



# OMNIRIDE ACCESS

*Paratransit Rider's Guide*

[OmniRide.com/Access](https://OmniRide.com/Access) • 703.730.6664

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# Definitions

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act 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.

## FIXED-ROUTE TRANSIT

Fixed-route transit is public transportation that operates along designated routes according to a set schedule.

## PARATRANSIT

Paratransit is transportation services for people with disabilities, often provided as a supplement to fixed-route bus and rail systems by public transit agencies.

## ORIGIN-TO-DESTINATION PARATRANSIT

The term “origin-to-destination” emphasizes paratransit’s obligation to ensure passengers are able to get from their starting location, or point of origin, to their point of destination.

## PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT (PCA)

Personal Care Attendants assist with the daily tasks of elderly, mentally disabled, chronically ill, or physically challenged clients, as well as hospice patients and those in various stages of rehabilitation or recovery.

## COMPANION

A companion is someone who accompanies a paratransit-eligible passenger, but who does not have professional training to assist that person.

## NO-SHOW

A No-Show occurs when a customer does not present themselves for boarding the paratransit vehicle within five minutes of the vehicle’s arrival within the 30-minute pick-up window.

## Definitions *(continued)*

### **LATE CANCELLATION**

A Late Cancellation occurs when a customer cancels a trip less than two hours before the start of the 30-minute pick-up window.

### **CANCELLATION AT DOOR**

A Cancellation at Door occurs when a customer cancels a trip after the driver arrives. This includes canceling via phone.

# Our Mission

**The mission of OmniRide Access is to provide origin-to-destination paratransit service to our customers while complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations for paratransit services.**

## Introduction

This Rider's Guide outlines the policies and procedures for using OmniRide Access. Please read it carefully.

OmniRide Access provides paratransit services to people with disabilities within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the OmniRide Local bus routes serving Manassas and Manassas Park.

Occasionally, people are not able to ride a fixed-route bus because of limited functional abilities. In such cases, a person may apply to use OmniRide Access paratransit services. An eligibility review will determine if a person is eligible for paratransit service.

If a rider who is eligible for paratransit service is not capable of reading this Rider's Guide, the rider is still required to follow the basic responsibilities outlined. The caregiver of the person eligible for service may need to assume the responsibility of reading and understanding this information as well as making trip reservations and other arrangements for the rider. This Rider's Guide is available in alternative formats upon request.

## Customer Rights

As an OmniRide Access customer, you have a right to:

- Be picked up on time within a 30-minute window.
- Be transported in a safe manner.
- Be treated with courtesy and respect.
- Travel in a clean, well-maintained vehicle.
- Be heard and expect OmniRide Access to investigate, address, and resolve concerns or complaints.
- Have calls answered promptly and courteously.
- Receive quality transportation services that are equivalent to those offered on all OmniRide bus routes.

# How To Contact Us

You may contact OmniRide Access via phone, fax, email or U.S. mail.

Transportation Support Agents are available to answer your questions and book paratransit trips Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. Calls are answered in the order in which they are received.

Before or after regular business hours, customers may use our automated telephone system which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The automated system will allow riders to confirm or cancel their OmniRide Access trips by using any touch-tone telephone. To schedule a trip when the Customer Service Office is closed, riders should leave a message, and a Transportation Support Agent will return the call during regular business hours.

**Phone:** 703-730-6664

**Virginia Relay Center:** TDD, call 711

**Fax:** 703-583-1377

**Email:** [Access@OmniRide.com](mailto:Access@OmniRide.com)

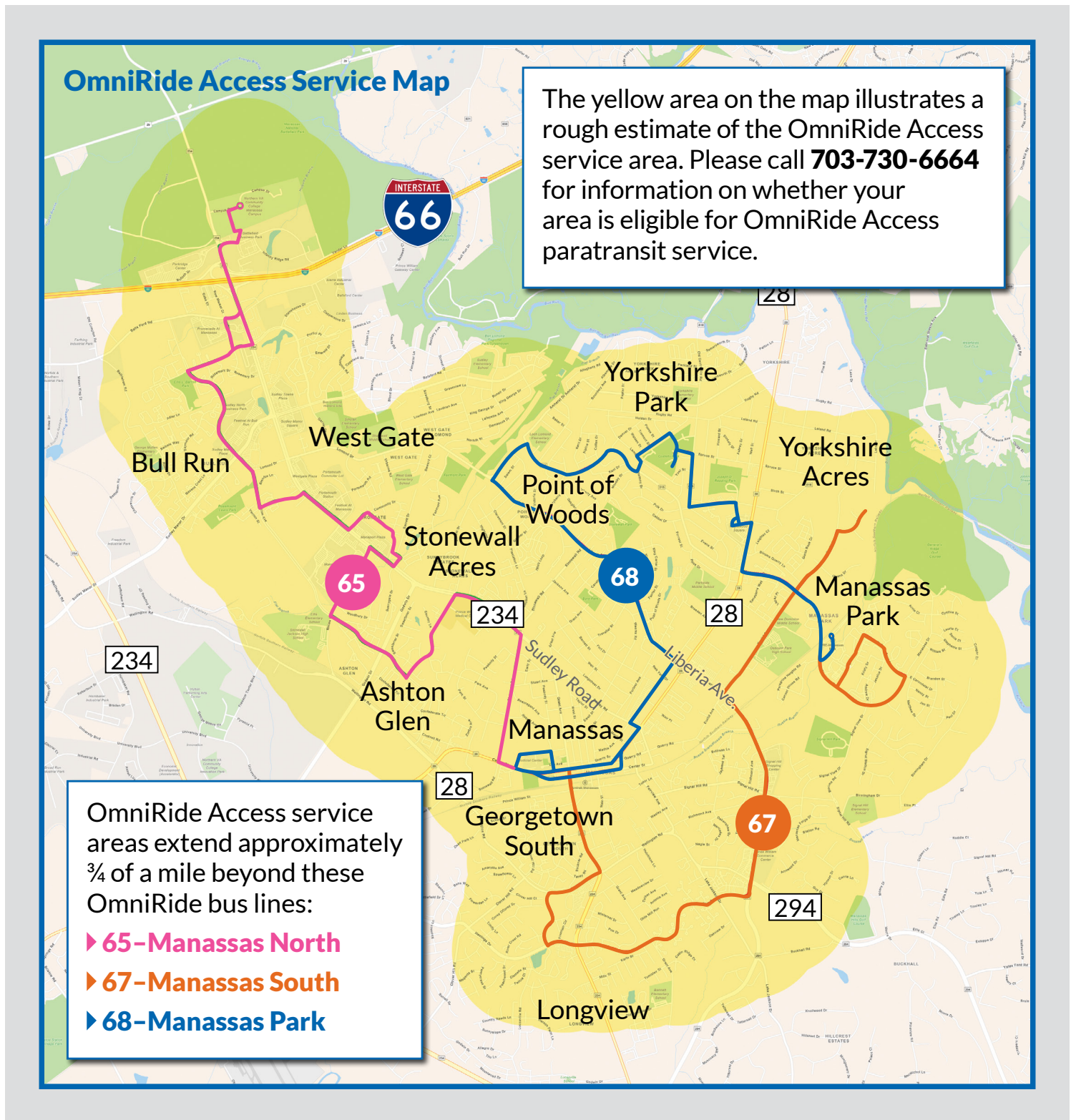
**Address:**

OmniRide Access  
14700 Potomac Mills Rd  
Woodbridge, VA 22192

# Riding Basics

## Paratransit Service Area

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), OmniRide Access is required to provide paratransit services to eligible riders traveling to or from 3/4 mile of the OmniRide Local bus routes serving Manassas and Manassas Park. This ADA service area is outlined in pale yellow on the map.





# Riding Basics (continued)

## Hours of Paratransit Service

Monday through Friday from 5:25 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. in Western Prince William County and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.

Because OmniRide Local buses do not operate on weekends in the areas of Manassas and Manassas Park, there is no OmniRide Access paratransit service on weekends.

## Customer Service Hours

To book paratransit trips, Transportation Support Agents are available Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m.

To cancel paratransit trips, Transportation Support Agents are available Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturday hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## Fares

Riders will pay one OmniRide Access token or \$3.10 cash per trip. Each token costs \$3.10; tokens also may be purchased in packs of 10 for \$31.00. OmniRide Access drivers can only accept exact cash fare and will not give change. No other forms of payment will be accepted on the vans.

## Ordering and Buying Tokens

To obtain OmniRide Access tokens:

- Contact OmniRide Access and order tokens by phone with payment via credit card;
- Request a token order form from your OmniRide Access driver (or download it online at **OmniRide.com/Access**) and mail the completed form, along with a check, to OmniRide Access;
- Contact OmniRide Access and ask for a token order form to be mailed to you. Then mail the completed form, along with a check, to OmniRide Access;
- Buy tokens at the OmniRide Transit Center, 14700 Potomac Mills Road, Woodbridge.

# Eligibility

## OmniRide Access Identification Card

Riders must show their OmniRide Access ID card when boarding an OmniRide Access vehicle.

The ADA requires an eligibility process for the ADA Paratransit service. See below to apply for eligibility:

**Website:** ADARide.com

**Phone:** (877) 232-7433 / Phone TTY: (310) 410-0985 / Fax: (310) 410-0239  
(Monday – Friday 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. ET)

**Mail:** ADARide, 19300 S. Hamilton Ave, Suite #120, Gardena, CA 90248

## Wait for Notification of Your Eligibility

You will be notified of your eligibility status within 21 days after the completion of the application process. **If you have not been notified within 21 days of submitting your application**, contact ADARide.

If a decision has not been made within 21 days of a completed application process, paratransit service will be provided to you until a final decision is made.

# Eligibility (continued)

## Paratransit Eligibility

Once the application has been completed and reviewed, the applicant will receive written notification within 21 business days of the of the eligibility status. If the applicant is eligible for OmniRide Access service, a written notification will be mailed to the successful applicant. The OmniRide Access Identification Card will be mailed separately.

There are three types of eligibility status. Your eligibility notification letter will explain which type you are qualified for. The eligibility status types are:

### ► Full Eligibility

Full eligibility is given if you cannot navigate the transit system without assistance. Also eligible is anyone who, because of a disability, cannot travel to or from the bus stop due to, for example, distance, terrain, weather, safety, or other obstacles that impede them due to their disability. To trigger eligibility, the obstacles must hinder the individual beyond simply being inconvenient. If either of these situations exists, you will be able to take your transit trip on a paratransit vehicle.

### ► Temporary Eligibility

Temporary eligibility is given if you are experiencing a health condition that is expected to improve but, for a limited time, the condition prevents you from riding a fixed-route bus. Until the health condition improves, you can take your transit trip on a paratransit vehicle.

### ► Visitor Eligibility

Visitors to the OmniRide Access area who are unable to use the fixed-route bus service because of their disabilities are eligible to use OmniRide Access paratransit. Visitors must either present documentation that they are eligible for ADA paratransit service in their home area, or document their place of residence and the limitation that prevents them from using the fixed-route bus.

OmniRide Access will provide paratransit services to visitors for no more than 30 days per year. To use paratransit service beyond the 30-day period, the visitor must apply for eligibility as if they were an area resident.

## Eligibility (continued)

### Eligibility for Children 8 Years of Age and Younger

Children who are 8 years of age and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Children under 9 years of age will be considered for paratransit eligibility based on the functional ability of both the child and the accompanying adult (as a team) to use the fixed-route bus service.

### Recertification of Eligibility

Each OmniRide Access paratransit customer must be recertified at least every five years. It may also be occasionally necessary to reevaluate an individual's eligibility before his/her eligibility ends. A customer's OmniRide Access ID card will indicate his/her paratransit eligibility expiration date. **It is the customer's responsibility to reapply for services prior to the eligibility expiration date.** If a customer fails to renew paratransit eligibility, he/she will be ineligible for service until he/she is determined eligible in the recertification process.

### Eligibility Appeals Process

If the applicant is found not eligible for paratransit services they may be eligible for reduced fares on OmniRide Local buses. In that case, they will receive an OmniRide Local bus reduced fare identification card.

If you do not agree with a paratransit eligibility decision, you have the right to appeal. Appeals must be made in writing and must be received within 60 days of OmniRide Access' determination. Please contact ADARide to file an appeal through the information listed below:

**Website:** [ADARide.com](http://ADARide.com)

**Phone Number:** 877-232-7433

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**Monday–Friday**

**11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**



# How to Use Paratransit

## Scheduling a Trip

Paratransit rides **must** be scheduled in advance. OmniRide Access accepts trip reservations not less than 24 hours and no more than 14 days before the time of the trip. OmniRide Access does not accept same-day trip reservations.

During regular business hours, Monday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., call (703) 730-6664 to speak with a Transportation Support Agent.

After regular business hours, call (703) 730-6664 and leave a message. A Transportation Support Agent will return your call during regular business hours. You must call before 4:30 pm on Sunday and leave a message to reserve a trip for the following Monday.

You must have the following information on hand before you call:

- Your name.
- A telephone number where you may be reached.
- Day of the week and date of your trip.
- Your preferred pickup time.
- Your pickup address.
- Your destination address and the time of your appointment(s) at that location.
- Your return time and return address.
- Whether you use a cane, walker, or other mobility device.
- Whether you will need assistance with boarding and disembarking or carrying packages.
- Whether you will be accompanied by a personal care attendant, a companion and/or a child, and whether that person has any special needs (e.g. mobility devices or service animals).

Remember, you'll be sharing your paratransit trip with others, and flexibility is required when using OmniRide Access.

# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## Canceling a Trip

Scheduled trips that are canceled after a driver has been assigned to the trip waste OmniRide Access resources and may impact service for other riders.

If you need to cancel a scheduled trip, please call OmniRide Access at 703-730-6664 as soon as possible. Trips must be canceled at least two hours in advance to avoid a penalty.

- Weekdays between 5:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., trips may be canceled by speaking with a Transportation Support Agent.
- At all other times, trips may be canceled by:
  - ◇ Leaving a voicemail message by calling 703-730-6664 and selecting "OmniRide Access" from the menu options. You must leave your first and last name, the trip(s) date and the trip(s) time.
  - ◇ Using the automated phone system at 703-730-6664 using your OmniRide Access ID and password.

## Changing a Trip

Please contact OmniRide Access before 4:30 p.m. the day prior to make any necessary changes to your previously requested trip. Same-day changes to your trip cannot be accepted.

Do not ask the driver to make changes to your trip, such as dropping you off at a different address. Drivers are not authorized to make changes to trip assignments.

## OmniRide Access Identification Card

- You are required to present your OmniRide Access ID card before boarding all OmniRide Access vehicles.
- Your OmniRide Access ID card is issued to you **for your use only**. You may not give or lend your OmniRide Access ID card to anyone. Your OmniRide Access ID card allows you to travel aboard OmniRide Access vehicles along with one Personal Care Attendant (PCA) who may accompany you free of charge.
- Misuse, alteration or counterfeiting of your OmniRide Access ID card will get you suspended from OmniRide Access indefinitely.

## How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

- OmniRide Access customers who are eligible for paratransit may travel aboard OmniRide Local bus services for a reduced fare. On OmniRide Local buses, you may be accompanied by one Personal Care Attendant who may ride with you free of charge. Additional persons traveling with you are required to pay the standard fare. To take advantage of this benefit, you must present your OmniRide Access ID card to the OmniRide bus operator.
- If you lose your OmniRide Access ID card or if it is stolen, you must report the loss immediately by calling 703-730-6664. OmniRide Access will send you a new card for free.
- If your OmniRide Access ID card is worn, broken, cracked, or otherwise unserviceable, contact us and your card will be replaced for free.
- Customers can request a replacement OmniRide Access ID card in person on a walk-in basis at the OmniRide Transit Center or by mailing a request to OmniRide Access. Written requests must include your name, date of birth, address, contact phone number and OmniRide Access ID number. Mail requests to:

OmniRide Access  
14700 Potomac Mills Rd  
Woodbridge, VA 22192

Your replacement ID card will be forwarded to the home address we have on record.

# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## Subscription Service

Do you take the same trip on the same day of the week, at the same time, between the same addresses? For example, do you have a consistent doctor's appointment or travel to work? If so, you might qualify for OmniRide Access' subscription service. Once your subscription service is established, you will not have to call and schedule these pre-arranged trips. To qualify for subscription service, customers must demonstrate consistent travel patterns.

1. Customers must demonstrate travel to the destination consistently over a 30-day period before subscription service can begin. This means customers must travel to the same destination, with similar pick-up and drop-off times, at least once a week, for a 30-day period.
2. Customers are allowed to modify their subscription trips once every 30 days in the following ways: pick-up time, appointment time and phone number. Modifications to pick-up time will be negotiated per the regular OmniRide Access reservations process.
3. If the destination and/or origin address changes, the customer must cancel the current subscription and demonstrate a consistent pattern of travel for 30 days before a new subscription can be approved.
4. If a rider cancels 25% or more of their subscription trips within a 30-day period, it may result in the cancellation of subscription service.
5. Subscription service is automatically canceled on all major federal holidays. These include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.
6. Subscription service may take up to seven business days to start. Until subscription service begins, established customers must continue to book individual trips for their travel. Trips may be scheduled between one and seven days in advance.
7. Subscription service may be placed on hold for a maximum of 30 days within a 90-day period. The exact same subscription must be re-started, or it will be treated as a new subscription. Subscriptions that are inactive for longer than 30 days may be canceled. The customer is responsible for re-booking inactive subscription trips. If re-booking a previously existing subscription after 30 days and the subscription is identical to the original, the 30-day travel demonstration is not required.

To request a subscription, call OmniRide Access at 703-730-6664.



# How to Use Paratransit (continued)

## On The Day of Your Trip

### ► Your Pick-Up Window and When to Be Ready

OmniRide Access schedules pick-ups within a 30-minute window to allow for traffic and other delays. Instead of giving you an exact time, we'll give you a 30-minute period during which your driver should arrive. For example, if your trip is scheduled for 8 a.m., your ride will arrive between 7:45 and 8:15 a.m.

Please be ready at the beginning of the pick-up window with your valid OmniRide Access photo ID card and exact fare to present to the driver. For example, if your pick-up window begins at 7:45 a.m., be ready at 7:45 a.m. **Your driver is required to wait for only five minutes after he or she has arrived within your pick-up window.**

You have the option of receiving an automated phone call informing you that your OmniRide Access driver has arrived. Please remember that any calls are a courtesy and are not guaranteed.

You are not required to board the vehicle until the pick-up window begins, but you may board the vehicle early if you wish.

OmniRide Access drivers carry ID badges that are to be visible at all times. If you ever doubt your driver's identity, call OmniRide Access at 703-730-6664 and select the OmniRide Access option to speak with a Transportation Support Agent.

### ► Vehicle Wait Time

Drivers are required to wait five minutes from arrival within the pick-up window at the pick-up location for riders to present themselves for boarding. If the rider is not present for boarding within that time, the driver will request that OmniRide Access staff begin the No-Show authorization process.

OmniRide Access staff will first verify that the driver is at the correct location and make a good faith effort to call the customer before authorizing the driver to proceed to the next destination. If the customer can be reached and becomes available for boarding while the driver is still on site during this process, the driver will hold their location for an additional five minutes.

Customers who are not ready for boarding upon the driver's arrival and are still not present at the end of the five-minute waiting period, will be considered a "No-Show" and will be subject to the OmniRide Access Late Cancellation and No-Show Policy as described on the next page.

# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## Late Cancellation and No-Show Policy

- ▶ A **"No-Show"** occurs when a customer does not present themselves for boarding the vehicle within five minutes of the vehicle's arrival within the 30-minute pick-up window.
- ▶ A **"Late Cancellation"** occurs when a customer cancels a trip less than two hours before the start of the 30-minute pick-up window.
- ▶ A **"Cancellation at Door"** is when a customer cancels a trip after the driver arrives. This includes canceling via phone.

**For purposes of this policy, a Late Cancellation or a Cancellation at Door will be considered a No-Show. A customer will be assessed only one No-Show for any specific pick-up window.**

- If a passenger has had five No-Shows in a 30-day calendar period, they will be subject to review. By the fifth day of the following month, OmniRide Access will mail a letter to the passenger notifying him/her of the review and what it means. The letter will provide a summary of the verified occurrences and information about appeals in the instances when service will be suspended
- A pattern or practice involves intentional, repeated or regular actions that are not isolated, accidental or singular incidents. All passenger records will be reviewed on the last business day of the month to determine if any passenger will be subject to possible reviews.
- In any six-month period, any customer who has scheduled at least ten trips and has No-Showed at least 35% of those trips will receive a notice that they are temporarily suspended from booking paratransit trips.
- Passengers who violate the Late Cancellation and No-Show Policy and face suspension will have the option of paying a \$15 fee to avoid suspension of their paratransit trips.
- If you no-show or late cancel because of circumstances beyond your control, please call OmniRide Access at 703-730-6664 to explain the circumstance, and request the removal of the no-show or late cancellation.

**Note:** Trips that are cancelled less than two hours before their window or that are No-Showed by the passenger for reasons that are beyond the passengers control may be excused. However, repeated failures (5 trips or more per month) to take scheduled trips, regardless of the reason, are subject to review.

# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## Suspension Policy

All suspension periods will begin on a Monday. The length of a customer's suspension will follow this schedule:

- **Five No-Shows in 30-day period:** Warning letter
- **Subsequent violations:** 7-day (1-week) suspension

OmniRide Access will retain records on customer compliance with this policy for the calendar year. A warning letter and copy of this policy will be issued upon the first violation of the year.

Further violations of this policy will result in suspension, per the schedule.

If you No-Show because of circumstances beyond your control, please call OmniRide Access at 703-730-6664 to explain the circumstance, and request the removal of the No-Show.

No-Shows must be disputed within two business days after the end of the calendar month in which they occur. Prior to sending a suspension letter, OmniRide Access will review all No-Shows to ensure that the process was followed properly and an accurate count was represented. Any No-Show that is found to be in error will be removed from the customer's account.

If you dispute a suspension under this policy and your claim is denied, you have the right to file an appeal. Appeal Requests must be filed in writing, by the deadline and per the instructions within the appeal packet. If you miss the Appeal Request deadline, your OmniRide Access service will be suspended on the date listed on your OmniRide Access Service Suspension Notice. A copy of the appeal process will be sent to you with your suspension letter.

# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## Riding Assistance

### ► Unattended or Supervised Passenger Form

Each OmniRide Access passenger must fill out a form certifying if they are capable of riding unattended or if they require supervised status, i.e., having a Personal Care Attendant or companion accompany them, or having someone meet them at the vehicle when they are dropped off at their destination.

The self-certification determination shall be made based on:

- Age;
- Cognitive limitations; or
- Special request of the responsible party.

### ► Personal Care Attendants

All customers have the right to travel with one PCA and should indicate their intent to do so when making a reservation. Depending on the nature and severity of one's disability, customers may require additional assistance from a PCA. Customers who cannot travel safely or comfortably without being accompanied by or met by a PCA must understand that OmniRide Access drivers cannot fulfill PCA duties.

Some duties that may be performed by a PCA but not by an OmniRide Access driver include and are not limited to:

- Assisting a customer in removing a jacket and/or repositioning in a wheelchair.
- Providing physical support for a customer to walk between the vehicle and the outermost exterior door of the pick-up or destination.
- Assisting a customer with changing oxygen canisters.
- Traveling with or meeting a customer who cannot be left unattended at the destination.
- Traveling with customers who cannot be left unattended for a brief time on an OmniRide Access vehicle without risk to themselves or others.
- Assisting a customer who travels with a service animal but cannot board or disembark that animal from the vehicle without assistance.
- Assisting a customer using a wheelchair in navigating up or down any steps or curbs to or from the OmniRide Access vehicle.
- Operating the controls of an electronically operated mobility device.



# How to Use Paratransit (continued)

## Driver Assistance for Customers

OmniRide Access drivers **will** provide the following assistance to customers:

- At public entrances, drivers may open the outermost exterior door to announce their arrival; however they may not enter the building. If the public entrance has a small vestibule with a second door nearby that leads to a waiting area, drivers may open the second door to announce their arrival, but will not proceed into the waiting area. Drivers will NOT approach doors of private residences unless prior arrangements have been made.
- Ask customers to show a valid OmniRide Access ID card and collect full fare for trip.
- Ask the customer "How may I assist you?"
- Offer the usage of a posey belt, which fits around the passenger and mobility device, to customers using a wheelchair or scooter.
- Accompany and assist the customer along the entire path of travel between the first exterior door and the vehicle.
- Guide customers who are blind or have low vision (per customer's approval/request).
- Maneuver the customer's manual wheelchair (per customer's approval/request).
- Allow customers to hold the driver's arm for balance.
- Escort the customer on/off the vehicle, operate vehicle lift if required, and ensure proper securement of the customer (including seatbelt securement) and mobility devices. Posey belts are optional.

It is important to note that the driver is not a personal care attendant and **is not permitted to provide assistance beyond what is outlined in this guide.**

Customers are responsible for making arrangements for any additional assistance.

Additionally, OmniRide Access drivers are strictly prohibited from:

- Entering or unlocking a customer's private residence at any time.
- Assisting a customer using a wheelchair up or down steps or curbs.
- Waiting with customers at their destination.
- Handling a service animal.
- Operating the controls of an electronically operated mobility device.
- Making personal unscheduled stops at the request of the customer.

# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## OmniRide Access Vehicles

### ► Emergency Procedures

In the event of an accident or emergency, please remain calm and follow the driver's instructions.

A rider who becomes ill or notices another rider who may be ill should immediately inform the driver.

If a rider, due to their disability, is to be met when they are dropped off and the person meeting them is not there when the driver arrives, the rider will be transported to a safe location, such as Novant Medical Center in Manassas or the OmniRide Access office in Woodbridge. The rider's guardian or caregiver will be notified and required to pick up the rider or to make other transportation arrangements. If we are unable to make contact with the guardian or caregiver, the proper authorities will be notified. This will result in a No-Show being assessed to the rider's record.

### ► Ride Time

OmniRide Access provides a "shared-ride" paratransit service. This means that other riders with different destinations may be picked up and/or dropped off along the way to your destination. This can result in your trip taking longer than if you were to take a taxi or drive yourself. Occasionally, it may take up to 45 minutes for your OmniRide Access trip.

Because OmniRide Access services are not designed to follow a direct route between an individual's pick-up and drop-off locations, we recommend that riders carry any medications with them in case their trips are delayed.

### ► Accessibility

- OmniRide Access has lift-equipped vans and buses. OmniRide Access does not accommodate requests for specific types of vehicles. Accessible vehicles are used to transport both ambulatory customers and customers who use wheelchairs/scooters requiring a lift to board a vehicle.
- OmniRide Access vans and lifts hold wheelchairs and scooters up to 51" long and 33" wide and a maximum of 800 pounds. Mobility aids beyond these specifications might not be transportable. We reserve the right to refuse transport if unsafe. Examples of mobility aids that are not allowed on OmniRide Access vehicles are shopping carts and geriatric chairs (chairs used in healthcare facilities to mobilize patients).

# How to Use Paratransit *(continued)*

For your safety, please make sure that brakes, batteries, and other parts on your wheelchair or mobility device are in good working condition.

- During boarding, the driver may assist passengers by operating the wheelchair lift and the mobility aid securement devices. Ambulatory customers utilizing the vehicle lift should use provided hand rails for safe boarding.

## ► Seatbelt Policy

For your safety and that of your fellow passengers, the OmniRide Access Securement Policy requires all passengers to wear both the lap belt and shoulder belts at all times while riding OmniRide Access, in compliance with OmniRide policy and applicable state laws. The belts are designed to protect you and others, and to prevent injury.

State laws allow passengers with certain medical conditions to obtain a waiver from wearing the lap and/or shoulder belts, but only if their healthcare provider documents and certifies the medical reason why the lap belt or shoulder belt should not be worn. Those who apply for a waiver (and their doctors) will be fully informed of the safety risks to the customer, other passengers and OmniRide Access drivers. Proper tie-down of mobility devices is always mandatory, while the use of posey belts (those that fit around the passenger and mobility device) continues to be optional.

Waiver applications are available from the OmniRide Access office and are valid only upon verification by OmniRide. After verifying the application, we will make a notation of the exception which will appear in the driver's instructions.

All children seven years old and under must utilize a child safety seat during transport. The customer is responsible for providing and securing the car seat.

**Passengers must comply with the OmniRide Access Securement Policy, or have an exception on file with OmniRide, or they will not be transported.** Drivers are not permitted to move the vehicle until all passengers are secured, and must stop the vehicle if belts are removed during travel.

For questions about the policy or to obtain a waiver application form, please email [Access@OmniRide.com](mailto:Access@OmniRide.com) or call 703-730-6664.

# How to Use Paratransit *(continued)*

## "No Strand" Policy

OmniRide Access is committed to the safety and security of its customers.

If we provide transportation for a customer to a given location, we will make every attempt to provide the return trip, even if the customer fails to appear for boarding within the scheduled pickup window. In such cases, return service will be provided as soon as possible but may be delayed depending upon prevailing traffic and weather conditions and scheduling considerations.

If a customer is a No-Show for a trip originating from their home, no vehicle will be sent back to the home to perform the trip. However, if a return trip was scheduled, OmniRide Access will honor the return trip's scheduled pickup location.

Vehicles will not be sent for return trips in some circumstances including, but not limited to, the following:

- The customer booked a one-way trip to a location and did not schedule a return trip.
- The customer requests to disembark from the vehicle before reaching his/her destination.
- The customer refuses to follow applicable operational and/or safety policies required for transport.
- The customer demonstrates inappropriate, aggressive, threatening, or abusive behavior toward others.
- At times when transportation is not possible due to weather conditions, Acts of God, acts of terrorism, civil disturbances, work stoppage or any other natural disaster outside of OmniRide Access control that may cause the suspension of service.

## Lost and Found

OmniRide Access is not responsible for lost or stolen items. If you believe that you have lost something on OmniRide Access, call 703-583-7782 for assistance.



# How to Use Paratransit (*continued*)

## What You May Bring With You

### ▶ Life Support Equipment

You may bring a respirator, portable oxygen or other life-support equipment as long as it does not violate hazardous material transportation laws. The equipment must be small enough to fit into the vehicle and be secured. Customers must ensure that there is an adequate oxygen supply (3/4 or full) before boarding. Drivers are not authorized to operate life support equipment at any time.

### ▶ Companions and Personal Care Assistants (PCAs)

Companions who are not trained as PCAs may travel with a certified customer when space is reserved. When booking your trip, be sure to notify the Transportation Support Agent if a companion will ride with you and if your companion uses a wheelchair or scooter. Companions, including children of all ages, must pay the full fare. Trained PCAs traveling with certified customers may ride for free.

### ▶ Service Animals

You may travel with a service animal. Comfort or therapy animals, which are used solely to provide emotional support, are not considered to be service animals.

Be sure to tell the reservation agent when scheduling your trip that you will be traveling with a service animal. There is no fee to bring your service animal. Your service animal must be under your control at all times and cannot ride on an OmniRide Access seat. Your service animal can ride in an approved animal carrier or can ride on the floor at your feet. If your service animal displays any aggressive or disruptive behavior, OmniRide Access can require that the animal be removed from the vehicle.

# How to Use Paratransit *(continued)*

## Groceries and Shopping Bags

1. A passenger may carry only as many grocery bags or shopping bags as the passenger can carry on and off the van in one trip by themselves. Drivers will not assist in carrying items on or off the van.
2. A passenger carrying items on or off the van must request the use of the lift or ramp if needed.
3. All bags must be completely out of the aisle and secured by the passenger. If this is not possible, the driver may refuse to transport the passenger.
4. If the vehicle is full, the passenger must keep their bags at their own seating area.
5. Under no circumstances will the bags be stored in the wheel well area or in an area that blocks access to either the front or rear doors.
6. The bags may be stored in the wheelchair securement area if they are secured by the passenger. If the wheelchair securement area is needed for a passenger who uses a wheelchair as a mobility device, the passenger with the bags must move to another area.
7. A passenger who uses a wheelchair as a mobility device is limited to the number of bags and other items that can safely be attached to the wheelchair. The number and location of the items must not interfere with the process of safely securing the wheelchair using a four-point tie-down.
8. If the bags cannot be accommodated under these guidelines due to the number of bags blocking or narrowing the aisle, the driver may deny the passenger a ride.

# Winter Weather Procedures

You are responsible for snow and ice removal to make your home accessible to the OmniRide Access driver. If the home is not accessible, the ride will be considered “Canceled at Door.” If you live in an apartment complex, it is your responsibility to make the apartment manager aware of the policy. If there is a recurring problem with the apartment management not removing the snow, please contact OmniRide Access and speak with a Transportation Support Agent.

In the event of an accumulation of snow or ice, OmniRide Access will follow the procedures listed below:

- If weather conditions and/or snow or ice accumulations do not allow the vehicle’s lift to be safely deployed, the driver will not attempt a pick-up. You will be contacted and notified of your ride cancellation.
- If the lift can be safely deployed, but the sidewalk or driveway to or from the bus is not sufficiently clear of snow or ice to enable you to proceed to and from the bus safely, you will be contacted and notified of your ride cancellation.
- If the pathway at your pickup location is impassable, you are encouraged to notify OmniRide Access before the scheduled pick-up time. Your ride will be canceled and rescheduled for a time after the snow/ice has been cleared from the pathway.

## Cancellation of Service

OmniRide Access reserves the right to modify, suspend, or cancel service during times of hazardous weather conditions that may jeopardize the safety of our riders, our employees, or our vehicles. On days when bad weather is predicted, check OmniRide.com or call 703-730-6664 for closing announcements.

Riders are encouraged to sign up for Rider Express email and text message notifications at OmniRide.com to stay informed about conditions that could affect paratransit operations.

**If you see or hear a notification that OmniRide Local buses are operating on the Emergency Service Plan (ESP) or that OmniRide Local bus service is suspended or shut down, OmniRide Access trips will be canceled for that day.** You may also call (703) 730-6664 for a recorded announcement about the status of OmniRide Local and OmniRide Access service.

## Winter Weather Procedures *(continued)*

If your trip is for dialysis, chemotherapy, or another life-sustaining purpose, call the OmniRide Access office to make sure you can get where you need to go. Every effort will be made to deliver life-sustaining and essential trips using OmniRide Access vehicles.

If you are traveling during times of inclement weather, be sure to be prepared for longer ride times. For example, bring any medication you may need. If you use oxygen, bring an adequate (extra) supply. If you are diabetic or hypoglycemic, bring a small snack with you in case the trip is longer than expected due to weather.

# Public Transportation and Travel Training

Have you ever wanted to be more independent? Have you ever wanted to use regular public transportation? With OmniRide Travel Training, you may be able to do both. What will that mean to you? It will be easier for you to get around without having to pre-schedule a trip. By riding the fixed-route OmniRide bus instead of paratransit, you'll have access to a greater network of transportation options.

Since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), great strides have been made by public transportation providers to make buses more accessible to persons with disabilities. But sometimes, riding transit requires more than the ability to ride; it requires knowing how to ride.

Those who qualify for OmniRide's Reduced Fare Program pay discounted fares on OmniRide buses. Discounted fares are available all day on OmniRide Local buses and on the OmniRide Cross County Connector. Discounted fares are available during non-peak times on OmniRide Express and OmniRide Metro Express buses. To qualify for the Reduced Fare Program, riders must:

- Be age 60 or older; or
- Have a disability as defined by the ADA; or
- Have a valid Medicare card; or
- Be a current paratransit customer.

OmniRide Access encourages our customers with disabilities to take advantage of the flexibility, independence, and reduced cost that our public transportation buses provide.

## What is Travel Training?

Travel Training teaches persons with disabilities how to ride public transportation. Trainers work with passengers in their home and on the buses and trains they will be riding, providing them with the practice they need to feel comfortable and confident when riding.

## Who is Eligible to Receive Travel Training?

Travel Training is available to anyone who requests it. Persons with physical or developmental disabilities, visual impairments or blindness, or with mental illness or other disabilities, are encouraged to request Travel Training.

## Do You Have to Be a Certain Age to Qualify for Travel Training?

There are no age requirements for Travel Training. OmniRide has provided instruction to riders of all ages.



# Public Transportation and Travel Training (*continued*)

## Where is Travel Training Provided?

Travel Training is conducted at an approved location or at a customer's home. It is also conducted on the bus route the customer will be riding. Exactly how and where Travel Training is conducted will depend on the needs of the customer.

## How Do I Request Travel Training?

Contact OmniRide to speak with a Transportation Support Associate.

**Main Phone Number:** 703-730-6664

**Virginia Relay Center** – TDD, call 711

**Email us:** [Access@OmniRide.com](mailto:Access@OmniRide.com)

# Rider Courtesy and Rules of Conduct

OmniRide Access has a list of common sense rules to ensure the safety of all riders and drivers. We ask that all riders, their Personal Care Attendants, and any companions traveling with riders observe the following Rules of Conduct:

- Be ready for pick-up throughout the pick-up window of the scheduled trip and board the vehicle promptly.
- Display your OmniRide Access photo ID card to the driver before boarding the vehicle.
- Pay exact fare (one token or \$3.10 cash) when boarding the vehicle.
- Cancel reservations at least two hours before the scheduled pick-up, and ideally at least 24 hours in advance.
- Remain seated once on board.
- Wear required vehicle restraints at all times during transport.
- Depart the vehicle upon request of an authorized OmniRide Access representative, including the bus operator.
- Do not eat or drink in an OmniRide Access vehicle except for health reasons.
- Do not smoke in an OmniRide Access vehicle.
- Head, arms, and other body parts must be kept inside the vehicle.
- Keep personal assistance devices in good condition and be able to operate them without driver assistance.
- Keep service animals under control at all times.
- No petting of guide dogs or other service animals without the permission of the owner.
- No operating or tampering with any vehicle equipment.
- No abusive, threatening, or obscene language or actions.
- No physical or verbal abuse of another rider or the driver.
- No playing of music, electronics or other noisy equipment while on board without headphones.
- No riding with open containers of alcohol or with illegal drugs.
- Riders shall maintain appropriate, reasonable personal hygiene.
- Shirts and shoes or other footwear (if ambulatory) must be worn.
- Weapons are prohibited on OmniRide Access vans.
- Federal regulations prohibit the transportation of flammable or explosive materials on transit vehicles (with the exception of mobility aids).

# Rider Courtesy and Rules of Conduct *(continued)*

- Littering is prohibited.
- Make sure ramps, sidewalks, and walkways are properly maintained and clear of snow and ice.
- Adults must control children.
- Provide up-to-date information to the OmniRide Access Call Center, including your home address, phone number, types of mobility aids you use, and your accessible format needs.
- Treat OmniRide staff and other riders with respect.

Riders, Personal Care Attendants, or guests traveling with riders who violate rules of courtesy and conduct will be subject to penalties, up to and including suspension of service.

Riders, Personal Care Attendants, or guests traveling with riders who engage in verbal or physical abuse or cause physical injury to another rider or driver, or who engage in other illegal activities, will be subject to immediate and permanent suspension from receiving paratransit service. They may also be subject to possible criminal prosecution, which may include fines.

## Exceptions

OmniRide Access recognizes that some disabilities and health-related conditions may cause people to act in ways that may break some of the OmniRide Access rules. OmniRide Access will take disability-related conditions into consideration before suspending service. However, suspension will still be an option if it is necessary to maintain a safe paratransit service. In such cases, service may be reinstated when the rider and the rider's caregivers develop a plan to ensure that the safety of the OmniRide Access service is not compromised.





# OMNIRIDE ACCESS

## *Paratransit Rider's Guide*

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To request forms or  
more information, please  
visit **ADARide.com** or  
call **877-232-7433**

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**OmniRide.com/Access**  
**703.730.6664**