

# THE ACCESS CONNECTION

Useful Information for ACCESS Customers



Solutions that move you

Summer 2017

## What is the Americans with Disabilities Act?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed as a civil rights law in 1990, 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. The purpose of the law is to ensure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as anyone else. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. VTA ACCESS complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which mandates that public fixed-route transit provide accessible fixed-route service and complementary paratransit service. ADA paratransit services must be equal where and when the fixed-route transportation services are available.

The ADA defines eligibility for paratransit services as a disability that directly affects an individual's functional ability preventing them from independent use of fixed route (bus and light rail) for some or all of their trips. Eligibility is not based on a diagnosis or mobility aids.

## New Paratransit Vehicles...

As VTA purchases new vehicles, we strive to exceed the Federal Transit Administration's regulations to provide you with exceptional service. We recently purchased 30 new small bus/cutaways with 72 inches door heights. When these vehicles integrate into our diverse fleet, they will proudly display VTA's new design.

## Technology in Your Next Paratransit Trip

VTA ACCESS is continuously looking for ways to improve service for our valued customers. One approach is partnering with a local tech company, Allied Telesis, to utilize EnVigilant's technology. Over the next 6 months, two of each vehicle types will participate in a pilot program. Our focus is on customer's safety, security, and comfort.

## REMINDER...

As of July 1, 2017, VTA ACCESS does not allow customers to take or book trips if your client account has insufficient funds or a negative balance. To ensure continued service please maintain a sufficient balance for planned trips. To make a payment, call VTA Customer Service at (408) 321-2300 and ask for ACCESS client accounts. You may also pay by check; please include your name and paratransit ID number.

Mail payments to:  
VTA ACCESS Paratransit,  
3331 North First Street,  
San Jose, CA 95134.

*These newsletters are issued quarterly on-line at [www.vta.org](http://www.vta.org), or email [paratransit@vta.org](mailto:paratransit@vta.org) to be added to our email distribution list.*

For ACCESS reservations and information, or to update your information please call (408) 321-2300

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Select vehicles are equipped with real-time camera feeds, audible GPS to track your trip's route with live traffic updates, on board Wi-Fi, and driver ratings. This technology also monitors our vehicle operation elements such as acceleration/deceleration, rapid braking, and engine over rev, and idle time.

In addition to the pilot program, VTA looks for long term solutions to enhance services by purchasing additional features for our transportation management software. This software is used to schedule and dispatch all paratransit trips and integrates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

Our new web-based software features allow customers to book, cancel, and monitor all trip information from any device with internet access. Customers can access real-time map views and vehicle location with Estimated Time of Arrivals (ETA). Customers will be able to book and view trip history, receive system notification on trip status, and real-time communication between you and your service provider.

During peak service hours, our enhanced system will allow staff to utilize our sub-contractors, taxis, to ensure all trips are provided on time. All trip transactions will be recorded and each vehicle will have GPS capability providing vehicle location, turn-by-turn directions, and increased on-time performance.

Our goal is to empower you, our customers, by giving you the ability to easily manage your account. A key improvement is our cashless faring solution, EZ Wallet, allowing you to manage your account through a self-service web-based portal. You can even designate another individual or caregiver to monitor or add funds to your client account. You can view trip history, fare debits and credits, and account balances at any time. You can also set up automated notifications for when your account balance reaches a predefined balance.

For those who prefer to call in, our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology enables customers, caregivers, and service providers to request, book, confirm or cancel trips without the need to speak with a call center representative. It allows for automated call-back of next day trips, ETA's of same-day trips, and a review of future trips.

As part of VTA's ongoing commitment to provide quality service to the community, VTA is proposing to make revisions to its ADA eligibility certification process with the following goals:

- Accurate and consistent eligibility determinations
- Ensure the quality and availability of services for all customers
- Stay current with industry's best practices
- Ensure transparency, stability, and equality

Stay up to date on upcoming presentations about our proposed improvements by emailing us at [paratransit@vta.org](mailto:paratransit@vta.org) or call customer service at (408) 321-2300.

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