 West Broadway on the first Mondays of every month except if a holiday such as Labor Day falls on that Monday.

2. Transportation Committee with Marcellus Mayes as Chairman. Here is Mr. Mayes' Newsflash message. "The committee's mission is to insure fair, objective and impartial treatment of passengers who are riding TARC 3 and fixed route services, who are covered by ADA. Recently we have met with an expert in public transportation to develop a strategic plan and organize a formal response to address the numerous complaints regarding:

- 1) Denial of service,
- 2) The lengthy rides which many passengers are taking,
- 3) Many passengers' rides are often times disappearing out of the computer systems well as many riders are being left scrambling for a way to and from their destinations.

Our main objective at this time is to encourage TARC 3 riders to document any problems with service or personnel at TARC. Make sure all complaints are sent to Barry Barker, cc Charles Rogers on a monthly basis. In addition, the Metro Disabilities Coalition would like a copy of the complaint sent to PO Box 8086 at 40257.

If anyone has any questions or concerns, please call Marcellus Mayes at 774-8993 or 778-2582 or Steve Snyder at 935-7063."

NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

If you have a Medicaid card, transportation to and from doctor's visits can be arranged through a broker service. Beginning May 1, 2003, LogistiCare Solutions was hired by the state of Kentucky to organize transportation for Medicaid patients in Jefferson and four nearby counties – Bullitt, Oldham, Shelby and Spencer. It provides rides for clients who are disabled and mentally retarded to doctors and adult day programs through subcontract with local companies. At this time, all taxi, van, mini-bus and wheelchair rides to Medicaid covered medical services must be scheduled through LogistiCare.

Their number is:

⇒ **1-866-251-7404;**

⇒ **to inquire where your ride is or to make a complaint, call 1-866-823-8350.**

There is some important information about these services and basic rules about transportation that you should know.

- You must call LogistiCare for a ride at least 3 days (72 hours) before your appointment.
- Have your Medical Card and appointment information (day, date, time, provider name and address) when you call.
- Tell LogistiCare if you have special needs such as wheelchair lift vehicle, escorts, and repeat rides for treatment.
- For urgent care rides (less than 72 hour notice), your doctor must approve your ride by calling, writing or faxing the information to LogisticCare.

Basic rules about transportation:

- If you or someone in your household has a car, van or truck and it is not available or appropriate for you to use, you may be asked to give the transportation provider information in writing that you can not use the car, van or truck.
- You should always try to go to the closest medical facility that can help your condition. If you need care out of your service area, you may be asked to have your doctor write a note to LogistiCare explaining why it is important for the trip to occur.
- **ONLY Medicaid members that are in a wheelchair or are able to walk, but disoriented, are allowed to choose the provider company they want to ride with.**

Freedom of Choice:

There are two categories of people with disabilities who have freedom of choice in regard to the transportation provider. Because of concern about the physical safety of persons in wheelchairs and the mental stability of persons who are disoriented, it has been established that these more vulnerable individuals need consistent services from the same driver and company.

In order obtain this choice, you will need to have the health care provider (doctor) fill out a “**Medical Transportation Classification Form**”. Your doctor should have copies of this form in his/her office. If the doctor does not have this form, it can be obtained from LogistiCare Solutions at 569-1688. Ask to speak to the Health Care Supervisor or the Transportation Supervisor and explain your need. If you already know the name of the transportation company you wish to use to transport your son/daughter, you might also get this form from them.

In any case, once it is determined that the person with a disability meets the criteria, LogistiCare should give you the names of companies from which to choose for transportation. If you do not know the names of well-regarded transportation companies, be sure to ask the adult day program provider or your health care provider for their recommendations, or call the Leadership Institute at 587-6500 for a list of all available transportation providers.

State Fair Hearing

If you are denied a service you may request a state fair hearing by sending a written request to:

Department of Medicaid Services
Program Integrity/Appeals
275 E. Main Street, 6E-B
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

You may also call the **Cabinet for Health Services, Office of the Ombudsman toll free at 1-877-807-4027** or, recipients who use a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD/TTY) may call **1-800-648-6056**.

PASSPORT NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Passport is a managed care program through Medicaid that covers Region VI. If you are a Medicaid recipient who is on the Passport program, then transportation to non-emergency medical appointments or other Medicaid-covered services or providers can be approved by contacting Passports. If Medicaid services are not covered through this program, Passports will direct you to the appropriate medical transportation services. When you call for transportation, you need to have this information ready:

- Passport Health Plan ID#
- Your home address and phone number
- Provider's address and phone number
- Destination and appointment time
- Give 3 days notice when scheduling your appointments
- Let provider know if you use a walker, cane, or wheelchair, etc. or need special assistance.

Contact the Passports Member Services Office regarding transportation at 1-800-578-0603 or call LogistiCare of Kentucky directly at 1-866-251-7404. For further information, call 585-7900, the local office of Passports Health Plan located at 305 West Broadway, Louisville, Kentucky 40202 or call 1-800-485-6531.

ADVOCACY NEEDS:

1. Obviously, becoming a part of one of the committees mentioned above or attending these meetings by yourself or with your advocacy group is needed to make any positive changes. Let your voice be heard!
2. One of our contacts mentioned that recertification of all TARC 3 riders is in process. He is worried about this perhaps cutting back services for many who are dependent on this specialized service. Be sure to get information on this process and the appeal procedures if you are affected.